

# Trousdale County High School

## English III - Summer Reading List

*An Invisible Thread*

Laura Schroff

She was a successful ad sales rep in Manhattan. He was a homeless, eleven-year-old panhandler on the street. He asked for spare change; she kept walking. But then something stopped her in her tracks, and she went back. And she continued to go back, again and again. They met up nearly every week for years and built an unexpected, life-changing friendship that has today spanned almost three decades.

*\*Breaking Night*

Liz Murray

This is the stunning memoir of a young woman who at age fifteen was living on the streets, and who eventually made it into Harvard.

*Charles and Emma: The Darwins' Leap of Faith*

Deborah Heiligman

Challenges about teaching the theory of evolution in schools occur annually all over the country. This same debate raged within Darwin himself, and played an important part in his marriage: his wife, Emma, was quite religious, and her faith gave Charles a lot to think about as he worked on a theory that continues to spark intense debates.

*\*Columbine*

Dave Cullens

In this account of the massacre at Columbine High School, Cullens delves deeply into the minds of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, asking – and answering – the question: “Why?”

*A Walk in the Woods*

Bryson, Bill

A study of friendship, human nature, and the American wilderness, this book chronicles travel writer Bill Bryson's attempt to walk the Appalachian Trail. *A Walk in the Woods* is more than just a laugh-out-loud hike. Bryson's acute eye is a wise witness to this beautiful but fragile trail, and as he tells its fascinating history, he makes a moving plea for the conservation of America's last great wilderness.

*\*Friday Night Lights*

HG Bissinger

When journalist HG Bissinger spent a year in Odessa, Texas, he observed more than just the daily lives of the Permian Panther football team players, coaches, and fans. Indeed, he tried “to capture the other aspects of the town . . . the values about race and education and politics and the economy.” Though “Odessa is the setting of this book, . . . it could be anyplace in this vast land where, on a Friday night, a set of spindly stadium lights rises to the heavens to so powerfully, and so briefly, ignite the darkness.”

*Hope Rises*

Kim Meeder

From a mistreated horse to an emotionally starved child and back again, a torrent of love revives their barren places. In the presence of unconditional love, a mute girl speaks for the first time. A defiant teenager teaches a horse to trust again...and opens his own heart to love. A rescued horse gives a dying man his last wish.

*In these girls, Hope is a Muscle*

Madeleine Blais

They were a talented team with a near-perfect record but a reputation for choking in the crunch of the state playoffs. Finally, after five straight years of disappointments, the Amherst Lady Hurricanes found they just might have what it took to go all the way.

*My Losing Season*

Pat Conroy

Pat Conroy recalls his senior year at The Citadel, where he started for the basketball team. Conroy recalls, "I was born to be a point guard, but not a very good one."

*Tuesdays with Morrie*

Mitch Albom

Mitch Albom, Schwartz's one-time student, chronicles his last days with his dying mentor, a sociologist who courageously studied his own degeneration from Lou Gehrig's disease.

*The Good Soldiers*

David Finkel

A Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, David Finkel spent eight months in Baghdad with a battalion of US soldiers charged with securing “a balanced, secure and self-sufficient environment for the Iraqi people.”

**\*Some of the novels have mature themes and language. Be sure to evaluate each novel before making a selection**

## Assignment – Due 1<sup>st</sup> Week of School

Students are to read one nonfiction book from the list provided and write a literary critique using the structured outline below.

### Paragraph I: Summary

Provide a brief synopsis of the book to better acquaint your reader with the work. Brief is the key word! If your summary comprises half of the essay, your response will feel unbalanced. It is important to provide an adequate amount of information without giving too much away. Begin your critique with a great quote from the book or some interesting fact. Also include the book's title, author, publication date, and any other information that might be helpful to the reader.

### Paragraph II: Identify

Identify the main theme of the work. What is the book about? What is the central idea or message the author is trying to convey? What is the major lesson to be learned? Once you have identified the major theme/s of the work, consider whether or not you believe it was conveyed effectively. Was this story a good vehicle to transfer this theme to you as the reader? Why or why not? Use specific evidence from the text to support your argument.

### Paragraph III: Criticism

Be the critic. Beyond the theme, was this a good story? What did you like about it? Consider the general plot, characters, writer's style and voice, narration, subject matter, etc. What was the author able to do effectively? What did you dislike about it? How did the author fall short of your hopes and expectations? What did they do poorly? How might the book be better improved?

### Paragraph IV: Consideration

How has this book changed your opinion of the world around you? Consider how this work has altered your perceptions of the topic discussed in the book. Did your opinion on the subject change at all from start to finish? How would you have felt about it before reading the novel? How do you feel now? What specific details from the work compelled this change? If there has been no change, explain what the author could or should have done to better do so.

### Paragraph V: Recommendation

What is your recommendation regarding this work? Would you encourage a friend or classmate to read it? Would you tell them to avoid it at all cost? Provide some closure to your response with final thoughts on the work. Restate the title, author, and major theme/s of the work, as well as appropriate (to your overall opinion) description of the work. Provide your recommendation, for or against the work. Restate the work's ability, or lack thereof, to compel the reader and creatively find some way to end your critique.

### Example of Paragraph V:

*Of Mice and Men*, by John Steinbeck is a gripping work that beautifully depicts the importance of dreams and friendship in society. I would highly recommend this work to any reader looking to explore such topics. Through its simple style and structure it is able to encompass themes much larger than its size and has changed my view on the necessity for true friendship. As George says to Lenny, "Guys like us, that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don't belong no place. . . . With us it ain't like that. We got a future."