

Junior Accelerated Summer Reading Assignment

All students are required to read Seamus Heaney's *Beowulf* and complete the assignment. In addition to that work, students must choose two of the following five books to read and complete the corresponding assignment. (all book descriptions taken from Amazon.com)

1. *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah

Kristin Hannah captures the epic panorama of WWII and illuminates a part of history seldom seen: the women's war. This is a story of two sisters embarking on her own dangerous path toward survival, love, and freedom in German-occupied, war-torn France.

2. *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah

Child soldiers have been profiled by journalists, and novelists have struggled to imagine their lives. But until now, there has not been a first-person account from someone who came through this hell and survived.

3. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* by Agatha Christie

Roger Ackroyd knew too much. He knew that the woman he loved had poisoned her brutal first husband. He suspected also that someone had been blackmailing her. Then, tragically, came the news that she had taken her own life with a drug overdose. But the evening post brought Roger one last fatal scrap of information. Unfortunately, before he could finish reading the letter, he was stabbed to death.

4. *Zeitoun* by David Eggers

The true story of one family, caught between America's two biggest policy disasters: the war on terror and the response to Hurricane Katrina. When Kathy evacuates New Orleans, Zeitoun stays and travels the city by canoe, feeding abandoned animals and helping elderly neighbors. Then, one day, police officers arrest Zeitoun in his home.

5. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot

Her name was Henrietta, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors, yet her cells – taken without her knowledge – became one of the most important tools in medicine. The first “immortal” human cells grown in culture, they are still alive today.

You will submit a paper on each book for a total of 3 papers. Assignments are below. The length should be at minimum 2 typed, double spaced pages. This work is due on the first day of school in the fall. You will then submit the typed work to turnitin.com to check for plagiarism. You cannot do that until you receive a password on the first day of school.

Beowulf: Discuss the concept of a hero as it applies to the poem. How does the story elevate Beowulf to heroic status and what importance is placed on that status throughout the poem. (Everyone does this assignment, then two of your choice.)

a long way gone: The book has much to say on the topic of family. Catalog and characterize the different families that Ishmael belongs to over the course of the book.

Zeitoun: What was your impression of the Muslim community in America prior to reading this book? How has that impression changed or been supported by the story?

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks: How do various members of Henrietta's family react to the discovery of her contribution to science? How does the author highlight the importance of Henrietta's contribution after death as well as her lack of acknowledgement by the scientific community?

The Nightingale: A major theme of the historical novel set in WWII is to show how the best of humanity is revealed during troubling times. Explain how Vianne and Captain Beck risk their lives saving others despite the consequences.

The Murder of Roger Ackroyd: Agatha Christie keeps us guessing throughout this novel. Who did you initially suspect for the crime? What clues led you to that decision? Describe how Christie created suspense throughout the story.