



Spring Ahead with SpringBoard's Summer Reading Assignment

Unit 1 The American Dream

Unit Overview: This fall, our first unit, will explore a variety of American voices and define what it means to be an American. If asked to describe the essence of the Spirit of America, you would probably refer to the American Dream. First coined as a phrase in 1931, the phrase “the American Dream” characterizes the unique promise that America has offered immigrants and residents for nearly 400 years. People have come to this country for adventure, opportunity, freedom, and the chance to experience the particular qualities of the American landscape. (SB)

Essential Questions: What is the “American Dream?” What does it involve? Is the American Dream “one size fits all?” or does every American have his or her own dream? How has “the American Dream” become known around the world? How does this dream differ for different groups and individuals? How do people achieve “the American Dream” in their lifetime? What are some challenges and obstacles to achieving the dream? What has been done to make the dream more accessible to everyone? What more needs to be done to make the dream more accessible to everyone? What does it take to achieve the dream? Who determines one’s success in the dream? Can the dream be realized today, or is it simply a “dream”?

Summer Read Task:

Select either a fictional or a non-fictional book from the attached list. You will need to purchase, download or borrow a copy from the library. (Purchased copies may be donated for extra credit.) Your task is to create a **Dialectical Journal Styled Literary Blog** to record your responses to your reading.

DIALECTICAL JOURNAL INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of a dialectical journal is to identify significant pieces of text and explain the significance of the passage to the overall theme or message of the text. In this case, we will be focusing on the American Dream. It begins with engaging the text through highlighting, annotating, and note taking within the text, by writing directly into the text or using post-it notes; this dialectical journal should be used to think about, digest, summarize, question, clarify, critique and reflect upon what is read. It is a way to take notes on what is read, using the actual text, so that when you are asked to write an essay about or utilize the information from the text, you do not have to reread the entire piece. Instead, you can search your notes/blog for direct quotes to use as supporting evidence for your opinions. A dialectical journal is also an effective way to assess your comprehension and skill of critical analysis.

(1) To create a **Dialectical Journal Styled Literary Blog**, use Blogger.com and your district email address. Blogger.com is Google’s Blog application. Title your Blog using your first and last name, period and day that you have English class next year, as well as the title and author of your book. Carefully follow the

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instructions in the app. for creating a blog. Then share your blog with me by going to **Settings**, then **Basic**, then **Add Authors**. Enter my email address, sfranklin@avhsd.org. Then click **Invite Authors**. I may pop into your blog from time to time, throughout the summer to share my thoughts. Ultimately, your summer reading experience will be memorialized in your blog.

(2) Divide your book into five reading sections. As you complete the reading of each section, identify three passages/quotes that address some aspect of the American Dream and/or select a quote that seems to answer one of the essential questions above. The questions above are guiding questions to assist you in thinking about your reading in a specific way. You may respond to these questions or formulate questions on your own. Be sure that the selection of your quotes is thoughtful and demonstrates your full engagement with the text. Place your passage/quote as a new post in your blog and follow with a full discussion of that passage/quote as a comment to that post in your blog. Continue to add posts and comments to your blog as you work your way through the text. Be sure to cite page numbers. Upon completion, you should have 30 quotes and 30 responses. Your comments do not have to be significantly long, yet they should be significant. Use the space necessary to respond appropriately to the quote. Your responses may lead to additional questions, therefore questioning is also appropriate in your responses, especially toward the beginning of the reading selection.

(3) In addition to posting and commenting, include each of the following items in your blog:

- Vocabulary Archive - Create a page or section to store unfamiliar words from each section. Try to include at least two words from each section. Define each word using the appropriate contextual definition. Then describe how the word is significant to the text.
- Multimedia Component - Create a page or section that includes a digital or audio/digital piece to your blog that relates to your selection and a brief discussion of its significance and how it relates to your reading selection. I.e. a Ted Talk, a lecture, a video clip.
- Related Readings/Images/Art - Create a page or section that includes an article, poem, speech, essay, editorial, image, or artwork that relates to your selection and a brief explanation of its significance and how it relates to your reading selection.

Please remember to cite the author, title and the source of your findings.

Should you need assistance in publishing your pages, please use the instructions found at the following link: <http://alturl.com/c26qh>

(4) Your completed blog is due on Monday, August 5th by 8:00 A.M.. This is one week prior to the first week of school. Should you finish your blog sooner than August 5th, please let me know via email at sfranklin@avhsd.org. This will enable me the opportunity to begin grading your work prior to the first day of school. This is the plan. :)

(5) During the first week of school, please be prepared to write an in-class essay based upon how your summer reading relates to the idea or concept of the American Dream.

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Fictional Texts

Author	Title	Lexile
Alvarez, Julia	How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents (*)	950L
• <i>Interrelated stories describe the experiences of the four Garcia sisters before and after their family's exile from the Dominican Republic. The novel is set in New York in the 1960s.</i>		
Anaya, Rudolfo	Bless Me Ultima (*)	840L
• <i>Antonio Marez must face numerous conflicts as he grows up in New Mexico. He is helped by Ultima, a curandera who cures with herbs and magic. At each turn of Tony's life, she is there to nurture his soul.</i>		
Erdrich, Louise	Love Medicine (*)	780L
• <i>The book explores 60 years in the lives of a small group of Chippewa (also known as <u>Ojibwa</u> or <u>Anishinaabe</u>) living on an unnamed Ojibwe Reservation in North Dakota (possibly based on the <u>Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation</u>). Love Medicine won the 1984 <u>National Book Critics Circle Award</u></i>		
Hamill, Pete	Snow in August	N/A
• <i>It is 1947 in Brooklyn, New York. Michael Devlin, an eleven-year-old Irish American boy who is Catholic, and Rabbi Hirsch, a recent immigrant and Holocaust survivor from Prague, Czechoslovakia, develop a friendship. Both characters have suffered the loss of loved ones—Michael's father died, and Rabbi Hirsch lost his wife—and their friendship bridges established anti-Irish and anti-Semitic prejudices and helps them heal. Michael teaches his new friend how to be an American while following Jackie Robinson's progress in his first season with the Brooklyn Dodgers. The rabbi teaches Michael the importance of language and the cultural and architectural history of Prague. This novel explores themes of bullying, prejudice, family, and the importance of cultural legends and stories. The book addresses controversial issues of interest to many adolescents and includes scenes and language that reflect mature content. (please consult a parent prior to selecting this text.)</i>		
Hijuelos, Oscar	Dark Dude (*)	980L
• <i>In Wisconsin, Rico could blend in. His light hair and lighter skin wouldn't make him the "dark dude" or the punching bag for the whole neighborhood. The Midwest is the land of milk and honey, but for Rico Fuentes, it's really a last resort. Trading Harlem for Wisconsin, though, means giving up on a big part of his identity. And when Rico no longer has to prove that he's Latino, he almost stops being one. Except he can never have an ordinary white kid's life, because there are some things that can't be left behind, that can't be cut loose or forgotten. These are the things that will be with you forever.... These are the things that will follow you a thousand miles away.</i>		
Jen, Gish	Who's Irish?	840L
• <i>In this collection of eight stories, the author chronicles the lives of the Chinese and other ethnic groups in search of the elusive American dream. These stories are set in the modern-day United States.</i>		

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Morrison, Toni	A Mercy (*)	
● It was published in <u>2008</u> . A Mercy reveals what lies beneath the surface of slavery in early America. It is both the story of mothers and daughters and the story of a primitive America. It made the New York Times Book Review list of "10 Best Books of 2008" as chosen by the paper's editors. In Fall 2010 it was chosen for One Book, One Chicago program.		
Munoz Ryan, Pam	Esperanza Rising (*)	750L
● This novel tells of a Mexican girl's fall from riches and her immigration to California in the 1930s. The story highlights her awareness of Mexico's post-revolution tensions, the rivalry with Oklahoma Dust Bowl victims, and struggles of Mexican workers trying to organize themselves to ask the U.S. government for better living conditions. California author and setting.		
Smith, Betty	A Tree Grows in Brooklyn (*)	810L
● An Irish American family living in New York City's slums during the early years of the twentieth century endures political and economic hardships. The novel's central character, an intelligent, secretive teenage girl, suffers from her father's drinking.		
Steinbeck, John	Of Mice and Men (*)	630L
● Steinbeck's famous play takes place by the banks of a river and in a bunkhouse near Salinas, California. It shows the unlikely friendship of two men: George and Lennie. George is smart, sensitive, and protective of Lennie, a mentally impaired man with the thoughts and comprehension of a child. During the course of the story George faces the challenge of keeping Lennie focused on work and away from the dangers of Curly and his wife. At the same time, George finds ways to keep alive his dream of owning a piece of land.		
Tan, Amy	The Joy Luck Club (*)	930L
● Two generations of Chinese-American women share their stories of family, loss, love, life, and plenty of other themes in one of the most notable examples of immigrant literature. Despite differing motivations for crossing the Pacific, the mothers still perpetuate the theme of starting over in America and hoping to take advantage of the available opportunities.		
Wilson, August	Fences	
● Fences was written by <u>August Wilson</u> in 1983 and first performed at the 46th Street Theatre on Broadway in 1987. Fences is the sixth play in Wilson's "Pittsburgh Cycle." The Cycle is a series of plays set in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania over the ten decades of the 20th century. Fences is set in the 1950's and deals with issues of race relations and the changing broader culture of the United		

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Non-Fiction/Informational Text

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Lexile</i>
Bissinger, H.G.	Friday Night Lights: A Town, a Team, and a Dream (*)	1220L
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The book follows the story of the 1988 Permian High School Panthers football team from Odessa, Texas, as they made a run towards the Texas state championship. While originally intended to be a Hoosiers-type chronicle of high school sports that holds together a small town, the final book ended up being critical about life in the town of Odessa. It was later adapted for television and film.</i> 		
Coates, Ta-Nehisi	Between the World and Me (*)	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>It is written as a letter to the author's teenaged son about the feelings, symbolism, and realities associated with being black in the United States. Coates recapitulates the American history and explains to his son the "racist violence that has been woven into American culture." Coates draws from an abridged, autobiographical account of his youth in Baltimore, detailing the ways in which institutions like the school, the police, and even "the streets" discipline, endangered, and threaten to disembody black men and women.</i> 		
Dillard, Annie	An American Childhood	1040L
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>An American Childhood is the electrifying memoir of the wide-eyed and unconventional upbringing that influenced the lifetime love of nature and the stunning writing career of Pulitzer Prize winner Annie Dillard.</i> 		
Eastman (Ohiyesa), Charles	Deep Woods to Civilization and The Indian Today	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This stimulating book is one of the few that really deserve the overworked term, a human document." — Publishers Weekly. In the first of his memoirs, the popular Indian Boyhood, Charles Alexander Eastman recounted his traditional upbringing among the Santee Sioux. From the Deep Woods to Civilization resumes his story, recounting his abrupt departure from tribal life at age 15 to pursue his education among whites — a path that led him to certification as a medical doctor.</i> 		
Ehrenreich, Barbara	Nickel and Dimed (*)	1340L
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Investigative journalist Barbara Ehrenreich spent 18 months working one or more minimum-wage jobs, attempting to reveal the very real fiscal struggles behind policies ostensibly meant to keep them afloat. So often, their economic situations have less to do with laziness and an inability to "Grab those bootstraps, boys" and stem almost entirely from a flawed system. Published in 2001, it proves that even now, class disparities exist and The American Dream is still out of reach for so many who desire — and deserve! — a slice of it.</i> 		
Gladwell, Malcolm	Outliers: The Story of Success (*)	1080L
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Gladwell examines the factors that contribute to high levels of success. To support his thesis, he examines why the majority of Canadian ice hockey players are born in the first few months of the calendar year, how Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates achieved his extreme wealth, how The Beatles became one of the most successful musical acts in human history, how Joseph Flom built Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom into one of the most successful law firms in the world, how cultural differences play a large part in perceived intelligence and rational decision making, and how</i> 		

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two people with exceptional intelligence, [Christopher Langan](#) and [J. Robert Oppenheimer](#), end up with such vastly different fortunes.

- | Author | Title | Lexile |
|--|---|---------------|
| Haley, Alex and Malcolm X | The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As Told to Alex Haley (*) | 1120L |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">When the Autobiography was published, the New York Times reviewer described it as a "brilliant, painful, important book". In 1967, historian John William Ward wrote that it would become a classic American autobiography. In 1998, Time named The Autobiography of Malcolm X as one of ten "required reading" nonfiction books. James Baldwin and Arnold Perl adapted the book as a film; their screenplay provided the source material for Spike Lee's 1992 film Malcolm X. (for a mature audience, parent permission required) | | |
| Hillenbrand, Laura | Seabiscuit: An American Legend (*) | 990L |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">The book is a biography of the Thoroughbred racehorse Seabiscuit. It won the William Hill Sports Book of the Year and was adapted as a feature film in 2003. It has also been published under the title: <i>Seabiscuit: The True Story of Three Men and a Racehorse</i>. The author has been praised for her ability to convey a sense of historical times.^[1] | | |
| Hillenbrand, Laura | Unbroken (*) | 1010L |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Unbroken is a biography of World War II hero Louis Zamperini, a former Olympic track star who survived a plane crash in the Pacific theater, spent 47 days drifting on a raft, and then survived more than two and a half years as a prisoner of war in three brutal Japanese prisoner-of-war camps. | | |
| Jemison, Mae | Find Where the Wind Goes: Moments from My Life | 960L |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">"The writing sings" says PW in this "inspiring autobiography." Dr. Mae Jemison, the first African-American woman in space, is truly a modern hero with a remarkable, inspirational story to tell. Mae Jemison made history as the first African-American woman in space.. The adventures of her life make for a truly compelling read. And to top it all off, with her charming sense of humor, Mae is a remarkable storyteller. The variety and richness of Mae Jemison's experiences will inspire every reader who picks up this book. | | |
| Junger, Sebastian | The Perfect Storm: A True Story of Man Against the Sea | 1140L |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Extreme weather focused two fronts to converge and created a massive storm which in turn created a natural disaster of epic proportions. Interviews, memoirs, radio conversations, and technical research recreate the last days of the "Andrea Gail," a fishing boat that was lost in a "perfect storm" off the coast of Nova Scotia in October 1991. | | |
| McBride, James | The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White... (*) | 1240L |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Author James McBride's memoir explores what it was like to grow up in a multicultural family. McBride's mother was disowned by her father, a rabbi, because she had married a black man. She kept her background hidden from her children, who saw her as "light" rather than white. In this personal experience of race, McBride shares a perspective of healing on an issue that tends to be divisive. | | |

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Nasar, Sylvia	A Beautiful Mind (*)	N/A
● This is a biography of John Nash, a mathematician who was awarded the Nobel Prize in economics. Presented is the complicated and perplexing life of a genius in differential calculus who is plagued by the bizarre illogic of schizophrenia. A knowledge of advanced mathematics is required to fully appreciate Nash's career accomplishments.		
Vance, Ashlee	Elon Musk (*)	1200L
● The book has been hailed as the definitive biography of Musk. The Washington Post wrote that "the book is a tremendous look into arguably the world's most important entrepreneur. Vance paints an unforgettable picture of Musk's unique personality, insatiable drive and ability to thrive through hardship." The New York Times reviewer wrote, "Mr. Vance delivers a well-calibrated portrait of Mr. Musk, so that we comprehend both his friends and his enemies."		
Wolff, Tobias	This Boy's Life	N/A
● This Boy's Life is a memoir by American author Tobias Wolff first published in 1989. It describes the author's adolescence as he wanders the continental United States with his traveling mother. The first leg of their journey takes them from Florida to Utah , where Mom, fleeing an abusive partner, hopes to get rich quick finding uranium .		
Zia, Helen	Asian American Dreams	N/A
● The book also examines the rampant stereotypes of Asian Americans. Helen Zia, the daughter of Chinese immigrants, was born in the 1950s when there were only 150,000 Chinese Americans in the entire country and she writes as a personal witness to the dramatic changes involving Asian Americans.		

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