

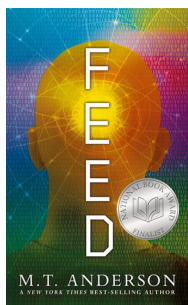
AIM Academy Upper School Summer Reading

During the 2018 summer, all students entering the Upper School must read **two** books.

- 1) *Feed* by M.T. Anderson
- 2) A faculty-choice summer reading option (listed below)

In addition to reading both books, students in grades 9-11 must write a paper in response to *Feed*. **All seniors must write two papers, one in response to *Feed* and another in response to their faculty-choice books.**

A description of the all-student book is below, followed by the paper prompt.

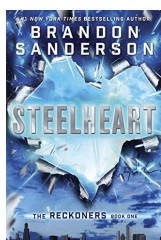


In a future world where internet connections feed directly into the consumer's brain, thought is supplemented by advertising banners, and language has gone into a steep decline, a little love story unfolds. Titus, an average kid on a weekend trip to the moon, meets Violet, a brainy girl who has decided to try to fight the feed. Assaulted by a hacker who interrupts their connection, they struggle to understand what has happened to them – and to everyone around them. In his National Book Award Finalist *Feed*, M. T. Anderson has created a not-so-brave new world – and a smart, savage satire that has captivated readers with its view of an imagined future that veers unnervingly close to the here and now.

Prompt: In a two- to three-page essay, explore the major plot points of the novel through the lens of one of the prevailing themes: consumerism, technology dependency, communication. Discuss how this theme shapes the way in which the reader experiences the story and empathizes with/ makes judgements about the characters.

2018 Faculty Choice Summer Reading Options

Ms. DeVault's
Pick:



Steelheart, by
Brandon
Sanderson

Steelheart is a science fiction novel set in a futuristic world, where an unexplained phenomenon has caused a few ordinary humans to develop superpowers. Rather than using their powers for good, however, these individuals have become villains called Epics, and humanity is enslaved to their power. In this world where superpowers have corrupted the gifted, one orphaned teenager must join forces with a group of like-minded revolutionaries to seek revenge on the most powerful Epics. This book turns the traditional super hero story on its head and explores the themes of power and corruption. It is an exciting and fast-paced story, full of adventure, friendship, mystery, and humor.

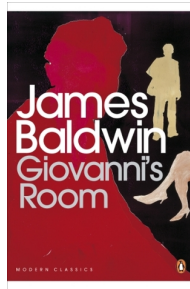
Mr. Dunn's
Pick:



The Hate U Give,
by Angie
Thomas

Angie Thomas's 2017 debut novel is the story of 16-year-old Starr Carter. Growing up in two seemingly separate worlds, Carter is constantly struggling with her conflicting lives. This struggle is intensified by the controversial shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil. With her life in a downward spiral, Carter is in search of some return to normal, but finds little solace in anything she does. *The Hate U Give* deals with issues of class, race, and community relationships, all through the lens of a high school student. Join Mr. Dunn in reading this National Book Award Longlist novel if you're interested in social justice, issues of community relations, and deeply exploring some thought provoking social topics.

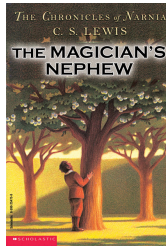
Mr. Murphy's
Pick:



Giovanni's Room, by James Baldwin

Giovanni's Room tells the story of David, a young American man living in Paris during the 1950s. Facing important questions about himself, morality and convention, David finds unfamiliar complexity in life and love. With a potential fiancé away in Spain, David begins a relationship with Giovanni, an Italian man. Told in a compelling and imaginative fashion, James Baldwin tells the entire story set during a single night, the night before Giovanni is executed. *Giovanni's Room* remains a classic, one that brought concerns of modern identity to a broader, mainstream audience.

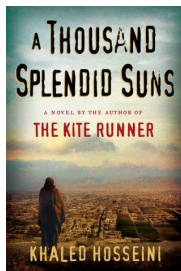
Ms. Johnston's
Pick:



The Magician's Nephew, by C.S. Lewis

The Magician's Nephew is the sixth book in the famous *Chronicles of Narnia* series by C.S. Lewis. The book is actually a prequel to the popular first book, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. As such, the novel reveals how Narnia was created and how evil entered the land.

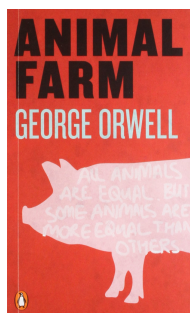
Ms. Nichols' Pick:



A Thousand Splendid Suns, by Khaled Hosseini

Mariam is an illegitimate child and suffers from both the stigma surrounding her birth along with the abuse she faces throughout her marriage. Laila, born a generation later, is comparatively privileged during her youth until their lives intersect and she is also forced to accept a marriage proposal from Rasheed, Mariam's husband.

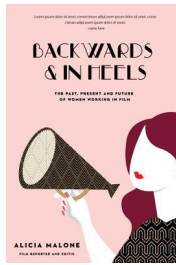
Mr. Brandon's
Pick:



Animal Farm, by George Orwell

George Orwell's famous satire of the Soviet Union, in which all animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others. *Animal Farm* is one of the most famous warnings ever written. Orwell's immortal satire - 'against Stalin' as he wrote to his French translator - can be read on many levels. With its piercing clarity and deceptively simple style it is no surprise that this novel is required reading for schoolchildren and politicians alike. This fable of the steadfast horses Boxer and Clover, the opportunistic pigs Snowball and Napoleon, and the deafening choir of sheep remains an unparalleled masterpiece. Over sixty years on in the age of spin, it is more relevant than ever.

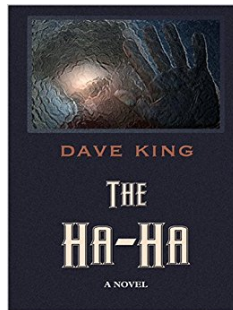
Ms. Tingle-
Oline's Pick:



Backwards and In Heels: The Past, Present and Future of Women Working in Film, by Alicia Malone

Women have been instrumental in the success of American cinema since its very beginning. One of the first people to ever pick up a motion picture camera was a woman, as was the first screenwriter to win two Academy Awards, the inventor of the boom microphone, and the first person to be credited with the title Film Editor. Throughout the entire history of Hollywood, women have been revolutionizing, innovating, and shaping how we make movies. Yet, their stories are rarely shared. *Backwards and in Heels* tells the history of women in film in a different way, with stories about incredible ladies who made their mark throughout each era of Hollywood, from the first women directors, to the iconic movie stars, and present-day activists. Each of these stories are inspiring in the accomplishments of women, and they also highlight the specific obstacles women have had to face.

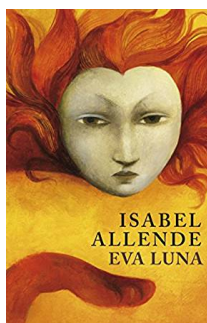
Ms. Nathan's
Pick:



The Ha-Ha, by
Dave King

Dive into the mind of Howard Kapostash, who suffered a brain injury only 16 days into his tour in Vietnam, and can no longer speak, read, or write, yet he can still understand everything spoken to and about him. Years later, while he manages to do odd jobs and communicate using a limited repertoire of gestures, Howie's real challenge comes not in speaking, but in forming relationships, such as with his former girlfriend, and her young son, whom Howie is put in charge of when mom Sylvie has to go to rehab. The little boy manages to bring out the best in Howie and his motley crew of housemates, bonding them as friends instead of roommates. The entire book is told from Howie's point of view, in his head, while the reader gets to see how people view the voiceless.

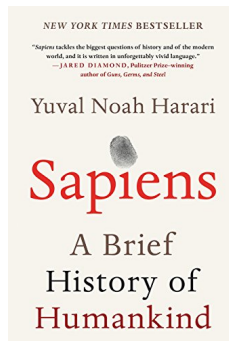
Ms. Cline's
Pick:



Eva Luna, by
Isabel Allende

Isabel Allende, the author of *Eva Luna*, was born in Peru and raised in Chile. *Eva Luna*, the assured voice of a naturally inventive storyteller, is a woman who relates to us the picaresque tale of her own life (born poor, orphaned early, she will eventually rise to a position of unique influence) and of the people—from all levels of society—that she meets along the way. They include the rich and eccentric, for whom she works as a servant; the Lebanese émigré who befriends her and takes her in; her unfortunate godmother, whose brain is addled by rum and who believes in all the Catholic saints, some of African origin, and a few of her own invention; a street urchin who grows into a petty criminal and, later, a leader in the guerrilla struggle; a celebrated transsexual entertainer who instructs her, with great tenderness and insight, in the ways of the adult world; and a young refugee whose flight from postwar Europe will prove crucial to Eva's fate. As Eva tells her story, Isabel Allende conjures up a whole complex South American nation—the rich, the poor, the simple, and the sophisticated—in a novel replete with character and incident, with drama and comedy and history, a novel that will delight and increase her devoted audience.

Ms. Gubanich
Williams' Pick:



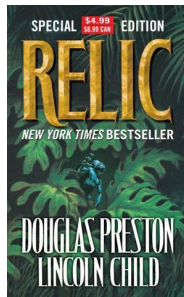
One hundred thousand years ago, at least six different species of humans inhabited Earth. Yet today there is only one—homo sapiens. What happened to the others? And what may happen to us?

Most books about the history of humanity pursue either a historical or a biological approach, but Dr. Yuval Noah Harari breaks the mold with this highly original book that begins about 70,000 years ago with the appearance of modern cognition. From examining the role evolving humans have played in the global ecosystem to charting the rise of empires, *Sapiens* integrates history and science to reconsider accepted narratives, connect past developments with contemporary concerns, and examine specific events within the context of larger ideas.

*Sapiens: A Brief
History of
Humankind*, by
Yuval Noah
Harari

Dr. Harari also compels us to look ahead, because over the last few decades humans have begun to bend laws of natural selection that have governed life for the past four billion years. We are acquiring the ability to design not only the world around us, but also ourselves. Where is this leading us, and what do we want to become? This provocative and insightful work is sure to spark debate.

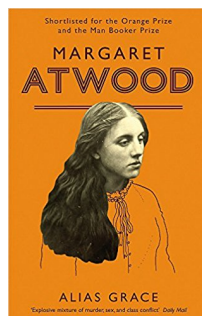
Mr. Kurish's
Pick:



The Relic, by
Douglas Preston
and Lincoln
Child

A good old-fashioned murder mystery. A monster on the loose in New York City's American Museum of Natural History provides the hook for this high-concept, high-energy thriller. A statue of the mad god Mbwun, a monstrous mix of man and reptile, was discovered by a Museum expedition to South America in 1987. Now, it is about to become part of the new Superstition Exhibition at the museum (here renamed the "New York Museum of Natural History"). But as the exhibition's opening night approaches, the museum may have to be shut down due to a series of savage murders that seem to be the work of a maniac-or a living version of Mbwun.

Ms.
Hellmann's
Pick:



Alias Grace by
Margaret
Atwood

It's 1843, and Grace Marks has been convicted for her involvement in the vicious murders of her employer and his housekeeper and mistress. Some believe Grace is innocent; others think her evil or insane. Now serving a life sentence, Grace claims to have no memory of the murders. An up-and-coming expert in the burgeoning field of mental illness is engaged by a group of reformers and spiritualists who seek a pardon for Grace. He listens to her story while bringing her closer and closer to the day she cannot remember. What will he find in attempting to unlock her memories? Based on a true story, *Alias Grace* is both captivating and disturbing.

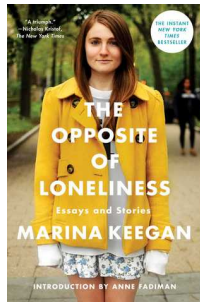
Ms.
Melchior's
Pick:



The Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right, by Atul Gawande

The Checklist Manifesto, a non-fiction novel written by general surgeon, Atul Gawande, explores how we can avoid failures in complex activities by using a simple method: a checklist. Gawande begins by making a distinction between errors of ignorance (mistakes we make because we don't know enough), and errors of ineptitude (mistakes we made because we don't make proper use of what we know). Failure in the modern world, he writes, is really about the second of these errors, and he walks us through a series of examples from medicine showing how the routine tasks of surgeons have now become so incredibly complicated that mistakes of one kind or another are virtually inevitable: it's just too easy for an otherwise competent doctor to miss a step, or forget to ask a key question or, in the stress and pressure of the moment, to fail to plan properly for every eventuality. Gawande then visits with pilots and the people who build skyscrapers and comes back with a solution. Experts need checklists, literally, written guides that walk them through the key steps in any complex procedure. In the last section of the book, Gawande shows how his research team has taken this idea, developed a safe surgery checklist, and applied it around the world, with staggering success.

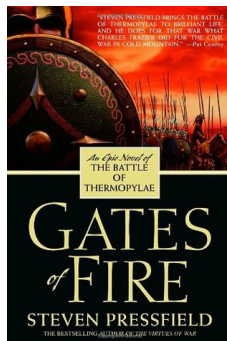
Ms. Rock's
Pick:



The Opposite of Loneliness, by Marina Keegan

An affecting and hope-filled posthumous collection of essays and stories from the talented young Yale graduate whose title essay captured the world's attention in 2012 and turned her into an icon for her generation. Marina Keegan's star was on the rise when she graduated magna cum laude from Yale in May 2012. She had a play that was to be produced at the New York Fringe Festival and a job waiting for her at *The New Yorker*. Tragically, five days after graduation, Marina died in a car crash. As her family, friends, and classmates, deep in grief, joined to create a memorial service for Marina, her deeply affecting last essay for The Yale Daily News, "The Opposite of Loneliness," went viral, receiving more than 1.4 million hits. Even though she was just twenty-two years old when she died, Marina left behind a rich, deeply expansive trove of prose that, like her title essay, capture the hope, uncertainty, and possibility of her generation.

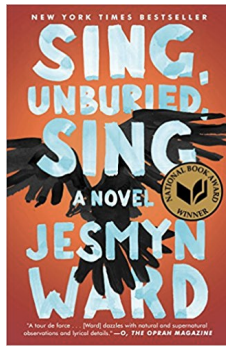
Mr.
McInerney's
Pick:



Gates of Fire by Steven Pressfield

At Thermopylae, a rocky mountain pass in northern Greece, the feared and admired Spartan soldiers stood three hundred strong. Theirs was a suicide mission, to hold the pass against the invading millions of the mighty Persian Army. Day after bloody day they withstood the terrible onslaught, buying time for the Greeks to rally their forces. Born into a cult of spiritual courage, physical endurance, and unmatched battle skill, the Spartans would be remembered for the greatest military stand in history; one that would not end until the rocks were awash with blood, leaving only one gravely injured Spartan to tell the tale. *Gates of Fire* is taught at West Point, The United States Naval Academy, and the Marine Corps Basic School at Quantico. The novel stresses literary themes of fate and irony as well as the military themes of honor, duty, stoicism, and esprit de corps.

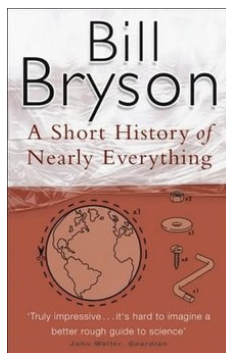
Ms. Cope's
Pick:



In Jesmyn Ward's first novel since her National Book Award-winning *Salvage the Bones*, this singular American writer brings the archetypal road novel into rural twenty-first-century America. An intimate portrait of a family and an epic tale of hope and struggle, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* journeys through Mississippi's past and present, examining the ugly truths at the heart of the American story and the power—and limitations—of family bonds.

*Sing, Unburied,
Sing* by Jesmyn
Ward

Mr. Vechik's
Pick:



*A Short History
of Nearly
Everything*, by
Bill Bryson

In his biggest book, comedic travel writer Bill Bryson strives to understand—and, if possible, answer—the oldest, biggest questions we have posed about the universe and ourselves. Taking as territory everything from the Big Bang to the rise of civilization, Bryson seeks to understand how we got from there being nothing at all to there being us. To that end, he has attached himself to a host of the world's most advanced (and often obsessed) archaeologists, anthropologists, and mathematicians, travelling to their offices, laboratories, and field camps. He has read (or tried to read) their books, pestered them with questions, apprenticed himself to their powerful minds, and then condensed those lessons into easy reading for the amateur scientist. *A Short History of Nearly Everything* is the record of this quest, and it is a sometimes profound, sometimes funny, and always supremely clear and entertaining adventure in the realms of human knowledge, as only Bill Bryson can render it. Science has never been more involving or entertaining.
