

Lowell High School - Summer 2021

“Those who tell the stories rule the world.” - Hopi American Indian proverb



LHS SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

Stories are a lot like weaving. Storytellers combine personal experiences and universal truths, small details and big ideas, the familiar and the unfamiliar, into a single, unified message. The City of Lowell has long been associated with this art form. You only need to look out of your classroom window to be reminded of Lowell’s important role in the Industrial Revolution and the textile industry. Our city also has a rich and important history of welcoming immigrants from all over the world. New arrivals continue to add to Lowell’s narrative, bringing new experiences, insights, perspectives and ideas. We are fortunate to have the individual threads of these diverse backgrounds to weave the colorful tapestry of our city’s evolving story.

This summer we invite you to think about how stories get told. Stories are unfolding all around us, all of the time. You hear them, you read them, and you tell them yourself. This summer assignment is designed to get you thinking about how facts, ideas, opinions, biases, and individual experiences are woven together to form a narrative. You will be prompted to think about what gets included - and what gets excluded -- from a story’s telling.

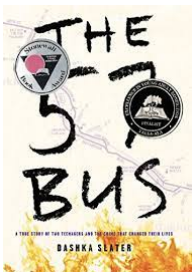
Our hope for Summer 2021 is that all members of our LHS community will:

- 1. spend time exploring and enjoying a good story**
- 2. reflect on the various threads of storytelling that made that story meaningful**
- 3. share your experience by completing one or more of the extra credit options**

Students and staff are encouraged to choose a story and a platform that most interests them. For those looking for recommendations, we offer the following suggestions.

Featured Text:

**“One teenager in a skirt. One teenager with a lighter.
One moment that changes both of their lives forever.”**



In *The 57 Bus*, Dashka Slater shares the true story of two teens, one bus ride, and a lifetime of consequences. Her approach to presenting things from multiple perspectives, and including varied sources of information, demonstrates how seemingly simple stories can be very complex.

From Goodreads: “If it weren't for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met. Both were high school students from Oakland, California, one of the most diverse cities in the country, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their

paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment. The case garnered international attention, thrusting both teenagers into the spotlight.” **Copies of *The 57 Bus* are available for borrowing. Sign out a copy at the LHS security desk, at our main entrance, or in the main office of the Freshman Academy.**

Featured Podcasts:



This American Life is an award-winning podcast with over 2 million weekly listeners. Hosted by NPR's Ira Glass, each episode includes multiple perspectives on a related theme. From the *This American Life* website: "Mostly we do journalism, but an entertaining kind of journalism that's built around plot. In other words, stories! Our favorite sorts of stories have compelling people at the center of them, funny moments, big feelings, surprising plot twists, and interesting ideas. Like little movies for radio."

New to *This American Life*? Ira Glass suggests episodes to start with [HERE](#). Listen to one episode of *This American Life* and you will surely be hooked.



The Moth: The Art and Craft of Storytelling This program presents a collection of short, personal stories told by amateur storytellers. Narratives are organized around themes - like heartbreak, sibling rivalry, embarrassing moments and comebacks. The website includes tips and tricks for telling your own story. If you prefer to watch the storytellers perform their stories, there is a [Moth youtube channel](#). Find the library of stories [HERE](#).



Serial: Season One is an investigative journalism podcast created by Sarah Koenig. In Season One, Koenig digs into the 1999 murder of high school student, Hae Min Lee. What looked like an open and shut case to many is presented for the complicated and tangled story that it truly is. This popular podcast has been downloaded over 68 million times. **This is a previous LHS summer favorite.** Listen to the series [HERE](#).



If you already enjoyed *Serial* and need a new true-crime story to obsess over, consider listening to ***Up and Vanished: Season One***. In this series, journalist Payne Lindsey investigates the cold case of missing beauty queen and high school social studies teacher, Tara Grinstead. Grinstead disappeared from her home, in small town Ocilla, Georgia, in 2005. Lyndsey digs up documents and police reports, talks to locals, asks hard questions, and uses the power of social media to help solve this case. (*There is a content warning on this program - it is not recommended for young children.*) Listen to the series [HERE](#).

[Share your experience and earn EXTRA CREDIT!](#)

[Submit your work to your new ELA teacher by September 10th.](#)

Option #1: [Reflection writing](#)

Option #2: [A creative response](#) - 6 possibilities

****Please Note: Students enrolled in English 3HH, Advanced Placement English Lit, and Dual Enrollment English Composition have summer assignments specific to their courses. Information about these assignments can be found on the English page of the LHS website.**

LHS Suggested Reading/Listening Lists

Have you been looking forward to reading a bestseller, a new release, or a favorite genre - or discovering a new podcast? We encourage you to choose your own reading and listening selections this summer. We are providing you with suggested reading lists and resources for supporting independent reading. We invite you to choose what and how you read - and hope that you will engage with a wide range of text-types, platforms, and voices. In a time of new rules and restrictions, we hope you will feel empowered by this freedom and be inspired by the endless possibilities.

- Lowell High School's list of staff suggestions
[Books We Are Grateful For](#)
- Lowell's Pollard Library will be offering curbside pick up this summer!
[Click here to go to the Pollard Library website](#)
- National Public Radio's list of popular Young Adult books
[Click here for NPR's List](#)
- The New York Time's A Beginner's Guide for Getting into Podcasts
[Click here for listening tips and suggested podcasts.](#)
- [Fifty of the Best Podcasts for High School Students](#)
- Diversity Book Lists from GoodReads
[Click here for GoodReads' List](#)
- Black Lives Matter: A Reading List for Young Adults (Skokie Public Library)
[Click here for Skokie Library's List](#)
- Code Switch - a podcast hosted by journalists of color, who promote "fearless conversations about race."
[Click here to access Code Switch.](#)
- Real life, personal stories to inspire teens:
[Click here to see suggestions for 10 Great Memoirs](#)
- Nonfiction Page-Turners
[Click here to see suggestions for nonfiction titles](#)
- A collection of short stories organized by genre and length:
[Short Stories at East of the Web](#)
- What's popular right now around the country:
[New York Times Best Sellers](#)
- Free audiobooks from Audible (check out the teen offerings)
[Free Audiobooks for Kids | Audible.com](#)

Resources for Becoming a Better Reader

- **Video: How to Read When You Hate Reading: Five Tips and Tricks**
[How to Read When You Hate Reading - 5 Tips and Tricks](#)
- **Video: How to Remember More of What You Read:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xw8KuGD1fJ4&t=1s>
- **Article: “Be a Better Reader in 7 Days” from *The New York Times***
[NYT Programs – Be a Better Reader in 7 Days](#)