Please read THREE books for summer reading. TWO must come from the list below. The THIRD may be another book of your choice that you have not read before; that third book may come from this list but does not have to. Bring all three books with you to school throughout the first week of class when you will be asked to share thoughts about your summer reading. As you read, in each of your three books, please select at least three passages (each a page or less in length) that stand out to you as especially enjoyable, confusing, beautiful, moving, telling, or important. Tag each selected passage with a sticky note so you can find it easily in class. If you use an e-book, please write/type your selected passages and bring them to class on paper.

**Little Women** by Louisa May Alcott. *Classic fiction.* 1868. The four March sisters experience joys and sorrows as they grow into young women in the nineteenth century.


**I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives** by Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda (with Liz Welch). *Non-fiction, epistolary memoir.* 2015. An American girl and a boy from an impoverished city in Zimbabwe exchange letters that change both of their lives forever.


**Hope Was Here** by Joan Bauer. *Realistic fiction.* 2002. When sixteen-year-old Hope and the aunt who has raised her move from Brooklyn to Wisconsin to work as waitress and cook in the Welcome Stairways diner, they become involved in a campaign to oust the town's corrupt mayor.

**Hurricane Child** by Kacen Callender. *Realistic fiction.* 2018. Twelve-year-old Caroline Murphy, self-described as “the littlest girl with the darkest skin … in [her] whole Catholic school,” deals with the loss of a parent at home and bullying at school in ways that test and reveal her strength and resilience.

**Star-Crossed** by Barbara Dec. *Realistic fiction.* 2018. Twelve-year-old Mattie wrestles with her crush on Gemma as they participate in their school production of *Romeo and Juliet.*


**The Only Road** by Alexandra Diaz. *Realistic fiction.* 2016. Twelve-year-old Jaime makes the treacherous and life-changing journey from his home in Guatemala to live with his older brother in the United States.

**Out of My Mind** by Sharon M. Draper. *Realistic fiction.* 2010. Considered by many to be intellectually disabled, a brilliant, impatient fifth-grader with cerebral palsy discovers a technological device that will allow her to speak for the first time.

**Mockingbird** by Kathryn Erskine. *Realistic fiction.* 2011. At school, ten-year-old Caitlin struggles to understand emotions, show empathy, and make friends at school; at home she seeks closure by working on a project with her father.

**How We Roll** by Natasha Friend. *Realistic fiction.* 2018. Quinn and Jake, teens facing trauma and identity issues, meet and find the confidence to believe in themselves again, and maybe even love.

**The Graveyard Book** by Neil Gaiman. *Fantasy.* 2008. After the grisly murder of his entire family, a toddler wanders into a graveyard where the ghosts and other supernatural residents agree to raise him as one of their own.


Flush by Carl Hiaasen. *Adventure fiction*. 2005. Noah Underwood and his younger sister, Abbey, must gather evidence that the owner of this floating casino is emptying his bilge tanks into the protected waters around their Florida Keys home.

The Night Diary by Veera Hiranandani. *Historical fiction*. 2018. This novel, which takes place in 1947 India during partition, is told through the letters of Nisha, a twelve-year-old Hindu girl, to her Muslim mother who died in childbirth.

Farewell to Manzanar by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston. *Non-fiction, memoir*. 1973. The true account of Jeanne Wakatsuki, who was sent at the age of seven with her family and many other Japanese-Americans to the Manzanar internment camp in California.

The Star of Kazan by Eva Ibbotson. *Historical fiction*. 2004. After twelve-year-old Annika, an orphan in late-1800s Vienna, inherits a trunk of costume jewelry, a woman claiming to be her mother arrives and takes her to live in a mysterious mansion.


Amina’s Voice by Hena Khan. *Realistic fiction*. 2017. Now that Amina’s in middle school, her friend is suddenly hanging out with one of the “cool” girls, and is even talking about changing her name to something more “American.” Where does Amina fit?

A Wizard of Earthsea by Ursula K. Le Guin. *Fantasy*. 1968. The tumultuous tale of how the restless youth Sparrowhawk survives many challenges to grow into Ged, the greatest wizard in Earthsea.

Where The Mountain Meets the Moon by Grace Lin. *Fantasy*. 2009. A Chinese girl named Minli sets off on a quest to bring good fortune to her family by finding the "Old Man In The Moon."

Confessions of a Closet Catholic by Sarah Darer Littman. *Realistic fiction*. 2006. To be more like her best friend, eleven-year-old Justine decides to give up Judaism to try being Catholic for a while.

Legend by Marie Lu. *Science fiction, dystopia*. 2011. On the flooded coast of former Los Angeles, two fifteen year-olds from wildly different sectors of the Republic learn the sinister lengths that their country will go to in order to keep its secrets.

Million-Dollar Throw by Mike Lupica. *Sports fiction*. 2009. When eighth-grade star quarterback Nate Brodie's family feels economic strain and his best friend Abby is going blind, he gets a chance to win a million dollars by completing a single pass.

Good Night, Mr. Tom by Michelle Magorian. *Historical fiction*. 1986. A battered child learns to embrace life when he is adopted by an old man in the English countryside during World War II.

Hurricane Season by Nicole Melleby. *Realistic fiction*. 2019. This novel—about taking risks and facing danger, about friendship and art, is, more than anything else, a story about love—both its limits and its incredible healing power.

One Bird by Kyoko Mori. *Realistic fiction*. 1996. Just when she feels that no one cares, fifteen-year-old Megumi meets veterinarian Dr. Mizutani, who offers Megumi a part-time job in her veterinary office helping her heal sick birds.

The Best at It by Maulik Pancholy. *Realistic fiction*. 2019. An Indian American boy struggles with his sexuality and mental health while finding a place for himself in seventh grade.

Updated April 20, 2023
The First Rule of Punk by Celia C. Perez. Realistic fiction. 2017. In this classic tale of friendship, identity, and punk rock, twelve-year-old Malu learns to navigate Posega Middle School by staying true to herself.

Echo by Pam Munoz Ryan. Historical fiction. 2015. Lost in the Black Forest, Otto meets three mysterious sisters and finds himself entwined in a prophecy that, decades later, catches three contemporary children in its thread.

The Wednesday Wars by Gary D. Schmidt. Historical fiction. 2007. When all his classmates go to either Catechism or Hebrew school, seventh-grader Holling Hoodhood must stay in Mrs. Baker's classroom and read the plays of Shakespeare.

Shooting Kabul by N. H. Senzai. Adventure fiction. 2010. After escaping to the San Francisco Bay Area from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan in the summer of 2001, eleven-year-old Fadi schemes to return for his little sister who was accidentally left behind.


Dry by Neal Shusterman. Science fiction. 2018. When the California drought escalates to catastrophic proportions, one teen is forced to make life and death decisions for her family.

The Schwa Was Here by Neal Shusterman. Adventure fiction. 2004. A Brooklyn eighth-grader nicknamed Antsy befriends the Schwa, an "invisible-ish" boy who is tired of blending into his surroundings and going unnoticed by nearly everyone.

Outcasts United: The Story of a Refugee Soccer Team that Changed a Town by Warren St. John. Non-fiction, sports. 2009. This young readers' edition of an adult bestseller tells the inspirational story of the Fugees, a youth soccer team made up of diverse refugees from around the world, and their formidable female coach, Luma Mufleh.

The Mysterious Benedict Society by Trenton Lee Stewart. Mystery. 2007. Reynie, Kate, Sticky, and Constance, all graduates of the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, embark on a scavenger hunt that turns into a search for the missing Mr. Benedict.

Dear Martin by Nic Stone. Realistic fiction. 2017. Justyce McAllister is a good kid, an honor student, and always there to help a friend—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs.


Genesis Begins Again by Alicia D. Williams. Realistic fiction. 2019. Thirteen-year-old Genesis tries again and again to lighten her black skin, thinking it is the root of her family's troubles, before discovering reasons to love herself as she is.


Each student must read THREE books from the list below:

*Feed* by M.T. Anderson. *Science fiction.* 2004. In a future where most people have computer implants in their heads to control their environment, a boy meets an unusual girl who is in serious trouble.


*The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* by Alan Bradley. *Mystery.* 2009. Eleven-year-old Flavia de Luce, an aspiring chemist with a passion for poison, must exonerate her father of murder; her investigation will lead her all the way to the King of England.

*New Boy* by Tracy Chevalier. *Historical fiction.* 2005. Chevalier recreates Shakespeare's *Othello* on a Washington 6th grade schoolyard in the 1970s when a black boy, new to the school, develops a friendship with the most popular white girl in school.

*Jess, Chunk, and the Road Trip to Infinity* by Kristin Elizabeth Clark. *Realistic fiction.* 2016. Last time Jess saw her dad, she was a boy. Now she’s on a road trip with her friend Chunk to address some unfinished business with her father.

*Whale Talk* by Chris Crutcher. *Sports fiction.* 2001. Follows a group of misfits, the Cutter All Night Mermen, as they struggle to find their places in a school that has no place for them.

*The Palace of Illusions* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. *Historical fiction.* 2008. A reimagining of the world-famous Indian epic, the Mahabharata, and relevant to today's war-torn world, this novel is half history, half myth, and wholly magical.


*Blood Red Horse* by K. M. Grant. *Historical fiction.* 2006. Will has a small chestnut stallion with a white blaze in his brow. Ellie, a fair maiden, is supposed to marry Will's older brother. And King Richard is calling for a Crusade to the Holy Land.

*Girl in the Blue Coat* by Monica Hesse. *Historical fiction.* 2016. In 1943 Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, teenage Hanneke—a 'finder' of black-market goods—is tasked with finding a Jewish girl a customer had been hiding, who has seemingly vanished.


*A Wizard's Guide to Defensive Baking* by T. Kingfisher. *Fantasy.* 2020. In a world full of magic, a young baker must learn how to harness her talent of controlling bread to protect her kingdom.


Updated May 4, 2023
The Apothecary by Maile Meloy. *Fantasy.* 2011. When a friend’s father is kidnapped, fourteen-year-old Janie must uncover the secrets of the apothecary’s sacred book, the *Pharmacopoeia,* and keep it out of the hands of Russian spies in 1950s London.

Monster by Walter Dean Myers. *Realistic fiction.* 2008. While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script.

The Housekeeper and the Professor by Yoko Ogawa. *Realistic fiction.* 2009. A housekeeper and her son create a quasi-family unit with the elderly mathematics professor whose house she cleans. He has no long-term memory and connects with people through baseball and numbers.

Akata Witch by Nnedi Okorafor. *Fantasy.* 2011. In Nigeria, Sunny Nwazue navigates her new path after learning that she has magical powers and has been recruited to fight an evil spirit.


The Chosen by Chaim Potok. *Classic fiction.* 1967. Classic story of two fathers and two sons and the pressures on all of them to pursue the religion they share, Judaism, in the way that is best suited to each.


My Brother’s Shadow by Monika Schröder. *Historical fiction.* 2011. In 1918 Berlin, sixteen-year-old Moritz struggles to do what is right in his relationships with his job, with his socialist mother and sister, and with his WWII veteran brother.

Girl in Reverse by Barbara Stuber. *Historical fiction.* 2014. Lillian Firestone is Chinese, but the kids in her 1951 Kansas City high school can't separate her from the North Koreans that America is at war with. Frustrated, Lily searches for her birth mother.

Lucky Child by Loung Ung. *Nonfiction, memoir.* 2005. (Note: Text includes graphic violence). Ten-year-old Loung Ung was the "lucky child," chosen to accompany her eldest brother to America while her sister and brothers remained behind in Cambodia under the violent regime of the Khmer Rouge. In alternating chapters, she gives voice to Chou, the beloved older sister.

Piecing Me Together by Renée Watson. *Realistic fiction.* 2017. Jade, one of the few black girls at her private school, is singled out for a mentorship program for “at-risk” girls. But Jade doesn't feel she’s "at-risk" at all; in fact, she may have a lot to teach.


The Book Thief by Markus Zusak. *Historical fiction.* 2006. The character Death relates the story of Liesel--a young German girl whose book-stealing and storytelling help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding.
Each student must read THREE books from the list below:

_The Lines We Cross_ by Randa Abdel-Fattah. *Realistic fiction. 2017.* In Australia, Michael's parents lead an anti-immigrant movement whilst Mina’s family are Afghani immigrants. The pair’s mutual attraction raises problems of family and identity.

_Speak_ by Laurie Halse Anderson. *Realistic fiction. 2009.* A traumatic event near the end of the summer has a devastating effect on Melinda's freshman year in high school, a year that brings her great struggle and, ultimately, growth.

_I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings_ by Maya Angelou. *Nonfiction; memoir; classic. 1969.* Angelou chronicles her childhood in 1930s rural Arkansas, including trauma she endured and the strength she gained from her grandmother and other elders.

_A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier_ by Ishmael Beah. *Nonfiction; memoir. 2007.* In the more than fifty conflicts going on worldwide, it is estimated that there are some 300,000 child soldiers. Ishmael Beah used to be one of them.

_Going Bovine_ by Libba Bray. *Fantasy fiction. 2009.* Cameron Smith, a disaffected sixteen-year-old, is diagnosed with “mad cow” disease and sets off on a road trip with a video gaming dwarf and a yard gnome in hopes of finding a cure.

_The Jade Peony_ by Wayson Choy. *Historical fiction. 1998.* In pre-WWII Vancouver, Liang, the daughter of Chinese immigrants, befriends a retired railroader who encourages her to tap dance, while her brothers also discover their identities.

_My Losing Season_ by Pat Conroy. *Nonfiction; memoir. 2002.* The author reflects on his days at a South Carolina military college. He recalls his love of basketball and its value to him as a means of self-expression.

_The Count of Monte Cristo_ by Alexandre Dumas. *Adventure fiction; classic. 1844.* Edmond Dantes, a young sailor who is falsely imprisoned, escapes and assumes a new identity on the island of Monte Cristo.

_The Diary of a Young Girl_ by Anne Frank. *Nonfiction; memoir; classic. 1945.* The journal of a Jewish girl describes the joys and torments of daily life through two years spent in hiding with her family during the Nazi occupation of Holland.

_The Ocean at the End of the Lane_ by Neil Gaiman. *Fantasy fiction. 2013.* When a middle-aged man returns to his childhood home in Sussex, England, for a funeral, he remembers eerie childhood events relating to the neighbor girl who promised to protect him.

_A Lesson Before Dying_ by Ernest J. Gaines. *Historical Fiction. 1994.* This novel explores the unlikely friendship and respect that arises between two African American men, one a teacher and the other an inmate on death row.

_Symptoms of Being Human_ by Jeff Garvin. *Realistic fiction. 2016.* Riley is a genderfluid teen who, at the suggestion of their therapist, begins an anonymous blog about their trans experiences and frustrations. When their blog goes viral, Riley begins to attract attention--both good and bad. (Content warnings for online/offline bullying and homophobic/transphobic slurs.)


*Updated April 28, 2023*


**We Were Liars** by E. Lockhart. *Mystery fiction.* 2014. Summerring on her family's private island off the coast of Massachusetts with her cousins and a special boy named Gat, Cadence struggles to remember what happened during her fifteenth summer.


**Born to Run: A Hidden Tribe, Superathletes, and the Greatest Race the World Has Never Seen** by Christopher McDougall. *Nonfiction; sports.* 2009. An outsider who befriends the Tarahumara Indians, leading to a running event between the tribesmen and American athletes, including an ultramarathoner, a surfer, and others.


**My Name is Asher Lev** by Chaim Potok. *Classic fiction.* 1972. When his uncle dies, orthodox Jew Asher Lev, a loner with artistic aspirations, must return to his native Brooklyn, where his art causes conflicts with his family and community.

**Dodger** by Terry Pratchett. *Adventure fiction.* 2002. In an alternative version of Victorian London, a seventeen-year-old Dodger, a cunning and cheeky street urchin, rises in life when he saves a mysterious girl, meets Charles Dickens, and foils Sweeney Todd.

**Long Way Down** by Jason Reynolds *Realistic fiction, novel in verse.* 2017. Determined to avenge his 19-year-old brother's death, 15-year-old Will wants to kill the person he's certain is the murderer, but it's a long way down in the elevator.

**X: A Novel** by Ilyasah Shabazz and Kekla Magoon. *Historical fiction.* 2015. Recounts the childhood of civil rights leader Malcolm X to his imprisonment at age twenty, when he found the faith that would lead him towards activism and justice.

**Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe** by Benjamin Alire Sáenz. *Realistic fiction.* 2014. Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world. The two of them begin a friendship that lasts a lifetime. A story of coming of age and coming out.

**Betsey Brown: A Novel** by Ntozake Shange. *Historical fiction.* 1985. Betsey is an African American seventh-grader growing up in St. Louis. This novel is based closely on the history of the school desegregation and civil rights movements in America.

The Scorpio Races by Maggie Stiefvater. *Fantasy fiction. 2011.* Nineteen-year-old returning champion Sean Kendrick competes against Puck Connolly, the first girl ever to ride in the annual Scorpio Races.

The Age of Miracles: A Novel by Karen Thompson Walker. *Science fiction. 2012.* Earth's rotation has suddenly begun to slow, posing a catastrophic threat to all life. How is young Julia supposed to know how to grow up facing such a harsh reality?

Code Name Verity by Elizabeth Wein. *Historical fiction. 2012.* In 1943, a British fighter plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France and the survivor tells a tale of friendship, war, espionage, and great courage.
SHARED READING (for World Civ II): all students must read *1984* by George Orwell. *Science fiction.* 1948. Winston Smith, a worker at the Ministry of Truth in the future political entity of Oceania, puts his life on the line when he joins a covert brotherhood in rebelling against the Party that controls all human thought and action.

In addition to *1984*, each student must read TWO books from the list below:

*Maya's Notebook* by Isabel Allende. *Realistic fiction.* 2013. After a recent loss, Maya escapes her downward spiral of drugs, alcohol, and petty crime to a remote Chilean island where she unravels the mysteries of her family and her life.

*The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood. *Science fiction; dystopian.* 1985. In what was once the United States, now called the Republic of Gilead, the ruling class reacts to social unrest and a declining birth rate with extremely repressive policies.

*Emma* by Jane Austen. *Classic fiction; humor.* 1815. In the provincial world of Highbury, Emma Woodhouse plays matchmaker, sometimes with unintended consequences.

*Spy Princess: The Life of Noir Inayat Khan* by Shrabani Basu. *Nonfiction; biography.* 2006. Khan, code named "Madeleine," the first woman wireless transmitter in WWII, was trained by Britain's SOE and assumed the most dangerous resistance post in underground Paris.

*The Little Girls* by Elizabeth Bowen. *Classic fiction; adventure.* 1964. In 1914, three eleven-year-old girls buried a box in a thicket on the coast of England shortly before World War I sent their lives on divergent paths. Nearly fifty years later, their paths cross again.

*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte. *Classic fiction.* 1847. Jane, a plain and penniless orphan in nineteenth-century England, accepts employment as a governess and soon finds herself in love with her melancholy employer, a man with a terrible secret. (Note: those who read *Jane Eyre* could consider reading its modern heir, *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys afterwards; see below.)

*Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte. *Classic fiction.* 1848. The passionate love story of stubborn Cathy and wild-as-the-wind Heathcliff in the rugged land of the Yorkshire moors has been a favorite since its publication.

*Possession* by A.S. Byatt. *Historical fiction; mystery/thriller.* 1990. Booker Prize winner. Interweaves two stories: in one, two scholars of opposing viewpoints discover a potential affair between two Victorian poets, one a married man and the other famously in a committed lesbian relationship. In the other story, we meet the poets themselves and learn the beautiful truth.

*Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet* by Becky Chambers. *Science fiction.* 2014. Follow a motley crew on an exciting journey through space--and one adventurous young explorer who discovers the meaning of family in the far reaches of the universe--in this light-hearted space opera that explores family, gender, and morality.

*The Night Tiger* by Yangtze Choo. *Historical fiction; fantasy; mystery.* 2020. The fates of a dance hall girl and an orphan boy entangle over an old Chinese superstition about men who turn into tigers.

*Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* by Susanna Clarke. *Fantasy fiction.* 2010. In 1806, most people believed magic to be dead in England--until the reclusive Mr. Norrell reveals his powers and another magician emerges: the young, daring Jonathan Strange.

*Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe. *Classic fiction; adventure.* 1719. An Englishman becomes the sole survivor of a shipwreck and lives for nearly thirty years on a deserted island.

*A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens. *Classic fiction.* 1859. “It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.” Thus begins the tale of Sydney Carton, a disreputable lawyer, and his involvement in the French Revolution.

Updated May 14, 2023
**Little Brother** by Cory Doctorow. *Science fiction*. 2008. In San Francisco, having been interrogated for days by officials of a police state that has emerged after a terrorist attack, seventeen-year-old Marcus decides to use his expertise in computer hacking to set things right.

**Rebecca** by Daphne Du Maurier. *Classic fiction*; *suspense*. 1938. The second Mrs. de Winter narrates the haunting events surrounding her marriage to Maxim de Winter and her growing obsession with his mysterious first wife, the beautiful, now dead Rebecca.

**The Vanishing Act of Esmé Lennox** by Maggie O’Farrell. *Historical fiction*. 2008. Esmé, a girl sent to an asylum at the age of 16, is forgotten by her family—until the asylum is shuttered and someone must take care of her.


**A Room With A View** by E.M. Forster. *Classic fiction*. 1908. A charming young English woman is at war with the snobbery of her own class and with her conflicting desires when she finds herself attracted to someone deemed unsuitable for her.


**My Brilliant Career** by Miles Franklin. *Classic fiction*. 1980. A semi-autobiographical novel of a hot-tempered girl growing up in Australia around 1900, who aspires to become a person of note despite the prejudices against women at that time.

**Good Omens** by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett. *Fantasy fiction*; *humor*. 1996. The world will come to an end next Saturday. Except: a fast-living demon and a fussy angel have grown fond of Earth's mortals and decide to try to stop the Apocalypse.

**Cold Comfort Farm** by Stella Gibbons. *Historical fiction*; *humor*. 1932. Flora Poste finds herself in a gloomy, overwrought world and proceeds to organize everyone out of their romantic tragedies and into the pleasures of modern life in the 1930s.

**These Violent Delights** by Chloe Gong. *Fantasy fiction*. 2020. Shanghai *Romeo and Juliet* retelling with Chinese gangs.

**Our Man in Havana** by Graham Greene. *Classic fiction*; *adventure*. 1958. A vacuum cleaner salesman who is short of money accepts an assignment as an M16 agent in Havana, where soon his faked intelligence reports start coming true.

**A Certain Justice** by P.D. James. *Mystery fiction*. 1997. A lawyer is murdered soon after successfully defending her client who was on trial for murder. An investigator learns the client recently became engaged to the lawyer's daughter. Is there a connection?

**Unmarriageable** by Soniah Kamal. *Realistic fiction*. 2019. Set in modern day Pakistan, Alys Binat has sworn never to marry—until an encounter with one Mr. Darsee at a wedding makes her reconsider. A modern retelling of Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*.

**Small Island** by Andrea Levy. *Realistic fiction*. 2005. Hortense Joseph arrives in London from Jamaica in 1948 hoping to start a new life with her husband, but they find themselves struggling to fit into the strange culture of their foreign “motherland.”

**Master of Thin Air: Life and Death on the World’s Highest Peaks** by Andrew Lock. *Nonfiction*; *memoir*. 2014. Opens with a fall down an almost vertical rock ramp and recounts Lock’s sixteen-year journey to summit all of the world's eight-thousands.
Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel. Science fiction. 2014. In a pandemic-ravaged society, actress Kirsten Raymonde travels with a troupe performing Shakespeare and finds herself in a community in which a prophet will not let anyone leave alive.

Enduring Love by Ian McEwan. Classic fiction. 1997. After a chance meeting, Jed Perry begins to stalk author Joe Rose. Driven by religious zeal and misdirected love, the strange young man will slowly unravel each strand of Joe's life.


The Cat's Table by Michael Ondaatje. Historical fiction. 2011. Michael, now an adult, recalls the three-week long sea voyage he took as a boy in the early 1950s. During the trip across the Indian Ocean the boy meets a variety of characters on board.

White is for Witching by Helen Oyeyemi. Mystery fiction. 2014. Sixteen-year-old Miranda struggles against the menacing haunted house she inhabits and a rare eating disease that causes her to eat non-edible substances.

My Name is Red by Orhan Pamuk. Historical fiction. 2002. A fiendishly devious mystery set amid the splendor and religious intrigue of sixteenth-century Istanbul by a celebrated contemporary Turkish novelist.

Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton. Classic fiction. 1948. A Zulu pastor and his son’s struggles under white rule in South Africa.


Nation by Terry Pratchett. Fantasy fiction; alternate history. 2008. After a devastating tsunami destroys all that they have ever known, Mau, an island boy, and Daphne, an aristocratic English girl, set about rebuilding their community.

Wide Sargasso Sea by Jean Rhys. Classic fiction; adventure.1966. Postcolonial novel centered upon Bertha, the Jamaican madwoman in the attic in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre, to which this novel could make an interesting follow-up read.


Sugar in the Blood: A Family's Story of Slavery and Empire by Andrea Stuart. Nonfiction; history. 2013. Stuart uses her own family’s Caribbean story as the pivot for this epic tale of migration, colonialism, slavery, settlement, and survival.

Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift. Classic fiction; adventure; satire. 1726. A classic satire that recounts four remarkable journeys of a ship's surgeon, Lemuel Gulliver, including one stay in a land of six-inch-high people and another in a land of giants.

The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde. Classic fiction. 1891. A handsome, dissolute man who sells his soul for eternal youth is horrified to see the reflection of his degeneration in the distorted features of his portrait.

Updated May 14, 2023
SHARED READING: all students must read *The Moor’s Account* by Laila Lalami. *Realistic fiction. 2014.* The invented memoir of enslaved person Mustafa al-Zamori follows him through his journey from Morocco to Florida and beyond with the Spanish Narváez expedition that goes horribly awry. **The book will be available in the JBS bookstore this spring.**

**In addition to The Moor’s Account**, each student must read TWO books from the list below:

*Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. *Realistic fiction. 2013.* Explores in savvy, blunt, and often humorous fashion concepts of culture, race, love, and gender in the struggles and triumphs of Nigerian immigrants in America and England.

*Before and After* by Rosellen Brown. *Mystery. 1992.* When the chief of police comes looking for Jacob one evening to question him about the bludgeoning to death of his teenage girlfriend, the lives of the Reiser family are changed forever.

*In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote. *Nonfiction; journalism. 1966.* An account of the murders of the four members of the Clutter family in Holcomb, Kansas, in 1959 by two drifters who fled to Mexico and were later arrested and executed for their crimes.

*The Moonflower Vine* by Jetta Carleton. *Realistic fiction. 2009.* Missouri author. On a farm in western Missouri during the first half of the twentieth century, Matthew and Callie Soames create a life for themselves and raise four headstrong daughters.

*Donald Duk* by Frank Chin. *Realistic fiction. 1991.* Donald, the 12-year-old son of a Chinatown chef in San Francisco, hates his name (he isn’t a cartoon character); he loves tap dancing; and he struggles to feel comfortable with being Chinese.

*The Boston Girl* by Anita Diamant. *Historical fiction. 2015.* A story of the twentieth century through the life of one woman, Addie Baum, born in 1900 to immigrant parents who are suspicious of America and its effect on their three daughters.

*Cloud Cuckoo Land* by Anthony Doerr. *Historical and speculative fiction. 2021.* An ancient Greek text weaves together the lives of five characters from the Byzantine empire up to a 22nd century starship and celebrates the human desire to dream, preserve, and be remembered.

*The Candy House* by Jennifer Egan. *Science fiction. 2022.* In the not-so-distant future, numerous characters must face the consequences of living in a world where the boundaries between personal and public lives have largely been broken down.

*Wit: A Play* by Margaret Edson. *Drama. 1999.* Vivian Bearing, a renowned English professor who has spent years studying and teaching poetry, takes an intellectual approach to her terminal cancer diagnosis for as long as she can.

*The Round House* by Louise Erdrich. *Adventure fiction. 2012.* When his mother slips into an abyss of depression after being brutally attacked, Joe Coutts, an Ojibwe teenager, sets out with his three friends to find the person that injured his family.

*Herland* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. *Classic; adventure. 1915.* Three male explorers discover an advanced, all-female society in South America and have trouble understanding how it can work so well without men.


*Less* by Andrew Sean Greer. *2017. Realistic fiction; satire.* When Arthur Less gets an invitation to his ex-boyfriend’s wedding, he responds with all the maturity of his 49 years by going on an international adventure that takes him as far from the event as possible.

*Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson. *Realistic fiction; courtroom. 1995.* In 1954, in an island community north of Puget Sound, a local fisherman is found suspiciously drowned and a Japanese American citizen is charged with his murder.

*Updated May 1, 2023*
The Last Child by John Hart. Mystery. 2009. After his twin sister disappears, thirteen-year-old Johnny Merrimon is determined to find her. When a second girl disappears from his rural North Carolina town, Johnny makes a shocking discovery.

Catch-22 by Joseph Heller. Classic; satire. 1955. Set in the closing months of World War II, Catch-22 is the story of a bombardier named Yossarian who is frantic and furious because thousands of people he hasn't even met keep trying to kill him.

For Whom the Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway. Classic; war. 1940. The Spanish Civil War is in full swing when one man's sense of duty confronts another's self-interest and weariness.

And We Stay by Jenny Hubbard. Realistic fiction. 2014. Sent to an Amherst, Massachusetts, boarding school after her ex-boyfriend’s death, seventeen-year-old Emily expresses herself through poetry, copes with her guilt, and begins to heal.

The Crazed by Ha Jin. Realistic fiction. 2004. When an eminent professor has a stroke in Communist China and begins to rave unconsciously in the hospital, a graduate student enlisted to sit with him must separate truth from fantasy in his wild “confessions.”

The Woman Warrior by Maxine Hong Kingston. Memoir and folktale. 1976. Kingston works to forge an understanding of her family’s past from her present life in California and the conflict between her mother’s tales of women warriors in China and the oppressive reality from which they emerged.

Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools by Jonathan Kozol. Nonfiction; journalism. 1991. An account of the author’s visits to schools in over 30 neighborhoods, including East St. Louis, Harlem, and Chicago, and the inequities he found.

We Are Okay by Nina LaCour. Realistic fiction. 2017. Printz Award winner. The summer before college was filled with change for Marin—a changing relationship with her best friend, Mabel, and then a sudden bereavement. When Mabel flies coast-to-coast to visit Marin, the two must face the past together and try to move past it.

Dead Wake by Erik Larson. Non-fiction. 2016. Grippingly describes the sinking of the Lusitania and captures the sheer drama and emotional power of a disaster whose intimate details and true meaning have long been obscured by history.

All the Pretty Horses by Cormac McCarthy. Western. 1992. Presents a cowboy odyssey for modern times and features the travels and toils of a 16 year old East Texan boy. The first volume of the author's Border trilogy.

Ordinary Monsters by J.M. Miro. Fantasy. 2022. In a dark, late 19th century, employees from the Cairndale Institute must round up children with “talents” from across the world before they are found by the haunting monster that hunts them.

A Good Man is Hard to Find and Other Stories by Flannery O’Connor. Realistic fiction. 1953. A ten-story collection of O’Connor’s startling and strange characters and plots that populate her country home near Milledgeville, Georgia, in the early 20th century.


Coal Black Horse by Robert Olmstead. Adventure. 2007. In the midst of the Civil War, Robey Child's mother sends him to the battlefield to find his father, and the fourteen-year-old is forced to become a man amidst the horrors of war.

The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. Le Guin. Science fiction. 1969. In a fictional universe, Genly Ai serves as an envoy to a distant planet where his struggle to understand the culture and ambisexuality of the world places him in grave danger.

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Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser. Nonfiction; journalism. 2001. The book inspires readers to look beneath the surface of our food system, consider its impact on society and, most of all, think for themselves.

Hyperion by Dan Simmons. Science fiction. 1989. Twenty-ninth century, intergalactic pilgrims travel to the mysterious and powerful Shrike sect on the far world of Hyperion and by sharing their separate tales try to understand the reason for their potentially deadly journey.

The Jungle by Upton Sinclair. Nonfiction; journalism. 1906. Sinclair worked undercover in the meatpacking Chicago stockyards to describe in true detail the horrific conditions among workers and the food they produced.

Men Explain Things to Me by Rebecca Solnit. Nonfiction; social commentary. 2014. Solnit humorously explores communication between men who wrongly assume they know things and/or wrongly assume women don't.

Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut. Science fiction. 1966. The story of Billy Pilgrim who has come unstuck in time and jumps back and forth from life on a distant planet to the horrors of the 1945 fire-bombing of Dresden.

The Color Purple by Alice Walker. Realistic fiction. 1983. Celie is a poor black woman in the South whose letters tell the story of 20 years of her life, from her endurance of abuse beginning at age 14 to her growth toward independence, creativity, and love.

All the King's Men by Robert Penn Warren. Realistic fiction. 1946. All the King's Men traces the rise and fall of demagogue Willie Stark, a fictional character loosely based on Governor Huey "Kingfish" Long of Louisiana.

Black Boy by Richard Wright. Nonfiction; memoir. 1945. Wright's unforgettable autobiography of growing up in the Jim Crow South offers an unsurpassed portrait of the struggles against the ingrained racism and poverty faced by African Americans.
**Book 1:** ALL rising seniors must read *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich. We suggest you read this book in August; please bring your copy to class with you on opening day.

**Books 2-3:** Choose your second book from this list; your third book may come from this list or may be another book of comparable complexity.

*Desert Solitaire* by Ed Abbey. *Nonfiction; memoir.* 1968. Abbey’s story of his three seasons in the desert at Moab, Utah is a fascinating, sometimes raucous account of a place that has already disappeared but is worth remembering.

*Eva Luna* by Isabel Allende. *Realistic fiction.* 1987. From nuns to sex workers, poor revolutionaries to gifted transgender artists, Muslim immigrants to privileged elites, orphaned Eva creates families around her—and learns to love—by telling magical stories.

*Bastard Out of Carolina* by Dorothy Allison. *Realistic fiction.* 1992. With this novel, Allison, who has been likened to Harper Lee, confronts race, class, gender, sexuality, and identity in the lives of poor whites in the South.

*Going to Meet the Man* by James Baldwin. *Fiction; short stories.* 1965. By turns haunting, heartbreaking, and horrifying, these stories are informed by Baldwin's knowledge of the wounds racism has left in both its victims and its perpetrators.

*Visit Sunny Chernobyl: And Other Adventures in the World’s Most Polluted Places* by Andrew Blackwell. *Nonfiction; journalism.* 2012. Andrew Blackwell describes his travels to the most polluted places in the world.

*Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson. *Nonfiction.* 1962. One of the most influential books of the 20th Century and a cornerstone of the environmental movement, spurring revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water.


*The Hours* by Michael Cunningham. *Historical fiction; short stories.* 1998. A trio of stories inspired by the writer Virginia Woolf, whose novel *Mrs. Dalloway* is also on this list.

*David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens. *Classic fiction.* 1850. One of the most autobiographical of all the author’s novels, it is a classic coming-of-age story chronicling the struggle between the emotional and moral aspects of his life.

*Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. *Classic fiction.* 1866. The poverty and hopelessness of pre-Revolutionary Russian society are tangible in this story of a student who murders two women and then tries to live with his crime.

*Finding Nouf* by Zoe Ferraris. *Mystery.* 2009. Saudi Arabian desert guide Nayir al-Sharqi is hired to find a girl. When she turns up dead, he forms an unexpected partnership with a female technician at the coroner's office to solve the case.


*One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. *Magical realism; classic.* 1967. One of the most influential literary works of our time, tells the story of the rise and fall, birth and death of the mythical town of Macondo through the history of the Buendiá family. Inventive, amusing, magnetic, sad and alive with unforgettable characters.


*Thinking in Pictures: My Life with Autism* by Temple Grandin. *Nonfiction; memoir.* 1995. Grandin brings the dual perspectives of scientist and autistic person to this classic, groundbreaking report from “the country of autism.”

*Updated May 4, 2022*


The Fifth Season by N. K. Jemisin. Science fiction; Afro-futurist. 2015. In an imagined world, a woman hides her supernatural ability to bend rocks and embarks on a quest to find her kidnapped daughter, only to find herself tempted to start a new epoch.

Waiting by Ha Jin. Historical fiction. 2000. Lin Kong, a man living in two worlds, is struggling with the conflicting claims of two utterly different women as he moves through the political minefields of a society designed to regulate his every move.

The Trial by Franz Kafka. Classic literature. 1925. Chilling tale of a respectable bank officer who is suddenly arrested and put on trial for a charge about which he can get no information. If you liked 1984, this is a good choice.

When Breath Becomes Air by Paul Kalanithi. Nonfiction; memoir. 2016. While training as a neurosurgeon, Kalanithi was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. He reflects on being a medical expert, dying patient, and new father all at the same time.

The Geography of Nowhere by J.H. Kunstler. Nonfiction; journalism. 1994. The author traces America's evolution from a nation of Main Streets and coherent communities to a land where every place is like no place in particular.

Pachinko by Min Jin Lee. Historical fiction. 2017. In the early 1900s, teenaged Sunja, the adored daughter of a crippled fisherman, falls for a wealthy stranger at the seashore near her home in Korea, setting off an epic tale moving from bustling street markets to the halls of Japan's finest universities to the pachinko parlors of the criminal underworld.

Black Hole Blues and Other Songs from Outer Space by Janna Levin. Nonfiction; science. 2016. In 1916, Einstein predicted the existence of gravitational waves: sounds without a material medium generated by the collision of black holes. Levin, herself an astrophysicist, recounts the surprising and fascinating story of the search, over the last fifty years, for these elusive waves.


The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison. Realistic fiction. 1970. Morrison’s bestselling first novel, telling the story of Pecola, growing up in Ohio following the Great Depression and struggling to love herself when she believes whiteness is the standard of beauty.

In Other Rooms, Other Wonders by Daniyal Mueenuddin. Fiction; short stories. 2009. A stellar linked set of short stories--some funny, some tragic, some adventurous, some lyrical--telling lives of a single extended household in and around modern-day Lahore.


Hamnet: A Novel of the Plague by Maggie O'Farrell. Historical fiction. 2020. O’Farrell offers a tender and unforgettable reimagining of a boy whose life has been all but forgotten and whose name was given to one of the most celebrated plays of all time.

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A Tale for the Time Being by Ruth Ozeki. Realistic fiction. 2013. A Hello Kitty lunchbox washes up on the shore of Vancouver Island. Inside are artifacts presenting a puzzle that when put together reveal the unexpected life of a Japanese teenager.

Snow by Orhan Pamuk. Suspense. 2005. This political thriller follows an exiled writer who returns to Turkey to investigate a religious youth protest movement, but it ends up being about so much more.

What I Was by Meg Rosoff. Realistic fiction. 2008. Finn was a beautiful orphan. H was a prep school misfit. They met on a beach on the coast of England where Finn lived alone in a hut. He recounts, in his old age, the story of their coming of age.

Midnight's Children by Salman Rushdie. Fiction; magical realism. 1981. This iconic masterpiece portrays India’s transition from British colonial rule to independence and the partition into India & Pakistan through the magical abilities of the children born alongside their country, at midnight on the day of independence.


Kusamakura by Natsume Soseki. Classic fiction. 1906. The lyrical story of the encounters of an artist on a walking tour of the mountains, its author describes this classic of Japanese literature as “a haiku-style novel that lives through beauty.”

Wild by Cheryl Strayed. Nonfiction, memoir. 2012. A powerful, blazingly honest, inspiring memoir; the story of a 1,100 mile solo hike that broke down a young woman reeling from catastrophe—and built her back up again.

Blankets by Craig Thompson. Graphic novel, autobiography. 2015. A young man comes of age and finds his artistic voice.


The Book of Salt by Monique Truong. Historical fiction. 2003. Binh is a young, gay, Vietnamese immigrant in 1930s Paris. He is also personal chef to the legendary Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas. Their famous relationship, successful careers, and committed home contrast to and fuel his secret loves, personal losses, and hope-filled ambitions.

Cutting for Stone by Abraham Verghese. Historical fiction. 2009. Twin brothers Marion and Shiva Stone come of age in Ethiopia, sharing a bond that helps them survive the loss of their parents and the country's political upheaval.

The Genius Plague by David Walton. Science fiction. 2017. What if the pandemic you thought would kill you made you more intelligent instead? In the Amazon, a disease is spreading. It grants enhanced brainpower—to those who survive.

Sing, Unburied, Sing by Jesmyn Ward. Realistic fiction. 2017. National Book Award. Jojo struggles with his mother's addictions and his grandmother's cancer before the release of his father from prison prompts a dangerous, hopeful road trip.

The Piano Lesson by August Wilson. Drama. 1990. Willie dreams of buying the Mississippi land his family had worked as slaves, selling their antique piano to finance his future. But his sister Berniece sees the piano as their legacy and refuses to sell.


Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf. Classic literature. 1925. Considered one of the most brilliant novels of its age, the story covers one day in the life of Mrs. Dalloway, but in that one day we see many of the threads that make up her life.

Native Son by Richard Wright. Fiction. Social realism. 1940. When a wealthy white family offers Bigger Thomas, a twenty-year-old black Chicagoan, a chauffeur's position, Bigger is torn between gratitude and resentment.