

Grade 9 English Summer Reading

Dear Carver Students & Parents:

Students entering the 9th grade will be expected to read the following:

- a. **9th grade CP:** one book from the choice list
- b. **9th Honors:** one book from the choice list and *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*

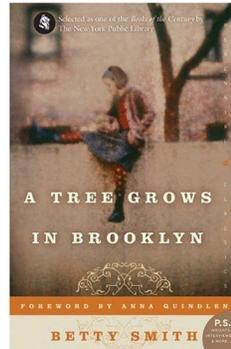
All of the following titles have to do with the topic of CULTURAL DIFFERENCES, a broad theme common to each of the 9th grade readings this year.

Upon your return to school in the fall, be ready to discuss and write about the following:

Essential Question

How can our differences shape, impact, or influence our perceptions of the world?

9th Grade Honors

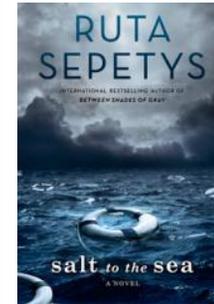


A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

The beloved American classic about a young girl's coming-of-age at the turn of the century, Betty Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* is a poignant and moving tale filled with compassion and cruelty, laughter and heartache, crowded with life and people and incident. The story of young, sensitive, and idealistic Francie Nolan and her bittersweet formative years in the slums of Williamsburg has enchanted and inspired millions of readers for more than sixty years. By turns overwhelming, sublime, heartbreaking, and uplifting, the daily experiences of the unforgettable Nolans are raw with honesty and tenderly threaded with family connectedness -- in a work of literary art that brilliantly captures a unique time and place as well as incredibly rich moments of universal experience. *from amazon.com*

Here is a link for a review of this book: [REVIEW](#)

Choice List for all 9th Graders



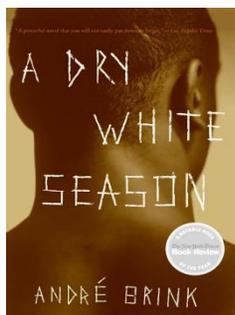
Salt to the Sea

In 1945, World War II is drawing to a close in East Prussia, and thousands of refugees are on a desperate trek toward freedom, almost all of them with something to hide. Among them are Joana, Emilia, and Florian, whose paths converge en route to the ship that promises salvation, the Wilhelm Gustloff. Forced by circumstance to unite, the three find their strength, courage, and trust in each other tested with each step closer to safety. Just when it seems freedom is within their grasp, tragedy strikes. Not country nor culture nor status matters as all 10,000 people aboard must fight for the same thing: survival.

As she did in *Between Shades of Gray*, Ruta Sepetys unearths a shockingly little-known casualty of a gruesome war and proves that humanity can prevail, even in the darkest of hours. *from amazon.com*

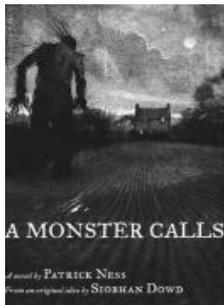
Here is a link for a review of this book: [REVIEW](#)

Summer Choice list for Grade 9 cont.



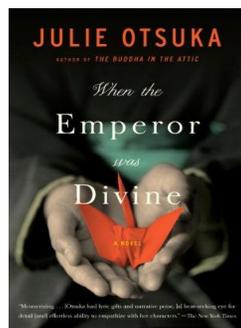
A Dry, White Season

As startling and powerful as when first published more than two decades ago, André Brink's classic novel, *A Dry White Season*, is an unflinching and unforgettable look at racial intolerance, the human condition, and the heavy price of morality. Ben Du Toit is a white schoolteacher in suburban Johannesburg in a dark time of intolerance and state-sanctioned apartheid. A simple, apolitical man, he believes in the essential fairness of the South African government and its policies—until the sudden arrest and subsequent "suicide" of a black janitor from Du Toit's school. Haunted by new questions and desperate to believe that the man's death was a tragic accident, Du Toit undertakes an investigation into the terrible affair—a quest for the truth that will have devastating consequences for the teacher and his family, as it draws him into a lethal morass of lies, corruption, and murder. Here is a link for a review of this book: [REVIEW](#)



A Monster Calls

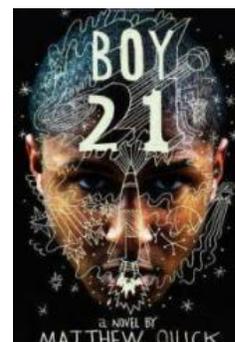
At seven minutes past midnight, thirteen-year-old Conor wakes to find a monster outside his bedroom window. But it isn't the monster Conor's been expecting-- he's been expecting the one from his nightmare, the nightmare he's had nearly every night since his mother started her treatments. The monster in his backyard is different. It's ancient. And wild. And it wants something from Conor. Something terrible and dangerous. It wants the truth. From the final idea of award-winning author Siobhan Dowd-- whose premature death from cancer prevented her from writing it herself-- Patrick Ness has spun a haunting and darkly funny novel of mischief, loss, and monsters both real and imagined. *from amazon.com* Here is a link for a review of this book: [REVIEW](#)



When the Emperor Was Divine

On a sunny day in Berkeley, California, in 1942, a woman sees a sign in a post office window, returns to her home, and matter-of-factly begins to pack her family's possessions. Like thousands of other Japanese Americans they have been reclassified, virtually overnight, as enemy aliens and are about to be uprooted from their home and sent to a dusty internment camp in the Utah desert. In this lean and devastatingly evocative first novel, Julie Otsuka tells their story from five flawlessly realized points of view and conveys the exact emotional texture of

their experience: the thin-walled barracks and barbed-wire fences, the omnipresent fear and loneliness, the unheralded feats of heroism. *When the Emperor Was Divine* is a work of enormous power that makes a shameful episode of our history as immediate as today's headlines. Here is a link for a review of this book: [REVIEW](#)



Boy 21

Basketball has always been an escape for Finley. He lives in broken-down Belmont, a town ruled by the Irish mob, drugs, violence, and racially charged rivalries. At home, his dad works nights, and Finley is left to take care of his disabled grandfather alone. He's always dreamed of getting out someday, but until he can, putting on that number 21 jersey makes everything seem okay. Russ has just moved to the neighborhood, and the life of this teen basketball phenom has been turned upside down by tragedy. Cut off from everyone he knows, he won't pick up a basketball, but answers only to the name Boy21 - taken from his former jersey number. As their final year of high school brings these two boys together, a unique friendship may turn out to be the answer they both need. *from amazon.com* Here is a link for a review of this book: [REVIEW](#)