

## English 12 Summer Reading Assignment

As you read this summer, you will be writing a double-entry journal (see sample). The double-entry journal is a way for you to be in *conversation* with the text you are reading: by responding, drawing conclusions, synthesizing ideas, making connections, asking questions (of the text and of yourself).

You will be best served if you *annotate* the text as well as responding in the journals. Your double-entry journals must be typed and are due on the first week of school, **Wednesday, August 15**.

**Choice Nonfiction Text:** see list provided

### ***The Assignment: Choice Nonfiction***

The choice nonfiction books on the list provided are written in an investigative journalism style that mirrors the style of writing you will be doing in your major research project called the I-Search.

In order to begin thinking about this style of writing, you will complete a double-entry journal for the book you choose from the list.

***You will have 6 journal entries (quotation and response):***

- *Find two examples of personal experiences the writer recounts.* Your reply/response: Why is this effective? Why does the writer include this story/experience? Other?
- *Find two examples of how the writer uses facts or data to support an argument, to illustrate, or to explain.* Your reply/response: How does the writer synthesize the information (including it smoothly into the text)? Why is this effective? How does the information included advance the writer's argument or help answer the writer's question? Other?
- *Choose two quotations that interest you in some way.* Your response might make connections, reveal realizations, ask questions of the text, stretch your thinking.
- *All entries must be typed (create a chart similar to the sample below).*

<i>Into the Wild</i> —Double Entry Journal	
<b><i>Quotation from the text</i></b>	<b><i>Response to the quotation</i></b>
<p>“. . . my fascination with McCandless remained long after that issue of <i>Outside</i> was replaced on the newsstands by more current journalistic fare. I was haunted by the particulars of the boy's starvation and by vague, unsettling parallels between events in his life and those of my own. Unwilling to let McCandless go, I spent more than a year retracing the convoluted path that led to his death on the Alaska taiga, chasing down details of his peregrinations with and interests that bordered on obsession. In trying to understand McCandless, I inevitably came to reflect on other, larger subjects as well: the grip wilderness has on the American imagination, the allure high-risk activities hold for young men of a certain mind, the complicated, highly charged bond that exists between fathers and sons. The</p>	<p>I like this passage because it explains the motivation and process of the I-Search. Krakauer begins by describing his interest in the topic of Chris McCandless's death, how it grows from a question he was asking for a magazine article, but then is a question he can't let go—or that won't let go of him. Krakauer notices the interconnections between the questions he's asking and his own life, "haunted" by the death and the "unsettling parallels" between their lives. He briefly describes the process of his search, and the book itself takes on the form of a series of questions. Krakauer calls the book a "meandering inquiry," (winding and turning), because it follows his interest in Chris McCandless's death, and ends up exploring questions well beyond that specific experience: questions about wilderness and the dangerous choices young men sometimes make. This</p>

result of this meandering inquiry is the book now before you” (Author’s Note).

The trip was to be an odyssey in the fullest sense of the word, an epic journey that would change everything. . . . At long last he was unencumbered, emancipated from the stifling world of his parents and peers, a world of abstraction and security and material excess, a world in which he felt grievously cut off from the raw throb of existence. . . . He intended to invent an utterly new life for himself, one in which he would be free to wallow in unfiltered experience. To symbolize the complete severance from his previous life, he even adopted a new name. No longer would he answer to Chris McCandless; he was now Alexander Supertramp, master of his own destiny (22-23)

Author’s Note establishes some of the topics the book will explore, even as it considers what actually happened to Chris McCandless. It also captures the essence of the I-Search Question Proposal: why did Krakauer write this book? He wanted to know what happened to McCandless, but he also seemed to understand that McCandless's death was about something more.

This description of McCandless’s plans includes a reference to an odyssey, evoking an allusion to the Greek epic poem of that title, where Odysseus sets out on an adventure, far from home. It also captures McCandless's character--to want to escape the perceived materialism of his life (and contemporary society) in order to experience "the raw throb" and to "wallow in unfiltered experience." It sounds a little melodramatic. Finally, we see that McCandless desires to disappear and recreate himself, part of the American Myth that is described by Wallace Stegner in the epigraph for this chapter: "being footloose has always exhilarated us. It is associated in our minds with escape from history and oppression and law and irksome obligations, with absolute freedom. . ." I’m reminded of Jay Gatsby, trying to recreate himself—and becoming a symbol for this very notion of “escape” described by Stegner and lived out by Chris McCandless.

**2018-2019 English 12 Summer Reading List**

Students will choose ONE book from the list below. See the attached assignment.

Please note – all book descriptions from Amazon.com.

Alexander, Stephen	<i>The Jazz of Physics</i>	A spectacular musical and scientific journey from the Bronx to the cosmic horizon that reveals the astonishing links between jazz, science, Einstein, and Coltrane.
Bryson, Bill	<i>A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail</i>	Through his experiences of hiking the Appalachian Trail, Bill Bryson introduces us to the history and ecology of the trail and to some of the other hardy (or just foolhardy) folks he meets along the way—and a couple of bears. Already a classic, <i>A Walk in the Woods</i> will make you long for the great outdoors (or at least a comfortable chair to sit and read in).
Cain, Susan	<i>Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking</i>	In <i>Quiet</i> , Susan Cain argues that we dramatically undervalue introverts and shows how much we lose in doing so.

Desmond, Matthew	<i>Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City</i>	Even in the most desolate areas of American cities, evictions used to be rare. But today, most poor renting families are spending more than half of their income on housing, and eviction has become ordinary, especially for single mothers. In vivid, intimate prose, Desmond provides a ground-level view of one of the most urgent issues facing America today
Edge, John T.	<i>The Potlikker Papers: A Food History of the Modern South</i>	Beginning with the pivotal role cooks and waiters played in the civil rights movement, noted authority John T. Edge narrates the South's journey from a hive of racism to a hotbed of American immigration. He shows why working-class Southern food has become a vital driver of contemporary American cuisine.
Ehrenrich, Barbara	<i>Nickel and Dimed</i>	Ehrenrich goes "undercover" as an unskilled worker to reveal the dark side of American prosperity.
Fink, Sheri	<i>Five Days at Memorial: Live and Death in a Storm-Ravaged Hospital</i>	In the tradition of the best investigative journalism, physician and reporter Sheri Fink reconstructs 5 days at Memorial Medical Center and draws the reader into the lives of those who struggled mightily to survive and maintain life amid chaos after Katrina struck.
Jamison, Leslie	<i>The Recovering: Intoxication and its Aftermath</i>	With its deeply personal and seamless blend of memoir, cultural history, literary criticism, and reportage, <i>The Recovering</i> turns our understanding of the traditional addiction narrative on its head, demonstrating that the story of recovery can be every bit as electrifying as the train wreck itself.
Le Duff, Charlie	<i>Detroit: An American Autopsy</i>	Once the vanguard of America's machine age—mass-production, blue-collar jobs, and automobiles—Detroit is now America's capital for unemployment, illiteracy, dropouts, and foreclosures. With the righteous indignation only a native son possesses, LeDuff sets out to uncover what destroyed his city.
Louv, Michael	<i>The Last Child in the Woods</i>	Richard Louv brings together cutting-edge studies that point to direct exposure to nature as essential for a child's healthy physical and emotional development [ and explores] the growing body of evidence linking the lack of nature in children's lives and the rise in obesity, attention disorders, and depression.
Preston, Richard	<i>The Hot Zone: The Terrifying True Story of the Origins of the Ebola Virus</i>	The landmark account of the first emergence of the Ebola virus. A highly infectious, deadly virus from the central African rain forest suddenly appears in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. There is no cure. In a few days 90 percent of its victims are dead. Sometimes the truth really is scarier than fiction.
Pollan, Michael	<i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i>	What should we have for dinner? Michael Pollan's exploration of our food choices, demonstrates that how we answer this question may determine not only our health but our survival as a species.
	<i>The Botany of Desire</i>	Weaving fascinating anecdotes and accessible science into gorgeous prose, Pollan takes us on an absorbing journey that will change the way we think about our place in nature.
Orleans, Susan	<i>The Orchid Thief</i>	Determined to clone an endangered flower—the rare ghost orchid <i>Polyrrhiza lindenii</i> —a deeply eccentric and oddly attractive man named John Laroche leads Orlean on an unforgettable tour of America's strange flower-selling subculture, through Florida's swamps

		and beyond, along with the Seminoles who help him and the forces of justice who fight him.
Reece, Erik	<i>An American Gospel: On Family, History, and the Kingdom of God</i>	Inspired by the Jefferson Bible, Reece undertook what would become a spiritual and literary quest to identify an "American gospel" coursing through the work of both great and forgotten American geniuses, from William Byrd to Walt Whitman to William James.
	<i>Lost Mountain: A Year in the Vanishing Wilderness: Radical Strip Mining and the Devastation of Appalachia</i>	A new form of strip mining has caused a state of emergency for the Appalachian wilderness and the communities that depend on it—a crisis compounded by issues of government neglect, corporate hubris, and class conflict. In this powerful call to arms, Erik Reece chronicles the year he spent witnessing the systematic decimation of a single mountain and offers a defense of a national treasure threatened with extinction.
	<i>Utopia Drive: A Road Trip Through America's Most Radical Idea</i>	Reece couldn't ignore his conviction that, in fact, the good ol' USA was in the midst of great social, environmental, and political crises—that for the first time in our history, we were being swept into a future that had no future. Where did we—here, in the land of Jeffersonian optimism and better tomorrows—go wrong?
Roach, Mary	<i>Grunt: The Curious Science of Humans at War</i>	<i>Grunt</i> tackles the science behind some of a soldier's most challenging adversaries—panic, exhaustion, heat, noise—and introduces us to the scientists who seek to conquer them.
	<i>Gulp: Adventures on the Alimentary Canal</i>	Why is crunchy food so appealing? Why is it so hard to find words for flavors and smells? Why doesn't the stomach digest itself? How much can you eat before your stomach bursts? Can constipation kill you? America's funniest science writer takes us down the hatch on an unforgettable tour.
	<i>Packing for Mars: The Curious Science of Life in the Void</i>	From the space shuttle training toilet to a crash test of NASA's new space capsule (cadaver filling in for astronaut), Roach takes us on a surreally entertaining trip into the science of life in space and space on Earth.
	<i>Spook: Science Tackles the Afterlife</i>	Mary Roach brings her tireless curiosity to bear on an array of contemporary and historical soul-searchers: scientists, schemers, engineers, mediums, all trying to prove (or disprove) that life goes on after we die.
	<i>Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers</i>	<i>Stiff</i> is an oddly compelling, often hilarious exploration of the strange lives of our bodies postmortem. For two thousand years, cadavers—some willingly, some unwittingly—have been involved in science's boldest strides and weirdest undertakings.
Robbins, Alexandra	<i>Pledged: The Secret Life of Sorority Girls</i>	Robbins, an investigative journalist, went undercover as a sorority sister; her expose is a breathtaking narrative about fraternities and sororities exposing what really goes on behind the facades of some of these Greek organizations.
Rovelli, Carlo	<i>Seven Brief Lessons on Physics</i>	This playful, entertaining, and mind-bending introduction to modern physics briskly explains Einstein's general relativity, quantum mechanics, elementary particles, gravity, black holes, the complex architecture of the universe, and the role humans play in this weird and wonderful world. Carlo Rovelli, a renowned theoretical physicist, is a delightfully poetic and philosophical scientific guide.

Sacks, Oliver	<i>Hallucinations</i>	Drawing on his own experiences, a wealth of clinical cases from among his patients, and famous historical examples ranging from Dostoevsky to Lewis Carroll, the legendary neurologist Oliver Sacks investigates the mystery of hallucinations: what they say about the working of our brains, how they have influenced our folklore and culture, and why the potential for hallucination is present in us all.
Tyson, Timothy B.	<i>The Blood of Emmet Till</i>	This extraordinary <i>New York Times</i> bestseller reexamines a pivotal event of the civil rights movement—the 1955 lynching of Emmett Till—“and demands that we do the one vital thing we aren’t often enough asked to do with history: learn from it” ( <i>The Atlantic</i> ).
Walker, Matthew	<i>Why We Sleep</i>	The first sleep book by a leading scientific expert—the Director of UC Berkeley’s Sleep and Neuroimaging Lab—reveals his groundbreaking exploration of sleep, explaining how we can harness its transformative power to change our lives for the better.
Wicker, Christine	<i>Lily Dale: True story of a Town that Talks to the Dead</i>	Reporter Christine Wicker comes to the world’s oldest and largest Spiritualist community, determined to understand the secret forces -- human or otherwise -- that keep Lily Dale, NY alive. She follows three visitors: a newly bereaved widow; a mother whose son killed himself; and a beautiful, happily married wife whose first visit to Lily Dale brings an ominous warning from a Spiritualist medium.
Wilson, Bee	<i>Consider the Fork</i>	In <i>Consider the Fork</i> , award-winning food writer Bee Wilson takes readers on a wonderful and witty tour of the evolution of cooking around the world, revealing the hidden history of objects we often take for granted. Technology in the kitchen does not just mean the Pacojets and sous-vide machines of the modern kitchen, but also the humbler tools of everyday cooking and eating: a wooden spoon and a skillet, chopsticks and forks.
Zimmer, Carl	<i>Parasite Rex</i>	In <i>Parasite Rex</i> , Carl Zimmer takes readers on a fantastic voyage into the secret universe of these extraordinary life-forms—which are not only among the most highly evolved on Earth, but make up the majority of life’s diversity. Traveling from the steamy jungles of Costa Rica to the parasite-riddled war zone of southern Sudan, Zimmer introduces an array of amazing creatures that invade their hosts, prey on them from within, and control their behavior.