As you wind down your junior year, we congratulate you on your successes this year in a very challenging academic program, and we wish you a relaxing summer. Before you leave Robinson to begin your summer break, we want to tell you a little bit about the IB English II course so that you will know what to expect and how to prepare.

The first semester will focus on a detailed study of works from different genres: essays, poetry and a novel. The Internal Assessment is oral, administered in December or January, and focuses on the works we have studied during the fall. In the second semester, we will focus on a group of works which connect under the theme of the Novel and Society by reading two novels and two sets of short stories from African writers. Exam paper two asks you to analyze two of these four works in a compare/contrast essay. Throughout the year, along with our close reading of literature, we will engage in lively conversation and thoughtful writing. We will take a number of papers through revision and maintain a writer’s notebook.

**Purpose of Assignment:** One key question that we will explore throughout the year is this: How does the way in which a writer chooses to tell his/her story affect the meaning? In other words, how do choices about narrative structure contribute to the author’s larger purposes? Narrative structure refers to the chronology, the point of view and the use of interpolated texts as well as other decisions that the writer makes to tell his or her story.

**Directions:** In order to begin our exploration of this question, we would like for you to choose one of the titles on the attached annotated bibliography and read it prior to the first day of class. We would like you to read with the purposes of the assignment in mind.

**Assessment:** One of the first things we will do in the fall is work with these books and the decisions that your writers have made. We will do some writing and our work with these books will culminate in a Socratic Seminar in late September.

**Due Date:** Please come in the first week of school having completed your book.

**Contact Person:** Wendy Vu (WMVu@fcps.edu)

**NOTE:** The English Department owns copies of many of these books and we will be happy to check them out to you for the summer if you wish to borrow one. If you would rather have your own copy so that you may annotate, the titles are all available in local bookstores and through amazon.com. Please see Mrs. Vu in the IB Office if you would like to check out a book.
IB English 2: Narrative Technique Title Choices

- *The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox* by Maggie O'Farrell. Chic and independent, Iris Lockhart is tending to her vintage-clothing shop in Edinburgh when she receives a stunning phone call: her great-aunt Esme—whom she never knew existed—is being released from Cauldstone Hospital, where she has been locked away for more than sixty years. Iris's grandmother Kitty always claimed to be an only child. But Esme’s papers prove she is Kitty’s sister. Esme has been labeled harmless—sane enough to coexist with the rest of the world—but she's still basically a stranger, a family member hidden away who will surely bring secrets with her when she leaves the ward. Moving expertly among the voices of Iris, Kitty, and Esme herself, Maggie O'Farrell reveals the story of Esme's tragic and haunting absence.

- *Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline. Foster teen Molly is performing community-service work for elderly widow Vivian, and as they go through Vivian’s cluttered attic, they discover that their lives have much in common. When Vivian was a girl, she was taken to a new life on an orphan train. These trains carried children to adoptive families for 75 years, from the mid-nineteenth century to the start of the Great Depression. Novelist Kline brings Vivian’s hardscrabble existence in Depression-era Minnesota to stunning life. Molly’s present-day story in Maine seems to pale in comparison, but as we listen to the two characters talk, we find grace and power in both of these seemingly disparate lives.

- *Leaving Time* by Jodi Picoult. Jodi Picoult’s *Leaving Time* weaves elephant behavior into a search for a missing mother. Teenager Jenna Metcalf was just three years old when her mother disappeared from an elephant sanctuary. Ten years later, she takes up the search for her mother, Alice, by studying Alice’s decade-old journals on grieving elephants. The research itself is fascinating, the hints about Alice’s disappearance are compelling; but Jenna cannot find her mother on her own. By enlisting the help of a formerly famous—now infamous—psychic, as well as a down-and-out private detective whose career went south during the botched investigation of Alice's disappearance, Jenna forms a sort of new family to help her in her quest. As the facts begin to come together—described in alternating chapters by Jenna, the psychic, the private detective, and Alice’s journals—it all heads toward a thrilling conclusion.

- *Please Look After Mom* by Kyung-Sook Shin. When sixty-nine-year-old So-nyo is separated from her husband among the crowds of the Seoul subway station, her family begins a desperate search to find her. Yet as long-held secrets and private sorrows begin to reveal themselves, they are forced to wonder: how well did they actually know the woman they called Mom? Told through the piercing voices and urgent perspectives of a daughter, son, husband, and mother, *Please Look After Mom* is at once an authentic picture of contemporary life in Korea and a universal story of family love.

- *Book of Jonas* by Stephen Dau. Jonas is fifteen when his family is killed during an errant U.S. military operation in an unnamed Muslim country. With the help of an international relief organization, he is sent to America, where he struggles to assimilate. Eventually, he tells a court-mandated counselor and therapist about a U.S. soldier, Christopher Henderson, responsible for saving his life on the tragic night in question. Christopher's mother, Rose, has dedicated her life to finding out what really happened to her son, who disappeared after the raid in which Jonas' village was destroyed. When Jonas meets Rose, a shocking and painful secret gradually surfaces from the past, and builds to a shattering conclusion that haunts long after the final page.

All summaries are taken directly from www.amazon.com.