



Dartmouth High School Summer Reading 2017

To foster a true love of reading, your English teachers want YOU to choose your summer reading book. These are the only guidelines for book selection:

- ❑ an age-appropriate work of FICTION OR NONFICTION that fits one of the writing prompts below
- ❑ a book that is AT LEAST 100 pages AND that agrees with your family's moral compass

We **STRONGLY SUGGEST** selecting a *New York Times* best seller. (Snap codes and URLs to suggested lists will be emailed and will be posted on the DHS School Fusion page.)

Writing prompts:

FICTION FOCUS: *Focusing on one of the main characters, determine how the author uses DICTION (word choice) to move the character from being just a name on the page to being a fully developed person/being/creature (depending on genre). For example, what words does the author use to describe the character's actions or way of speaking? What words does the character use and which ones do other characters use when describing the character? Any time authors chooses one word or phrase over another, they are molding the characters we imagine.*

NONFICTION FOCUS: *Choose one of the key people (or organizations) on which the book focuses. Determine how the author uses DICTION (word choice) to develop a specific image of that person (or organization). For example, if the book is about the FBI, does the author portray the organization as more beneficial or harmful? If it's about a person, does the author highlight the positives or negatives--or does the author focus on both?*

General directions:

- ❑ Be prepared to write a 1-2-page response to one of the prompts when we return to school. **Regardless of which semester you have English**, you will write your response, which will count as a class assignment, on **Wednesday, September 13**. Please do not write your response ahead of time; you must produce it in school.
- ❑ As you read, please gather **4-5 examples of textual evidence** to use within your response. On the above date, you will need those examples either in notes WITH PAGE NUMBERS or marked with sticky notes within the text.

FOCUSING ON DICTION

When you think of how word choice affects your view of a character or real person, you might initially think of DIALOGUE. Yes, you will consider DIALOGUE (what the character actually says), but also consider how the author describes the character's appearance, voice, movements, interactions, etc.

CONSIDER THESE TWO SENTENCES:

1. Pat walked confidently into the office, feeling fully prepared for the interview.
2. Pat strutted arrogantly into the office, feeling fully prepared for the interview.

Which Pat do you think will get the job? Or scholarship? Why?

Whether you chose Pat #1 or Pat #2, see how this slight change in diction changes your image of Pat? Authors make those small-but-powerful decisions throughout a text. Look for places in your book where the author's choices affect the image of the character, person, or organization you choose.

The text below is annotated with the fiction writing prompt in mind:

From *Divergent* by Veronica Roth (If you read *Divergent*, obviously you must find your own examples.)

Waiting for us outside the cafeteria is a row of ten rooms. They are used only for the aptitude tests, so I have never been in one before. Unlike the other rooms in the school, they are separated, not by glass, but by mirrors. I watch myself, pale and terrified, walking toward one of the doors. Susan grins nervously at me as she walks into room 5, and I walk into room 6, where a Dauntless woman waits for me.

She is not as severe-looking as the young Dauntless I have seen. She has small, dark, angular eyes and wears a black blazer—like a man's suit—and jeans. It is only when she turns to close the door that I see a tattoo on the back of her neck, a black-and-white hawk with a red eye. If I didn't feel like my heart had migrated to my throat, I would ask her what it signifies. It must signify something.

Mirrors cover the inner walls of the room. I can see my reflection from all angles: the gray fabric obscuring the shape of my back, my long neck, my knobby-knuckled hands, red with a blood blush. The ceiling glows white with light. In the center of the room is a reclined chair, like a dentist's, with a machine next to it. It looks like a place where terrible things happen.

"Don't worry," the woman says, "it doesn't hurt."

Her hair is black and straight, but in the light I see that it is streaked with gray.

"Have a seat and get comfortable," she says. "My name is Tori."

Clumsily I sit in the chair and recline, putting my head on the headrest. The lights hurt my eyes. Tori busies herself with the machine on my right. I try to focus on her and not on the wires in her hands.

"Why the hawk?" I blurt out as she attaches an electrode to my forehead.

"Never met a curious Abnegation before," she says, raising her eyebrows at me.

I shiver, and goose bumps appear on my arms. My curiosity is a mistake, a betrayal of Abnegation values.

1. The narrator watches herself, which we've learned breaks rules.
2. Her nervousness shows this test is a big deal to her.

Roth doesn't just say Beatrice is nervous; she says that her heart has traveled up in her throat making it impossible to speak. We also get a first glimpse at her non-Abnegation trait of curiosity.

Roth has the narrator describe her own speech as blurring out. This, along with Tori's response, further shows the narrator does not quite fit her family's faction. The word BETRAYAL tells us the narrator feels guilty about this fact.

SAMPLE START OF A RESPONSE TO THE WRITING PROMPT:

Veronica Roth uses diction to portray Beatrice "Tris" Potter as a conflicted character throughout *Divergent*. The novel opens on the day adolescents in this futuristic dystopian society take an aptitude test that tells them in which of their society's factions they best fit. Right from the beginning Roth uses word choice to characterize Tris as someone who loves her family but welcomes the option of a new life. After describing a peaceful family morning, Tris admits, "it is on these mornings that I feel guiltiest for wanting to leave them" (Roth 3). Her guilt blends with nervousness when she enters the test. Roth has Tris describe herself as "pale and terrified" (11), and when Tris considers asking her test administrator, Tori, about her tattoo, she explains, "If I didn't feel like my heart had migrated to my throat, I would ask her what it signifies" (11). The reader soon understands that asking questions is not a typical quality for Tris's faction when Tori later comments that she "Never met a curious Abnegation before" (12), but Roth intensifies this idea by having Tris call her atypical behavior a "betrayal of Abnegation values" (12). The word *betrayal* implies more than just a mistake; it implies an intentional wish to do harm. This self-criticism continues to plague Tris as she ... (not a complete response)

WE DON'T RECOMMEND GATHERING ALL YOUR EXAMPLES FROM ONE PAGE BECAUSE THE IMAGE CREATED SHOULD SPAN THE BOOK. WE DID SO HERE ONLY TO SHOW YOU THE TEXT, ANNOTATIONS, AND RESPONSE IN ONE PLACE.

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Accessing *New York Times* Book Lists

PLEASE NOTE:

- These are the most current NYT lists, but there are many excellent books that have made the lists previous years.
- You may access 10 free articles/month at the NYT website. Each “Notable” list is an article, and each category (e.g., Hardcover Fiction) of the current list is an article. Please browse wisely.

New York Times Book Lists	URL	Snap Code
Current Best Sellers	https://goo.gl/OLbvKF	
100 Notable Books of 2016	https://goo.gl/N3sXJy	
--Notable Children’s Books of 2016 (scroll down to “Young Adult”) Please do not read a YA book if going into an honors English class.	https://goo.gl/ldgkyG	
100 Notable Books of 2015	https://goo.gl/SZihhC	
--Notable Children’s Books of 2015 (scroll down to “Young Adult”) Please do not read a YA book if going into an honors English class.	https://goo.gl/aoKSk4	
Amazon’s NYT Best-seller’s “store”	https://goo.gl/VRW6xV	