

339 (before)

Business



339. That is the number of books I plan to finish before I graduate high school. Sure, there will be new releases that I read before the next one on my list, and yes, there will be some that will be agonizing to even begin to read (let alone finish), but I will finish my list. I got the list off some website that I can't seem to remember now, and when I first told my family, all they did was laugh. 339! That's a crazy number, too much for one person (especially since as Junior, I have to finish them in a span of 2 years).

Except its not. To me 339 is not just a number, 339 represents the number of ideas, of voices that I will be saturating my ever- changing mind with. It's the number of heartbreaks I will most likely endure, and the minimum amount of times I believe I will smile. I was skimming the list a few days ago, and crossing out the names of books I had already conquered. For the first time, I had begun to truly explore the list.

There were classics like 1984 by George Orwell or Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll, but there were others like The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the fair that Changed America by Erik Larson and The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion. Perhaps I am not as cultured as I always thought I was, but I have never heard of those titles. But now I do, and none the less, I will get through every single one of them. I might have to skip a few nights of sleep, but in the end it will all be worth it. It isn't just being able to say, " I read 339 books", but meeting these new authors and getting to know them in the best way possible, through their words. I will keep their words in stored in my heart and my brain, and who knows? Maybe they will influence me in a ways I could have never known without them.

Books are an escape, they are a home, they are a place where dreams come true, at least most of the time, and if sentences can change people, then 339 books worth of them can definitely impact me in some way or another. No matter what anyone says, no matter how long it takes, or how tiring it may be, I will finish my list. I will not stop until every book on my list is crossed off my list, and on that fateful day, with my cap and gown on and a diploma in my hand, I will not be alone in front of the camera, I will be surrounded by 339 authors, 339 voices, and 339 dreams. That is my dream, and I will make it true.