

**Carpe Librum *Seize the Book***  
**Literary Merit Badges**

You can learn about a wide variety of genres and subjects as you earn Literary Merit Badges. In the 2018-19 school year, there are 18 merit badges, and any Roseville Area High School student may earn any of these at any time.

**Pick a Subject.** Talk to your English teacher about your interests. Read the requirements of the merit badges you think might interest you, and pick one to earn. Identify the name of the teacher who is sponsoring the badge at the end of each badge description. These individuals have special knowledge in their merit badge subjects and are interested in helping you.

**Meet with the Merit Badge Sponsor Teacher.** Get an Application for a Merit Badge from Ms Dahlin in B217. Get in touch with the merit badge sponsor teacher and explain that you want to earn the badge. The sponsor teacher will clearly explain what is expected and start helping you meet the requirements.

Unless otherwise specified, work on a badge can be started at any time. Ask your sponsor teacher to help you develop ideas and find resources that will meet the requirements. You should take careful notes that address the requirements of the badge as you do your work.

**Show Your Stuff.** When you are ready, meet with the sponsor teacher again to make an appointment to review and discuss your work. When you go to demonstrate your work take along the things you have written, read, performed, or created to meet the requirements. If they are too big to move or an experience that happened elsewhere, take pictures or video record what you have done. The sponsor teacher will review and discuss with you each requirement to make sure you know your stuff and have done or can do the things required. If you demonstrate only partial knowledge or have only partially completed the work, you may be asked to continue working to fulfill the requirements.

**Get the Badge/Button.** When the sponsor teacher is satisfied you have met each requirement, he or she will sign your application. Give the signed application to Ms Dahlin in room B217 so your merit badge can be secured for you. You should receive the button within two weeks.

**Requirements.** You are expected to meet the requirements as they are stated—no more and no less. You must do exactly what is stated in the requirements. If it says “show or demonstrate,” that is what you must do. Just telling about it isn’t enough. The same thing holds true for such words as “make,” “list,” “analyze” and “collect,” “identify,” and “label.”

The requirements listed below are the current and official requirements of the Literary Merit Badges 2018-19. If a student has already started working on a merit badge when a new edition of the pamphlet is introduced, the student may continue to work to meet the requirements specified on their badge application to earn the badge, they need not start over again with the new pamphlet and revised requirements.

There is no time limit for starting and completing a merit badge, but all work must be completed by the time a student graduates from RAHS.

**Academic Letter** Any student who successfully earns 6 or more badges and creates a public display for the media center / Roseville Library by May 1, 2019, is eligible for an academic letter.

**Literary Merit Badges** available in 2018-19

### **1 - Ancient Meets Modern**

1. Choose a book written before the Renaissance that is NOT part of RAHS curriculum. It can be philosophy, drama, epic poetry, poetry, essays, meditations, or a religious text.
2. As you read, take notes on anything that seems connected to our current world. Identify at least one personal connection to your life, one artistic connection to art or music, and one connection to larger social, scientific, religious or political world..
3. Write a short piece to submit to the RAHS newspaper that helps other students see the way in which you found writing from the ancient world relevant to your world today.
4. Set up an appointment with Ms. Dahlin in room B217 to share your work.

### **2 – Big Books**

1. Read a big book (450+ pages) of either fiction or nonfiction. See Mr. Engelking for suggestions if you need it; see him anyway to get approval of your book choice.
2. Mark up a passage from the book that a shorter work might not have included and briefly explain why you think it was left in.
3. Design a chart showing three or four parts of the book that could have been safely cut, and three or four parts of the book that could have been even longer.
4. Set up an appointment with Mr. Engelking in room B216 to discuss your chart and talk about the passage you chose.

### **3 – Books We Read For School Are Usually Boring, But *This Wasn't Bad***

1. Read a work of fiction or a collection of non-fiction by an author you have discovered in one of your English classes here at RAHS. For example, if you liked F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, you could choose to read his novel *This Side of Paradise*.
2. Design a poster/mind map that shows the ways in which the new work you've read is EITHER similar to (in subject, theme, style, attitude, etc.) OR different from the first thing you read by the author.
3. Write a brief (1-page) response explaining why you like this author, or whether you still like this author after you've read more of their work.
4. Set up an appointment with Mr. Engelking in room B216 to discuss your poster and commentary.

#### **4 – Caribbean, Central American and South American Literature**

1. Read a book from a Central American, Caribbean, or South American author. Note: chances are high that this book will be translated into English from another language.
2. Choose one passage that contains a cultural tradition or other cultural information that either a) puzzles you, or b) you have not previously read about in other literature classes. (Ex: what's with all the stuff about the banana plantation in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*?) Research this information and write a brief (1 page MAXIMUM) explanation of this tradition or information.
3. Write a second short (1-page) reaction to the novel that explains how it expands or adds to your idea of what American literature is.
4. Set up an appointment with Mr. Engelking in room B216 to share your work.

#### **5 – For the Love of Food**

1. Choose a book set in another culture that makes consistent references to food - can be fiction, non-fiction, poetry - and read it, taking notes on role of food.
2. Find a recipe for one of the dishes mentioned, research the ingredients and history of that dish, traditional cooking techniques, and then make the dish and share it with others.
3. Document your cooking and eating by photos or video.
4. Describe how your understanding of the culture and the book you read changed because of your experience actually making the food.
5. Set up an appointment with Ms. Dahlin in B217 to share your work.

#### **6 – The Heart of Transcendentalism**

1. Print, read, and annotate any two chapters of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. What do you notice? What is confusing? What is the author trying to convey?  
[http://literatureproject.com/walden/walden\\_5.htm](http://literatureproject.com/walden/walden_5.htm)
2. Print, read, and annotate Chapter I from Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay "Nature."  
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/29433/29433-h/29433-h.htm>
3. Print, read, and annotate any three poems from American poet Mary Oliver.
4. Spend 60 minutes in a natural setting (e.g. a nature center or a state or regional park). Spend those 60 minutes outside, by yourself, in a place with some nature, without any books or electronic diversions. The goal is to forget about all the things you have to do and let go of modern distractions and tune into the natural world. Pay attention to the little things around you and give your mind a chance to hear itself think. After you get back, write down where you went, what you saw and heard (be really specific), what you thought about, and how it felt to be out there. (minimum two paragraphs/ten complete sentences)
5. Set up an appointment with Mr. MacGillis in room C214 to share the results of your study and outdoor experience.

## **7 – The Journey of a Lifetime**

1. Read a novel, memoir, play, or epic poem about an extended physical journey or travel. The piece of literature should center around a single character or small group of characters undertaking the journey, and who grow or change because of their travels.
2. Create an itinerary for a trip YOU could undertake one day. This itinerary must include:
  - a. A statement of purpose (What you hope to gain or how you hope to grow on this trip).
  - b. A list of activities to be done and sites to be seen in each location.
  - c. A daily itinerary detailing specific locations, modes of travel between locations, and sleeping arrangements.
  - d. A proposed budget taking into account estimated costs for travel, accommodation, and activities.
3. Compile your itinerary with visuals into a pamphlet, poster, or Google slides presentation, as if you were proposing your trip to a board or organization that will grant you the funds for the trip if you convince them to.
4. Set up an appointment with Mr. Lane in room D112 to share your work.

## **8 – Laugh Track**

1. Choose a book written by a favorite comedian and read it - taking notes on what makes it funny to you and how you connect personally to the book and/or author.
2. Find a performance, video/movie, or podcast by the same comedian and watch/listen to it.
3. Write a (minimum 3 minutes) set of stand-up comedy based on what you learned about yourself and/or life and society from reading and watching/listening to this comedian. Perform it in front of at least six people and video record your set.
4. Describe how you were influenced by the comedian you chose and what you learned about comedic performance from completing this task.
5. Set up an appointment with Ms. Ormseth in room C215 to share your work.

## **9 – Modern Japanese Literature**

1. Read a novel written by a Japanese author after 1895. Because of different cultural norms, sex and violence could be presented in much different and more graphic ways than is typical in American literature. Be sure that you have your family's approval for whatever book you choose.
2. Where does the novel take place? Go and research the geography, history, current population, and industries of the setting.
3. As you read take notes on the ways that the novel portrays the ideas of duty, individuality, and the perception of reality. Describe how the characters demonstrate and / or struggle with these ideas.
4. What themes do you think the novel is trying to communicate? (Recall that a theme is a complete statement about a subject.)

5. Set up a meeting with Ms Dahlin in room B217 to share and discuss your work.

### **10 – Moving Images**

1. Choose a topic you are interested in reading about. Find and read a book of poems or short stories organized around a topic of your choosing. Your selection must include at least one poem/story from an author from outside of Europe and North America and at least one author who is still alive. Take notes on images used and meanings created around your topic.

2. Find examples of art - this can include video, photography, painting, sculptures, installations, etc. - that reflect the images used in your poems.

3. Create a new piece of work that mixes together both examples of art and words from the poetry. This could be a video, collage, or composited image.

4. Describe how mixing the words and art changed your understanding of the topic and some of its thematic elements.

5. Set up an appointment with Ms Stahlman in room C212 to share your work.

### **11 – Music To Your Eyes**

1. Read a book about music, preferably one from this list:

[https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/87326.Words\\_Music\\_Pitchfork\\_Staff\\_s\\_60\\_Favorite\\_Music\\_Books](https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/87326.Words_Music_Pitchfork_Staff_s_60_Favorite_Music_Books)

2. Listen to one of the albums mentioned (but not thoroughly discussed) in the book you chose and write a 125-200 word capsule review of it. A capsule review is a relatively short (1-2 paragraph) response to a book/movie/album that describes both the overall impression of the work of art as well as a few specific details. Tone and diction can vary according as necessary; it doesn't need to be 100% serious or 100% jokey.

3. Listen to one of the *songs* mentioned (but not thoroughly discussed) in the book you chose and write a 125-250 word reaction to it.

4. Set up a time to talk to Mr. Engelking about the 3-4 most important or significant details about music, composition, the performers, or the era covered in the book. (You can give him your two short reviews as well.)

### **12 – New Voices in Fantasy and Science Fiction novels**

1. These are two of the most popular genres for high school readers, yet the authors students tend to pick up are remarkably limited - Tolkien, Rowling, Martin, and Herbert dominate. Yet there are so many other amazing choices out there. Research lists of current science fiction and fantasy books and authors and choose a novel to read that falls outside the common canon of these genres.

2. Keep track of the ways that the novel both followed common expectations and how it offered something new.

3. Research the author and their thoughts and motivations for writing the novel and write a journal entry exploring your views of how it connects to our world.
4. Meet with Ms Dahlin in B217 to share and discuss your work.

### **13 – Page to Stage**

1. Choose a work of drama (meant for the stage) that is not a part of RAHS curriculum. Brainstorm how you would put the work on the stage if you were a director, producer, or performer. Think casting, setting, blocking, etc.
2. Find a film adaptation or stage production of the play and watch it.
3. Write a short piece about how you envisioned the play as you read it versus how the director put it together in the production you watched. Some questions to consider: How were the visions similar or different? What surprised you in their interpretation? What did you want more/less of? Were there creative choices in staging that made themes or characters clearer than a reading on the page? Would you cast it differently?
4. Set up an appointment with Mr. Hemmerlin in room B219 to share your work.

### **14 – The Poetry Slam**

1. Read a published poetry book by a performance (slam) poet. Suggested publishers to find full-length books include Write Bloody, Button Poetry, Where Are You Press, Penguin, and GrayWolf. Ms. Helmick & the RAHS Media Center have several you can borrow.
2. Attend a poetry slam. Suggested: TruArt Speaks/Be Heard MN Youth Poetry Slam series. Take notes on what you noticed about the poetry *and* the performance.
3. Write your own slam poem. It needs to be at least 30 lines on any subject of your choice. Record yourself performing (privately or publicly).
4. Meet with Ms. Helmick in room C220 to discuss the poetry book, the poetry slam, and to show your own slam poetry performance.

### **15 – Political Punditry**

1. Read a book or a collection of essays or articles about a social, political, or international issue you care about. The reading should be non-fiction and timely for current world events.
2. Listen to a podcast or watch a documentary that relates to the same issue.
3. Write an article or letter to the editor for a relevant outlet referencing the piece and advocating a position on an issue. This may be a newspaper, a magazine, an online magazine, a blog entry, etc. Be thoughtful about your potential audience - try to convince others!
4. Set up an appointment with Ms. Madson in room B121 (afternoons only) to share your work.

### **16 – The Serious Russians**

1. Read a novel written by a Russian author. They tend to be long and they tend to be serious. Know this going in.

2. As you read, identify one social issue the author seems to be addressing and find at least three significant quotes about it in the book.
3. When you are finished, research the author's life. Write a short description of how the events the author experienced first hand are reflected in the novel.
4. Design a poster to market the book to current readers. Include: a relevant image, an important quote from the story, quotes from famous people who liked the book, a 1 sentence summary designed to interest other readers.
5. Set up an appointment with Ms Dahlin in room B217 to share your work.

### **17 – Social Justice through a Young Adult Lens**

1. Read a young adult book (fiction or nonfiction) related to the themes of equity and social justice. This book should include voices that have historically been absent from school curriculum required reading.
2. Write a letter to one of the characters (at least 2 pages in which you explore and respond to the characters, events, themes in the book as well as identify and reflect on a social justice issue currently happening in our community).
3. Make a list of 25 things you (or someone like you) can do right now to help promote equity and social justice in our community.
4. Set up an appointment with Ms Clercx in room B102 to share your work.

### **18 – Visual Art and its Creators**

1. Read a book about someone who creates visual art (sculpture, painting, fashion, pottery, performance art, etc.)
2. Look up and examine five of the pieces discussed in the book.
3. Write a description of your reaction to these pieces. Do they emotionally touch or move you in some way? Why or why not?
4. Identify an artist that was influential to this artist OR an artist who found this artist influential and examine 3 pieces of their work. Write a short analysis of how you can trace the influence of the other person.
5. Set up an appointment with Ms Dahlin in room B217 to share your work.