

**Shawnigan Lake School
English Department
Summer Reading Programme
For grade 12**

The English Department Summer Reading Programme is designed to supplement and enhance our students' reading interests, competence and pleasure. The ability to read with care and discernment and to take pleasure in reading is essential not only for success in high school but is also a necessary step towards reaching larger goals and aspirations. Assigned reading should be completed by the end of the summer. Assessment of reading is handled in a variety of ways: short essays, personal reflections, projects, and oral presentations. Starred (*) reading selections are required and/or part of the curriculum. Students are strongly encouraged to choose an author or subject they genuinely enjoy.

English 12 (Students read a minimum of two works, one of which must be *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*, by Ishmael Beah)

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

This is the horrific personal account of a boy's transformation from an innocent village youth into a deadly participant in the civil war in Sierra Leone--and his eventual rehabilitation.

Testimony, by Anita Shreve

This is a powerful tale of sexual misconduct set in a prestigious New England boarding school.

The Alchemist: A Fable About Following Your Dream, by Paulo Coelho

The Alchemist presents a simple fable about Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy, who dreams of a distant treasure in the Egyptian pyramids. He leaves Spain to literally follow his dream. Along the way he meets many spiritual messengers.

Old School, by Tobias Woolf

A scholarship boy at a New England prep school grapples with literary ambition and insecurity in this lucid, deceptively sedate novel, set in the early 1960s and narrated by the unnamed protagonist from the vantage point of adulthood. Each year, the school hosts a number of visiting writers, and the boys in the top form are allowed to compete for a private audience by composing a poem or story.

The Secret Agent, Joseph Conrad

Described by writer Ford Madox Ford as "one of the best—and certainly the most significant—detective stories ever written," this novel is set in late nineteenth-century London and offers an exciting experience for students who enjoy political thrillers.

Non-Fiction Selections

Blink, by Malcom Gladwell

Gladwell advances the theory that expertise, in large part, may be seen in the kind and quality of decisions made literally in the “blink of an eye.”

A Short History of Nearly Everything, by Bill Bryson

Bryson has, quite simply, documented the advent of the universe in just under 500 pages, charting the evolution of man, planet Earth, its oceans and mountains, and all the atoms holding them together. And he explores the cosmos beyond. Bryson introduces pioneering researchers into the fray, giving face to some pretty impressive (in some cases outrageous) theories of why things are the way they are.

Ecological Intelligence, by Ian McCallum

Ecological Intelligence defines a new way of thinking about the unprecedented environmental pressures of our day. McCallum offers a compelling argument that we must think differently about ourselves and the earth if we are to take seriously the survival of wilderness areas, wild animals, and the human race. Ecological Intelligence explores the relationship between humans and nature from both a biological and poetic perspective.