



Walter Johnson High School

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Walter Johnson High School Summer Reading 2011

The Walter Johnson faculty encourage all students to read for pleasure over the summer. Students may choose what they like to read, select from the lists on the MCPS website located at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/readists/>, or choose from the lists posted with this letter. We would also recommend the One Maryland One Book selection for 2011, a 2007 National Book Award winner. The selection this year is *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie. It is a semi-autobiographical work of fiction that details the life of Arnold Spirit, a 14-year-old budding cartoonist living on the Spokane Indian Reservation in Washington State. One Maryland One Book was developed to bring people together to read the same book and a calendar of free public programs will be available online this summer. All students in English 9 – 12 should be prepared to participate in a literature discussion and/or write about a book they have read when we return to school in the fall. In addition, specific summer reading assignments have been posted on the WJHS website and the MCPS summer reading website for AP Language and Composition, AP Literature and Composition, APEX English 10 and APEX English 9.

Students may choose to peruse the lists or visit a local Montgomery County public library to select works that will be interesting and challenging, affording them the opportunity to discover new genres, both non-fiction and fiction, and to read simply for the pleasure of reading. Educational research confirms that reading is a core skill. A report released by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in 2007 focuses on the role of reading for pleasure in U.S. society and states that reading for pleasure correlates strongly with academic achievement. According to *Reading Today*, a publication of the International Reading Association, "Research shows that more and more of young people's reading in today's world focuses on online resources. Often, that type of reading revolves around skimming and scanning rather than the deeper reading needed to absorb a complicated text such as a novel." It is important for students to take the opportunity to attempt this deeper reading over the summer months. Reading will prepare them for all high school courses and enhance their ability to perform well on standardized tests including the SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement exams.

Students are encouraged to select books from various genres this summer including: realistic fiction, science fiction, fantasy fiction, historical fiction, action/adventure, mystery/suspense, sports, biographies/autobiographies, history, philosophy, science/technology, or political science. Choosing a variety of texts from multiple genres will broaden background knowledge and help prepare students for their academic studies. In the bigger picture, we hope to encourage students to maintain a lifelong habit of reading for pleasure.

If you have any questions regarding summer reading, please call the **Walter Johnson English department at 301-803-7184.**