

## Reading suggestions for students entering 8th grade at HMS

Avi. *Nothing but the Truth : a Documentary Novel*. A ninth-grader's suspension for singing "The Star-Spangled Banner" during homeroom becomes a national news story.

Bloor, Edward. *Tangerine*. Paul, who lives in the shadow of his football hero brother Erik, fights for the right to play soccer despite his near blindness and slowly begins to remember the incident that damaged his eyesight.

Blume, Judy. *Tiger Eyes*. Davey's father is killed during a holdup of his 7-Eleven store in New Jersey, and she moves with her mother and brother to Los Alamos where she meets a mysterious boy and learns to cope with her grief. Although there's a violent crime at the center of the story, *Tiger Eyes* isn't about violence. It's about the sudden, tragic loss of someone you love.

Bruchac, Joseph. *Code Talker : a Novel about the Navajo Marines of World War II*. After being taught in a boarding school run by whites that Navajo is a useless language, Ned Begay and other Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become Code Talkers, sending messages during World War II in their native tongue.

Colfer, Eoin. *Artemis Fowl*. Artemis Fowl is a young genius and member of a legendary Irish criminal family which lost their fortune when his father, missing and presumed dead, tangled with the Russian Mafia. He develops a scheme to rob the fairies of some of their gold. A mix of high technology and magic. First of a series.

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. In a future North America, where the rulers of Panem maintain control through an annual televised survival competition pitting young people from each of the twelve districts against one another until only one survives, sixteen-year-old Katniss's skills are put to the test when she voluntarily takes her younger sister's place. Part 1 of a trilogy.

Collier, James Lincoln. *War Comes to Willy Freeman*. A free thirteen-year-old black girl in Connecticut is caught up in the horror of the Revolutionary War and the danger of being returned to slavery when her patriot father is killed by the British and her mother disappears.

Covey, Sean. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens : the Ultimate Teenage Survival Guide*. Nonfiction. A step-by-step guide to help teens improve self-image, build friendships, resist peer pressure, achieve their goals, get along with their parents, and more.

Creech, Sharon. *Absolutely Normal Chaos*. A thirteen-year-old girl grows up quickly during the summer while learning about romance, homesickness, death, and her cousin's search for his biological father.

Crutcher, Chris. *Whale Talk*. This novel has gripping athletic competitions, raw emotion, and an insufferable high school atmosphere that allows bullying and worships star athletes. The teen hero, who could be a star athlete, instead forms a swim team made up of the school underdogs so that everyone earns a letter jacket.

Flinn, Alex. *Breathing Underwater*. Sent to counseling for hitting his girlfriend, Caitlin, and ordered to keep a journal, sixteen-year-old Nick recounts his relationship with Caitlin, examines his controlling behavior and anger, and describes living with his abusive father.

Fox, Paula. *Good Night, Maman*. Karin and her brother, Marc are two of the lucky Jews to escape France alive during Hitler's occupation. They move, under cover of darkness from place to place, searching for safety. Eventually they arrive in America. Along the way, Karin composes letters to her Maman, who is supposed to catch up to them when she is better.

Gunther, John. *Death Be Not Proud : a Memoir*. Non-fiction. John Gunther's seventeen-year-old son died after a series of operations for brain tumor. This is a tribute to a remarkable boy and an account of a brave fight against disease.

Haddix, Margaret. *Don't You Dare Read This, Mrs. Dunphery*. In the journal she is keeping for English class, sixteen-year-old Tish chronicles the changes in her life when her abusive father abandons her and her brother, and her mother follows him.

Hesse, Karen. *Out of the Dust*. Living on a farm in Oklahoma during the Dust Bowl era, 13-year-old Billie Jo loses her mother and unborn brother in an accident that she is partly responsible for and burns her own hands so badly that she may never again play the piano, her only comfort in life. Hoping to escape the dust and her brooding father, she hops on a train going west. The free-verse poetry deals with questions of loss, forgiveness, and home,

Howe, James. *The Misfits*. Four students who do not fit in at their small-town middle school decide to create a third party for the student council elections to represent all students who have ever been called names.

Kadohata, Cynthia. *Cracker! : the Best Dog in Vietnam*. A view of America's war in Vietnam, as experienced by an army dog named Cracker and her 17-year-old handler, Rick Hanski. The story explores the close bond of the scout-dog team as it detects booby traps and mines, finds the enemy, rescues POWs, and returns home to a heroes' welcome.

London, Jack. *Call of the Wild*. Buck, a dog who is half St. Bernard and half Scotch shepherd, is abducted and taken to the Klondike in the Yukon where is trained to be a sled dog. He survives abuse and neglect until he is finally rescued by a woodsman. When that man is killed, Buck reverts to the wild and becomes a leader of a pack of wolves.

Mikaelsen, Ben. *Touching Spirit Bear*. After his anger erupts into violence, Cole is facing prison, agrees to participate in a sentencing alternative based on the native American Circle Justice. He is sent to a remote Alaskan Island and he plans to escape from the island as soon as possible. An encounter with a huge Spirit Bear changes his life.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Autobiography of My Dead Brother*. In the aftermath of the latest murder in his Harlem neighborhood, fifteen-year-old artist Jesse chronicles his best friend Rise's growing involvement with gangs and drug-dealing while trying to sort out his own future.

O'Dell, Scott. *The Black Pearl*. Ramonis is a 17 year old diver in La Paz, Mexico. His dream is to find a pearl so large that the other divers will respect him. The pearl he finds brings bad luck to everyone until it is finally given to the church.

Patterson, James. *Maximum Ride*. Nonstop action as Max leads a band of mutant orphans hiding from the sinister scientists at "the School," who grafted avian DNA onto their genes, giving them wings. "Erasers" (genetic combinations of men and wolves) pursue them at every turn.

Paulsen, Gary. *How Angel Peterson Got His Name : and Other Outrageous Tales about Extreme Sports*. Non-fiction. Gary Paulsen, author of *Hatchet* and many other books for young people, relates experiences from his youth in a small town in northwestern Minnesota in the late 1940s and early 1950s, such as skiing behind a souped-up car and imitating daredevil Evel Knievel.

Sciescka, Jon. *Guys Write for Guys Read*. Nonfiction. A collection of short stories, drawings, poems, and memoirs from well-known writers of "guy" fiction. Includes pieces by Daniel Pinkwater, Neil Gaiman, Will Hobbs, Stephen King, Gary Paulsen, among others.

Steinbeck, John. *The Pearl*. Kino prays to find a pearl so that he can afford medical help for his son. After he discovers it, terrible events follow. See also *The Black Pearl*, by O'Dell.

Tolkein, J.R.R. *The Fellowship of the Ring*. The hobbit Frodo undertakes a great journey across Middle-earth to cast the One Ring, filled with the power of the Dark Lord Sauron, into the Cracks of Doom. Part 1 of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

Woodsen, Jacqueline. *Behind You*. After fifteen-year-old Jeremiah is mistakenly shot by police, the people who love him struggle to cope with their loss as they recall his life and death, unaware that 'Miah is watching over them.