**English 4 – 1st Independent Reading Assignment (100 “Project” points)**

For your first independent reading assignment, choose a book that you haven’t already read from the list below and complete four journal responses and one “creative” response to the work. Each book on the list is loosely related to an overarching theme we have been (and will be) studying through the Transcendentalists, *Into the Wild*, and the Beats—the individual’s search for the self within (or outside of) society.

* *Dharma Bums*, Jack Kerouac
* *Fight Club*, Chuck Palahniuk
* *Walden*, Henry David Thoreau (the whole thing)
* *The Hours*, Michael Cunningham
* *Bee Season*, Myla Goldberg
* *Fortress of Solitude*, Jonathan Lethem
* *Everything is Illuminated*, Jonathan Safran Foer
* *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*, Tom Robbins
* *Song of Solomon*, Toni Morrison
* *The Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison
* *The Saskiad*, Brian Hall
* *Animal Dreams*, Barbara Kingsolver
* *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, Dave Eggers
* *Motherless Brooklyn*, Jonathan Lethem
* *Reservation Blues*, Sherman Alexie
* *Caucasia*, Danzy Senza
* *The Rain God*, Arturo Islas
* *She's Come Undone*, Wally Lamb
* *China Boy*, Gus Lee
* *The World According to Garp*, John Irving
* *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, John Irving
* *Black Boy*, Richard Wright
* A different idea? See or email me for approval; the book must be related to the theme.

**Journal Responses:**

You will write **four** journal responses, equally spaced throughout your book (i.e., if the book is 200 pages long, write a response for every 50 pages or so; *label the page range for each response*). Each one should be **typed, at least two double-spaced pages in length, and include two quotations**. You don’t necessarily have to do a “close reading” of these quotations, but your responses should reflect some deep thinking about and analysis of the quotations. Your responses must **address the “search for the self” theme**, but feel free to also write about other aspects of the book that are interesting to you.

**Creative Response:**

This could be a painting or other piece of visual art illustrating or inspired by the book, creative writing (poem, short story, script, etc.) or a song (written and recorded or performed by you) related to the book, a mix CD with a thematic tie-in to the book, or…? Please see or email me for approval of an alternative creative response idea.

**Due dates:**

* Select a book by **Tuesday, September 21st**
* Complete and turn in all work by **Friday, October 29th**