Your name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**CRL 101 - CRITICAL LITERACY (3 credits)**

**Fall 2022**

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*Confidence, Clarity, and a Heightened Sense of Purpose*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Welcome to CRL 101! This three-credit course integrates reading and writing instruction to engage you in the rigors of college work and prepare you for the reading and writing expectations of future college courses. Through strategic instruction and guided practice, you will strengthen your reading skills and gain practice in writing college essays. Through an exploration of knowledge and learning in higher education, you will be encouraged to think critically.

What is critical literacy? According to educator Mike Rose, critical literacy includes “framing an argument or taking someone else’s argument apart, systematically inspecting a document, an issue, or an event, [and] synthesizing different points of view” (188). Gary L. Anderson and Patricia Irvine define critical literacy as “learning to read and write as part of the process of becoming conscious of one’s experience as historically constructed within specific power relations.”

**COURSE GOALS**

Because reading and writing are inextricably connected, this course integrates reading and writing instruction in order to effectively engage you in the rigors of college work. You will read a variety of college-level materials designed to strengthen your reading skills while building a reading habit. The readings will give you opportunities to examine argument as a mode of constructing and advancing knowledge.

You will also gain practice in writing argument essays that respond to the readings. In the process, you will consider broad questions about knowledge and learning in higher education and will be encouraged to think critically.

**COURSE THEME**

Our course theme is “**The Construction of Knowledge**.” How do high schools and universities help us construct knowledge? Do they do this differently? How? In what ways?

Through reading, writing, and class discussions, we will explore these questions:

* What should we know? Why?
* How do we learn?
* How has that changed over time?
* Who decides what we should know? How can we think critically about what we learn?
* How does higher education seek knowledge?
* What is a liberal arts education? Why is it central to a Niagara University education?
* How do college professors guide students to seek knowledge? How do their methods and expectations differ from high school teachers?

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Giannina A. Lucantoni, English Instructor

Niagara Falls High School, room 448 glucantoni@nfschools.net

Methods of Instruction: Because we discuss the readings in class, it is vital that you **complete each assigned reading**. Class time will be devoted to instruction in the reading strategies that you should apply when you read. Discussions of the readings will be primarily large-group, with occasional small-group activities. During most classes, time will also be devoted to writing, reading, journaling, and instruction. You are expected to apply these principles to your papers and other written assignments. You will also deliver one presentation based on your independent reading book during the 40 weeks.

Please feel free to contact me on Teams (glucantoni) or through email (glicantoni@nfschools.net) with any questions you have or any needs and clarification.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

1. **One** independent reading book (see list later in syllabus).
2. I recommend that you have a **binder** to organize course handouts.
3. All course readings will be provided on paper and available online

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Your final grade for the course will be determined as follows. Further details regarding each of these requirements are provided below. You will receive a detailed handout in class for each assignment as the class progresses.

**Each marking period, the grades will be as follows: (**Each marking period adds up to 100 points)

Major Writing Assignment/Paper each semester 50 points

Journals throughout the marking period 20 points

Participation in class and class discussions 10 points

Homework and Smaller Assignments 20 points

**Grading policy for papers:**

A major goal of CRL 101 is to improve college-level writing. Although the class is modified for high school students, students will be graded using Niagara University’s evaluation system. See the table below on the next page …

**NU Grading Scale:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| LETTER GRADE | NUMERIC VALUE | GPA |
| A+ | 97-100 | 4.00 |
| A | 93-96 | 4.00 |
| A- | 90-92 | 3.67 |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.33 |
| B | 83-86 | 3.00 |
| B- | 80-82 | 2.67 |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.33 |
| C | 73-76 | 2.00 |
| C- | 70-72 | 1.67 |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.33 |
| D | 63-66 | 1.00 |
| D- | 60-62 | 0.67 |
| F | 59 AND LOWER | 0.00 |

**How will I evaluate your papers?**

For all Papers, you will first turn in a “best-effort” draft. This should be a full, polished version of the **best** essay you can write at this point. It should never be hurriedly written the night before. I will comment extensively on your draft in addition to grading it. We can also meet to discuss your writing.

**Late paper policy:** All students have a one-week grace period for handing in assignments unless there is a specific medical/emergency or Excused Absence. After one-week points will be deducted from the final grade depending on the severity of the lateness. A paper beyond one-month late will not be accepted without extenuating circumstance or excused absence.

**Reading**: There is no traditional textbook for this course. Instead, you will read brief articles for every class, Regular reading can help you become a stronger, more confident, and more thoughtful reader as you build a reading habit. You will also read one full-length book during the 40 Week marking period.

Reading college assignments differs from reading a magazine or mystery novel at the beach. The latter tends to be more passive reading, done for pleasure or to pass the time but without much deep thinking. For CRL 101 and college courses you take in the future, you need to read more actively, or as Professor Michael J. Strada of West Liberty University says, more “aggressively.” Active reading involves writing notes in the margins, jotting ideas and questions that occur to you as you read, and re-reading – in short, thinking actively while reading. We will do this together in class so that you can learn to read this way independently. Eventually, I will expect you to do this for all our readings. If you are struggling with a reading, don’t give up; I am always happy to help.

If you are concerned that a course reading might upset you, please speak to me outside of class.

**Journaling**:

You will use one section of your binder to respond to journal topics related to the reading. Journaling is a way for you to reflect on what you already know relating to topics we discuss in class, practice writing, and think more deeply about your personal perspective.

**Homework/assignments**:

Every marking period there will be one or two assignments that are opportunities for you to practice reading and writing skills related directly to this course.

**Book project**: *(Explained later in the syllabus)*

**Participation:**

Do you sit on your phone the entire class and ignore class discussions? Are you chronically absent? Are you unable to participate in lass discussion and group work because you didn’t bother to do the reading? Such behaviors result in loss of participation points. But, more importantly, being disengaged like this will make the class hard for you and limit how much you’ll learn. Let’s make the most of our time together!

**Monitoring your grade**:

Monitor your course grade by consulting Power School. I am happy to meet with you any time you have questions about your grade in this course. Please keep in mind that college professors rarely remind students about low grades or missing assignments.

**UNDERSTANDING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM**

Academic honesty – being honest and truthful in academic settings, especially in the communication and presentation of ideas – is required to experience college life. Academic dishonesty – being untruthful, deceptive, or dishonest in academic settings in any way – harms faculty and students and damages the reputation of the university. Do not copy other people’s words or ideas and try to claim them as your own. Also, when quoting from any reading, always include the correct citation (I will show you how to do this). In some colleges, intentional plagiarism can get you expelled.

If you would like to seen an example of how Niagara University approaches academic honesty and their policies related to intentional plagiarism you can visit the following website:

[www.niagara.edu/academicintegrity](http://www.niagara.edu/academicintegrity).

**CELL PHONE AND EAR BUD POLICY**

As I explained in my opening letter to the class, when entering 448 you should place your cellphone into the cell phone holder using your assigned number. Please do not wear ear buds in class. Anyone who follows the cellphone and ear bud policy will have 5 points extra credit added to their final average.

**YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A STUDENT IN CRL 101:**

1. Read this syllabus thoroughly. Ask me any questions you have.
2. Please put this syllabus in the very front of your binder
3. Complete all assigned reading **before** class.
4. Bring copies of the readings for the day to each class; I will always provide you with copies of the readings
5. Budget your time carefully throughout the year. Enter due dates in your planner and/or phone, and consult daily.
6. Begin writing papers early enough to allow ample time to proofread and revise multiple times I recommend starting each paper at least one week before it is due. I will support and promote this habit by providing time in class for writing and giving reminders. Journaling is also a tool we will use to get you thinking about upcoming papers.
7. Consult the handout describing each paper and carefully follow all the guidelines.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES for CRL 101**

Course Goal: CRL 101 provides students with opportunities to examine argument as a mode of constructing and advancing knowledge within the disciplines.

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| **Student Learning Goals** | **Assessments** | **Relationship to Niagara University general education goals** |
| Students will develop and practice strategies for analyzing written academic arguments.   * They will practice reading strategically * They will make important distinctions * They will arrive at evidence-based conclusions | Annotations on readings  In-class discussion of readings  Responses to questions on Reading Guides | 1. Prepares students for positions of responsibility in the professions and in the broader society, including critical thinking skills. |
| Students will recognize common types of disciplinary arguments (e.g. arguments of fact; arguments of definition; arguments of evaluation; proposals). | Annotations on readings  Responses to questions on Reading Guides  Essays | 2. Prepares students for positions of responsibility in the professions and in the broader society, including the development of information literacy skills. |
| Students will develop and practice strategies for producing informed written arguments. | Written & oral responses to readings  Papers 1, 2, & 3 | 1. Prepares students for positions of responsibility in the professions and in the broader society, including critical thinking skills. |
| With support of instructor, students will   * use information effectively to support claims * cite information accurately and ethically | Research instruction  Paper 3 | 2. Prepares students for positions of responsibility in the professions and in the broader society, including the development of information literacy skills. |
| Students will increase their ability to create grammatically correct, stylistically strong writing on the sentence-level. | Papers 1, 2, & 3  In-class activities | 1. Prepares students for positions of responsibility in the professions and in the broader society, including critical thinking skills. |
| Students will reflect upon the course theme, “The Construction of Knowledge,” and in particular the role of argument in constructing and advancing disciplinary knowledge; upon the cultural, social, and historical forces that shape and influence what they learn; and upon their roles as active participants in academic inquiry. | Papers 1, 2, & 3  In-class activities  Written reflections | 1. Prepares students for positions of responsibility in the professions and in the broader society, including critical thinking skills. |

**10 Weeks/20 Weeks/30 Weeks/40 Weeks Thematic Instruction**

The theme of CRL 101 is **“The Construction of Knowledge.”** Readings are divided into three segments (10, 20- and 30-week marking periods). The last marking period will focus on an independent reading book.

In this **FIRST SEGMENT**, we begin by reading about thinking and learning. The next few readings contrast learning before college with the different expectations of learning in college. Several readings describe how professors’ expectations of your reading and writing may differ, sometimes significantly, from high school.

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| **Dates** | **Readings and Assignments** | **NYS ELA Standards** |
| Week of 9/6 | Course introduction and syllabus review  MLA Workshop | 11-12W7  11-12L6 |
| Week of 9/12 | Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. Penguin Classics, 2014, pp. 45-50. | |  | | --- | | 11-12R1  11-12R4  11-12SL1d | |
| Week of 9/19 | X, Malcolm. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Bantam Doubleday Dell  Publishing Group, 1998.  **Literacy Narrative assignment introduced** | 11-12R1  11-12R4  11-12SL1d  11-12W4  11-12W3 |
| Week of 9/26 | Chaffee, John. *The Thinker’s Way: 8 Steps to a Richer Life*. Little, Brown and Company, 1998. | 11-12SL1d  11-12SL3 |
| Week of 10/3 | Rober, Mark. “The Super Mario Effect - Tricking Your Brain into Learning More.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Tedx Talks, 31 May. 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9vJRopau0g0>  Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. The Continuum, 1999.  **Literacy Narrative assignment due** | 11-12W7  11-12W4  11-12W3 |
| Week of 10/11 | Meiland, Jack W. “The Difference Between High School and College.” *Foundations: A Reader for New College Students*, edited by Virginia N. Gordon and Thomas L. Minnick, Wadsworth Thompson Learning, 2002, pp. 7-9.  Rose, Mike. *Lives on the Boundary*. Simon and Schuster, 1988. | 11-12R8  11-12SL1b  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 10/18 | Hemingway, Ernest. “Hills Like WhiteElephants.” Charters, Ann, Ed. *The Story and its Writer: An Introduction to Short Fiction,* *6th Edition.* Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2003.  **Paper #1 introduced in class** | 11-12SL4  11-12L6  11-12W7   |  | | --- | | 11-12R1 |  |  | | --- | | 11-12R3 | |
| Week of 10/24 | Vonnegut, Kurt, and New York, NY. International Paper Co. *How To Write with Style. Power of the Printed Word*. Jan. 1980. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED236589&site=ehost-live. | |  | | --- | | 11-12R2  11-12R6  11-12W5 | |
| Week of 10/31 | Hjortshoj, Keith. *The Transitions to College Writing*. Bedford/St. Martin’s,  2001.  Zinsser, William. “Simplicity” and “Clutter.” *On Writing Well*. 7th ed. HarperCollins, 2006. | 11-12R1  11-12R4  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 11/8 | Ross, Gary Earl. “Choosing Not to Read Is Choosing to be Stupid.” *The Buffalo*  *News*, 10 Sept. 2004, p. C2.  Lanier, Jaron. “You Are Losing Your Free Will.” *The Norton Sampler*, edited by Thomas Cooley, Norton and Company, 2021, pp.505-509.  **Best Effort Draft Paper #1 Due** | 11-12SL3   |  | | --- | | 11-12R1 |   11-12R6 |

Continuing the course theme of **The Construction of Knowledge**, readings in the **SECOND SEGMENT** of the coursecontinue to focus on how we learn. However, they expand on this theme by investigating what have we learned and why; what we haven’t learned and why; how knowledge changes over time and why; and how to learn and think more critically about new concepts and information, which is at the heart of college learning. Readings in this second segment also introduce the themes of some of the Book Project books read during the 40 weeks.

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| **Dates** | **Readings and Assignments** | **NYS ELA Standards** |
| Week of 11/14 | Adiche, Chimamanda. “The Danger of a Single Story.” YouTube, uploaded by  Ted Talks, 7 Oct. 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9Ihs241zeg>    Conferences and Revisions for Paper #1 | 11-12W7  11-12R1 |
| Week of 11/21  (2 days only) | Short Week – Thanksgiving  Continued Conferences and Revisions for Paper #1 | 11-12W6  11-12W7  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 11/28 | Brooks, David. “Harmony and the Dream.” *The Norton Sampler*, edited by Thomas Cooley, Norton and Company, 2010, pp.191-193.  **Paper #1 Due** | 11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12W1b  11-12SL1a  11-12SL1d  11-12W7 |
| Week of 12/5 | Loewen, James. “Introduction: Something Has Gone Very Wrong.” *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*. The New Press, 2007  Loewen, James. “Handicapped by History: The Process of Hero-Making.” *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*. The New Press, 2007. | 11-12R1  11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12SL1a  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 12/12 | Li, Yiyun. “Orange Crush.” The Norton sampler, edited by Thomas Cooley, Norton & Company, 2010, pp. 110-113  Chaffee, John. “Analyzing Five Different Accounts of the Assassination of Malcolm X.” *Thinking Critically: A Concise Guide*. Houghton Mifflin, 2004.  **Paper #2 introduced** | 11-12R1  11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12SL1a  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 12/19  (4 days only) | Lim, Louisa. “U.S. is Main Foe in North Korea’s ‘History’ Lessons.” *National Public Radio,* NPR.Org. 16 Oct. 2009. <http://www. npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=113833149&ps=cprs | 11-12R1  11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12SL1a  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 12/26 | **No School – Winter Break** |  |
| Week of 1/3 | Rosen, Christine. “The Myth of Multitasking.” *New Atlantis: A Journal of Technology & Society*, vol. 20, Spring 2008, pp. 105–110. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=33186635&site=ehost-live. | 11-12R1  11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12SL1a  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 1/9 | Sharot, Tali. “The Optimism Bias.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Ted Talks, 14 May 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8rmi95pYL0>  **Paper #2 Draft** | 11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12W1b  11-12SL1a  11-12SL1d  11-12W7 |
| Week of 1/16  (4 days only) | **Paper #2 Due** | 11-12W1b  11-12W7 |

*The* ***THIRD SEGMENT*** *of this course explores a particular approach to constructing knowledge: liberal arts and its focus on broad learning. Niagara University emphasizes liberal arts as well as career preparation. Niagara’s distinctive focus on liberal arts is evidenced through its requirement that all students, no matter what their major, take three courses in philosophy, three in religious studies, and one in history (HIS 199, American history from the end of World War II to the present). Our final course readings explore these three disciplines. Some readings discuss how to make the most of college and how to become a wiser student.*

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| **Dates** | **Readings and Assignments** | **NYS ELA Standards** |
| Week of 1/23 | **Library research instruction:** Using the *NY Times* Database for the NY Times Packet assignment | 11-12SL2  11-12SL4  11-12SL5  11-12L4  11-12L6 |
| Week of 1/30 | **Library research instruction**: Using EBSCO to find sources that discuss the value of liberal arts (in preparation for paper #3)  Review MLA Workshop | 11-12SL2  11-12SL4  11-12SL5  11-12L4  11-12L6  11-12W7  11-12L6 |
| Week of 2/6 | Turner, Kathleen J. “The Only Thing I’ve Learned: The Central Tenet of a Liberal Arts Education.” *Vital Speeches of the Day*, vol. 70, no. 16, 1 Jun. 2004, pp. 500-502. *Academic Search Premier*, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com>.  Review MLA Workshop | 11-12R1  11-12R4  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 2/13 | Bruni, Frank. “The End of College As We Knew It?” *New York Times*, 4 June 2020, p. SR6, <http://www.nytimes.com>  Selingo, Jeffrey J. “Colleges Need to Rethink their Market – and Maybe Their Mission.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 21 Feb. 2020, p. B9 | 11-12R1  11-12R4  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 2/21  (4 days only) | Atwood, Margaret. "Weekend Journal;  Essay: Debtor's Prism."*Wall Street*  *Journal*, Sep 20, 2008*. ProQuest*,  <https://ezproxy.niagara.edu/login?url>=  <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers>  /weekend-journal-essay-debtors-  prism/docview/399043954/se-  2?accountid=28213.  **Paper #3 introduced** | 11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12W1b |
| Week of 2/27 | Prothero, Stephen. “Worshipping in Ignorance.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 16 Mar. 2007, pp. B6-B7.  Writer Workshop  **Paper #3 conferences** | 11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12W1b  11-12SL1a |
| Week of 3/6 | James, George. “Why Study Philosophy?” *University of North Texas Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies*, 17 Jun. 2000,  <http://www.cep.unt.edu/philtalk.htm>.  Writer Workshop  **Paper #3 conferences** | 11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12W1b  11-12SL1a  11-12SL1d |
| Week of 3/13  (4 days only) | Jackson-Hayes, Loretta.  *We don't need more STEM majors.*  *We need more STEM majors with*  *liberal arts training.: The ability to*  *draw from other disciplines produces*  *better scientists.*WP Company LLC  d/b/a The Washington Post, 2015*.*  *ProQuest*, <https://ezproxy.niagara.edu/login>.  Writer Workshop  **Paper #3 conferences** | 11-12R7  11-12R8  11-12W1b  11-12SL1a  11-12SL1d  11-12W7 |
| Week of 3/20 | Book Talks – in preparation for committing to a book for the 40-week book project  **Paper #3 due** | 11-12SL1a  11-12R9 |

**Fourth and Final Segment – Independent Book Project**

The Book Project, which is the basis for the 40-week grade (at Niagara University it would be 20% of the grade for the 15-week class), is designed to help you develop the habit of regular reading while exploring an important issue. You will read **ONE** of the high-interest books selected by the university that explore important social, historical, or political issues through compelling stories. These books come from a variety of genres, time periods, and cultures, so be sure to do a bit of research on each text before submitting your preferences. Our in-class book talks toward the end of the 30-week marking period will have helped you to make an informed decision. To increase your understanding of your book, you will also find two articles in the *New York Times* to gain a better understanding of the social, historical, political, and geographical context of your book.

**Reading Your Book**

Ideally, start reading your book as soon as you know your assigned text. To determine when you should start reading you book, consider your own reading pace, the book’s length, your assignments in other courses, and any outside responsibilities you may have

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| **Dates** | **Readings and Assignments** | **NYS ELA Standards** |
| Week of 3/27 | Independent Reading Book Assignment  **New York Times Research Assignment #1** | 11-12W5  11-12R4 |
| Week of 4/3 | *Spring Break – Students read independently* |  |
| Week of 4/10 | *Spring Break – Students read independently* |  |
| Week of 4/17 | Plato. *The Republic*. Translated by Benjamin  Jowett, Lerner Publishing  Group,2018.*ProQuest Ebook Central*,  <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/niagara-ebooks/detail.action?docID=5444385>, pp. 168-173. | 11-12R5  11-12W2  1-12SL1b  11-12SL1c |
| Week of 4/24 | Reading Group Meeting One – Setting, author’s purpose, socio-political significance  **New York Times Research Assignment #2** | 11-12W5  11-12R4 |
| Week of 5/1 | Independent reading continues and small group instruction with close reading | 11-12R4  11-12R2  11-12R3 |
| Week of 5/8 | Reading Group Meetings /Two – Language, diction, syntax, and tone | 11-12SL4  11-12SL5  11-12SL6  11-12R4 |
| Week of 5/15 | Independent reading continues and small group instruction with close reading  Reading Group Meetings /Three (final) – planning for presentations | 11-12R4  11-12R2   |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | |
| Week of 5/22 | Group Book Presentations: Literary Elements  University Created Independent Reading Book Comprehension Exam | 11-12SL4  11-12SL5  11-12SL6  11-12R4 |
| Week of 5/30  (4 days) | University Created Independent Reading Book Comprehension Exam  Independent Reading Book Presentations and Course Evaluations | 11-12SL1  11-12R9 |
| Week of 6/5 | Independent Reading Book Presentations and Course Evaluations | |  | | --- | | 11-12R1  11-12R9 | | |  | | --- | |  | | |
| Week of 6/12  Final Week/End | Independent Reading Book Presentations and Course Evaluations | 11-12W6  11-12L3  11-12SL6  11-12SL5 |

**🕮 🕮 40 WEEK BOOK PROJECT 🕮 🕮**

The Book Project is designed to help you develop the habit of regular reading while exploring an important issue. You will read **ONE** of these high-interest books that explore important social, historical, or political issues through compelling stories. These books come from a variety of genres, time periods, and cultures, so we will discuss each book in class before you have to choose. I’ve included a brief synopsis of each in the table on the next page.

Reading your book may help you think more critically about issues we will discuss in class. To increase your understanding of your book, you will also find two articles in the *New York Times* to gain a better understanding of the social, historical, political, and geographical context of your book.

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| The **Book Project** consists of two parts:     1. **A Presentation**, explained below. 2. **Comprehension test**: **You will take this test in class (see course schedule).** |

**Reading Your Book**

Ideally, start reading your book as soon as you know your assigned text. To determine when you should start reading you book, consider your own reading pace, the book’s length, your assignments in other courses, and any outside responsibilities you may have. As you read, jot notes on stick-on notes.

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| **CRL 101**  **Independent Reading Selections** | | | | | | |
| **Title** | **Cover Image of Correct Edition** | **ISBN: *Please use this edition!*** | **Author** | **Genre** | **Topic(s)** | **Setting** |
| *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* |  | 0143107305 | Frederick Douglass | Autobiography | How Douglass escaped slavery in 19th century America | United States in the early to mid-1800’s |
| *Dear Zari* |  | 1402268378 | Zarghuna Kargar | Narrative non-fiction | Stories of women in Afghanistan, shared on a BBC radio show titled *Afghan Woman’s Hour* | Afghanistan in the late 90’s/2000’s |
| *First They Killed My Father* |  | 0060856262 | Loung Ung | Memoir | Khmer Rouge’s brutal takeover of Cambodia in 1975 and the events that followed | Cambodia in the 1970’s |
| *Nectar in a Sieve* |  | 0451531728 | Kamala Markandaya | Fiction | The effects of industrialization and urbanization in rural 1950’s India on the narrator’s family and neighbors, who have to learn to cope with a changing world | India in the mid-1900’s |
| *The Grass Dancer* |  | 0425159531 | Susan Power | Magical realism | Follows generations of Sioux living on a reservation in North Dakota through interconnected stories from the 1800’s to the present | Sioux lands in North Dakota, 1800’s to the present |
| *The Shift* |  | 1616206020 | Theresa Brown | Narrative non-fiction | 24 hours in the life of an oncology nurse | A hospital in Pittsburgh, PA, modern day |
| *The Joy Luck Club* |  | 0143038095 | Amy Tan | Fiction | Sixteen interlocking stories about the lives of four Chinese immigrant mothers and their four American-born daughters | San Francisco, CA in the mid- 20th century |
| *God’s Middle Finger* |  | 1416534407 | Richard Grant | Travel | An account of the people and places the author meets on a trip across the violent, dangerous and largely ungoverned Sierra Madre region of Mexico near the Mexico/US border | Sierra Madre region of Mexico, 2000’s |
| *Born a Crime* |  | 0399588191 | Trevor Noah | Memoir | A memoir of Noah’s struggle as a mixed race child, which was considered a crime in South Africa at the time, thus the book’s title. The narrative depicts his struggles growing up in a violent household during the period of apartheid in South Africa. | South Africa, late 20th century |

**Individual Presentation**

The final component of the independent reading project is a 7-10 minute presentation. In your presentation, you will have the opportunity to share what you’ve learned about the historical, social, or political contexts of your assigned text. You will also discuss the ways in which your author makes use of themes and concepts from the course, such as tone, attention to audience, imagery and detail, voice, and organization—just to name a few.

*More details will be provided during the 40-week marking period.*