Dear Rising Juniors,

We are delighted you have elected to pursue the IB program in English, and we look forward to spending a challenging year exploring humanity and the world through the written and spoken word.

During our first unit of study this school year, we will be exploring issues of identity, loss, and coping through close analysis of Tennessee Williams’ play *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

For your summer reading, please select one of the following plays to read and enjoy:

- *The Glass Menagerie*, by Tennessee Williams
- *Death of a Salesman*, by Arthur Miller
- *Fences*, by August Wilson
- *A Raisin in the Sun*, by Lorraine Hansberry
- *Long Day’s Journey into Night*, by Eugene O’Neill

Descriptions of each of the plays are attached.

We encourage you to get together with some friends to read and discuss your selected play this summer.

As you read and annotate the play, consider:

- the central conflict and how this conflict is resolved
- how the playwright develops characters and the relationships between characters
- how the playwright establishes mood and tone
- stage directions
- motifs and symbols
- the importance of the setting
- the theme(s) of the play

If you are using a library book, use sticky notes to make your annotations. You will need a copy of the play to use in class in the fall. All of these works are American classics which can easily be found at bookstores (including used bookstores) and online.

You should also read the 11th & 12th grade common read, *Unwind*, by Neal Shusterman. You can find this dystopian novel at bookstores and online. Some information about the novel is attached.

We hope that you have a restful and safe summer, and we look forward to beginning the English IB program with you. Should you need to speak with someone during summer, please feel free to contact one of the IBI teachers.

Sincerely,
The IBI Team

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For your planning purposes, we will be studying *A Streetcar Named Desire*, selected American poetry (no specific text required) paired with classic American choice novels (titles TBD), and a novel (TBA) during the first semester. Second semester is a study of works in translation. Titles for the second semester will be shared in the fall.
**The Glass Menagerie, by Tennessee Williams**

The Glass Menagerie was Williams's first popular success and launched the brilliant, if somewhat controversial, career of our pre-eminent lyric playwright. Abandoned by her husband, Amanda Wingfield comforts herself with recollections of her earlier, more gracious life in Blue Mountain when she was pursued by ‘gentleman callers’. Her son Tom, a poet with a job in a warehouse, longs for adventure and escape from his mother’s suffocating embrace, while Laura, her shy crippled daughter, has her glass menagerie and her memories. Amanda is desperate to find her daughter a husband, but when the long-awaited gentleman caller does arrive, Laura’s romantic illusions are crushed.

**Death of a Salesman, by Arthur Miller**

Ever since it was first performed in 1949, Death of a Salesman has been recognized as a milestone of the American theater. In the person of Willy Loman, the aging, failing salesman who makes his living on a smile and a shoeshine, Arthur Miller redefined the tragic hero as a man whose dreams are at once insupportably vast and dangerously insubstantial. He has given us a figure whose name has become a symbol for a kind of majestic grandiosity—and a play that compresses epic extremes of humor and anguish, promise and loss, between the four walls of an American living room.

**Fences, by August Wilson**

From August Wilson, author of The Piano Lesson and the 1984-85 Broadway season’s best play, Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, is another powerful, stunning dramatic work that has won him numerous critical acclaim including the 1987 Tony Award for Best Play and the Pulitzer Prize. The protagonist of Fences(part of Wilson’s ten-part “Pittsburgh Cycle” plays), Troy Maxson, is a strong man, a hard man. He has had to be to survive. Troy Maxson has gone through life in an America where to be proud and black is to face pressures that could crush a man, body and soul. But the1950s are yielding to the new spirit of liberation in the 1960s... a spirit that is changing the world Troy Maxson has learned to deal with the only way he can...a spirit that is making him a stranger, angry and afraid, in a world he never knew and to a wife and son he understands less and less...

**A Raisin in the Sun, by Lorraine Hansberry**

This groundbreaking play starred Sidney Poitier, Claudia McNeill, Ruby Dee and Diana Sands in the Broadway production which opened in 1959. Set on Chicago’s South Side, the plot revolves around the divergent dreams and conflicts within three generations of the Younger family: son Walter Lee, his wife Ruth, his sister Beneatha, his son Travis and matriarch Lena, called Mama. When her deceased husband’s insurance money comes through, Mama dreams of moving to a new home and a better neighborhood in Chicago. Walter Lee, a chauffeur, has other plans, however: buying a liquor store and being his own man. Beneatha dreams of medical school.

The tensions and prejudice they face form this seminal American drama. Sacrifice, trust and love among the Younger family and their heroic struggle to retain dignity in a harsh and changing world is a searing and timeless document of hope and inspiration. Winner of the NY Drama Critic’s Award as Best Play of the Year, it has been hailed as a ‘pivotal play in the history of the American Black theatre.’ by Newsweek and ‘a milestone in the American Theatre.’ by Ebony.

**Long Day’s Journey into Night, by Eugene O’Neill**

O’Neill’s painful view of his own life forms the core of Long Day’s Journey Into Night, one of the greatest of all American plays. The Tyrone family (father James, mother Mary, and sons Edmund and Jamie) of the play is a surrogate for O’Neill’s own family and, through them, the playwright wrestles with his past demons. Covering a single day and night, O’Neill’s play traces the impact on the family relapse into a drug addiction and younger son Edmund’s being institutionalized for consumption. These events reopen old wounds and resentments and initiate a harrowing series of accusations and recriminations that threaten to tear apart the family. At turns haunting, riveting, and emotionally lacerating, Long Day’s Journey Into Night is one of O’Neill’s greatest plays.
Unwind, by Neal Shusterman, 335 pages, Science Fiction
Unwind Dystology, Book 1 of a four-book series

Price: $6.00
Awards: National English Honor Society Common Reader, Virginia Readers Choice Award, ALA (American Library Association) Top Ten Picks for Reluctant Readers, ALA Best Young Adult Book list, NY Public Library “Books for the Teen Age” list.
One Book Selections: Westfield HS One Book Selection 2015, State of Nebraska 2009

Summary: In a society where unwanted teens are salvaged for their body parts, three runaways fight the system that would ‘unwind’ them. Connor’s parents want to be rid of him because he’s a troublemaker. Risa has no parents and is being unwound to cut orphanage costs. Lev’s unwinding has been planned since his birth, as part of his family’s strict religion. Brought together by chance, and kept together by desperation, these three unlikely companions make a harrowing cross-country journey, knowing their lives hang in the balance. If they can survive until their eighteenth birthday, they can’t be harmed -- but when every piece of them, from their hands to their hearts, are wanted by a world gone mad, eighteen seems far, far away.

School Library Journal Review
Grades 9 Up - An unsettling futuristic novel set after the Second Civil War. Connor Lassiter, age 16, runs away from his suburban Ohio home after discovering that his parents have scheduled his ‘unwinding.’ His body parts will go to other people who need them. He will be both terminated and ‘technically’ kept alive, only in a separated state. The constitutional amendments known as ‘The Bill of Life’ permit parents to choose to “unwind” children between the ages of 13 and 18. Connor meets another Unwind, Risa, and they kidnap Lev, who is a Tithe (the 10th child born to a single family with the express purpose of being unwound). Their escape and survival stories interweave as they struggle to avoid harvest camps. Luckily, an underground network is helping Unwinds escape to safety. There is evenhanded, thoughtful treatment of many issues, including when life starts and stops, consciousness, religion, free will, law, trust and betrayal, suicide bombers, and hope. Initially, the premise of parents dismantling their children is hard to accept; however, readers are quickly drawn into the story, which is told in a gripping, omniscient voice. Characters live and breathe; they are fully realized and complex, sometimes making wrenchingly difficult decisions. This is a thought-provoking, well-paced read that will appeal widely, especially to readers who enjoy Scott Westerfeld’s Uglies (2005), Pretties (2005), and Specials (2006, all S & S)
Author Website, with trailers, activities, discussion questions: http://www.storyman.com/books/unwind/