

## Scope and Sequence for 9<sup>th</sup> Grade English School Year 2024 - 2025

Dear Student,

Welcome to 9<sup>th</sup> Grade English! This year will be an exciting one for us as we explore complex themes of human reality, investigate a variety of artistic and scientific disciplines, and polish our written and conversational English.

The main focus of our class will be on the reading, analysis, discussion, and critique of five novels. I have selected these five novels because they i) offer accessible yet diverse language, ii) provide interesting and useful perspectives, iii) tackle important and relevant topics related to the human experience, and lastly, because these award-winning novels are recognized as classics of English literature. The novels are listed below in classroom sequence. Each listing includes the book's title, author, and ISBN; the Lexile reading level of the text; a brief synopsis of the novel, and some of the major themes that are covered. Please note that while you are at liberty to purchase these novels, I will provide you with a complete .pdf for each book. And while reading all of these novels appears to be Herculean task, in truth it boils down to reading just 7 pages per day throughout the school year; even less if you do some reading on the weekends!

We will supplement our language mastery efforts with important grammatical tips and exercises from the Oxford Discover Future Series as well as from investigations, projects, and presentations in the arts and sciences.

I look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,



Bruce Marrón, MS

### The 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Novels

1. *"Bless Me, Ultima"* by Rudolfo Anaya  
ISBN: 9780446600255  
Lexile Reading Level = 840L

"Bless Me, Ultima" is a coming-of-age novel set in New Mexico during World War II. The story revolves around a young boy named Antonio Marez y Luna, who is caught between the conflicting cultural and spiritual worlds of his family.

When Ultima, a wise and mystical *curandera* (healer), comes to live with Antonio's family, she becomes his mentor and guide. Ultima's presence introduces Antonio to the world of healing, spirituality, and the ancient

traditions of his ancestors. Through her teachings, Antonio learns to navigate the complex moral landscape of good and evil, faith and doubt.

Antonio's parents have different visions for his future: his mother wants him to become a priest, while his father dreams of him becoming a *vaquero* (cowboy) like his ancestors. As Antonio witnesses various events, including death, violence, and supernatural occurrences, he grapples with his own identity and beliefs.

A central conflict in the novel is the tension between the indigenous and Catholic spiritual traditions. Antonio's experiences with Ultima challenge his understanding of religion and spirituality, leading him to form his own beliefs.

"Bless Me, Ultima" explores themes of cultural identity, spirituality, family, and the loss of innocence. Through Antonio's journey, the novel highlights the importance of understanding and integrating diverse cultural and spiritual perspectives.

## 2. *"The House on Mango Street" by Sandra Cisneros*

ISBN: 978-0679734772

Lexile Reading Level = 680L

"The House on Mango Street" is a coming-of-age novel told through a series of vignettes. The story follows Esperanza Cordero, a young Latina girl growing up in a poor, Hispanic neighborhood in Chicago. Each vignette offers a glimpse into her life, her family, her neighbors, and her dreams for the future.

Esperanza dreams of escaping her rundown neighborhood and the limitations placed on her due to her gender and socioeconomic status. Throughout the novel, she observes the struggles of the women around her and vows to break free from the cycle of poverty and oppression.

The vignettes touch on various themes, such as identity, culture, gender roles, and the immigrant experience. Esperanza's journey is marked by her desire for a better life, her encounters with prejudice and violence, and her growth into a young woman who understands the importance of self-determination and resilience.

"The House on Mango Street" is celebrated for its lyrical prose, its exploration of cultural and social issues, and its portrayal of a young girl's quest for a place to call home. The novel is both a personal and universal story of growing up and finding one's voice.

## 3. *"1984" by George Orwell (75th Anniversary)*

ISBN: 9780451524935

Lexile Reading Level = 1090L

"1984" is a dystopian novel set in a totalitarian society governed by the Party and its enigmatic leader, Big Brother. The story takes place in Airstrip One (formerly known as Great Britain), a province of the superstate Oceania. The Party exercises absolute control over every aspect of life, including thoughts, through the use of propaganda, surveillance, censorship, and brutal repression.

The protagonist, Winston Smith, works at the Ministry of Truth, where he alters historical records to fit the Party's narrative. Disillusioned with the oppressive regime, Winston secretly rebels by starting a forbidden relationship with Julia, a co-worker, and seeking the truth about the Party and Big Brother. He hopes to join a rumored resistance group known as the Brotherhood.

As Winston delves deeper into his rebellion, he is eventually caught by the Thought Police. Under the brutal interrogation and psychological manipulation of O'Brien, a high-ranking Party official, Winston is forced to betray Julia and abandon his rebellious thoughts. The novel concludes with Winston's complete submission to the Party and his love for Big Brother.

"1984" explores themes of totalitarianism, surveillance, individuality, and the manipulation of truth, serving as a powerful warning about the dangers of unchecked political power and the erosion of personal freedoms.

#### 4. *"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" by Mark Twain*

ISBN: 9780520053380

Lexile Reading Level = 980L

"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" is a classic American novel that follows the journey of a young boy named Huck Finn. Set in the pre-Civil War South along the Mississippi River, the story addresses themes of friendship, freedom, and race.

Huck, the novel's narrator, lives with the Widow Douglas, who is trying to "civilize" him. Huck's life changes dramatically when his abusive father, Pap, returns to town and kidnaps him. To escape his father's clutches, Huck fakes his own death and runs away. He meets Jim, a runaway slave, and together they embark on a journey down the Mississippi River on a raft.

As Huck and Jim travel, they encounter various characters and situations that challenge Huck's understanding of morality and society. Huck grapples with the racist attitudes of the time and his own internal conflicts about helping Jim gain his freedom. Despite the societal norms that dictate he should turn Jim in, Huck decides to protect and help him, demonstrating his moral growth and development.

Their adventures include encounters with feuding families, con men, and dangerous situations. Huck's growing friendship with Jim, his reflections on right and wrong, and his critiques of the society around him form the core of the novel.

"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" is celebrated for its vivid portrayal of life along the Mississippi River, its satirical examination of societal norms, and its exploration of themes such as freedom, friendship, and the moral dilemmas faced by individuals. The novel is often regarded as one of the greatest works of American literature.

5. *"The Joy Luck Club" by Amy Tan*

ISBN: 9780399134203

Lexile Reading Level = 930L

"The Joy Luck Club" is a novel that explores the complex relationships between Chinese-American daughters and their immigrant mothers. The story is structured as a series of interwoven vignettes, each focusing on different characters and their experiences, both in China and America.

The novel begins with Jing-Mei "June" Woo, who is asked to take her deceased mother's place at the meetings of the Joy Luck Club, a group her mother founded. The club consists of four Chinese-American families who gather to play mahjong, share stories, and support each other.

Through the stories of the mothers—Suyuan Woo, An-Mei Hsu, Lindo Jong, and Ying-Ying St. Clair—the novel delves into their pasts in China, revealing their struggles, sacrifices, and the hardships they endured before coming to America. Each mother has a unique story of loss, resilience, and hope, which shapes their identities and influences their relationships with their daughters.

The daughters—Jing-Mei Woo, Rose Hsu Jordan, Waverly Jong, and Lena St. Clair—grapple with their own challenges growing up in America, often feeling caught between their Chinese heritage and American culture. They struggle to understand their mothers' expectations and cultural values, leading to misunderstandings and conflicts.

As the daughters learn more about their mothers' pasts, they gain a deeper appreciation for their strength and sacrifices. The novel highlights themes of cultural identity, generational conflict, and the unbreakable bonds between mothers and daughters.

"The Joy Luck Club" is celebrated for its rich storytelling, emotional depth, and insightful exploration of the immigrant experience. Through its portrayal of these intertwined lives, the novel captures the complexities of family relationships and the enduring power of love and understanding.