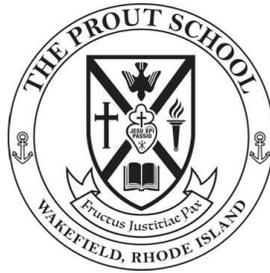


# Prout School Summer Reading 2017



Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Prout School encourages students and families to continue reading during the summer months. Literacy research has shown that students often tend to experience the “summer slide” which is a slowing down in reading abilities, vocabulary, comprehension, and focus. This phenomenon is a tendency for students to lose some of the achievement gains they made the previous school year by not reading over the summer. This summer slide will frequently cause students to be less prepared for the academic expectations for the next school year. We want ALL students to have the same chance for academic success from the very first day of school!

Summer reading matters in other ways, too. “Reading empowers critical thinking skills. It can enhance empathy and lead to greater understanding of people who are different from ourselves, and it can help us appreciate other points of view”. (California Library Association) When parents/guardians are able to read the books their children have been assigned for summer reading, the experience can foster wonderful family discussions and build great reading memories. Familial modeling the importance of year round reading will encourage teenagers in becoming lifelong readers.

Reading is an important part of everyday life! The more our students read, the better readers they will be. If you have any questions pertaining to the summer reading, please feel free to contact Miss Mary Hoyt: [mhoyt@theproutschool.org](mailto:mhoyt@theproutschool.org).



## **SUMMER READING 2017 ENGLISH GRADE NINE CP**

READ THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE BOOKS AND THE GUIDING QUESTIONS  
*BEFORE YOU BEGIN READING EACH BOOK.*

Keep the questions at hand as you read and take notes, in the books, if they are yours, or on paper. **Answers to the questions SHOULD NOT be written out.** Guiding questions are just to help students with more effective comprehension.

### **Assessment – first full day of classes:**

You will be asked to respond to short answer questions related to the Guiding Questions.

**All students must choose *two* of the following four books to read over the summer.** Use the guiding questions as you read. If you have already read any of these books, select two you haven't read.

***TUNES FOR BEARS TO DANCE TO* (Robert Cormier)**

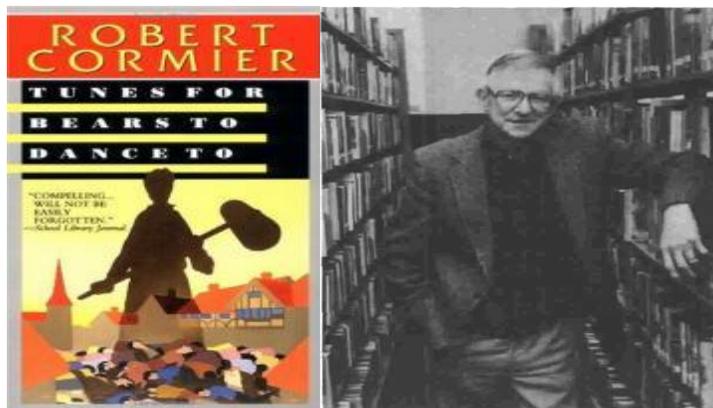
***FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON* (Daniel Keyes)**

***INCANTATION* (Alice Hoffman)**

***PORT CHICAGO 50* (Steve Sheinkin)**

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***TUNES for BEARS TO DANCE TO* (Robert Cormier)**



Robert Cormier was born and raised in Leominster, Massachusetts. He was a newspaper reporter and columnist for thirty years. His love for writing began early. As a young kid he always remembers writing stories, “in the seventh grade...I can’t remember a time when I wasn’t trying to get something down on paper.” Cormier has written numerous books for young adults and has won many awards. He died in 2000.

Taken from [www.classzone.com](http://www.classzone.com); LANGUAGE ARTS NOVELGUIDE

## NOVEL

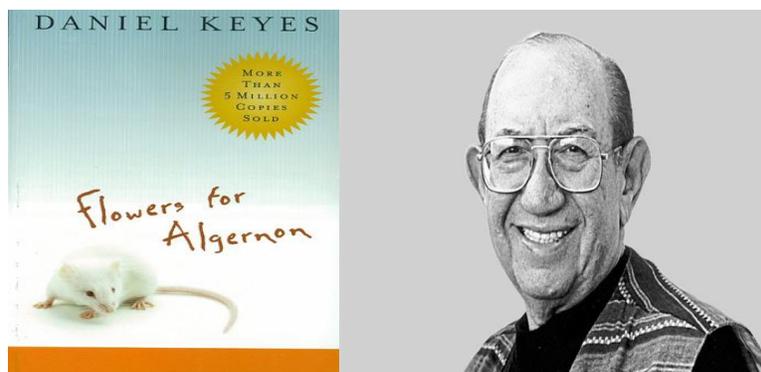
Henry is a young boy whose brother dies and his family is struggling with the grief. His dad is in the throes of a nervous breakdown and his mother is trying to hold the family together with her waitressing job. Henry works at the local grocery store for a very prejudiced man named Mr. Hairston. Henry also befriends Mr. Levine, a holocaust survivor on a mission to accept his past. Mr. Hairston asks Henry to do something he’ll regret and bribes him with the promise of buying a headstone for his brother’s grave. This is something the family could never afford.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. There are many ways we find out what a character is like. What is Mr. Hairston like and how do we know this?
2. After surviving the concentration camps, Mr. Levine is determined to regain some peace of mind by rebuilding his village. What is this miniature village like?
3. Prejudice is the prejudging of a person before even knowing them. Where does prejudice come from? How can it be stopped?
4. At the end of the story Henry has to make a choice. What are his choices and what is the outcome? What would you have done? Why?

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## **FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON (Daniel Keyes)**



Daniel Keyes was born in 1927 in Brooklyn, New York. He earned his bachelor's and master's degree from Brooklyn College. After college, he worked as a teacher of the developmentally disabled. This is where he acquired his idea for writing a short story about a mentally handicapped man who has his intelligence tripled through an experiment.. "Flowers for Algernon" (the short story) was published in 1959, winning the Hugo Award for best story of the year.

In 1961 the short story was made into a movie entitled *The Two Worlds of Charlie Gordon*. By 1966 Keyes had expanded the short story into a novel winning the Nebula Award for best science fiction novel.

Flowers for Algernon was Keyes' only success. He went on to write three other novels and publish three works of journalism.

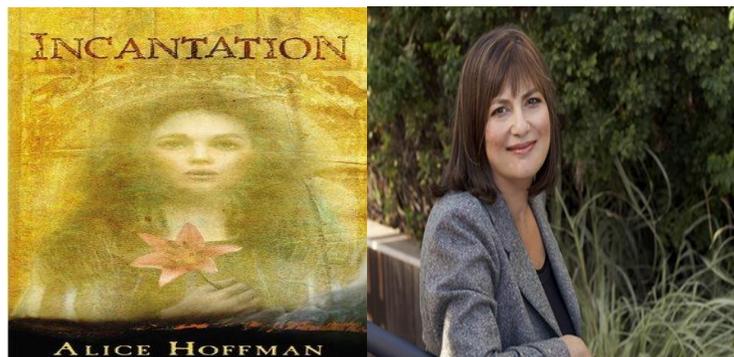
## NOVEL

Flowers for Algernon is the story of a young mentally challenged man named Charlie Gordon, who volunteers to undergo an operation to triple his intelligence. The story is written in journal style and traces his development from innocence to intelligence. He is in constant competition with a mouse named Algernon, who has also had the operation. Charlie struggles to find happiness and peace.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe Charlie Gordon in the beginning of the story? What is he like? Who are his friends? Is he generally a happy person? In what ways does his personality change during the course of the novel?
2. As Charlie progresses, how do his relationships with Miss Kinnion and his co-workers change? Why do you think this happens?
3. Modern science can do just about anything but increase intelligence. If it were possible to triple your intelligence, would you have the operation? Why or why not? What would be some benefits to having it done, what would be some disadvantages?

## **INCANTATION (Alice Hoffman)**



In 1953 Alice Hoffman was born in New York City. She received her Undergraduate degree from Adelphi University and a Masters degree at Stanford. Her novel **INCANTATION**, is a nominee for the Rhode Island Teen Book Award in 2008. She currently lives in Boston and New York.

\*Taken from the Rhode Island Teen Book Award Web site.

## NOVEL

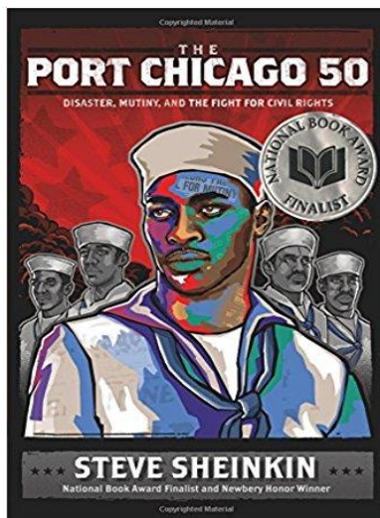
**INCANTATION** is set in Spain during the Inquisition. During this time, the Jews were being driven out of Spain or killed, much like what Hitler did in Germany during WW II. The main character is a sixteen-year-old named Estrella who, as a Catholic, frightfully watches what happens to Jews in her neighborhood. Eventually, she comes to find out a dark secret that her family has been keeping for many years. Will this secret destroy the family?

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What kind of a relationship does Estrella have with Catalina in the beginning of the novel? How does it change over the course of time?
2. The neighbors seem to be on a witch-hunt. Discuss how they treat people they are suspicious of?
3. How do some people stand up for what they believe in and how do others just go along with the crowd? Which is easier to do and why? What are the consequences of both actions?

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## **PORT CHICAGO 50 (Steve Sheinkin)**



“I was born in Brooklyn, NY, and my family lived in Mississippi and Colorado before moving back to New York and settling in the suburbs north of New York City. As a kid my favorite books were action stories and outdoor adventures: sea stories, searches for buried treasure, sharks eating people... that kind of thing. Probably my all-time favorite was a book called *Mutiny on the Bounty*, a novel based on the true story of a famous mutiny aboard a British ship in the late 1700s.

I went to Syracuse University and studied communications and international relations. The highlight of those years was a summer I spent in Central America, where I worked on a documentary on the streets of Nicaragua.

After college I moved to Washington, D.C., and worked for an environmental group called the National Audubon Society. Then, when my brother Ari graduated from college a few years later, we decided to move to Austin, Texas, and make movies together. We lived like paupers in a house with a hole in the floor where bugs crawled in. After that I moved to Brooklyn and decided to find some way to make a living as a writer. I wrote short stories, screenplays, and worked on a comic called *The Adventures of Rabbi Harvey*. In 2006, after literally hundreds of rejections, my first Rabbi Harvey graphic novel was finally published.

Meanwhile, I started working for an educational publishing company, just for the money. We'd hire people to write history textbooks, and they'd send in their writing, and it was my job to check facts and make little edits to clarify the text. These days, I live with my wife, Rachel, and our two young kids in Saratoga Springs, New York. We're right down the road from the Saratoga National Historical Park, the site of Benedict Arnold's greatest – and last – victory in an American uniform. But that's not why I moved here. Honestly.” (from the author's website: <http://stevesheinkin.com/about/>)

### ***PORT CHICAGO 50* by Steve Sheinkin**

#### **Brief summary:**

**At Port Chicago, a naval base in California where bombs were loaded and shipped to the Pacific during WWII, a massive explosion killed over 300 sailors in 1944. Months later, the Navy assigned only black sailors to return to duty there and many refused. This is the story of their refusal and subsequent trial. It is considered by many to be one of the earliest civil rights protests in American history.**

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What does the opening story of Mess Attendant Dorie Miller say about how the soldiers of color were treated in the navy during WWII?
2. In what ways were the jobs the soldiers performed unsafe?
3. Describe how the men refused to go back to the port. How did their protest begin? Did everyone join in? How did the Navy respond?
4. Research Thurgood Marshall and write a paragraph on him. What was the final outcome of the trial? Do you think justice was served? Why /why not?

