**Contemporary Literature Outside Reading**[[1]](#footnote-2)

Please **DO NOT** ask to read any novel that is not on this list,

even if it is written by one of the authors listed here. We will say, “No.”

It is **VITALLY** important that you preview your choices as length and difficulty vary widely.

Due: October 21st 2010

*Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*

Born with green skin and huge teeth, like a dragon, the free-spirited Elphaba grows up to be an anti-totalitarian agitator, an animal-rights activist, a nun, then a nurse who tends the dying and, ultimately, the headstrong Wicked Witch of the West in the land of Oz.

*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*

Offers a fictional portrait of the characters, themes, and language of the Spokane Indian Reservation. The tone is melancholic; reflective

*The Road*

Cormac McCarthy sets his new novel, *The Road*, in a post-apocalyptic blight of gray skies that drizzle ash, a world in which all matter of wildlife is extinct, starvation is not only prevalent but nearly all-encompassing, and marauding bands of cannibals roam the environment with pieces of human flesh stuck between their teeth.

*\*Catch-22*

Presents the contemporary classic depicting the struggles of a United States airman attempting to survive the lunacy and depravity of a World War II airbase. The tone is darkly humorous; moving; sobering

*Grendel*

The monster Grendel expresses his isolation and loneliness in a dark and bleak northern world. The tone is suspenseful; reflective

*Fallen Angels*

Seventeen-year-old Richie Perry, just out of his Harlem high school, enlists in the Army in the summer of 1967 and spends a devastating year on active duty in Vietnam. The tone is suspenseful; thought-provoking.

*\*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*

Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother. The tone is bittersweet; moving.

*\*How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*

The four Garcia girls escape the Dominican Republic and a life of privilege in the 1960s to come to the United States and difficult adjustment. The tone is heartwarming; nostalgic; reflective.

*\*Into Thin Air*⎯non-fiction

Heroism and sacrifice triumph over foolishness, fatal error, and human frailty in this bone-chilling narrative in which the author recounts his experiences on last year's ill-fated, deadly climb. The tone is thrilling; suspenseful.

*Persepolis*⎯non-fiction

Adult/High School-Marji tells of her life in Iran from the age of 10, when the Islamic revolution of 1979 reintroduced a religious state, through the age of 14 when the Iran-Iraq war forced her parents to send her to Europe for safety. This story, told in graphic format with simple, but expressive, black-and-white illustrations, combines the normal rebelliousness of an intelligent adolescent with the horrors of war and totalitarianism.

**\* indicates that the book is available from the teacher upon request if the student is unable to secure their own copy**

1. Summaries and tone words provided from Novelist and amazon.com [↑](#footnote-ref-2)