

9th grade Honors Summer Reading 2024-2025



from Our School Library during National Poetry Month

A warm welcome to Freshman Class of 2028! This year, I am looking forward to sharing with you books that explore fascinating topics and will be a starting point for us to share our own perspectives in class discussions. The purpose of this summer reading adventure is to help you:

- Improve your reading skills
- Increase your vocabulary
- Prepare you for high school
- Enjoy reading and discover new interests and genres

In this course, we'll explore a wide range of literary genres and make connections between the characters, story structures, and themes. As you read, you'll be completing a handwritten journal recording details and responses. This journal will count as the first major grade of the year. We'll also dedicate our first two weeks of class to discussion of the stories and they will appear on the first exam.

Guidelines and Suggestions:

- Give yourself ample time to complete the readings and assignments. Do not wait until the last minute to try to complete this assignment.
- Try mapping out your plan of action in a planner, calendar, or any source you can easily refer back to.
- Decide when and how you will read: On the subway as you go to meet friends? At the beach when you're relaxing? On a flight? With your morning cup of coffee? For a certain amount of time each night before bed? At the park on a beautiful day?

- Having a strategy will help you get through the texts. On the calendar count up the days when you know you will have anywhere between 20-40 minutes to read.
- Calculate how many pages (or chapters) you will need to read per day. 10 to 50 pages is doable. More than that can be overly ambitious.
- Don't forget to include days when you will dedicate time to writing your assignment. You may complete the assignment as you are reading the book or after you have finished it in its entirety.

Summer Reading Texts and Brief Summaries

1. “Flowers for Algernon” by Daniel Keyes

Text version: [Click Here for "Flowers for Algernon" text](#)

Audio version: [Click Here for "Flowers for Algernon" audio](#) (1 hour and 23 minutes)

Synopsis: The adult, learning disabled narrator of this fictional story is compelled to write “Progress Reports” of his experiences and reactions for a controversial experiment that is intended to rapidly increase his intelligence. A mouse named Algernon, is also undergoing the same experimental treatment. As his brain changes, so does his perspective of the world.

2. “Scarlet Ibis” by James Hurst

Text: [Text of "Scarlet Ibis"](#) (6 pages)

Audio: [Audio for "The Scarlet Ibis"](#) (only 26 minutes)

Synopsis: This fictional short story begins with a narrator who recalls memories of time spent with his younger brother, Doodle. The narrator struggles with his own pride and his love for his disabled brother.

3. *Gorilla, My Love* by Toni Cade Bambara

Text is 192 pages; approximately 3 hours and 15 minutes

Sample Audio Version: [Click Here for "Gorilla, My Love" audio](#)

Synopsis: Fifteen short stories that, according to reviews by Google Books, “ Toni Cade Bambara gives us compelling portraits of a wide range of unforgettable characters, from sassy children to cunning old men, in scenes shifting between uptown New York and rural North Carolina. A young girl suffers her first betrayal. A widow flirts with an elderly blind man against the wishes of her grown-up children. A neighborhood loan shark teaches a white social worker a lesson in responsibility. And there is more. Sharing the world of Toni Cade Bambara's "straight-up fiction" is a stunning experience.

Total:

Audiobook: approximately 5 hours

Writing Assignment: This assignment can be handwritten (preferred) or you can use Canva to keep a digital notebook (don't pay for any features, just use the free templates). If you choose to handwrite your work, keep one small, organized journal (no five subject notebooks necessary) where you will hand write and record your responses. Be sure to clearly label each response. You should **create a section of your journal for each prompt and clearly label which sections refer to "Scarlet Ibis," and which sections refer to Flowers for Algernon and Gorilla, My Love.**

- **Setting:** Based on clues from the text, try to determine WHERE and WHEN each book takes place. Write down five hints from the text that suggest the time and place of the story (example: The descriptions of the surroundings, the way people dress or speak, clothes worn for that time of year, etc.) For *The Scarlet Ibis*—set in the South—you'll want to specify how the places and customs described in the story differ from your own.

- **Character Study:** Select three characters from each book. Trace their development throughout the novel and address the following questions: Who are they when we first meet them? Describe their appearance, their actions, and their thoughts. What challenges or conflicts do they face? How do they change and what is the cause? Be sure to indicate page numbers where these important details occur.

- **Quotations:** Record ten quotations from each text and indicate the meaning or significance of each. Why does this quote stand out to you? How is it important to the story?

- **Personal Reaction/Review:** Write a three to five paragraph personal reaction to each story/essay. What have you learned from the character's experiences? Would you recommend this book to a friend? Explain why or why not. Be specific in your reasoning.

Due Date: Your journal is due the second day of school. If you have any questions regarding the assignment, you can email me over the summer at ulgen.m@stsaviour.org . I am looking forward to meeting you. Have a great summer!

If you plan on buying the book instead of borrowing it from the library, shop locally:

- **Barnes & Noble bookstore** (on 7th Ave. & 6th Street)
- **Greenlight Bookstore** 686 Fulton St, Brooklyn, NY 11217
- **Troubled Sleep**, 129 6th Avenue, Brooklyn (used bookstore/cheaper)
- **The Community Bookstore**, 143 7th Avenue.
- **Books are Magic**, 225 Smith Street, Brooklyn
- **The Strand Bookstore**, the corner of 12th Street and Broadway in Manhattan