

Required Summer Reading

Everyone should read Tennessee Williams' play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*. In addition, you should read one other book (play or novel) with gender-related themes. You may select a book from the list below or make your own choice. Do not read something that you have already read.

Essay

After you complete your summer reading, write a 500-700 word essay in which you address the following prompt:

We live in a culture where there are expected gender roles. Depending on whether you are born a man or a woman, you are expected to dress a certain way, talk a certain way, be smart (or stupid) in certain ways, etc. These expectations affect us differently--from becoming an essential part of who we are at one extreme to preventing us from becoming who we truly are at the other extreme.

Choose two characters from your summer reading (one from each book). In your essay compare and contrast how each character relates to gender expectations. What are the gender expectations they face? Do they conform, resist, or rebel? How do the gender expectations affect them socially, psychologically, spiritually? If you wish, you may reflect on your own attitudes or experiences with expected gender roles.

A few notes:

- The essay should have multiple paragraphs. Body paragraphs should have topic sentences, and you should use transitions between paragraphs.
- Include at least one quotation from each book. Make sure to provide citations for your quotations and include a Works Cited page.
- I strongly recommend that you complete this work without looking at any secondary sources. However, if you do use outside sources, you **must cite them** (otherwise, you will be plagiarizing).
- Take time to do your best work. That means that you should do some planning before you start writing, and you should proofread your essay before turning it in. Do not try to do the whole thing in one sitting.
- You've learned how to write essays in the past. You should use those skills for this essay.

Suggested Titles for Summer Reading

Classics (18th - 20th century)

Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders*
Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*
Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*
Richard Wright, *Native Son*
Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*
Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*
Virginia Woolf, *Orlando: A Biography*

Recent Books (late 20th century to present)

Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*
Lisa See, *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*
Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*
Jeanette Winterson, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*
Anita Diamant, *The Red Tent*

Recent Books (cont.)

Jeffrey Eugenides, *Middlesex*
Chuck Palahniuk, *Fight Club*
Monica Ali, *Brick Lane*
Haruki Murakami, *Sputnik Sweetheart*
Jacqueline Woodson, *Another Brooklyn*

YA Books

Rita Mae Brown, *Rubyfruit Jungle*
Benjamin Alire Sáenz, *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*
Julie Anne Peters, *Luna*
Alyssa Brugman, *Alex As Well*
Stephen Chbosky, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*
Brie Spangler, *Beast*
David Levithan, *Every Day*