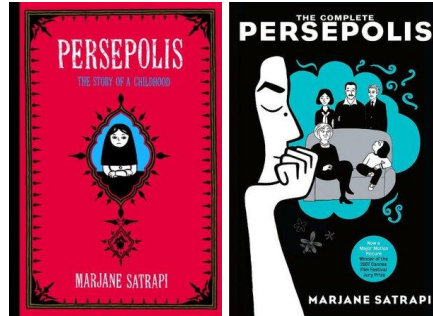


Vermont Commons School Summer Reading List 2012



Dear Parents, Students, and Friends,

We are pleased to announce the 2012 Common Text at Vermont Commons School! The Language Arts department has selected Marjane Satrapi's memoir *Persepolis* (2000) for the seventh and eighth graders, and *The Complete Persepolis* (2004), which contains the book's sequel, for the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. The book tells the story of the author's tumultuous childhood and adolescence in 1970s and 1980s Iran, when the country was racked by political unrest, revolution, and war. As Marjane, the author, grows up, she begins to think critically about what she is being taught in school, takes part in demonstrations, defies the restrictions placed upon her because of her gender, rebels against her parents and other authorities, and loses friends and relatives to the Iranian Revolution. The coming-of-age story debuted as an animated film in 2007, and was nominated for an Academy Award.

In a *New York Times* interview from 2007, the author discussed the origin of the book, and commented on the accolades it has received from around the world: "Ms. Satrapi said she wrote *Persepolis* as an answer to the relentless and loaded question of what it means to be Iranian. But her book's success has meant that she has both gently educated those in the West — *Persepolis* is taught in 118 colleges in the United States, including West Point, according to Pantheon, its publisher — and taken part in a larger conversation about the book's global resonances. "Little by little, as the book got translated in other languages, people were saying, 'This is my story too,' " she said. "Suddenly I said to myself, 'This is a universal story.' I want to show that all dictatorships, no matter if it's Chile, if it's the Cultural Revolution in China or Communist Poland, it's the same schematic. Here in the West we judge them because we are so used to democracy, believing that if we have something, it is because we deserve it, because we chose it. Political changes turn your life completely upside down, not because you are crazy but because you don't have any way out."

Spanning from Satrapi's childhood to her early twenties, *Persepolis* and *The Complete Persepolis* appeal to all age groups. *The Complete Persepolis* does contain

some profanity, sexual situations, and violence, as well as some scenes involving drug use. However, it does not promote drug use, nor does it promote violence. In fact, it has an anti-drug message, and advocates for a deeper understanding between Eastern and Western cultures. The graphic novel format is one that students will find both accessible and enjoyable to read; from Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, to Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, contemporary authors use the visual medium in order to better convey their stories, and the results are powerful. We chose these particular books because their themes concern how the political influences the personal; 2012 is in an election year, and how our leaders' choices influence our lives will be an integral part of the national conversation. In addition, the book speaks to the global immersion aspect of our mission statement, shedding light on a country that most do not know much about, but that is deeply intertwined with our own.

We hope that your son or daughter will enjoy reading Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* and *The Complete Persepolis*, and we look forward to a lively, dynamic, and engaging Common Text Day in October.

Enjoy your summer reading!

Christie K. Beveridge Cara M. Simone Jennifer B. Cohen

2012 VCS Summer Reading List

Once again, we've divided the reading list into three categories:

- (1) Classics and Prize Winners
- (2) Books that Speak to the VCS Mission Statement
- (3) Other Books for Summer

We are asking students to ***choose a book from two of the categories, as well as the Common Text***, for a total of three books to be read this summer.

We've put asterisks next to the texts that may be more appropriate for 7th and 8th graders, and the abbreviation (NF) next to nonfiction texts.

For summaries of the books, we encourage students **to browse** the bookstore or an online bookseller such as Barnes & Noble.com. There are many choices on the list, and we're confident that each student will find at least two books that spark his or her interests. When students return in the fall, they will complete one assignment for each of their summer reading books. The assignments will include the following:

1. A poster focusing on literary themes. (Due the first week.)
2. A creative author imitation and reflection. (Due the second week.)

3. A quiz on the Common Text. (Taken in the first two weeks of school.)

Details about these assignments are below. They will also be posted on our website.

Poster

Requirements and Grading:

1. An attractive display of the title and author: You may do a creative drawing on the poster that represents something significant about the book. (25 points)
2. A paragraph that describes the protagonist, the main conflict, and a little about the plot, but that does not reveal the ending. (25 points)
3. A paragraph that relates an important image, scene, or character that you connect with and that explains why you find this part significant. (25 points)
4. A paragraph that recommends or does not recommend this book to others – be specific. Who would like this book and why this book is or is not worth our time? (25 points)

The paragraphs should be 8-10 sentences long and should be printed out and placed on the poster. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence and adequate evidence to support this topic sentence. The paragraphs should conclude with commentary, but this does not mean you need to use the pronoun “I”. You may say, “This book is not worth reading.” You need not say, “I think this book is not worth reading.”

Author Imitation and Reflection

Requirements and Grading:

In this assignment, students should try to approximate the voice and style of the author of one book from the Summer Reading List. This assignment lends itself to fiction, but some nonfiction could work. Write an alternate scene or a scene that occurs after the ending. Or, you could try rewriting a scene from another character’s perspective. After writing the imitation, a *one-two page* reflection should follow, which identifies which literary devices were used.

Author Imitation (75 points)

The length of the imitation should be 1-2 pages.
Consider some of the literary devices in the list below before you begin.

- Point of view (1st person or 3rd person). From what perspective is this story being told?
- Tense (past or present). Is the action unfolding in the moment, or is the story being told after the fact, perhaps many years later?
- The length of your author’s sentences, as well as his or her word choice. Does this author write long sentences with lots of adjectives? Short, clipped sentences? Both?
- Does your author use dialogue? Internal monologue? Letters?
- Description. Does your author use ornate descriptions? Was there concrete detail that allows the reader to conjure an image of a scene?

Reflection (25 points)

In a follow-up, please discuss how the author's choices affected the meaning of the text. In addition, identify which literary devices you chose to imitate and why. (1-2 pages)

Classics and Prize Winners

Alcott, Louisa May. *Little Women* (Christie's choice for seventh and eighth graders)

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*

Bronte, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*

Chekhov, Anton. *The Seagull*

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe**

Desai, Kirin. *The Inheritance of Loss*

Dickens, Charles. *A Tale of Two Cities*

Doctorow, E.L. *Ragtime*

Doig, Ivan. *The Whistling Season*

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Crime and Punishment* (Jennifer's choice)

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. *The Hound of the Baskervilles*

Dumas, Alexander. *The Count of Monte Cristo*

Eliot, George. *Middlemarch*

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*

Farmer, Nancy. *House of the Scorpion**

Faulkner, William. *As I Lay Dying*

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *This Side of Paradise*

Fowles, John. *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

Hardy, Thomas. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Heller, Joseph. *Catch-22*

Hemingway, Ernest. *For Whom the Bell Tolls, The Sun Also Rises*

Hesse, Herman. *Siddhartha*

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Dust Tracks on the Road* (Mark's choice)

Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*

Ishiguro, Kazuo. *Remains of the Day*

Keller, Helen. *The Story of My Life**

L'Engle, Madeline. *A Wrinkle in Time**

Marquez, Gabriel Garcia *Love in the Time of Cholera*

Melville, Herman. *Moby Dick*

Mitchell, Margaret. *Gone With the Wind*

Morrison, Toni. *Home* (Christie's choice)

O'Neil, Eugene. *Long Days Journey Into Night*

Penn Warren, Robert. *All the King's Men*

Roth, Phillip. *Goodbye Columbus*

Sewell, Anna. *Black Beauty* *

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet* and *King Lear*

Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath* (Mark's choice)

Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Treasure Island**

Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*

Stoppard, Tom. *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*
Tolstoy, Leo. *Anna Karenina, War and Peace*
Trumbo, Dalton. *Johnny Got His Gun*
Twain, Mark. *Tom Sawyer**
Verne, Jules. *Journey to the Center of the Earth**
Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse Five*
Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*
Wells, H. G. *War of the Worlds*
Wharton, Edith. *Ethan Frome, House of Mirth*
White, T.H. *The Once and Future King*
Woolf, Virginia. *To the Lighthouse*
Wright, Richard. *Native Son*

Books that Speak to the VCS Mission

Abbey, Edward. *Desert Solitaire (NF)*
Ali, Saleem. *Treasures of the Earth: Need Greed and a Sustainable Future*
Barr, Nevada. *Track of the Cat*
Brown, Tom. *The Tracker**
Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*
Callenbach, Ernest. *Ecotopia*
Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*
Cartright, Paul Russell. *Lewis and Clark: Pioneering Naturalists (NF)*
Craighead George, Jean. *Missing 'Gator of Gumbo Limbo: An Ecological Mystery*
De Rosnay, Tatiana. *Sarah's Key(Sarah Soule's choice)**
Duncan, David James. *The River Why*
Gould, Steven J. *The Panda's Thumb*
Elder, John. *Reading the Mountains of Home. (NF) (Christie's choice)*
Eggers, Dave. *What is the What?*
Eiseley, Loren. *The Night Country*
Hall, Ron and Denver Moore. *Same Kind of Different As Me*
Heiligman, Deborah. *Charles and Emma : The Darwins' Leap of Faith**
Heinrich, Berndt. *Winter World*
Hestler, Peter. *Country Driving* (recommended for students who take Chinese)
Holmes, Hannah. *Suburban Safari*
Kingsolver, Barbara. *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle (NF)*
Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Poisonwood Bible (Liz's Choice)*
Lawrence, Gale. *The Beginning*
Lear, Linda. *Rachel Carson: Witness for Nature* (NF)*
Leopold, Aldo. *Sand County Almanac*
MacLean, Norman. *A River Runs Through It*
McKibben, Bill. *End of Nature **, *Eaarth*, and *Wandering Home (NF) (Christie's choices)*
McPhee, John. *Encounters with the Archdruid*
Pfeffer, Susan. *The Dead and the Gone**
Pollan, Michael. *The Botany of Desire, Omnivore's Dilemma (NF)*

Quammen, David. *Song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinctions, Wild Thoughts from Wild Places*
Ransome, Arthur. *Swallows and Amazons*
Redniss, Lauren. *Radioactive*
Roberts, Paul. *The End of Oil (NF)*
Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation (NF)*
Sobel, Dava. *Longitude*
Stephenson, Neal. *Zodiac*
Storm, Heymehyohsts. *Seven Arrows**
Tempest Williams, Terry. *Red: Passion and Patience in the Desert (NF)*
Theroux, Paul. *The Mosquito Coast*
Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden (NF)*
Tolan, Sandy. *Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East (NF)*
Van Matre, Steve. *The Earth Speaks*
Weisman, Alan. *Gaviotas*

Other Books for Summer

Abbey, Edward. *The Monkey Wrench Gang*
Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*
Adams, Douglas. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*
Adams, Richard. *Watership Down*
Allende, Isabel. *The House of the Spirits*
Alvarez, Julia. *Return to Sender*
Amado, Jorge. *Gabriela, Cloves, and Cinnamon*
Angelou, Maya. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
Asimov, Isaac. *Foundation**
Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale, Oryx and Crake*
Baldwin, James. *Go Tell it on the Mountain*
Barry, Lynda. *The Greatest of Marlys*
Beah, Ishmael. *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*
Boyle, T.C. *The Tortilla Curtain*
Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451*
Brown, Mike. *How I Killed Pluto and Why It Had It Coming (NF)*
Butler, Octavia. *Bloodchild and Other Stories**
Cain, Susan. *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop.*(NF) (Ann's choice)
Card, Orsen Scott. *Ender's Game**, *Ender's Shadow**
Carr, Nicholas. *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains (NF)*
Cashore, Kristin. *Graceling**
Chabon, Michael. *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*
Chen, Da. *Colors of the Mountain*
Christie, Agatha. *Murder on the Orient Express**
Clare, Cassandra. *Clockwork Angel**
Coelho, Paulo. *The Alchemist*

Cooper, James Fenimore. *The Last of the Mohicans*
 Cunningham, Michael. *The Hours*
 Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe**
 Delany, Sarah L. et al. *Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years*
de Rosnay, Tatiana. *Sarah's Key (Sarah Soule's choice)*
 Diamant, Anita. *The Red Tent*
 Diaz, Junot. *The Brief, Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*
 Doyle, Arthur Conan. *The Hound of the Baskervilles*
 Duncan, David James. *The River Why*
 Eggers, David. *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*
Ende, Michael. *Momo (Bradley's choice)**
 Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*
Erdich, Louise. *Love Medicine (Cara's Choice)*
 Farmer, Nancy. *The House of the Scorpion**
Ford, Jamie. *The Hotel at the Corner of Bitter and Sweet. (Sarah Soule's choice.)*
 Forster, E.M. *A Passage to India*
 Fusco, Kimberly. *Tending to Grace**
 Gaiman, Neil. *American Gods*
 Gaines, Ernest. *A Lesson Before Dying*
 Gladwell, Malcolm. *Outliers: The Study of Success (NF)*
 Gold, Glen. *Carter Beats the Devil*
Goldman, Emma. *Living My Life (Mark's choice)*
 Graves, Robert. *Goodbye to All That (NF)*
 Green, John. *The Fault in our Stars* *
 Gruen, Sara. *Water for Elephants*
 Haddon, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time**
 Harris, Lynn E. *And This Too Shall Pass*
 Hazzard, Shirley. *The Transit of Venus*
Hersey, John. *Hiroshima (Mark's choice).*
 Hillenbrand, Laura. *Unbroken (NF)*
 Holmes, Hannah. *Suburban Safari*
 Isaacson, Walter. *Steve Jobs*
 Jewett, Sarah Orne. *The Country of the Pointed Firs*
 Kesey, Ken. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*
 Kidd, Ronald. *Monkey Town**
 Kimball, Kristen. *The Dirty Life (NF)*
 Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Bean Trees*
 Kingston, Maxine Hong. *Woman Warrior*
 Konigsburg, E.L. *Silent to the Bone**
 Krakauer, John. *Into Thin Air*
 L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time**
 Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird (NF)*
Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies (Christie's choice)*
 Larsen, Erik. *In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin*
 LeGuin, Ursula K. *The Wizard of Earthsea**

Levitt, Steven. *Freakonomics (NF)*
Marshall, James Vance. *Walkabout*
Martel, Yann. *Life of Pi**
Matthiessen, Peter. *At Play in the Fields of the Lord*
Michaelis, Antonia. *Tiger Moon**
Mieville, China. *Railsea**
Mosley, Walter. *Devil in a Blue Dress*
Obrecht, Tea. *The Tiger's Wife. (Jennifer's choice for seventh and eighth graders)*
O'Neill, Eugene. *Long Day's Journey into Night*
Oe, Kenzaburo. *Teach Us to Outgrow Our Madness*
Orwell, George. *1984, Down and Out in Paris and London*
Pausch, Randy. *The Last Lecture (NF)*
Pratchett, Terry. *Nation**
Peck, Robert Newton. *The Day No Pigs Would Die*
Philbrick, Nathaniel. *In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex (NF)*
Rushdie, Salman. *Luca and the Fire of Life**
Roth, Veronica. *Divergent*
Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things (Christie's choice)*
Rushdie, Salman. *East-West*
Rylant, Cynthia. *Beautiful Stories of Life: Six Greek Myths Retold**
Safran Foer, Jonathan. *Everything is Illuminated*
Sepetys, Ruta. *Between Shades of Gray**
Sobel, Dava. *Galileo's Daughter*
Soto, Gary. *A Summer Life *, Accidental Love**
Staples, Suzanne. *Under the Persimmon Tree**
Stegner, Wallace. *All the Little Things*
Stockett, Kathryn. *The Help*
Tan, Amy. *The Kitchen God's Wife*
Thiongo, Ngugi wa. *A Grain of Wheat*
Thurber, James. *My Life and Hard Times**
Zusak, Marcus. *The Book Thief (Sarah Soule's choice)*