

May, 2019

Dear Parents,

As our students ready themselves for summer, we are happy to share the following lists of books assigned for them to enjoy over Summer Break. It is a valued characteristic among our student body to be well-read. Moreover, regular contact with well-composed text makes us better readers, writers, and speakers. We also enjoy discussing books we have read as a community. *We would like to invite all parents to share in the experience this year by reading one of the Orientation Books and attending the discussion to be held at school on Thursday, August 29 (time TBD).* At the very least, we hope you will participate in helping your student to choose from the selections described on the attached list.

Each student will read a total of **FOUR (4)** books this summer. First, students will read one of our “Orientation Book” options. Brief assignments that students will need to complete about these books will be distributed once students make their selections. These assignments will also be available on the Parent Portal of the Camelot website. **Parents please read the descriptions attached and the italicized notes to participate in your student’s selection.** Students should arrive at school on the **first day of school, August 28**, with their completed orientation book assignment.

**TWO** of the other assigned Summer Reading books will require students to take an Accelerated Reader (AR) test at school. Your student will need to make a few trips to Camelot during the summer to complete these tests. Each AR test is administered through an assigned computer at Camelot. Camelot will be open during the summer, except from June 24 - July 5 when our offices and programming are closed for vacation. Students may come to take tests during all other weeks at any time between 8 AM and 5 PM. There is no appointment needed. If your student does not meet the mastery standard of 80%, he or she is expected to review the book and take the test again on another day. Please inform the office if your student did not show mastery on a test so we can reset the account. A student must wait one day before retrying a test. AR test grades do not factor into a student’s Language Arts course grade. Their objective is to develop and maintain the habit of reading closely and to encourage an increased exposure to literature. **The deadline for completing all Summer AR tests is Friday, August 23rd at 5pm.**

The last book that Camelot students will read this summer should be related to the student’s 2019-20 Academic Fair topic. English teachers will approve both the topics and the books before the end of this school year. Students do not have to take an AR test on this book, but should **arrive at school on the first day of regular classes, September 3, with 15 research notecards containing notes and/or quotes from the book.**

Inability to locate any one of the assigned books will not be an acceptable excuse for not completing the summer reading assignments. Please let us know early in the summer if you need assistance. Students who do not complete the assignments will need to attend after school Study Hall starting on September 3 until the assignment is complete. To indicate that you have read and understood this information, please sign the second page of this form and return by Wednesday, May 22. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,  
Camelot’s Language Arts Teaching Team

## Upper School Book List

### **ORIENTATION BOOKS - Choose ONE of the following to discuss at Orientation.**

**Students will receive the accompanying assignment once they select a book.**

- ❑ **Overstory by Richard Powers** - This 2019 Pulitzer Prize winning narrative, woven from what seem at first to be unrelated short-story vignettes laced with illuminating arboreal wisdom about roots, seeds and leaves, follows several characters as they are summoned in various ways to participate in a violent stand to save the forests. *Contains some violence and a few references to sexual activity.*
- ❑ **Deep Run Roots by Vivian Howard** - This autobiographical cookbook weaves anecdotes from the life of Vivian Howard, award-winning co-creator of the PBS series *A Chef's Life* and owner of the acclaimed *Chef and Farmer* restaurant in Kinston, NC, with a large selection of her delicious recipes. Students are asked to read the narrative beginnings of each chapter, which are organized by ingredient. The assessment for this book will involve cooking something from the book and writing about the experience.
- ❑ **Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi**: This award-winning book follows the parallel paths of sisters from Ghana, one of whom is sold into slavery and one marries a British slaver. The book traces their descendants through eight generations: from the Gold Coast to the plantations of Mississippi, from the American Civil War to Jazz Age Harlem, even into modern day. This extraordinary novel illuminates slavery's legacy and impact on generations. *Parents and students should know that while not gratuitous, this book contains scenes of physical and sexual abuse, sexual activity, and drug use.* (review adapted from Amazon)
- ❑ **Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari** - This book draws on many disciplines to tackle questions like how did our species come to dominate in the animal kingdom? Why did our foraging ancestors come together to create cities and kingdoms? How did we come to believe in gods, nations, and human rights? How did we start to trust money, books and laws? Have we become happier as history has unfolded? *Parents and students should be aware that this book situates its explanation of human history within a framework provided by evolutionary biology and challenges some religious, political, and philosophical beliefs.* (review adapted from Goodreads)
- ❑ **Travels with Charley by John Steinbeck**: With Charley, his French poodle, Steinbeck drove the interstates and the country roads, dined with truckers, encountered bears at Yellowstone and old friends in San Francisco. In this non-fiction book recounting Steinbeck's own reflections on travel, he muses about the American character, racial hostility, the particular form of American loneliness he finds almost everywhere, and the unexpected kindness of strangers. (review adaptes from Amazon)

**In addition to the Orientation Book, all Upper School Regular English students will read**

- ❑ **A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman**
- ❑ **1 Academic Fair book**
- ❑ **1 choice book that can be found in the AR system. Please verify eligibility here: <https://www.arbookfind.com/>**

**In addition to the Orientation Book, all Upper School Honors and AP English students will read**

- ❑ **East of Eden by John Steinbeck**
- ❑ **1 Academic Fair book**
- ❑ **1 choice book that can be found in the AR system. Please verify eligibility here: <https://www.arbookfind.com/>**

Camelot Summer Reading SUMMARY OF DUE DATES:

**Wednesday, May 22:**

- Book selection and signatures

**Friday August 23 at 5pm:**

- 2 AR Tests passed with an 80% or higher

**Wednesday, August 28:**

- Orientation book read and mini-assignment completed - see Parent Portal of Camelot Website

**Tuesday, September 3:**

- 15 notecards on a book related to Academic Fair topic

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**Please sign that you have received and read the summer reading letter and directions and understand the expectations.**

Please put a check next to the Orientation Book you plan to read. You are welcome to change your mind by letting Ms. Amy know at [amy@camelotacademy.org](mailto:amy@camelotacademy.org), but we want a general idea of how many will do what and need to give you the appropriate assignment.

See descriptions on attached letter.

- ☐ Overstory by Richard Powers
- ☐ Deep Run Roots by Vivian Howard
- ☐ Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi
- ☐ Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari
- ☐ Travels with Charley by John Steinbeck

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents, please sign that Parents, please sign that

- ☐ You have read the summer reading letter and expectations
- ☐ You approve your student reading the chosen book based on the description attached, including italicized notes.

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_