



# NEWMARK

High School

Summer 2024

Dear Parents,

Our Newmark High School 2024 Summer Reading Program is designed to give students an opportunity to strengthen their reading comprehension skills. Each year, students are encouraged to choose a novel that is of high interest with the objective of finding reading enjoyable. Students are always encouraged to read as many as they like throughout the summer.

**This year, ALL students regardless of their participation in ESY, are *required* to read one book from the provided lists.**

- **Students who are attending ESY will have an opportunity to choose their book in advance and it will be available in the English classroom on the first day of ESY.**
- **Students who are not attending ESY can purchase their own book from any preferred bookstore.**

During the first weeks of school, students will work on a required assignment in their English class centered around the book they selected. Students will be presented with a choice board that includes diverse options like crafting a diary entry, assembling a collage, designing a soundtrack, composing a book of poetry, or writing a letter to the author. This project will be graded and included as part of their first quarter grade in English.

**Please make sure your teen brings in their summer reading book on the first day of school, Thursday September 5, 2024!**

Please email us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mr. Conor Walton  
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Inspire. Prepare. Succeed.



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## Summer Reading High School 2024

### Freshman, Sophomore & Junior Reading List

#### ***In the Wild Light* by Jeff Zentner** **Realistic Fiction**

*A poignant coming-of-age novel about two best friends whose friendship is tested when they get the opportunity to leave their impoverished small town for an elite prep school. For fans of *Looking for Alaska*.*

*Life in a small Appalachian town is not easy. Cash lost his mother to an opioid addiction and his Papaw is dying slowly from emphysema. Dodging drug dealers and watching out for his best friend, Delaney, is second nature. He's been spending his summer mowing lawns while she works at Dairy Queen. But when Delaney manages to secure both of them full rides to an elite prep school in Connecticut, Cash will have to grapple with his need to protect and love Delaney, and his love for the grandparents who saved him and the town he has to leave behind. Jeff Zentner's new novel is a beautiful examination of grief, found family, and young love.*

#### ***Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline** **Adventure/Fantasy**

*A world at stake. A quest for the ultimate prize. Are you ready?*

*In the year 2045, reality is an ugly place. The only time Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the OASIS, a vast virtual world where most of humanity spends their days. When the eccentric creator of the OASIS dies, he leaves behind a series of fiendish puzzles, based on his obsession with the pop culture of decades past. Whoever is first to solve them will inherit his vast fortune—and control of the OASIS itself.*

*Then Wade cracks the first clue. Suddenly he's beset by rivals who'll kill to take this prize. The race is on—and the only way to survive is to win.*

#### ***The Truth About Horses* by Christy Cashman** **Realistic Fiction**

*Fourteen-year-old Reese's dream of winning the Black Elk race is shattered when her beloved horse, Trusted Treasure, falls at the last jump and the vet suggests they put him down. While still reeling from that loss, her family suffers a second tragedy—one that results in the end of their family business, the sale of Trusted Treasure, and irreparable damage to Reese's relationship with her father.*

*Heartbroken and still longing to find Trusted Treasure, Reese meets Wes, a selective mute, whose way of training horses is unlike anything she's ever seen. If anyone can win the Black Elk, it's Wes—but he's struggling with his troubled past and having a teenage girl hanging around his barn isn't exactly what he'd planned. Through heartaches and triumphs, Reese must prove her worth if she wants to heal her family, help Wes, and show them all that some dreams are worth fighting for.*

*A spellbinding tale in which every teenager has magical powers within them just waiting to be discovered, this book will have you laughing and crying—sometimes on the same page—all the while rooting for Reese, the most unlikely of heroes.*



**West With Giraffes by Lynda Rutledge**  
**Historical Fiction**

*"Few true friends have I known and two were giraffes..."*

*Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave.*

*It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy Woodrow. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as sassy as the giraffes.*

*Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, West with Giraffes explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late.*

**I Captured the Castle by Dodie Smith**  
**Classic Literature**

*Adapted to a feature film in 2003, I Capture the Castle tells the story of seventeen-year-old Cassandra and her family, who live in not-so-genteel poverty in a ramshackle old English castle. Here she strives, over six turbulent months, to hone her writing skills. She fills three notebooks with sharply funny yet poignant entries. Her journals candidly chronicle the great changes that take place within the castle's walls, and her own first descent into love. By the time she pens her final entry, she has "captured the castle"-- and the heart of the reader-- in one of literature's most enchanting entertainments.*

**The Golden Compass by Phillip Pullman**  
**Fantasy**

*Lyra is rushing to the cold, far North, where witch clans and armored bears' rule. North, where the Gobblers take the children they steal--including her friend Roger. North, where her fearsome uncle Asriel is trying to build a bridge to a parallel world.*

*Can one small girl make a difference in such great and terrible endeavors? This is Lyra: a savage, a schemer, a liar, and as fierce and true a champion as Roger or Asriel could want.*

*But what Lyra doesn't know is that to help one of them will be to betray the other...*

*A masterwork of storytelling and suspense, Philip Pullman's award-winning The Golden Compass is the first in the His Dark Materials series, which continues with The Subtle Knife and The Amber Spyglass.*



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## Senior Class Summer Reading 2024

### **The Martian Chronicles by Ray Bradbury**

#### **Sci-Fi**

*In The Martian Chronicles, Ray Bradbury, America's preeminent storyteller, imagines a place of hope, dreams, and metaphor— of crystal pillars and fossil seas—where a fine dust settles on the great empty cities of a vanished, devastated civilization. Earthmen conquer Mars and then are conquered by it, lulled by dangerous lies of comfort and familiarity, and enchanted by the lingering glamour of an ancient, mysterious native race. In this classic work of fiction, Bradbury exposes our ambitions, weaknesses, and ignorance in a strange and breathtaking world where man does not belong.*

### **The Help by Kathryn Stockett**

#### **Realistic Fiction/Historical Fiction**

*Aibileen is a black maid in 1962 Jackson, Mississippi, who's always taken orders quietly, but lately she's unable to hold her bitterness back. Her friend Minny has never held her tongue but now must somehow keep secrets about her employer that leave her speechless. White socialite Skeeter just graduated college. She's full of ambition, but without a husband, she's considered a failure.*

*Together, these seemingly different women join together to write a tell-all book about work as a black maid in the South that could forever alter their destinies and the life of a small town...*

### **The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch**

#### **Nonfiction/memoir**

*A lot of professors give talks titled "The Last Lecture." Professors are asked to consider their demise and to ruminate on what matters most to them. And while they speak, audiences can't help but mull the same question: What wisdom would we impart to the world if we knew it was our last chance? If we had to vanish tomorrow, what would we want as our legacy?*

*When Randy Pausch, a computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon, was asked to give such a lecture, he didn't have to imagine it as his last, since he had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer. But the lecture he gave--"Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams"--wasn't about dying. It was about the importance of overcoming obstacles, of enabling the dreams of others, of seizing every moment (because "time is all you have...and you may find one day that you have less than you think"). It was a summation of everything Randy had come to believe. It was about living.*

*In this book, Randy Pausch has combined the humor, inspiration and intelligence that made his lecture such a phenomenon and given it an indelible form. It is a book that will be shared for generations to come.*

*"We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand." --Randy Pausch*



## **NEWMARK** High School

### **The DaVinci Code by Dan Brown** **Mystery**

*As Langdon and gifted French cryptologist Sophie Neveu sort through the bizarre riddles, they are stunned to discover a trail of clues hidden in the works of Leonardo da Vinci—clues visible for all to see and yet ingeniously disguised by the painter. Even more startling, the late curator was involved in the Priory of Sion—a secret society whose members included Sir Isaac Newton, Victor Hugo, and Da Vinci—and he guarded a breathtaking historical secret. Unless Langdon and Neveu can decipher the labyrinthine puzzle—while avoiding the faceless adversary who shadows their every move—the explosive, ancient truth will be lost forever.*

### **Into Thin Air by Jon Krakauer** **Memoir/ Adventure**

*A bank of clouds was assembling on the not-so-distant horizon, but journalist-mountaineer Jon Krakauer, standing on the summit of Mt. Everest, saw nothing that "suggested that a murderous storm was bearing down." He was wrong. By writing Into Thin Air, Krakauer may have hoped to exorcise some of his own demons and lay to rest some of the painful questions that still surround the event. He takes great pains to provide a balanced picture of the people and events he witnessed and gives due credit to the tireless and dedicated Sherpas. He also avoids blasting easy targets such as Sandy Pittman, the wealthy socialite who brought an espresso maker along on the expedition. Krakauer's highly personal inquiry into the catastrophe provides a great deal of insight into what went wrong. But for Krakauer himself, further interviews and investigations only lead him to the conclusion that his perceived failures were directly responsible for a fellow climber's death. Clearly, Krakauer remains haunted by the disaster, and although he relates a number of incidents in which he acted selflessly and even heroically, he seems unable to view those instances objectively. In the end, despite his evenhanded and even generous assessment of others' actions, he reserves a full measure of vitriol for himself.*

### **The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho** **Classic literature**

*Paulo Coelho's enchanting novel has inspired a devoted following around the world. This story, dazzling in its powerful simplicity and inspiring wisdom, is about an Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago who travels from his homeland in Spain to the Egyptian desert in search of a treasure buried in the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself king, and an alchemist, all of whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest. No one knows what the treasure is, or if Santiago will be able to surmount the obstacles along the way. But what starts out as a journey to find worldly goods turns into a discovery of the treasure found within. Lush, evocative, and deeply humane, the story of Santiago is an eternal testament to the transformation power of our dreams and the importance of listening to our hearts.*