

ENGLISH IV
DR. VAN GUNTEM
SUMMER READING 2018

Instructions: Choose and carefully read one book from this list. You will have a written-response type test on your chosen book during the first three days of class in August, 2018.

Paulo Coelho, *The Alchemist*.

Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy, one night dreams of a distant treasure in the Egyptian pyramids. And so he's off, leaving Spain to literally follow his dream. Along the way he meets many spiritual messengers who come in unassuming forms, such as a camel driver and a well-read Englishman. In one of the Englishman's books, Santiago first learns about the alchemists--men who believed that if a metal were heated for many years, it would free itself of all its individual properties, and what was left would be the "Soul of the World." Santiago does eventually meet an alchemist, and the ensuing student-teacher relationship clarifies much of the boy's misguided agenda while also emboldening him to stay true to his dreams.

Faiza Guene, *Kiffe Kiffe Tomorrow*.

The Paradise Housing Projects are only a few metro stops from Paris, but here it's a whole different kind of France. Doria's father, "The Beard," has headed back to their hometown in Morocco, leaving her and her mom to cope with their *mektoub*--their destiny--alone. They have a little help from a social worker sent by the city, a psychiatrist sent by the school, and a thug friend who recites the French poet Rimbaud. It seems like fate has dealt them an impossible hand, but Doria might still make a new life. She'll prove the projects aren't only about rap, soccer, and religious tension. She'll take the Arabic word *kif-kif* (same old, same old) and mix it up with the French verb *kiffer* (to really like something). And she'll have a whole new motto: *Kiffe Kiffe Tomorrow*.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.

In the madness of World War II, a dutiful Russian soldier is wrongfully convicted of treason and sentenced to ten years in a Siberian labor camp. So begins this masterpiece of modern Russian fiction, a harrowing account of a man who has conceded to all things evil with dignity and strength. First published in 1962, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* is considered one of the most significant works ever to emerge from Soviet Russia. Illuminating a dark chapter in Russian history, it is at once a graphic picture of work camp life and a moving tribute to man's will to prevail over relentless dehumanization.