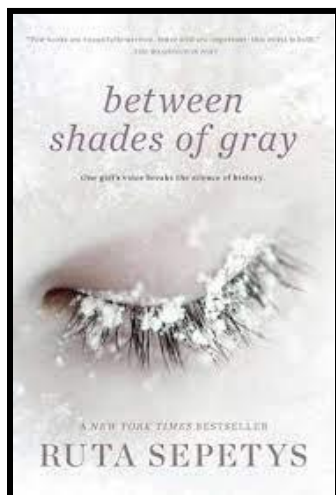


Grade 10 High Honors English
Summer Reading Assignment
2025



***Between Shades of Gray* by Ruta Sepetys**

Summary:

Lina is just like any other fifteen-year-old Lithuanian girl in 1941. She paints, she draws, she gets crushes on boys. Until one night when Soviet officers barge into her home, tearing her family from the comfortable life they've known. Separated from her father, forced onto a crowded and dirty train car, Lina, her mother, and her young brother slowly make their way north, crossing the Arctic Circle, to a work camp in the coldest reaches of Siberia. Here they are forced, under Stalin's orders, to dig for beets and fight for their lives under the cruelest of conditions.

Lina finds solace in her art, meticulously—and at great risk—documenting events by drawing, hoping these messages will make their way to her father's prison camp to let him know they are still alive. It is a long and harrowing journey, spanning years and covering 6,500 miles, but it is through incredible strength, love, and hope that Lina ultimately survives. *Between Shades of Gray* is a novel that will steal your breath and capture your heart. (Goodreads)

Before you read, take a few minutes to learn about the following:

[Lithuania](#) (Especially the history from 1941-1944 in “Restored statehood and occupations”)

[The NKVD](#) (Especially the “Domestic Repressions” section)

[Soviet Deportation to Labor Camps](#) (Especially the “Deportations” section)

Please also view the maps at the beginning of the novel.

While you read... We advise you to take notes to help you remember characters and events. We know that some of you may finish the book in June, so we want to be prepared for the test and writing assignment during the first week of school. The notes are not mandatory, but strongly suggested.

Questions? Please reach out to Mrs. Keefe (skeefe@lowell.k12.ma.us), Ms. Medrano (smedrano@lowell.k12.ma.us), or Ms. Apostolos (eapostolos@lowell.k12.ma.us) with any questions you may have.

Copies of *Between Shades of Gray* are available at the Pollard Library and through SORA. Some copies are available in Room 715 and 724 in the Freshman Academy. **You may sign out a book beginning Thursday, June 12.**