

Isle of Wight Academy
2026 Required Summer Reading Novel List
12th Grade - Regular Classes (not AP)

The goals of the summer reading assignments for IWA are to improve literacy and to promote lifelong reading. As students grow and mature, they need to continually practice their reading skills. The lists are based on recommendations from classroom teachers, librarians, and students. Each reading selection has an assignment designed to enhance the reading, thought processes, and message of the selection.

Read ***Make Your Bed*** by Admiral William H. McRaven

Make Your Bed is based on Admiral William H. McRaven's commencement speech for the graduating class from the University of Texas at Austin. In it, McRaven shares the ten lessons he learned from Navy SEAL training. They are simple lessons that deal with overcoming the trials of SEAL training, but the ten lessons are equally important in dealing with the challenges of life—no matter who you are.

Assignment:

Complete the attached packet below during the reading of each chapter of the novel.

Please print it out and turn it in on the first day of school.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

***Make Your Bed* - Chapter 1**

"Start Your Day with a Task Completed"

What are the four characteristics of the people who have inspired Admiral McRaven?

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| a. _____ | b. _____ |
| c. _____ | d. _____ |

1. If you want to change the world ...

- a. start off by making your mom coffee.
- b. start off by following the rules and being respectful.
- c. start off by making your bed.
- d. start off by being kind to others.

2. What does the term "spartan" mean?
- a. Nondescript
 - b. Barren
 - c. Showing indifference to comfort to luxury
 - d. A room for a warrior

3. What line from the story helped you find the answer to question 3?

4. What is the final test the Lieutenant conducts to make sure the bed is made correctly?

- a. A quarter must bounce on the bed
- b. He looks for tight corners
- c. No wrinkles can be seen on the sheets or blanket
- d. The pillow must be fluffed.

5. What was the first thing Admiral McRaven did when he was well enough to lift himself from his bed? Why?

6. What did McRaven notice that Saddam Hussein never did? What does this tell you about Hussein's character?

7. What is the central idea of page 9?

8. What is the overall theme of the first chapter? (Mark all that apply.)

- a. Find purpose.
- b. Create structure in your life that can give you a sense of pride.
- c. Don't be lazy.
- d. Discipline leads you to success.

9. What line from page 9 helped you find your answer to question 8? Cite your answer.

Make Your Bed—Chapter 2

“You Can’t Go It Alone”

If you want to change the world ... find someone to help you paddle.

Pre-Reading

Watch these two TED Talks and write a summary of each focusing on the central idea.

Seth Godin: The Tribes We Lead

[https://www.ted.com/talks/seth_godin_the_tribes_we_lead?utm_campaign=tedsprea
&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare](https://www.ted.com/talks/seth_godin_the_tribes_we_lead?utm_campaign=tedsprea&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare)

David Logan: Tribal Leadership

[https://www.ted.com/talks/david_logan_tribal_leadership?utm_campaign=tedsprea
&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare](https://www.ted.com/talks/david_logan_tribal_leadership?utm_campaign=tedsprea&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare)

1. The paddle boat proved to be very challenging to McRaven and the other Seal trainees. What did they learn on their journey? Use a direct quote from the story to support your answer.

2. After McRaven's horrific accident he felt like his career as a Navy Seal was over. During his time as a Navy Seal he has experienced numerous setbacks and each time what happened?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

3. McRaven's states, "None of us are immune to life's tragic moments." What is his advice to others to overcome those times in our lives? Use direct quotes to support your answer.

Make Your Bed—Chapter 3

“Only the Size of Your Heart Matters”

If you want to change the world, measure a person by the size of their heart.

1. "This inspection also gave the instructors an opportunity for more harassment" (McRaven 25). What purpose does the "harassment" serve the trainees?

2. What is the definition of surf as used in this context?

- a. To get on a board and ride the waves
- b. Line of foam formed by waves breaking on a seashore
- c. The height of a wave
- d. How deep a wave flows into the shore

3. "Even out of the corner of my eye I could see the student's jaw begin to tighten" (McRaven 27). What can the reader infer about the student, based on this quote?

- a. The student is embarrassed.
- b. The “harassment” has gone too far.
- c. The student feels challenged and will take the challenge head-on.
- d. The student will work harder because he is being "harassed".

4. What two characteristics are more important than talent?

- a. _____
- b. _____

5. The old saying goes, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” How did McRaven judge a book by its cover? What did he learn?

6. What other stories in life have you watched or read that prove, "It's not the size of your flippers that count, it's the size of your heart"?

Make Your Bed—Chapter 4

"Life's Not Fair! Drive on."

If you want to change the world . . . get over being a sugar cookie and keep moving forward.

1. After reading Chapter 4, give the figurative definition of a "sugar cookie" based on what you learned in this chapter.

2. What is the military definition of a "sugar cookie"?

3. What is the denotation and connotation of a sugar cookie?

4. Create your own metaphor for when life isn't fair. If you are struggling with creating this metaphor, think about how you would want to teach your own child to learn that life isn't always fair.

Make Your Bed-Chapter 5

"Failure can make you stronger."

If you want to change the world, don;t be afraid of The Circus.

1. What is the purpose of a swim buddy? (Mark all that apply)

- a. To support you
- b.To save you from drowning
- c. To bring you down
- d.Teach you about teamwork

2. Do you think it is fair if your swim buddy fails, you fail? Why or why not?

3. What is The Circus list? What does it mean to be on The Circus list?

4. What is the figurative meaning of a death spiral as used in the text?

5. "Once again you two officers have embarrassed your class" (McRaven 50). How did they embarrass their class?

- a. They beat everyone else because they worked so hard.
- b. They were once again so slow, they would never finish Seal training.
- c. The instructor was just harassing them.
- d. The instructor was rude.

6. On page 52 McRaven learned a valuable lesson. What was that lesson?

- a. They beat everyone else because they worked so hard.
- b. They were once again so slow, they would never finish Seal training.
- c. The instructor was just harassing them.
- d. The instructor was rude.

7. On page 53 McRaven decided that his previous failure wasn't going to hold him back. What mental change did he make to learn from his failure? Use direct words from the book.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

8. On page 54 what was the moral of the story? Use a direct quote to support your answer.

Make Your Bed—Chapter 6

"You must dare greatly."

If you want to change the world ... slide down the obstacle head first.

Directions: Today, you will be the teacher. Create 3 teacher-like questions.

1. (Multiple Choice)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

2. (Short Answer)

3. (Multiple Choice)

- e. _____
- f. _____
- g. _____

Make Your Bed–Chapter 7

"Stand up to the bullies."

If you want to change the world ... don't back down from the sharks.

1. Without _____ others will define your path.

- a. patience
- b. strength
- c. courage
- d. perseverance

2. How did the new Iraqi government leaders react to Saddam when brought into the room? What was odd about their behavior?

3. How did McRaven teach Saddam he was no longer in power? Why did McRaven treat him in this Manner?

4. How do bullies gain their strength?

- a. By being mean
- b. By intimidation
- c. With threats
- d. Through the timid and faint of heart

5. How can a person overcome a bully?

Watch this TED Talks. Write down your first reaction thoughts about this speech, in diary form, on this paper. Be prepared to share with others.

https://www.ted.com/talks/shane_koyczan_to_this_day_for_the_bullied_and_beautiful?utm_campaign=tedsread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare

Make Your Bed—Chapter 8

"Rise to the Occasion"

If you want to change the world ... be your very best in the darkest moments.

1. What is "folklore"?

- a. A fake story
- b. Stories of a community
- c. A strong belief in something or someone
- d. A poem

2. What words stayed with McRaven for the next thirty years? Why were these words so significant?

3. It seems like a simple task to be your best in dark moments and yet McRaven chose to remind us of the importance to rise above and be your best. Why?

4. <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/11/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/11Rparenting.html>

Read this article about Michael Murphy. How did America and many others exhibit what McRaven is trying to teach?

Make Your Bed—Chapter 9

"Give People Hope"

If you want to change the world . . . start singing when you're up to your neck in mud.

1. What are the Tijuana mud flats?

2. What is the purpose of Hell Week?

- a. To become a SEAL
- b. To eliminate the weak
- c. To toughen up
- d. Spa time for mud facials

3. On page 88 the instructor stated that he needed 5 people to quit. Would you sacrifice yourself "for the good of the others"? Or, would you stick it out and give it all you had to become a SEAL?

4. Do you think you have what it takes to make it through Hell Week? Why or why not?

5. What are the 3 things McRaven learned as the group began to sing together?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

6. Describe John Kelley and his effect on the people around him. What was so special about him?

7. What did you learn about hope from this chapter?

Make Your Bed- Chapter 10

"Never, Ever Quit!"

If you want to change the world . . . don't ever, ever ring that bell.

1. In the last chapter the author, McRaven, circles the reader back to the first day of SEAL training. What was the author's purpose in taking the reader back to day 1?

2. The author uses sensory language on pages 97-98. Quote and cite two lines of sensory language from these two pages. State what type of sense is touched upon.

- a. _____ sense _____
- b. _____ sense _____

3. How did the use of sensory language contribute to this portion of the reading?

4. Two times in the instructor's monologue he uses the word "easy". Page 98, " ... there is an easy way out." Page 99, "Quitting never makes anything easier." What was the instructor trying to teach the cadets? (Do not give a surface-level answer. Grab the shovel and dig deeper.)

5. Read the second paragraph on page 103, read it again, and again. Close your eyes and reflect upon what McRaven is trying to say to you as the reader. After you have spent some time processing his words, tell me what it means to you.
