

## ROSELLE PARK HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER READING GUIDE

**ACADEMIC and COLLEGE PREP (CP) Level Students:** This is an optional assignment. Choose one book from the list. Complete a double entry reading log. Hand it in to your English teacher and receive ten points extra credit on your first test. This is NOT a requirement!!

### FICTION

*Paper Covers Rock* by Jenny Hubbard

Synopsis: At the beginning of his junior year at a boys' boarding school, 16-year-old Alex is devastated when he fails to save a drowning friend. When questioned, Alex and his friend Glenn, who was also at the river, begin weaving their web of lies. Plagued by guilt, Alex takes refuge in the library, telling his tale in a journal he hides behind Moby-Dick. Caught in the web with Alex and Glenn is their English teacher, Miss Dovecott, fresh out of Princeton, who suspects there's more to what happened at the river when she perceives guilt in Alex's writing for class.

*Eleanor and Park* by Rainbow Rowell

Synopsis: Bono met his wife in high school, Park says.

So did Jerry Lee Lewis, Eleanor answers.

I'm not kidding, he says.

You should be, she says, we're 16.

What about Romeo and Juliet?

Shallow, confused, then dead.

I love you, Park says.

Wherefore art thou, Eleanor answers.

I'm not kidding, he says.

You should be.

Set over the course of one school year in 1986, this is the story of two star-crossed misfits--smart enough to know that first love almost never lasts, but brave and desperate enough to try. When Eleanor meets Park, you'll remember your own first love--and just how hard it pulled you under.

*Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen

Synopsis: Though he may not speak of them, the memories still dwell inside Jacob Jankowski's ninety-something-year-old mind. Memories of himself as a young man, tossed by fate onto a rickety train that was home to the Benzini Brothers Most Spectacular Show on Earth. Memories of a world filled with freaks and clowns, with wonder and pain and anger and passion; a world with its own narrow, irrational rules, its own way of life, and its own way of death. The world of the circus: to Jacob it was both salvation and a living hell.

**\*\**Girl Interrupted* (Mature Title)** by Susanna Kaysen

Synopsis: In 1967, after a session with a psychiatrist she'd never seen before, eighteen-year-old Susanna Kaysen was put in a taxi and sent to McLean Hospital. She spent most of the next two years on the ward for teenage girls in a psychiatric hospital as renowned for its famous clientele

**\*\**The Things They Carried* (Mature Title)** by Tim O'Brien

Synopsis: A classic work of American literature that has not stopped changing minds and lives since it burst onto the literary scene, *The Things They Carried* is a ground-breaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling.

*The Things They Carried* depicts the men of Alpha Company: Jimmy Cross, Henry Dobbins, Rat Kiley, Mitchell Sanders, Norman Bowker, Kiowa, and the character Tim O'Brien, who has survived his tour in Vietnam to become a father and writer at the age of forty-three.

***Looking for Alaska*** by John Green

Synopsis: Miles "Pudge" Halter is done with his safe life at home. His whole life has been one big non-event, and his obsession with famous last words has only made him crave "the Great Perhaps" even more (Francois Rabelais, poet). He heads off to the sometimes crazy and anything-but-boring world of Culver Creek Boarding School, and his life becomes the opposite of safe. Because down the hall is Alaska Young. The gorgeous, clever, funny, sexy, self-destructive, screwed up, and utterly fascinating Alaska Young. She is an event unto herself. She pulls Pudge into her world, launches him into the Great Perhaps, and steals his heart. Then. . . . After. Nothing is ever the same.

## **NON-FICTION**

***Fast Food Nation*** by Eric Schlosser

Synopsis: In 2001, *Fast Food Nation* was published to critical acclaim and became an international bestseller. Eric Schlosser's exposé revealed how the fast food industry has altered the landscape of America, widened the gap between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and transformed food production throughout the world. The book changed the way millions of people think about what they eat and helped to launch today's food movement.

***The Glass Castle* (Mature Title)** by Jeannette Walls

Synopsis: Jeannette Walls grew up with parents whose ideals and stubborn nonconformity were both their curse and their salvation. Rex and Rose Mary Walls had four children. In the beginning, they lived like nomads, moving among Southwest desert towns, camping in the mountains. Rex was a charismatic, brilliant man who, when sober, captured his children's imagination, teaching them physics, geology, and above all, how to embrace life fearlessly. Rose Mary, who painted and wrote and couldn't stand the responsibility of providing for her family, called herself an "excitement addict." Cooking a meal that would be consumed in fifteen minutes had no appeal when she could make a painting that might last forever.

Later, when the money ran out, or the romance of the wandering life faded, the Walls retreated to the dismal West Virginia mining town -- and the family -- Rex Walls had done everything he could to escape. He drank. He stole the grocery money and disappeared for days. As the dysfunction of the family escalated, Jeannette and her brother and sisters had to fend for themselves, supporting one another as they weathered their parents' betrayals and, finally, found the resources and will to leave home.

# Roselle Park Summer Reading Response Journal Template

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level in September \_\_\_\_\_

**Be sure to cite page numbers as evidence. Remember that your journal must be typed as a Word document and submitted to Turnitin.com in the fall in order to receive credit.**

Chapter #, List and Summary of Events	Reader Reflections/Questions