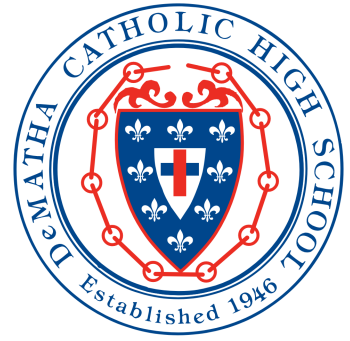
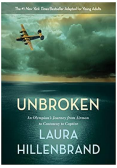


FRESHMEN



2024 DeMatha Summer Reading Guide

Required:



***Unbroken (The Young Adult Adaptation)*, by Laura Hillenbrand**

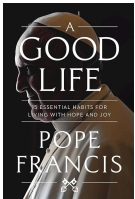
Louis Zamperini, mischievous and willful son of Italian immigrants, was headed toward a life of crime when his brother convinced him to join the track team. Zamperini discovered he had world-class talent, but the determination and toughness that made him so hard to handle as a child became invaluable traits for him in his roles as Olympic athlete, World War II pilot, and eventually a Japanese prisoner of war in appalling conditions. This is a true story of surviving incredible physical and emotional trials.

Choose One:



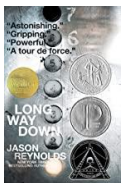
***Akata Witch*, by Nnedi Okorafor**

Often referred to as "the Nigerian Harry Potter," this coming-of-age novel follows a young American-born girl as she grows up in Nigeria. Her foreign-birth is only one of the traits that distinguishes her from her peers: she is also albino, and a witch, who had been unaware of her powers when she first moved to Nigeria. Now there is a serial killer on the loose. How will she navigate both this impending danger and her own complicated identity?



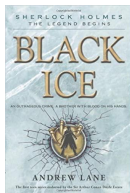
***A Good Life: 15 Essential Habits for Living with Hope and Joy*, by Pope Francis**

Incoming freshmen are often looking for books of advice, and Pope Francis provides guidance shaped by a life of deep faith and contemplation. Written with a spirit of wonder and compassion, these pages brim with easily digestible observations about what brings peace and meaning to one's life at any age. Read with a highlighter in hand, because there are several sentences that you are going to want to return to as you move along life's journey.



***Long Way Down*, by Jason Reynolds**

When his older brother Shawn is shot and killed, Will Holloman thinks he's supposed to just follow the rules. No crying. No snitching. Just get revenge. Will arms himself and rides his building's elevator down to the ground floor, but on that long way down he is visited by the ghosts of other loved ones lost who make him question just what exactly he'd be finishing by getting revenge. This is a powerful story—told through short poems on each page—about the cycle of violence and how to escape it.



***Black Ice*, by Andrew Lane**

Sherlock Holmes is a teenager in this adventure, and, while smart, he is not yet "the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen." With the help of his mentor, Amyus Crowe, he must now save his brother from a murder conviction. The room was locked, only two people were inside—one ended up dead and Mycroft was discovered with a knife. Sherlock will have to travel the streets of London and Moscow to unravel the sinister set-up.

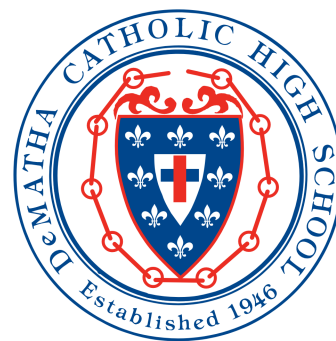


***The Boys Who Challenged Hitler*, by Phillip Hoose**

The Nazi war machine has over-run much of Europe, and a group of 15-year-old Danish boys can't stand the thought that their country has let the Germans occupy their towns without a fight. Armed with only their bicycles and their bravery, the boys launch a series of sabotage efforts and guerilla-style attacks on the Nazi occupiers. Their exploits—which include escaping from prison to continue their nightly raids—inspire the adults of their country to begin resisting the Nazis at every turn.

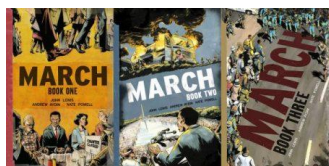
Rising freshmen are asked to prepare written responses to their two summer reading books. [See the prompts here](#). Students in the Summer Prep class will read *Unbroken* and prepare the first written response as part of the Summer Prep course. They must complete the second book and written response independently.

SOPHOMORES



2024 DeMatha Summer Reading Guide

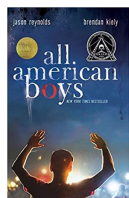
Required:



***March* (in three volumes), John Lewis and Nate Powell**

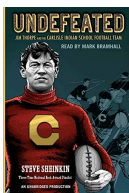
From an Alabama chicken farm to a podium on the National Mall, from Nashville lunch counters to Bloody Sunday on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, artist Nate Powell's illustrations and John Lewis's narration bring alive both the incredible personal story of a Civil Rights leader and the country-changing movement of which he was an integral part. Lewis's lessons about "good trouble" still resonate today. DeMatha freshmen read *Book One* as part of their English 9 course; transfer students should read it in addition to *Books Two* and *Three*. [Students can request to borrow digital copies of these texts here.](#)

Choose One:



***All American Boys*, by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely**

When Rashad is mistakenly accused of shoplifting at the corner store, Quinn is the only eyewitness to Rashad's encounter with an off-duty police officer—a confrontation that leaves Rashad in the hospital with broken ribs and a collapsed lung. To make matters worse, the officer was someone Quinn had looked up to like a father, after his own father had died in Afghanistan, and soon Quinn will have to choose between staying quiet to protect someone from his inner circle and speaking up for what he knows is the truth.



***Undeclared: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School*, by Steve Sheinkin**

More than a century ago, legendary football coach Pop Warner took a game that frequently featured fist fights and cracked craniums and modernized it with the forward pass, trick plays, and the electric speed of his players at Carlisle Indian School. This is the true story of Jim Thorpe (often considered one of the best athletes of the 20th century), the evolution of football, and Native American cultures that refused to be erased.



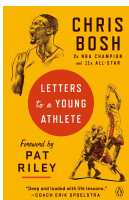
***Mexican WhiteBoy*, by Matt de la Peña**

Danny Lopez is a biracial teenager with Big League dreams. When he spends a summer with his absent father's side of the family, he discovers new truths about his talent, his father, and his own identity. Along the way, he'll have to learn how to talk to his crush (considering they don't speak the same language!) and make an unlikely friend, who has similar questions about where he belongs. This is a great choice for fans of baseball or of stories about growing up.



***The Upper World*, by Femi Fadugba**

After a near-death experience, Esso, a South London teenager, finds himself dislodged from his previous understanding of time. As a grown teacher in the future, he forms a relationship with a young soccer player named Rhia. This partnership will prove essential as they quest for the identity of Rhia's birthmother and to stop a larger tragedy for occurring. This entertaining, fast-paced story will bend the rules of physics as its characters try to change the course of history.



***Letters to a Young Athlete*, by Chris Bosh**

In a voice that's both conversational and academic, former NBA star Chris Bosh gives advice to young people about how to succeed in athletics, in school, and in life. It comes down to finding your purpose and "putting work into your mental game." You do not have to be a basketball fan or an athlete to appreciate the stories and perspective that this book offers.

JUNIORS

2024 DeMatha Summer Reading Guide



Required:

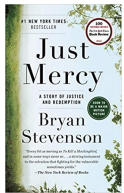


The Kite Runner [Graphic Novel], by Khaled Hosseini

Amir and Hassan had always been best friends—almost like brothers—despite Hassan being a Harza, an ethnic group considered inferior in Afghanistan's social hierarchy. When Amir's failure to stand up for Hassan turns his friend toward a terrible life trajectory, Amir must live with his guilt and remorse for years. This story about friendship and fathers and sons takes us inside Afghanistan before the rise of the Taliban and then shows us the upheavals and reversals of power—both personal and societal—that come with it.

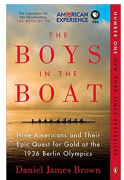
[Students can request to borrow digital copies of this text here.](#)

Choose One:



Just Mercy, by Bryan Stevenson

While on his summer break from Harvard Law School, Bryan Stevenson began volunteering at an organization in Georgia that offered legal representation to inmates on Death Row. Now, after more than 30 years working with the destitute, desperate, and forgotten through his Equal Justice Initiative, Stevenson delivers a frustrating, heart-breaking look into the corners of our justice system, and hope for how to reform it.



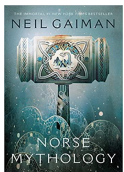
The Boys in the Boat, by Daniel James Brown

When Joe Rantz was just 15, his father and stepmother abandoned him, leaving him to fend for himself in a half-finished log cabin in the woods north of Seattle. Rantz survived by logging and doing odd jobs, all while finishing high school and then earning a place on the vaunted University of Washington rowing team. As the tough-as-nails young men on this team go from local heroes to Olympic hopefuls, this depression-era story becomes one of individuality and teamwork, an international triumph that is part Rocky and part Miracle on Ice.



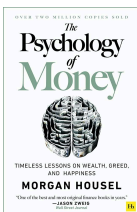
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time, by Mark Haddon

Fifteen-year-old Christopher knows a mystery when he sees one. When his neighbor's dog is mysteriously killed, Christopher decides to investigate. But Christopher is unlike any narrator we've heard from before. While he searches for clues, his autism prevents him from reading the social and emotional clues of the people around him, and he plunges deeper into a disturbing mystery about his own family. This modern classic is funny, sad, weird, brilliant, life-affirming, and unforgettable.



Norse Mythology, by Neil Gaiman

Master storyteller Neil Gaiman breathes new life into the traditional myths of Odin, Thor, Loki and the other Norse gods of Asgard. Gaiman gives shape to these often disjointed tales by creating a unified plot that takes readers from the creation of the nine worlds through the gods' many attempts to ward off the chaos of the giants and the long foreseen end of the world, Ragnarok. These reimagined myths are both funnier and more fearsome than the traditional tales.



The Psychology of Money: Timeless Lessons on Wealth, Greed, and Happiness, by Morgan Housel

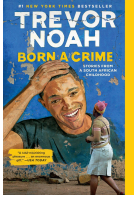
Housel, an award-winning finance journalist, believes that “personal finance” is more about the “personal” than it is about the “finance.” He’s a part of a growing field of study, known as behavioral economics, that looks into the psychology of *why* and *how* we make decisions with money. This book, accessible to novices but also intriguing to experts, shares 19 stories that reveal the ways people think about money. There’s also some sound financial advice here, but nothing about how to “get rich quick.” In fact, looking for a shortcut to wealth is one of the surest ways to never arrive there.

SENIORS

2024 DeMatha Summer Reading Guide



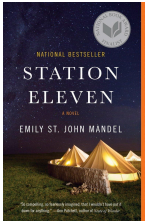
Required:



Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood, by Trevor Noah

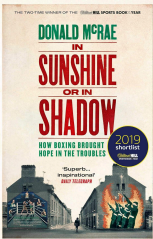
As the son of a Black South African mother and a white father, Trevor Noah was literally born a crime in Apartheid South Africa. In this collection of personal stories, Noah tells the story of growing up “mixed” in a society designed—by law and deeply rooted prejudices—to keep the races separate. In the process of telling these stories from childhood, the older Noah recognizes the impact of his mother’s strength, bravery, and love on nearly every element of his journey.

Choose One:



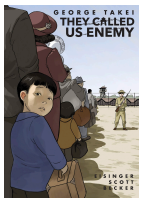
Station Eleven, by Emily St. John Mandel

This dystopian novel, recommended by Mrs. Strickland, begins during a performance of *King Lear*. The readers are then witnesses to the start of a pandemic. We, the readers, are fast-forwarded twenty years where the world that we knew has drastically changed. With ease, Mandel manages to keep multiple storylines vivid and manageable. We witness and solve a mystery that ties the characters together (smoothly done!). A quick read that has the capability of capturing our imagination and surprising us, *Station Eleven* keeps us and any new reader interested until the last page.



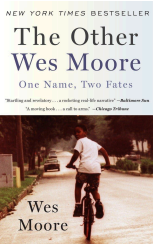
In Sunshine or in Shadow, by Donald McRae

Students who enjoy sports literature and/or learning about history will love this wonderful look at boxing in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. In what ways does a fight “inside the ring” speak to the fights happening outside of it. Let’s get you Stag readers connected right away to how sport influences society a-n-d how society influences sport. Mr. Strickland says, “Happy reading!”



They Called Us Enemy, by George Takei

During World War II, President Roosevelt ordered every person of Japanese descent to be sent to internment camps. George Takei was a boy when this happened, born in this country and detained with his family against their will. Fans of graphic memoirs like *March* will especially appreciate the way this form can be used to render an intimate and vivid account of a tragic part of our nation’s past.



The Other Wes Moore, by Wes Moore

When author Wes Moore was studying abroad on his Rhodes Scholarship, a friend from his home state of Maryland shared the news that there was another Wes Moore on trial for killing a cop. The author looked into the matter further, discovering layers of similarity between the two men. Through research and interviews, the author, now Governor, strung together a timeline for the convicted Moore and compared it to his own. The results became clear: small changes in circumstance can make all the difference.

Rising seniors who are enrolled in AP Literature & Composition should also read Born a Crime. The “choice text” is optional for these students because of the additional requirement on the following page.

AP English Literature & Composition

2024 DeMatha Summer Reading Guide



In addition to Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime*, all rising seniors who are enrolled in AP English Literature & Composition must read Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* over the summer.

A copy has been provided to each student who had registered for the class by the Spring 2024 deadline. Transfer students should purchase their own copy of this text. Used copies are fine. The Fourth Norton Critical Edition (pictured below, ISBN 978-0393284164) includes the pieces of literary criticism we'll examine in class. **Students should bring this book to class during the opening days of school.**



ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

FOURTH
NORTON
CRITICAL
EDITION

MARK TWAIN

Edited by Thomas Cooley

Since its U.S. publication in 1885, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been called everything from “the best book we’ve had” and the “[source] of all American writing” (Ernest Hemingway) to “[not] even a serious novel” (Jane Smiley) and “the most grotesque example of racist trash ever written” (John H. Wallace). There is much to debate in this book, but what is indisputable is its larger-than-life place in the literary world and in the cultural landscape. You’ve most likely heard of it, and you may even have already read it. There’s a good chance your parents and grandparents have read it, too. As its title claims, this story of the flight of an “unsivilized” young white boy and an enslaved Black man down the Mississippi River contains numerous “adventures”—some playful, some gravely serious, and some of the latter masking as the former.

Perhaps no one captures the novel’s status and complexity better than Toni Morrison:

The source of my unease reading this amazing, troubling book now seems clear: an imperfect coming to terms with three matters Twain addresses—Huck Finn’s estrangement, soleness and morbidity as an outcast child; the disproportionate sadness at the center of Jim’s and his relationship; and the secrecy in which Huck’s estrangement with (rather than escape from) a racist society is necessarily conducted. It is also clear that the rewards of my effort to come to terms have been abundant. My alarm, aroused by Twain’s precise rendering of childhood’s fear of death and abandonment, remains—as it should. It has been extremely worthwhile slogging through Jim’s shame and humiliation to recognize the sadness, the tragic implications at the center of his relationship with Huck. My fury at the maze of deceit, the risk of personal harm that a white child is forced to negotiate in a race-inflected society, is dissipated by the exquisite uses to which Twain puts that maze, that risk...

For a hundred years, the argument that this novel is has been identified, reidentified, examined, waged and advanced. What it cannot be is dismissed. It is classic literature, which is to say it heaves, manifests, and lasts.

Expect an in-class AP-style essay at the end of August. You will be able to use your copy of *Huck Finn* during the essay, but no extra copies of the novel will be provided for students.

We’ll also look at the Toni Morrison essay in its entirety, as well as other pieces of literary criticism that help us approach the novel from a variety of angles. I look forward to your take!