Dear Students and Parents,

In Literature and Composition, we will explore the American Dream through the context of three essential questions:

1. What commonalities exist in immigrants’ American Dreams?
2. Why do individuals succeed or fail in achieving their American Dreams?
3. What potential barriers do immigrants and minorities face, and what makes them barriers?

In order to explore these questions, we will be reading Lorraine Hansberry’s *A Raisin in the Sun* as a mentor text in class, meaning we will complete the reading and analysis during the school day.

Simultaneously, students will read a novel of their choosing. The novel must include immigrants or minorities seeking to succeed in America. The novel may be either fiction or non-fiction; connections between the individual choice novel and the common mentor text will be essential for ongoing small and large group discussions as we seek to thoroughly explore these questions.

The English department has multiple copies of the following fiction and memoirs for students to read in this unit:

1. *An Island Like You* Judith Ortiz Cofer
2. *The House on Mango Street* Sandra Cisneros
3. *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* Betty Smith
4. *Bless Me, Ultima\** Rudolfo Anaya
5. *Bodega Dreams\** Ernersto Quinonez
6. *Caucasia* Danzy Senna
7. *Gang Leader for a Day\** Sudhir Venkatesh
8. *Forty Years in a Day* Mona Rodriguez & Dianne Vigorito
9. *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents\** Julia Alvarez
10. *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* Jamie Ford & James Ford
11. *Joy Luck Club* Amy Tan
12. *My Antonia* Willa Cather
13. *Parrot in the Oven* Victor Martinez
14. *Pioneers* Willa Cather
15. *Snow Falling on Cedars\** David Guterson
16. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* Sherman Alexie
17. *The Journal of Ben Uchida* Barry Denenberg
18. *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* Sherman Alexie
19. *The Tortilla Curtain\** T. Corghessan Boyle
20. *When I was Puerto Rican* Esmeralda Santiago
21. *Yellow Raft in Blue Water* Michael Dorris

\*The novels marked with an asterisk deal with adult content: (1) adult situations and/or (2) language.

If your teenager selects one of the novels with an asterisk, please have him or her return the attached permission slip acknowledging you are aware he or she is reading one of the more adult novels.

These are choices, not mandatory reading. Students can always select a different novel (although the teacher must approve it) in order to achieve the learning targets.

Thank You,

Lucas Cleary

**Reading Permission Slip**

I have asked my son or daughter why he or she wants to read the novel he or she has selected and give permission for my son or daughter to read the novel

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which deals with adult situations.

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Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_