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School: Valencia High School

Book Title: The Secret History

Grade: Freshman

Book Author: Donna Tartt

Rate 1-5 (1-lowest to 5-highest): 3

*The Secret History* by Donna Tartt is a novel about a group of high-society college students. The book's narrator, Richard Papen, recounts his abnormal college days while being a part of this group. His narration takes us through the events leading to a dreadful murder and the devastation that followed. *The Secret History* is regarded as a modern classic by multiple authors and book critics.

This book is not one I would usually pick up, because I usually gravitate towards more action-packed and fast-paced novels. Overall, the book was incredibly slow-paced but it was very descriptive. While reading the book, I found myself feeling nostalgic, as if I were the one recounting these scenic and picturesque memories. But, this extensive recollection of events made the book's pacing extremely slow and it was easy to get lost while reading. *The Secret History* was filled with deep philosophical dilemmas that made me stop and think. The characters themselves were very unique. Each of the characters was perfectly described through the eyes of Richard Papen. Lots of thought was put into the character's characterization due to the sheer amount of details in their descriptions.

If you like reading books that are slower-paced, poetic, and written with lots of high vocabulary, then *The Secret History* is the right one for you. I also think it is for more mature readers due to its inclusion of complex concepts and inappropriate content. The book itself has a dark academia and studious vibe to it. Daniel Handler's works remind me of *The Secret History* in terms of writing style and tone. So if you enjoyed *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, you'll enjoy this read too.