

English II  
Summer Reading 2019

**Summer Reading for English II:**

Welcome to English II! Over the course of sophomore year you will examine the theme: *Clashes of Culture*. As you read from a variety of selected texts, you will be asked to analyze the relationships between characters, in terms of how a character's sense of self plays a part in their understanding of the world around them. Carefully consider the roles individuals, or groups of people play, in influencing cultural identity.

If you do your reading early in the summer, you should review *Long Way Down*, by Jason Reynolds, a week or two before returning to school. Part of your inquiry will involve taking notes (annotating) the text itself; underline, circle, highlight, and dot important lines, passages and details in Reynolds' work. This will help you prepare for what will be assigned during the first two weeks of school.

New students who are accepted to Wardlaw+Hartridge before August 19 are expected to complete the summer assignment if they are looking to gain acceptance into the Honors class. Those accepted after August 19 will be responsible for acquiring the text and need to contact Liz Rooney: [lrooney@whschool.org](mailto:lrooney@whschool.org), instructor of English II, prior to the start of school for amended requirements.

**Required Summer Reading:**

*Long Way Down*, Reynolds: If you only had 60 seconds to decide the rest of your life, would you play by the rules?

**Yearly Theme:** Cultural Collision

**Essential Question:** How much influence do we have in shaping our own cultural identity?

Many works of literature depict characters caught between colliding cultures -- national, regional, ethnic, religious, institutional. Such collisions can call a character's sense of identity into question. When reading *Long Way Down*, think about how one character in the book deals with some aspect of cultural identity, either on a personal level or in relation to the environment they are in. You might want to think about questions such as: does a person have to abandon their previous culture in order to acclimate to a new culture? What does it mean to 'play by the rules'? Is there such a thing as multi-cultural? Can a piece of literature show range in cultural identity, or do authors inherently show only one aspect of a culture? How does a character change or evolve as a result of having multiple cultural identities? These are just questions to consider; you may examine your own thoughts and ideas as well.

During the first week of school you will first be asked to write a short, well-organized and supported response to Reynolds' work, illustrating how the concept of cultural collision is addressed in poetic prose. Then, you will write an **original** dramatic monologue as a character from the book to be preformed within the first month of school.

