

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
STOUGHTON HIGH SCHOOL
REQUIRED SUMMER READING LIST GRADE 10 HONORS

A Separate Peace – John Knowles
To Kill A Mockingbird – Harper Lee
The Secret Life of Bees– Sue Monk Kidd
Arms and the Man – George Bernard Shaw
The Elements of Style – William Strunk and E.B.White

Study Guide Questions: You will need notes on each text to help you prepare for a test on these works in September. These questions for each selection should help you focus on important ideas.

A Separate Peace: What is friendship? Who is the true friend? How might the tree suggest the symbolic tree of Eden? Consider the theme: “War occurs not only between nations but between individuals, even friends, and a blame can be traced to a lack of understanding, an ignorance of the human heart.”

To Kill A Mockingbird: What lessons did his children learn from the trial? Consider: “If there’s just one kind of folks, why can’t they get along with each other? Scout, I’m beginning to understand why Boo Radley’s stayed shut up in his house all the time...it’s because he wants to stay inside.” What does this statement mean?

The Secret Life of Bees: Consider the following questions: How is family represented in this novel? (hint: try to look beyond the “traditional” ideas of family) What happens to a daughter when she discovers her mother once abandoned her? Is Lily right—would people generally rather die than forgive? Was it harder for Lily to forgive her mother or herself? Why is it important that women come together? What did you think of the "Calendar Sisters" and the Daughters of Mary? How did being in the company of this circle of females transform Lily? How might all of this connect to the books many references to bees?

Arms and the Man: A romantic comedy is a play which has a strong love interest and presents life as people would like it to be, not as life actually is. What reasons can you give for Shaw’s creating such a typical romantic comedy to satirize typical romantic ideas? What are these ideas? Could Shaw have satirized them as effectively in any other kind of play? Why did Shaw call this play an anti-romantic comedy?

The Elements of Style: Review the rules of usage. Take notes on the principles of composition found in Chapter 2. Skim Chapters 3 and 4. Take notes and review an “approach to Style” in Chapter 5.