Hello, Modern Lit Students! Before we start the course in August, we would like for you to read Kazuo Ishiguro’s widely acclaimed, dystopian, science fiction novel *Never Let Me Go*. Not exactly a light, summer, beach read, but we promise it is a very cool, very worthwhile read. It also serves to establish some of the dominant themes that we explore in Modern Lit, and it allows us to develop our critical thinking and academic discussion skills. Feel free to purchase your own copy to annotate (*ISBN-10: 9781400078776*), but that is not a requirement.

Here’s what we would like for you to do over the summer:

1. **Read the novel** in its entirety.
2. **Get into it.** By that we mean read for long stretches with your phone put completely away and silent. Give the novel your undivided attention. Think of *Never Let Me Go* like a friend: it needs your full engagement to be understood, to feel “real.” We will expect you to be able to recall events and summarize the novel during whole-class discussion, so please pay attention when you read.
3. **Think about themes** (universal ideas) you see emerging. In other words, as you are reading, what ideas keep coming up? Jot **at least three** down in a notebook that you will use for our class.
4. Now, **what events or characters support those themes**? In that same notebook, write down page numbers where you found your support.
5. **Connect your findings to another text** (*book, film, play, etc.*). Where do you see these themes playing out in those works? Write those connections down in your notebook.
6. Finally, be ready to **share your findings on the second day of class** in a whole-class discussion (Socratic Circle style).

Your grade on this assignment is based on your **thoughtful and well-prepared contributions to class discussion.**

See the rubric below for how we will assess you.

**Curriculum Standard:** *Using appropriate text, determine two or more themes in a text, analyze their development throughout the text, and relate the themes to other texts, human nature, and the world; provide an objective and concise summary of the text.*

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<th>4 (50 points)</th>
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<td>The student demonstrates mastery of the standard by contributing at least two thoroughly prepared, well-supported, deeply-connected ideas to class discussion.</td>
<td>The student demonstrates a basic understanding of the standard by contributing at least two prepared, supported, connected ideas to class discussion.</td>
<td>The student attempted to, but did not, demonstrate a basic understanding of the standard; contribution(s) were not well-prepared, supported or connected.</td>
<td>The student did not demonstrate a basic understanding of the standard; contribution(s) were inadequate in number, and not well-prepared, supported or connected.</td>
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**NOTE:** CHECK YOUR EMAIL FOR TWO OPTIONAL MEETING DATES OVER THE SUMMER TO MEET WITH US AND DISCUSS THE BOOK. :)

We have extensive experience with academic discussion, so please do not try to “wing it” by only watching the film (yes, there is one) or reading Shmoop. It devalues your experience and may negatively affect your performance on this assignment. You should also anticipate other assessments (quizzes and/or written responses) over the entire novel within the first few days of the semester.