

NAHS Summer Reading Lists 2026-27: OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENT

9th and 10th Grades: Choose one of the following books.

1. *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
2. *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner
3. *Call of the Wild* by Jack London
4. *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett
5. *Divergent* by Veronica Roth
6. *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green
7. *The Hobbit* by J.R.R Tolkien
8. *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe
9. *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
10. *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck
11. *Bleachers* by John Grisham
12. *Life of Pi* - Yann Martel
14. *My Dog Skip* Willie Morris
15. *The Hate U Give* Angie Thomas
16. *Long Way Down* Jason Reynolds
17. *Legend* Marie Lu

11th and 12th Grades: Choose one of the following books.

1. *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith
2. *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini
3. *A Separate Peace* John Knowles
4. *The Secret Life of Bees* Sue Monk Kidd
5. *Go Set a Watchman* by Harper Lee
6. *A Time to Kill* John Grisham
7. *The Firm* John Grisham

8. *Natchez Burning* Greg Iles
9. *The Ghosts of Medgar Evers* Willie Morris
10. *Crossroad Blues* Ace Atkins
11. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* Zora Neale Hurston
12. *The Jungle* Upton Sinclair
13. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot
14. *Hidden Figures* Margot Lee Shetterly
15. *We Were Liars* E. Lockhart
16. *Educated* Tara Westover
17. *Defending Jacob* William Landay

Assignment for Summer Reading Novel 2026-27

Dialectical Journal

Directions: Assignment is due on the second day of class. Choose one novel from the reading list for the grade you will enter in the Fall of 2026. As you read the novel, be an active reader--mark, highlight, or make notes as you see fit so that you may more easily find specific passages. You will also complete a dialectical journal for the book as follows:

1. Create a chart like the sample below.
2. Complete the Dialectical Journal chart for your selected novel.
3. In the first column, copy quotes from the novel that stand out to you and include the page number for each quote.
4. In the second column, write an explanation of why you chose this particular quote. Your explanation may be a statement, but you may also include questions that the quote raised for you. You can explain a connection to the text from your life or something else you've read. What do you think the author was thinking when they wrote that quote? What does it make you think of?
5. You should have a minimum of 20 entries; these should cover the

entirety of the book.

Student Name:

Grade:

Novel Title:

Dialectical Journal

QUOTE & PAGE NUMBER	RESPOND, ANALYZE, AND EVALUATE (Why do you find this quote interesting or important?)
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“The snow was like a carpet, very gentle, very warm” (83).

(simile)

“At last, the morning star appeared in the gray sky. A trail of indeterminate light showed on the horizon. We were exhausted. We were without strength, without illusions” (92)

I can picture the men standing in the concentration camp, watching the snow blanket the ground. The snow-covered ground is smooth and soft. Wiesel describes the snow as “gentle” and “warm.” This comparison is not what one would expect. Standing barefoot in the snow would be very painful and cold. So why does he say warm? Perhaps his feet are frozen and numb to the pain. Maybe the snow provides insulation like a blanket. This comparison creates a sense of peace. It is as if he is at home again, warm and safe.

As the prisoners complete their death march from Buna, I am reminded of a camping trip my dad and I took last summer. We hiked for miles only to then have to pitch our tent, light a fire, and cook supper. It was extremely difficult work, and I can’t imagine how the prisoners in the book felt since they had little access to food and water and still had to run for miles. What illusions does the author speak of? Is his lack of strength related to seeing the truth? Or is he so weak that his faith is an illusion? My camping trip brought me closer to faith, but Elie’s death march separates him from the devoted child he once was.