**English 12 (M) Summer Reading Assignment and Choices**

As of now, the course will be in the Spring. Though you are welcome to read the book during the summer, it may serve you better to wait (or refresh) during the winter break. To begin the course, you must first complete the summer reading assignment. This is a self-paced reading assignment that you are required to complete **PRIOR** to the start of the semester. English 12 is a course that focuses on World Literature. This means that the class will be spanning a large amount of time, and focusing on set pieces of literature. These set pieces are carefully chosen for their overall importance to, and influence on, English Literature. That being said, it is useful to be rounded, and also have experience dealing with issues, themes, and devices that we will be working on in class. Your options are below, with a brief bit of background. Please note that the cliche is true: “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” All of the information below comes directly from the abstracts of the different novels. This means that they are broad, and that you need to do more research to see if the works interest you. Also note that all of the books are roughly the same length, but have vastly different subject material. This means that the old idea of “go with the shortest book” needs to be scrapped. There are physical copies of the texts available (but it will be a first come basis), Amazon, or P.D.F. versions that are posted on the Vault’s webpage (). If you have any questions, please email Mr. Callis (nicholas.callis@garrettcountyschools.org)..

After you have made your choice, take time to read and analyze the material carefully. Take notes of any thoughts or ideas you have about the material as you read, and look for quotes that deal with the advancement and ramifications of scientific advancements, the concepts of differences in species, the outlook/critique of society’s treatment of the odd/unique, and the treatment of the different genders in the novel. All of the aforementioned topics will not only be useful for your assignment on the summer reading novels, but it will also be beneficial as we move forward and discuss the literature of English 12. Also, do not hesitate to mark questions you have as you read, and revisit those questions/sections again after you finish. **DO NOT** do any of the following: wait until the last minute to read the material, skim through the material to get it done quickly (you will need direct quotes so this is a very poor choice), watch the movie version and hope for the best (it is not a lie that creative interpretations means a vastly different story), utilize online sources instead of reading the material (this will alter your view of the work and can lead to plagiarism, whether it is intentional or not).

**Summer Reading Options:**

❏ ***Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley**: Hundreds of years in the future, the World Controllers have created an ideal civilization. Its members, shaped by genetic engineering and behavioral conditioning, are productive and content in roles they have been assigned at conception. Only Bernard Marx is discontented, developing an unnatural desire for solitude, and a deep consideration for the idea of whether freedom, dignity, and individuality are worth suffering for.

❏ ***On the Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin**: Darwin’s theory that species derive from other species by a gradual evolutionary process and that the average level of each species is heightened by the “survival of the fittest” stirred up popular debate to fever pitch. Its acceptance revolutionized the course of science.

❏ ***The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde**: The story follows the novel’s namesake, Dorian Gray, as he makes a deal with a stranger with unintended consequences. As the story progresses, Dorian takes greater and greater leaps into the taboo and illegal, realizing that he has a secret trick up his sleeve thanks to the mysterious stranger and his gift of an oil portrait. First published as a complete story in 1890, the editors feared the story was indecent. Despite that censorship, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* offended the moral sensibilities of British book reviewers, some of whom said that Oscar Wilde merited prosecution for violating the laws guarding the public morality.