

RUMSON-FAIR HAVEN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
2021 SUMMER READING PROGRAM
GRADE 10



Students enrolled in **ENGLISH II** are required to read one of the listed works.

WHALE TALK (Chris Crutcher) High-school senior The Tao (T.J.) Jones has learned to live with his status as the only student of color in his small, rural high school, but he has never learned to accept the school's suffocating reverence for the athletic establishment. When his ultra-cool English teacher approaches T.J. to swim for the school's brand-new team, T.J. looks beyond the negatives to one overwhelming positive: this is his way of giving the finger to the school's stultifying sports culture. Crutcher juggles the disparate elements of his plot with characteristic energy, crafting a compulsively readable story that rings true with genuine feeling and is propelled by exhilarating swimming action to an ending that is both cataclysmic and triumphant.

TURTLES ALL THE WAY DOWN (John Green) Written by acclaimed author John Green, the novel begins with a fugitive billionaire and the promise of a cash reward. *Turtles All the Way Down* is about lifelong friendship, the intimacy of an unexpected reunion, Star Wars fan fiction, and tuatara. But at its heart is Aza Holmes, a young woman navigating daily existence within the ever-tightening spiral of her own thoughts. A thoughtful look at mental illness and a debilitating obsessive-compulsive disorder that doesn't ask but makes you feel the constant struggles of its main character. *Turtles* explores the definition of happy endings, whether love is a tragedy or a failure, and a universal lesson for us all: "You work with what you have."

THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER (Stephen Chbosky)

Formatted as a series of comic and often tragic letters to an unnamed "friend," Stephen Chbosky's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is a coming-of-age novel that captures the experiences of an adolescent teetering on the brink of adulthood. Charlie is a freshman in high school. While he is not the biggest geek in the school, he is a "wallflower"—a shy, introverted and thoughtful youth struggling to make sense of the complicated world of high school. While the reader may not know where Charlie lives and to whom he is writing, the reader can relate to the protagonist as Charlie follows a strange course through the uncharted territory of adolescence.

Students enrolled in **ENGLISH II HONORS** are required to read both of the listed works;
taking notes as you read is highly recommended.

THE GLASS CASTLE (Jeannette Walls)

For years, *MSNBC.com* contributor Jeannette Walls hid her hardscrabble past as the child of two eccentric, nomadic parents and her experiences growing up in a family that was both dysfunctional and vibrant at the same time. In *The Glass Castle*, Walls finds the courage to chronicle her childhood with compassion and empathy rather than the anger and bitterness that often distinguish contemporary memoirs about childhood.

THE GREAT GATSBY (F. Scott Fitzgerald)

The Great Gatsby is F. Scott Fitzgerald's celebrated chronicle of American life during the "Jazz Age"—the era of unprecedented prosperity in the years following the shock and chaos of World War I. In the novel, Jay Gatsby pursues a quixotic quest for love, social status, wealth, and the American Dream, never realizing that powerful cultural currents will impede his efforts every step of the way. Part love story, part tragedy, and part social commentary, *The Great Gatsby* is—in the words of the novelist and poet James Dickey—"an American masterpiece in its final form."

★ Please note, all summer work is dependent on your finalized schedule!