Attention: Parents and Students!


WHAT: The information attached outlines the choices and assignments we have given to our students for the 2020 James S. Rickards School-Wide Summer Reading Program. While specific courses such as Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) may have alternate or additional summer assignments that will need to be completed before the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, we want to develop a program that encourages a culture of reading and an expectation of academic dedication for all of our students. Therefore, we are asking you to read the attached information and participate in our summer reading activity. The assignment composed for this year focuses on having students answer reflective questions about their chosen text and provide evidence for the inferences they make in their reflection. Students are expected to complete each assignment by themselves only using the power of their brain and their chosen book. If a student is caught plagiarizing their work, they will receive a 0%.

WHEN: While the expectation is that students will write original answers to these questions and submit them as a course requirement by the end of the first week of school following our return, we also want to encourage parents and groups of students to use them to discuss their readings with each other so that we can all share in the experience of these texts. Activities centered upon these questions will take place within the first few weeks of Language Arts instruction in the fall as well.

CONTACT INFO: If you have any questions regarding our JSRHS Summer Reading Program, please feel free to contact Ms. O’Reilly or Mrs. Madden, JSRHS ELA Department Chair and Reading Coach (oreillys@leonschools.net; maddena@leonschools.net)

JSRHS Summer Reading Titles and Sneak Previews, 2020


One teenager in a skirt. One teenager with a lighter. One moment that changes both of their lives forever. If it weren’t for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met. Both were high school students from Oakland, California, one of the most diverse cities in the country, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment. The case garnered international attention, thrusting both teenagers into the spotlight.


Meet Rico: high school senior and afternoon-shift cashier at the Gas 'n' Go, who after school and work races home to take care of her younger brother. Every. Single. Day. When Rico sells a jackpot-winning lotto ticket, she thinks maybe her luck will finally change, but only if she--with some assistance from her popular and wildly rich classmate Zan--can find the ticket holder who hasn't claimed the prize. But what happens when have and have-nots collide? Will this investigative duo unite...or divide? Nic Stone, the New York Times bestselling author of Dear Martin and Odd One Out, creates two unforgettable characters in one hard-hitting story about class, money--both too little and too much--and how you make your own luck in the world.

Based on rare archival material, obscure trial manuscripts, and interviews with relatives of the conspirators and the manhunters, CHASING LINCOLN’S KILLER is a fast-paced thriller about the pursuit and capture of John Wilkes Booth: a wild twelve-day chase through the streets of Washington, D.C., across the swamps of Maryland, and into the forests of Virginia.


Sixteen-year-old Bri wants to be one of the greatest rappers of all time. Or at least win her first battle. As the daughter of an underground hip hop legend who died right before he hit big, Bri’s got massive shoes to fill. But it’s hard to get your come up when you’re labeled a hoodlum at school, and your fridge at home is empty after your mom loses her job. So Bri pours her anger and frustration into her first song, which goes viral . . . for all the wrong reasons. Bri soon finds herself at the center of a controversy, portrayed by the media as more menace than MC. But with an eviction notice staring her family down, Bri doesn’t just want to make it—she has to. Even if it means becoming the very thing the public has made her out to be. Insightful, unflinching, and full of heart, On the Come Up is an ode to hip hop from one of the most influential literary voices of a generation. It is the story of fighting for your dreams, even as the odds are stacked against you; and about how, especially for young black people, freedom of speech isn’t always free.


This story was going to begin like all the best stories. With a school bus falling from the sky. But no one saw it happen. They were all too busy—Talking about boogers. Stealing pocket change. Skateboarding. Wiping out. Braving up. Executing complicated handshakes. Planning an escape. Making jokes. Lotioning up. Finding comfort. But mostly, too busy walking home. Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.

James S. Rickards High School Summer Reading Assignment 2020

After completing your reading of ONE of the titles above, please complete BOTH parts of the assignment below. Note that both part one and part two of the assignment will be due at the end of the first week of the 2020-2021 school year.

**Assignment Part I: Written Response**

**Directions:** After reading the summer reading novel you chose from the school list, complete the following questions. Your responses may be typed or neatly hand-written on a separate sheet of paper.

1. List the title and author of your book.

2. Write a concise, objective summary of your book. This should be no longer than 3-5 sentences.

3. What is the central conflict or societal issue presented in this book? How does it change or develop over the course of the novel?

4. Part A: What is a statement about life or the world with which the author of this book would agree? Your answer should be one complete sentence.

5. Part B: Consider the statement you constructed in part A (question #4). Cite 4-5 quotations from the book that provide textual evidence of the accuracy of the statement you constructed. Be sure to cite your quotations using the following example: “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view…” (pg. 83)
6. Explain an event or idea from your own life or current events that relates to a theme or idea that is prominent in this book.

*General Reminders and Expectations for Writing Short Responses*

- The response should answer ALL portions of the question.
- The response should be accurate in its answer to all portions of the question.
- The response should be written with the appropriate level of thought and depth demanded by the task.
  - When required, the response provides text evidence for support.
- The response is free from errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.
  - The response is written in complete sentences.

**Assignment Part II: Creative Response**

*Directions:* Using your responses to several of the questions above, construct either a brochure or poster to promote your book. Your promotional poster or brochure should be neat, colorful, and contain a version of your book summary (question #2), 2-3 quotations from the book (question 5), a brief quote or statement from you, the reader, giving your opinion of the book (2-3 sentences maximum), and artwork that is relevant to the major themes or ideas of the text.

*General Reminders and Expectations for Crafting Creative Responses*

- The creative response should address all components required by the task directions.
- The creative response should accurately reflect the required information.
  - The creative response should be neat and attractive.
- The creative response is free from errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage.

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*Per School Board Policy 2240, Leon County Schools recognizes that certain instructional materials may conflict with a student’s or parent’s value system. In such cases, a parent may request in writing an alternative summer reading assignment. Please direct inquiries to Mrs. Madden (maddena@leonschools.net) or Ms. O’Reilly (oreillys@leonschools.net)*