

MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER READING LIST (2019/20)

Entering 6th Grade Required Reading

Incoming sixth grade students are required to read **two** books over the summer. The first book is required for all students, and no substitutions may be made. The remaining book is completely up to the students to choose for themselves. We recognize that students have their own diverse interests and varied reading abilities, so we strongly recommend that students choose books that are written at an appropriate reading level, are an achievable length, and most importantly, are high interest.

English class will begin with a discussion of the required book, along with accompanying assignments and projects. Thus, it is essential all summer reading and summer reading assignments must be completed by the first day of school.

The Lightning Thief—Rich Riordan. Twelve-year-old Percy Jackson is on the most dangerous quest of his life. He must catch a thief who has stolen Zeus’s lightning bolt, and along the way, battle a host of mythological enemies trying to stop him. (Fantasy)

Entering 7th Grade

Incoming seventh grade students may select any **two** books from their respective reading lists. English classes will begin with a discussion of these works, along with accompanying assignments and projects. Thus, it is essential all summer reading and assignments must be completed by the first day of school.

Fever 1793—Laurie Halse Anderson. Young Mattie Cook, living in Philadelphia, struggles with the aftermath of the American Revolution and the onslaught of the plague. Read about her fight for survival (Historical Fiction)

My Brother Sam Is Dead—James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier. A young boy struggles to discover where his loyalties lie during the Revolutionary War; with his father or his brother. (Historical Fiction)

Milkweed—Jerry Spinelli. A young Jewish boy living on the streets of the Warsaw ghetto is intrigued by the soldiers he sees walking about and aspires to become one, until he finds the terrifying truth of who they are and what they are there to do. (Historical Fiction)

The Giver—Lois Lowry. In this futuristic novel, Jonah must cope with his “assignment” which sets him apart from the rest of his community, something he knows to be very dangerous. (Science Fiction)

Uglies—Scott Westerfeld. Set in a futuristic society, this novel follows Tally, an "ugly" who is trying to survive in a society out to control her every move, including one day making her a "pretty". (Science Fiction)

Make Lemonade—Virginia Euwer Wolff. LaVaughn is an inner city kid trying to make good by earning a college scholarship. Through this poetic narrative, we join Jolly, a teen-aged mom, and LaVaughn in the dedication and frustration of creating and keeping a family while also being true to themselves. (Realistic Fiction)

The Pigman—Paul Zindel. Don't let the title fool you! This wonderful coming of age tale takes place in a time when teenagers began questioning the values of the adults around them. The novel's main characters are challenged to question their own beliefs and choices as they develop a close relationship with an elderly man. A wonderful classic! (Classic Fiction)

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian—Sherman Alexie. This novel chronicles the life of Arnold Spirit, aka Junior, a Spokane Indian from Wellpinit, WA. When a teacher pleads with this bright fourteen-year-old to escape the hopelessness of "the rez," Arnold switches to a rich white school and immediately becomes as much an outcast in his own community as he is a curiosity in his new one. Through art and soul-searching, he figures out where he truly belongs. (Multicultural Fiction)

Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment—James Patterson This action packed novel has a group of unique kids on the run from an organization. They are fiercely loyal to one another and work to find a way to survive in the wilderness while uncovering the mystery of this secret organization. A story of friendship and survival that will keep you on the edge of your seat! (Science Fiction)

Moo—Sharon Creech This novel, written in verse, tells the story of a young girl who is uprooted from her home to move with her family to Maine. As she and her brother develop an unexpected relationship with an eccentric neighborhood, they learn that a little kindness can change lives. (Realistic Fiction)

When the Sea Turned to Silver—Grace Lin This enchanting novel tells the story of a young girl who has to try to rescue her grandmother, the Storyteller, who has been kidnapped by the Emperor. She must go on a journey to find the Luminous Stone and bring it back to the emperor. A fast paced adventure filled with magic! (Fantasy)

Entering 8th Grade

Incoming eighth grade students may select any **two** books from the summer reading list. Students may not substitute books on the reading list with those of their own choosing. Written assignments exploring these books will be shared with students in time for summer break. English classes will begin with an examination of these works. Thus, it is essential all summer reading and assignments must be completed by the first day of school.

The Hate U Give—Angie Thomas. Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What

everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. (Realistic Fiction)

The Book Thief—Markus Zusak. A story of a young girl growing up in Germany during WWII. As she struggles with the War and death, she turns to stealing books to fulfill her love for reading and help her to cope with her surroundings. (Historical Fiction)

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime—Mark Haddon. When his neighbor's poodle is killed and Christopher is falsely accused of the crime, he decides that he will take a page from Sherlock Holmes (one of his favorite characters) and track down the killer. The mystery leads him on a quest to find his place in the world. (Mystery)

Ender's Game—Orson Scott Card. In order to develop a secure defense against a hostile alien race's next attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. A brilliant young boy, Andrew "Ender" Wiggin, along with his siblings, has the ability to remake the world, if the world survives. An exciting tale of psychological and physical battles. (Science Fiction)

Habibi—Naomi Shihab Nye. In a story filled with beautiful imagery and intriguing characters, fourteen-year-old Liyana's father, a native Palestinian, decides to move his family from America back to Jerusalem. Liyana's happiness improves when she makes a friend, Omar, a Jewish boy. A tale of the meaning of home. (Multicultural Fiction)

Picture Me Gone—Meg Rosoff. A page-turner about the relationship between parents and children, love and loss. Mila a teenager girl with a special talent for reading a room—sensing hidden facts and unspoken emotions from clues that others overlooked—uses her senses when her father's best friend goes missing from his upstate New York home. Yet, just when she's closest to solving the mystery, a shocking betrayal calls into question her trust in the one person she thought she could read best. (Mystery)

Inherit the Wind—Jerome Lawrence. A legal drama based upon the Scopes Trial, involving the debate between creationism and evolution. Again, do not let yourself be swayed by length, as this is a most serious work. (Historical Fiction)

Brown Girl Dreaming—Jacqueline Woodson. In this National Book Award Winner and Newbery Honor Book, Woodson shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remains of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Written in powerful, yet simple poetry, each poem is a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world, finding joy in stories even as she struggles with reading. (Memoir)

Hole in My Life—Jack Gantos. In the summer of 1971, Jack Gantos was a high school graduate looking for adventure, cash for college tuition, and a way out of a dead-end job. He recklessly agreed to help sail a sixty-foot yacht loaded with a ton of hashish from the Virgin Islands to New York City, where he and his partners sold the drug until federal agents caught up with them. This is a fast-paced read about the struggle that marked the end of his youth. (Memoir)

Wolf Hollow—Lauren Wolk. Annabelle has lived a happy life in her small Pennsylvania town until the day a new student, Betty Glengarry, walks into her class. Betty acts cruelly, and, while

her bullying seems isolated at first, things quickly escalate. A reclusive World War I veteran Toby becomes a target of her attacks. While others have always seen Toby's strangeness, Annabelle knows only kindness. She will soon need to find the courage to stand as a lone voice of justice as tensions mount. (Fiction)

UPPER SCHOOL SUMMER READING LIST (2019/20)

Upper School students must read **three** books from the summer reading list assigned for their particular (incoming) grade. Two of these books are mandatory reading, indicated by an asterisk; the third may be chosen from the list. Students may not substitute books on the reading list with those of their own choosing.

English classes will start the semester focusing on these works. Thus, it is essential all summer reading and assignments must be completed by the first day of school.

Entering 9th Grade

The Trip to Bountiful—Horton Foote. This is the poignant story of Mrs. Watts, an aging widow living with her son and daughter-in-law in a three-room flat in Houston, Texas. Fearing that her presence may be an imposition on others, and chafing under the watchful eye of her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Watts imagines that if she can get away and return to her old home in the town of Bountiful, she is sure to regain her strength, dignity and peace of mind.

**The Secret Life of Bees*—Sue Monk Kidd. A story of racism, loss, motherhood, childhood, love, and redemption.

Caleb's Crossing—Geraldine Brooks. A missionary's daughter forms a bond with a scholarly Indian in 17th Century New England. This tender story combines both early American history and coming of age themes.

A Season on the Brink—John Feinstein. Basketball coach Bobby Knight has been called a “Greek drama and comedy neatly wrapped in a red sweater.” Follow his drama through the ‘85-’86 championship run in Indiana.

Unbroken—Lauren Hillenbrand. The inspiring true story of a man who lived through a series of catastrophes almost too incredible to be believed, *Unbroken* tells the story of Louie Zamperini--a juvenile delinquent-turned-Olympic runner-turned-Army hero. During a routine search mission over the Pacific, Louie’s plane crashed into the ocean, and what happened to him over the next three years of his life is a story that will keep you glued to the pages, eagerly awaiting the next turn in the story and fearing it at the same time.

Breath, Eyes, Memory—Edwidge Danticat. Cultural conflicts between generations.

**A Separate Peace*—John Knowles. Experiences of adolescents at a boarding school in the early years of WWII erode their innocence and change their world forever.

The Eagle of the Ninth—Rosemary Sutcliffe. The Ninth Legion marched into the mists of northern Britain—and they were never seen again. Four thousand men disappeared and their eagle standard was lost. It's a mystery that's never been solved, until now.... Marcus has to find out what happened to his father, who led the Legion. He sets out into the unknown on a quest so dangerous that nobody expects him to return.

Entering 10th Grade

**The White Tiger*—Aravind Adiga. A black comedy of the struggles and achievements of Balram Halwai, India's finest up-and-coming entrepreneur and emerging sociopath. Caught between the gleaming promise of global capitalism and the soul-sapping poverty of rural India, Balram Halwai finds the success he craves, but at a terrible cost.

**The Kite Runner*—Khaled Hosseini. Two boys from different backgrounds grow up together in Kabul. A powerful story about betrayal and redemption.

The Namesake—Jhumpa Lahiri. As the Gangulis make their way from Calcutta to New England, they experience the opposing pressures of cultural assimilation and familial obligations in this finely detailed novel.

Beartown—Fredrik Backman. A small Swedish town on the edge of the forest has dwindling resources but a collective dream of winning big in hockey. A small group of teenage boys carry the burden and hope of the town, only to have an act of violence tear at the very fabric of the community.

Water for Elephants—Sara Gruen. A page-turner set in a depression-era circus, where fantasy, danger, and romance come alive in alternating chapters of an old man looking back on his life's adventures and a young man living them. Enchanting characters and a compelling story make for a great read.

Master Harold and the Boys—Athol Fugard. This poignant drama explores the sometimes intimate, sometimes distant relationship between a boy and his servants during South Africa's Apartheid.

Entering 11th Grade

**Americanah* - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. When a young Nigerian woman moves to America, she is forced to examine not only who she is and who she loves, but also what it means to be black in America.

** Goodbye, Columbus* - Philip Roth. A novella and short stories about questions of Jewish identity in America.

The Bell Jar—Sylvia Plath. Set against the backdrop of the New York literary world, a promising young writer descends into madness.

The Things They Carried—Tim O'Brien. Foot soldiers in Vietnam struggle to maintain their own moral compasses in the trenches of a war whose purpose is unclear.

The Grapes of Wrath—John Steinbeck. A family struggles for survival as they move from farm to farm. Simple, evocative writing.

A Good Man Is Hard to Find and Other Stories—Flannery O'Connor. Thought-provoking, profound, and sometimes violent short stories.

Tales of the Jazz Age and Other Stories—F. Scott Fitzgerald. Short stories set in the roaring twenties. Beautiful prose, complex themes.

Love Medicine—Louise Erdrich. Cross-generational contemporary look at life on a Native American reservation, where exquisite moments of beauty rise out of squalor. A good read.

Naked—David Sedaris. This scaldingly funny collection of writings by one of America’s great contemporary essayists reminds us of how important humor and the comedic temperament is in our own lives and others.

Entering 12th Grade

Prospective AP English students should read *The Invisible Man***, *Billy Budd***, and **one** other book of their choosing. **Prospective Shakespeare students** should read *Macbeth* and two other books of their choosing. All other students should read **three** books of their choosing from the list below.

***The Invisible Man*—Ralph Ellison. One of the 100 Best Novels of the 20th Century, the text follows a young African-American “model citizen” from the rural South to NYC and invisibility.

***Billy Budd*—Herman Melville. A seafaring tale of a “golden-youth” trapped between an act of iniquity and the rigidity of the British naval code.

Hamlet—William Shakespeare. Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, is home from school to mourn the death of his father, King Hamlet, who has died two months earlier. ... The ghost of his father beckons Hamlet to follow him and reveals that his brother Claudius poisoned him in the ear. Hamlet vows to avenge his father's murder.

All the Light We Cannot See—Anthony Doerr. A beautifully crafted story of a blind French girl and German boy trying to survive the chaos of World War II. Ten years in the writing and winner of the Pulitzer Prize.

Beloved—Toni Morrison. Slavery scars all involved, even years later.

It Can't Happen Here—Sinclair Lewis. Is American democracy so fragile that fascism could actually take root? This chilling political satire written during the Great Depression offers a harrowing account of what still may be yet to come.

Poems of New York—ed. by Elizabeth Schmidt. An impressive, wide-ranging collection of poetry on the city we call home that spans the early, exuberant musings of Walt Whitman and Hart Crane to contemporary poets post-9/11.

Up in the Old Hotel—Joseph Mitchell. A collection of stories and essays, many reprinted from The New Yorker, that eloquently chronicle a New York that was, and maybe still is.

July's People—Nadine Gordimer. A black servant in Apartheid South Africa becomes a white family's savior during a civil war.

Rule of the Bone—Russell Banks. Teenage drifter finds father and responsibility in Jamaica.

Cathedral—Raymond Carver. Spare, understated short stories that began a new trend in literature. Moving tales about love, loss, loneliness and hard times. Accessible, provocative and challenging.

1000 Splendid Suns—Khaled Hosseini. Two generations of women are brought together by war and personal tragedies in the Afghani city of Kabul.

White Noise—Don DeLillo. One of the most influential American novels of the post-modern era, DeLillo's evocative, sometimes poetic and often humorous story includes professors of Elvis Presley and Hitler Studies, the most photographed barn in America, and an "airborne toxic event" that leads to the evacuation of the community.

Friday Night Lights—H.G. Bissinger: A Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist spends a season with the Permian Panthers and vividly exposes the glory and the glorification of Texas high school football.

Martyr—Rory Clements. John Shakespeare, Elizabethan England's most remarkable investigator, and William Shakespeare's brother, is the protagonist in this tale of murder and conspiracy that succeeds brilliantly as both historical fiction and a crime thriller.

Revenger—Rory Clements. In the sequel to *Martyr*, the Queen needs John Shakespeare's services once more. England is still at war with Spain, but her court is riven by savage infighting among ambitious young courtiers. A fantastic novel by a master of historical suspense.