

Rising Ninth Grade Summer 2023 Reading List

Required Book:

***The Lantern Bearers* by Rosemary Sutcliff.** This is the third book in Sutcliff's trilogy about Roman Britain. While students are welcomed to read the first two novels in the trilogy, *The Eagle of the Ninth* and *The Silver Branch*, each novel can stand on its own because the trilogy spans different generations in this same region over the course of a few hundred years. *The Lantern Bearers* is set in the middle of the fifth century as the last Roman legions leave Britain after four hundred years of rule. The novel follows the journey of Aquila, a Roman soldier assigned to the British Isles, who must learn to find hope again after devastating loss.

Please Note: Students need to purchase a clean copy of this novel for annotation (ISBN: 978-0192755063). Students should annotate as they read, and we will do further work on annotating through the course of the year.

The following is a list of recommended additional reading:

***The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien.** While not medieval works specifically, Tolkien's trilogy skillfully presents the medieval worldview that will be central to the literature we will read this year. Plus, it's such a good story!

***On the Shoulders of Hobbits: The Road to Virtue with Tolkien and Lewis* by Louis Markos.** This is a readable, inspiring introduction to the larger project of "re-mythologizing" Western literature that both Professor Tolkien and C. S. Lewis were engaged in. Markos invites us to be inspired by the characters of Narnia and Middle-earth to live lives of virtue.

***Odd and the Frost Giants* by Neil Gaiman.** A whimsical and well-written story set squarely in the cold, northern world of the Norse gods and giants, this short, illustrated tale will give students a taste of the chilly climes and fantastic adventures that await in medieval literature.

***Crispin: The Cross of Lead* by Avi OR *The Seeing Stone* by Kevin Crossley-Holland.** Either of these two unput-down-able (it's okay—English teachers are allowed to make up words) will thrust readers right into the midst of everyday life in the Middle Ages.

***King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table* by Roger Lancelyn Green.** Brush up on your knowledge of Arthurian legend in this accessible retelling of Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*.