

## Required Summer Reading

**Course:** English II Honors

**Novel:** The Chosen by Chaim Potok

**Nonfiction Work:** Seabiscuit: An American Legend by Laura Hillenbrand

Welcome to sophomore English. As the current school year begins to wind down and summer break approaches, students at the honors level are required to fulfill the necessary summer reading obligations for next school year. Our hope is that you view the reading requirements as an opportunity to enhance your learning and to prepare you for a successful start in English II. For English II Honors, there are two works that will need to be completed prior to entering the course. These include The Chosen and Seabiscuit.

You will need to purchase your own copy of the works so that you will be able to highlight or underline important passages or make notes in the page margins. Used copies of the books may be ordered on Amazon.com for a minimal price, but you also may want to attempt to find them at local used bookstores such as Southland, The Book Rack, Cover to Cover, or McKay's. Please bring your works with you to school during the first week of instruction.

Set in the time period of the late stages of World War II, The Chosen traces the development of an unlikely friendship between two Jewish boys, Reuven Malter and Danny Saunders, living in New York. From a serious injury to intimidating conversations with the infamous Reb Saunders (Danny's father), Reuven grows an attachment to Danny but must also face the complexities that come with getting to know him. In the process, he also must learn the meaning of true friendship.

Set during the Great Depression and the advent of WWII, Seabiscuit is a true story of how three unlikely characters came together to do something extraordinary. Seabiscuit was a race horse with unimpressive features. Tom Smith, his trainer, was a reclusive misfit. Jockey Red Pollard was a down-on-his-luck aimless has-been. The three came together in an unusual set of circumstances to break an unprecedented amount of records. They eventually raced into the prestigious US Racing Hall of Fame. Seabiscuit embodies the theme of the underdog in the context of a nation that needed an underdog to believe in.

When your English class begins either in the fall or spring, you will be asked to display your knowledge of the books through discussion, writing, and objective testing. Please remember that the completion of summer reading is a required component of an Honor's English class and is a necessary step to begin the course on a successful note. In preparation for discussion and writing, it is important that you take notes and write down your own questions as you read. By doing this, you will be prepared to bring your own insight to share in class. Enjoy the works!