

Distinguished Honors Program Reading Requirements

Choose four of the follow titles to be read in 9th and 10th grade and choose four additional titles to read in 11th and 12th grade. A presentation will accompany the reading of each book. Presentation instructions and rubrics will be provided.

The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass – Frederick Douglass
(ISBN-10: 0486284999/ ISBN-13: 978-0486284996)

This is an 1845 memoir and treatise on abolition written by famous orator and former slave, Frederick Douglass. It is generally held to be the most famous of a number of narratives written by former slaves during the same period. In factual detail, the text describes the events of his life and is considered to be one of the most influential pieces of literature to fuel the abolitionist movement of the early 19th century in the United States.

Les Misérables – Victor Hugo
(ISBN-10: 045141943X / ISBN-13: 978-0451419439)

A French historical novel first published in 1862 that is considered one of the greatest novels of the 19th century. Examining the nature of law and grace, the novel elaborates upon the history of France, the architecture and urban design of Paris, politics, moral philosophy, antimonarchism, justice, religion, and the types and nature of romantic and familial love.

The Confessions of St. Augustine – Augustine of Hippo
(ISBN-10: 1490561676 / ISBN-13: 978-1490561677)

The work outlines Augustine's sinful youth and his conversion to Christianity. It is widely seen as the first Western autobiography ever written, and was an influential model for Christian writers throughout the following 1,000 years, through the Middle Ages.

Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God – Francis Chan
(ISBN-10: 1434705943 / ISBN-13: 978-1434705945)

Crazy Love deals with the idea of the average Christian's love of God and learning how to further develop those feelings into a "crazy, relentless, all-powerful love."

The Great Divorce – C.S. Lewis
(ISBN-10: 0060652950 / ISBN-13: 978-0060652951)

A theological fantasy in which, Lewis reflects on the Christian conception of Heaven and Hell.

The Bell Jar – Sylvia Plath
(ISBN-10: 0060837020 / ISBN-13: 978-0060837020)

The book is often regarded as a *roman à clef* since the protagonist's descent into mental illness parallels Plath's own experiences with what may have been clinical depression.

Through Gates of Splendor – Elisabeth Elliot**(ISBN-10: 0842371524 / ISBN-13: 978-0842371520)**

The book tells the story of Operation Auca, an attempt by five American missionaries - Jim Elliot (the author's husband), Pete Fleming, Ed McCully, Nat Saint, and Roger Youderian - to reach the Huaorani tribe of eastern Ecuador. All five of the men were killed by, the tribe.

The Prince – Niccolo Machiavelli**(ISBN-10: 0486272745 / ISBN-13: 978-0486272740)**

Sometimes claimed to be one of the first works of modern philosophy, especially modern political philosophy, in which the effective truth is taken to be more important than any abstract ideal. It was also in direct conflict with the dominant Catholic and scholastic doctrines of the time concerning how to consider politics and ethics.

The Jungle – Upton Sinclair**(ISBN-10: 0486419231 / ISBN-13: 978-0486419237)**

A 1906 novel written to portray the harsh conditions and exploited lives of immigrants in the United States in Chicago and similar industrialized cities. The book depicts working class poverty, the lack of social supports, harsh and unpleasant living and working conditions, and a hopelessness among many workers. These elements are contrasted with the deeply rooted corruption of people in power.

Cooked – Michael Pollan**(ISBN-10: 0143125338 / ISBN-13: 978-0143125334)**

The author explores the previously uncharted territory of his own kitchen. Here, he discovers the enduring power of the four classical elements—fire, water, air, and earth— to transform the stuff of nature into delicious things to eat and drink. The effects of not cooking are similarly far reaching. Relying upon corporations to process our food means we consume large quantities of fat, sugar, and salt; disrupt an essential link to the natural world; and weaken our relationships with family and friends. In fact, *Cooked* argues, taking back control of cooking may be the single most important step anyone can take to help make the American food system healthier and more sustainable. Reclaiming cooking as an act of enjoyment and self-reliance, learning to perform the magic of these everyday transformations, opens the door to a more nourishing life.

Diplomacy – Henry Kissinger**(ISBN-10: 0671510991 / ISBN-13: 978-0671510992)**

It is a sweep of the history of international relations and the art of diplomacy, largely concentrating on the 20th century and the Western World.

Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy – Eric Metaxas
(ISBN-10: 1595552464 / ISBN-13: 978-1595552464)

As Adolf Hitler and the Nazis seduced a nation, bullied a continent, and attempted to exterminate the Jews of Europe, a small number of dissidents and saboteurs worked to dismantle the Third Reich from the inside. One of these was Dietrich Bonhoeffer—a pastor and author. In this *New York Times* best-selling biography, Eric Metaxas takes both strands of Bonhoeffer's life—the theologian and the spy—and draws them together to tell a searing story of incredible moral courage in the face of monstrous evil.

Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything – Stephen J. Dubner and Steven D. Levitt

(ISBN-10: 0060731338 / ISBN-13: 978-0060731335)

The book is a collection of 'economic' articles written by Levitt, an expert who has already gained a reputation for applying economic theory to diverse subjects not usually covered by "traditional" economists; he does, however, accept the standard neoclassical microeconomic model of rational utility-maximization. Levitt and Dubner argue that economics is, at root, the study of incentives.

Truman – David McCullough

(ISBN-10: 0671869205 / ISBN-13: 978-0671869205)

Hailed by critics as an American masterpiece, David McCullough's sweeping biography of Harry S. Truman captured the heart of the nation. The life and times of the thirty-third President of the United States, Truman provides a deeply moving look at an extraordinary, singular American.

How We Got to Now: Six Innovations That Made the Modern World –

Steven Johnson

(ISBN-10: 9781594632969 / ISBN-13: 978-1594632969)

In this illustrated history, Steven Johnson explores the history of innovation over centuries, tracing facets of modern life (refrigeration, clocks, and eyeglass lenses, to name a few) from their creation by hobbyists, amateurs, and entrepreneurs to their unintended historical consequences. Filled with surprising stories of accidental genius and brilliant mistakes—from the French publisher who invented the phonograph before Edison but forgot to include playback, to the Hollywood movie star who helped invent the technology behind Wi-Fi and Bluetooth—How We Got to Now investigates the secret history behind the everyday objects of contemporary life.

Songs of America: Patriotism, Protest, and the Music That Made a Nation – Jon Meacham and Tim McGraw

(ISBN-10: 0593132955 / ISBN-13: 978-0593132951)

Beginning with the battle hymns of the revolution and taking us through songs from the defining events of the Civil War, the fight for women's suffrage, the two world wars, the Great Depression, the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, and into the twenty-first century, Meacham and McGraw explore the songs that defined generations, and the cultural and political climates that produced them. Readers will discover the power of music in the lives of figures such as Harriet Tubman, Franklin Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr., and will learn more about some of our most beloved musicians and performers, including Marian Anderson, Elvis Presley, Sam Cooke, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan, Duke Ellington, Carole King, Bruce Springsteen, and more.

Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater – Larry Stempel

(ISBN-10: 0393067157 / ISBN-13: 978-0393067156)

Stempel describes the Broadway stage with vivid accounts of the performers drawn to it, and detailed portraits of the creators who wrote the music, lyrics, and stories for its shows, both beloved and less well known. But Stempel travels outside the theater doors as well, to illuminate the wider world of musical theater as a living genre shaped by the forces of American history and culture. He reveals not only how musicals entertain their audiences but also how they serve as barometers of social concerns and bearers of cultural values.