

SUMMER READING FOR MRS. SHUMAN'S 2013-14 CLASSES

UPDATED JUNE 5, 2013

DEAR FAMILIES,

Whether you are looking for material to pass the time this summer, or wanting to augment the literature part of a class, you may find these lists helpful. I have enjoyed putting them together. There is a balance of “need to know” materials, such as plays by Shakespeare, and also contemporary, adventure, biography, and Christian literature. Note that there are points assigned to each piece of literature so that you can add up what your goal may be. **AP required reading is done best in August; AP optional reading can be done all summer. Reading for other classes is optional and should be completed by the second day of classes in the fall.**

Here are a few points to consider:

- I have read each of the books or plays on the list. Many have been part of my family's reading in the past, and I've had a good time adding ones that I've discovered recently.
- Parents are always the chiefs of their families' education. I encourage them to peruse any books their students may read before they start, especially if they have any particular wariness about certain issues. This is not a “Christian book” list—but there are some on the list that are in that category. Books that introduce ideas other than what my family follows allow for good discussion between us. Feel free to ask me questions about books I have on the list before they are read, if you wish. **See notes after the list.**
- **Other than Shakespeare's tragedies, I've listed books that I don't believe will leave the reader in despair due to tragic turns of plot. There is redemption in each book.**
- *Till We Have Faces* has extensive notes at the end of this document, since that book is not well-known from the Lewis canon.
- If a student in CL wants to read something from the AP/BL list, please ask me before you read.
- **TO GET CREDIT: Please drop me an email and let me know when you have completed a book. We'll set up a few minutes to discuss the book by phone and I'll give you an excellent grade to start your fall semester. It's easy!**

Happy summer! Be in touch by email (shumanhw@gmail.com) or phone (404-508-8318) any time!

Margaret Shuman

CONTEMPORARY LIT & COMP

All are optional, for a total extra credit grade up to 300 points. See descriptions following.

Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton (100 pts)
Daughters of Islam by Miriam Adeney (100 pts)
Endurance by Alfred Lansing (100 pts)
Extraordinary, Ordinary People by Condoleezza Rice (100 pts)
Faithful Women and Their Extraordinary God by Noël Piper (100 pts)
Gifted Hands by Ben Carson and Cecil Murphy (100 pts)
It's a Jungle Out There, Life Is a Jungle, and Jungle Calls by Ron Snell (200 pts for all combined)
Midsummer Night's Dream, Julius Caesar, Taming of the Shrew by Shakespeare* (100 pts each)
one thousand gifts by Ann Voskamp
Oswald Chambers: Abandoned to God by David Macasland (100 pts)
Outcasts United by Warren St. John (100 pts)
Outliers by Malcolm Gladwell (100 pts)
Rebel with a Cause by Franklin Graham (100 pts)
The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind by William Kamkwamba (100 pts)
The Places in Between by Rory Stewart (100 pts)
The Screwtape Letters by C. S. Lewis (100 pts)
There Is No Me without You by Melissa Faye Green (100 pts)
Till We Have Faces by C. S. Lewis (100 pts)

AP ENGLISH LIT & COMP AND BRITISH LIT & COMP

See descriptions following

Required for AP Lit for late summer: *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton

Optional for AP and BL: (up to 300 pts allowed)

Bend, Not Break by Ping Fu (100 pts)
Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoevsky (200 pts)
Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton (100 pts for BL)
Daughters of Islam by Miriam Adeney (100 pts)
Ecology of a Cracker Childhood by Janisse Ray (100 pts)
Endurance by Alfred Lansing (100 pts)
Extraordinary, Ordinary People by Condoleezza Rice (100 pts)
Faithful Women and Their Extraordinary God by Noël Piper (100 pts)
Gifted Hands by Ben Carson and Cecil Murphy (100 pts)
one thousand gifts by Ann Voskamp (100 pts)
Oswald Chambers: Abandoned to God by David Macasland (100 pts)
Othello, Julius Caesar, Midsummer Night's Dream, Taming of the Shrew by Shakespeare (100 pts per play)
Outcasts United by Warren St. John (100 pts)
Outliers by Malcolm Gladwell (100 pts)
Rebel with a Cause by Franklin Graham (100 pts)
The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind by William Kamkwamba (100 pts)
The Places in Between by Rory Stewart (100 pts)

The Screwtape Letters by C. S. Lewis (100 pts)

There Is No Me without You by Melissa Faye Green (100 pts)

Till We Have Faces by C. S. Lewis (100 pts)

**For Shakespeare, try a version with footnotes and summaries for extra help! Consider editions in the New Folger Library, published by Washington Square Press. Do not simply read a summary of the plot—read the actual play. You may listen to an audio recording as you read.*

MRS. SHUMAN'S NOTES ON LISTED BOOKS

Bend, Not Break—Ping Fu grew up during the Cultural Revolution in China. I didn't know anything about this time period before reading the book, but was really caught up in her story, which is rather like a dystopia at first (think *The Giver* or *1984*, but her story is true!). Today Ms. Fu leads a 3-D printing corporation she began here in the US, with a life in serious contrast to her incredible past growing up being indoctrinated into the Revolution's crazy world. This book came out in late 2013.

Crime and Punishment—Everyone I know who has read this book has believed it worth his time. Good theme of redemption. Try giving characters easy-to-remember nicknames to keep up with them in this Russian story—you may also find a helpful list online or in preface material that will give names and alternate names for each character. The *Wall Street Journal* counted it first in a list of crime thrillers.

Cry, the Beloved Country—This is one of my favorite books for simplicity of description as well as excellent build of characterization. Watch for biblical allusions and a theme of redemption as you build a story of South African culture during the beginnings of Apartheid.

Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges with Muslim Women—Though I have read a number of books about Middle Eastern life and perspectives, this one was particularly helpful since it challenged some of my cookie-cutter ideas of what “missions” means. I believe it helpful for Christian women wanting to understand and communicate with Muslim neighbors.

Ecology of a Cracker Childhood—Georgia writer Janisse Ray tells her own story of growing up in South GA, weaving together the intricate ecology of the long-gone, long-leaf pine forest with her family ecology that saw great hope as well as the struggles of mental illness. Like Ann Voskamp, Janisse has a narrative style that catches one off guard with her brilliant lists and diction. She also struggles with her faith in God and her hope for a world that will appreciate the natural gifts that can be squandered by reckless enterprise. A fascinating story that my AP Lang class has enjoyed.

Endurance—This is the story of Ernest Shackelton's survival as his trip across Antarctica goes against his plan. An eventful tale of 28 men and their various motivations to stay alive, and a beautiful account of a cold wasteland. Lansing's most famous book has scenes you will not forget. A book the Shumans read out loud with each other.

Extraordinary, Ordinary People—Former Secretary of State and first black woman to hold that office, Condoleezza Rice tells her story about growing up in Birmingham, Alabama, during the Civil Rights era. High school students would appreciate her inside looks into political office, attending and teaching at Stanford University, and foreign policy.

Faithful Women and Their Extraordinary God—Five rather short but well-written bios of historic and contemporary women from various cultures: Sarah Edwards, Lillias Trotter, Gladys Aylward, Esther

Ahn Kim, and Helen Roseveare. My husband couldn't help reading the last chapter out loud. The author tells their stories and then gives her own brief take-aways.

Gifted Hands—Once on everyone's reading list, this book belongs on ours. Last summer I reread it in two days because it was so interesting, and I loved the details of this neurosurgeon's life. Even though I'm queasy and uneducated about medical procedures, the back chapters' explanations of surgeries are understandable and exciting. Good book for family reading.

one thousand gifts—Hard to find good things to think about when you are angry? Mrs. Voskamp's journal-style writing deals honestly with her disappointments with God, even the death of her sister. Her beautiful writing style includes original words (Gerard Manley Hopkins comes to mind) and juxtaposed tones as she finds joy as a young Christian wife and mother on a Canadian farm.

Oswald Chambers' biography—A real surprise for me! I expected an elder-statesman type of man, but found a young man talented in the arts, who focused his life and went for what was important to him in his search for truth. Brings new energy to the devotions my family often reads.

Outcasts United—How do you coach a soccer team that speaks many languages, and has no place to practice? This is the readable story of a town, a group of refugees, and a soccer coach who gave up her family's expectations in order to make a difference in the lives of some kids in Clarkston, GA. Required reading for freshmen at GA State and GA Tech a few years ago.

Outliers—One out of a best-selling series of Gladwell books; this one looks at what creates success based on empirical data and observation. You'll be surprised at the interesting examples, from hockey stars to plane crashes to feuding families in Kentucky and lawyers in Manhattan. Quite readable—we read it on a family trip.

Rebel with a Cause—Franklin Graham's very readable autobiography. It was hard for Franklin to find his own life in the shadow of a "Christian Great" such as his father, Rev. Billy Graham. A famous traveling father and a determined and creative mom make for quite a set of boundaries for a young man too rebellious for his own safety! Graham's story continues through the beginnings of Samaritan's Purse. Hard not to share some of this with your family . . .

Ron Snell's "jungle trilogy"—Nonfiction stories my family has read out loud three times now, laughing sometimes while amazed at what two brothers learn in their rainforest life and trips back to the States. This is an autobiographical account of a missionary kid and his brother growing up in Peru with a "risk-everything," ex-military father and a careful mom. These are fast-moving adventures that continue through Ron's college days in Chicago ("snakes in the dorm" and other great stories).

Shakespeare's plays—Grab some friends and read these aloud? Take your time and use a Folger edition if possible to have summaries and footnotes available. Watch for quotable quotes and timeless themes. Listen along with an audio version if you wish.

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind—You will like this book if you like TED talks and STEM classes, if you are interested in African life today (this takes place in Malawi), or you just like an amazing story about a student your age. The son of Christian parents, William is like my step-son Kris; he always has bolts and washers and bits of this and that in his pockets, and loves to see how things work. How can someone like this change a whole village, and maybe a whole country?

The Places in Between—Stewart’s nonfiction account of a journalist’s walk across Afghanistan without the protection of his Western identity. Even if you have read only a little about the Middle East, this will inform and intrigue you. Includes a dog story, too . . . Another book the Shumans read out loud. There is a quite small amount of “language.”

The Screwtape Letters—Take your time with this series of letters from a Satanic, fallen angel to his fledgling assistant who is charged with making a new believer fail. It’s short, but its fantastic concept of evil vs. good will leave you re-thinking what tempts Christians to fall as well as survive in a world designed by a good God.

There Is No Me without You—Nonfiction read that blends history, medical research, personal account, and biography to tell the story of an African woman’s involvement in the growing orphan crisis in Ethiopia, and what we can do about it. Author is from Decatur—very readable and personal in approach. Another book the Shumans read out loud.

NOTES ON *Till We Have Faces*:

This book may catch you by surprise, since most students know Lewis as the author of the Narnia series and various other fiction or Christian apologetic texts. *Till We Have Faces* is actually the last book that Mr. Lewis wrote before his death, and has puzzled readers who expected something different from this author who embraced Christianity wholeheartedly after first refuting the idea of the supernatural and espousing atheism for much of his early life (beliefs he found hard to keep intact after spending time with his friend J.R. Tolkien and others.) Something else often unknown about Lewis is that he is today often considered the chief expositor of Middle Ages literature, so this look into a remaking of a myth in his own perspective comes to us from an informed mind who was a master of literary criticism.

I am providing articles below that you may find very helpful in understanding *Till We Have Faces*. The first I will add to the end of this document, since the article is rather brief and provides critique straight from Lewis himself. I can forward another article upon request that gives one writer’s speculation about the “theology” of *Faces*. You may choose to read one or both of these articles before or after you read the text, or you may just decide to read *Faces* and be done with it.

One of the peculiarities of this book is its basis in Greek mythology, and you may choose to research the myth that the story is based on. I chose not to read the myth until after I had read the book, because I hate to spoil a plot! After I finished the story, guessing my way throughout as to what sense the author wanted me to get from it, I found myself wading into the original myth and into the articles I am providing, and then nodding to myself that Lewis had indeed broached a subject that many of us, especially youth, could relate to.

Is this a good story if you aren’t especially “spiritually minded”? I believe it is. The subjects of friendship and good and evil are worth wandering into in this mythic setting which is seldom used to such advantage in contemporary writing. If you like fantasy at all, or a good story of friendship, you should relate well to this book.

The following is an article on *Till We Have Faces* from
<http://www.montreat.edu/dking/lewis/TILWEHAV.htm>
 [British-isms and typos have been left in the text.]

Lewis had the idea very early; writes in his diary, September, 9 1923: "My head was very full of my old idea of a poem on my own version of the Cupid and Psyche story in which Psyche's sister would not be jealous, but unable to see anything but moors when Psyche showed her the palace. I have tried it twice before, once in couplet and once in ballad form."

It was written during 1955 and ready in typescript by beginning of February, 1956, and was originally entitled Bareface. Lewis said: "In one sense the author has worked on this book most of his life, for this re-interpretation of an old story (readers need not know which when they begin) had lived with him and pestered him to make it ever since he was an undergraduate. Suddenly, last Spring [1955], the form presented itself. All came into focus: and had drawn into it many sympathies that had found no vehicle in earlier books--for the ugly woman, the barbarous idolator, the humane sceptic, and (above all) the friends and lovers of those who have a vocation or even a faith."

Lewis's own thoughts on what the book "means": An author doesn't necessarily understand the meaning of his own story better than anyone else, so I give my account of *Till We Have Faces* simply for what it is worth. The 'levels' I am conscious of are these:

A work of (supposed) historical imagination. A guess of what it might have been like in a little barbarous state on the borders of the Hellenistic world of Greek culture, just beginning to affect it. Hence the change from the old priest (of a very normal fertility mother-goddess) to Arnorn; Stoic allegorizations of the myths standing to the original cult rather as Modernism to Christianity (but this is a parallel, not an allegory). Much that you take as allegory was intended solely as realistic detail. The wagon men are nomads from the steppes. The children made mud pies not for symbolic purposes but because children do. The Pillar Room is simply a room. The Fox is such an educated Greek slave as you might find at a barbarous court--and so on.

Psyche is an instance of the anima naturaliter Christiana making the best of the Pagan religion she is brought up in and thus being guided (but always 'under the cloud', always in terms of her own imaginations or that of her people) towards the true God. She is in some ways like Christ because every good man or woman is like Christ. What else could they be like? But of course my interest is primarily Orual.

Orual is (not a symbol) but an instance, a 'case' of human affection in its natural condition, true, tender, suffering, but in the long run tyrannically possessive and ready to turn to hatred when the beloved ceases to be its possession. What such love particularly cannot stand is to see the beloved passing into a sphere where it cannot follow. All this I hoped would stand as a mere story in its own right. But--

Of course I had always in mind its close parallel to what is probably happening at this moment in at least five families in your home town. Someone becomes a Christian, or in a family nominally Christian already, does something like becoming a missionary or entering a religious order. The others suffer a sense of outrage. What they love is being taken from them. The boy must be mad. And the conceit of him! Or: is there something in it after all? Let's hope it is only a phase! If only he had listened to his natural advisers. Oh come back, come back, be sensible, be the dear son we used to know! Now I, as a Christian, have a good deal of sympathy with those jealous, suffering, puzzled people (for they do suffer, and out of their suffering much of the bitterness against religion arises). I believe the thing is common. There is very nearly a touch of it in Luke II. 38, 'Son, why hast thou so dealt with us?' And is the reply easy for a loving heart to bear?

(letter to Clyde Kilby, February 10, 1957; in LL, 273-74).