

12TH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS SUMMER READING

Choose one book from the following list for summer reading prior to 12th grade language arts. Students can choose any of the books from the list and will have an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of the choice novel when we return to school in August.

The Getaway by Lamar Giles

In a not-too-distant future in which current societal and natural threats, from economic disparity and racism to climate change, are further heightened, Karloff Country is a Disneyesque resort in Virginia providing escape. Many Karloff Country employees, including teenage Jay and his family, are BIPOC. Jay (Black) takes pride in his work and is grateful for the economic and food security Karloff Country provides for his family; he dismisses his friend Zeke's accusations of devious intentions by the billionaire owner. But when the global situation grows dire, it becomes clear that Karloff Country's true purpose isn't vacation destination; it's safe haven when society unravels. Even worse, the company orchestrated events leading to sudden global crisis. Employees aren't given the choice to stay or leave; they're needed to serve the mostly white uber-wealthy Karloff Country "Trustees" who've flooded to the resort. As unreasonable demands and racist microaggressions escalate, employee behavior is controlled with painful punishments delivered via an un-detachable armband; then comes the sanctioned lynching. Jay's girlfriend, Seychelle, biracial granddaughter of the Karloff founder, occupies an uncomfortable space, privileged and wealthy but regularly disparaged by her grandfather for her Blackness. Jay can't believe she knew about the plan, and when he joins the underground activist group that is fighting back, he must decide if he can trust her. Most of this enthralling, unsettling, provocative story is from Jay's perspective, his turmoil palpable as his worldview takes a 180-degree turn.

Chaos Theory by Nic Stone

The #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Dear Martin* delivers a gripping romance about two teens: a certified genius living with a diagnosed mental illness and a politician's son who is running from his own addiction and grief. Don't miss this gut punch of a novel about mental illness, loss, and discovering you are worthy of love. The next read for fans of Angie Thomas, Danielle Jawando and Jason Reynolds

Scars exist to remind us of what we've survived . . .

Since Shelbi enrolled at Windward Academy as a senior and won't be there very long, she hasn't bothered making friends. What her classmates don't know about her can't be used to hurt her – you know, like it did at her last school.

Andy Criddle is not okay. At all.

He's had far too much to drink.

Again. Which is bad.

And things are about to get worse.

When Shelbi sees Andy at his lowest, she can relate. So she doesn't resist reaching out. And there's no doubt their connection has them both seeing stars . . . but the closer they get, the more the past threatens to pull their universes apart.

Rez Ball by Byron Graves

Tre Brun is entering his sophomore year of high school on the Red Lake Ojibwe reservation in Minnesota. Tre has been training hard all summer in hope of making his school's varsity basketball team. His long-term dreams are big: Division 1 college ball and then the NBA. But Tre is playing for more than just himself: His older brother, Jaxon, was a star player on the team before dying in a car accident earlier in the year. Tre doesn't feel pressure to be Jaxon, but as he continues to grieve along with his parents, he wants to honor his brother with his play. Basketball is a constant in this story that follows Tre from late summer through the subsequent school year as he and his Native teammates become a force to be reckoned with and work their way to the state championship. But basketball is not Tre's only interest in this multidimensional story; he loves comics and video games, too, and his relationships with his family members, teammates,

and friends, including a new girl at school with whom he connects and would like to be more than friends, are essential and engaging parts of the narrative. The sports action is riveting, and following this underdog team on their journey is immensely satisfying. But the characters and relationships shine in quieter moments, while the games themselves underscore how important the team's efforts are to their Red Lake community.

Hungry Ghost by Victoria Ying

Valerie Chu is quiet, studious, and above all, *thin*. No one, not even her best friend, Jordan, knows that she has been bingeing and purging for years. But when tragedy strikes, Val finds herself reassessing her priorities, her choices, and her body. The path to happiness may lead her away from her hometown and her mother's toxic projections—but first she will have to find the strength to seek help.

This beautiful and heart-wrenching young adult graphic novel takes a look at eating disorders, family dynamics, and ultimately, a journey to self-love.

A Long Stretch of Bad Days by Mindy McGinnis

A lifetime of hard work has put Lydia Chass on track to attend a prestigious journalism program and leave Henley behind—until a school error leaves her a credit short of graduating.

Bristol Jamison has a bad reputation and a foul mouth, but she also needs one more credit to graduate. An unexpected partnership forms as the two remake Lydia's town history podcast to investigate the Long Stretch of Bad Days—a week when Henley was hit by a tornado, a flash flood, as well as its first, only, and unsolved murder.

As their investigation unearths buried secrets, some don't want them to see the light. When the threats escalate, the girls have to uncover the truth before the dark history of Henley catches up with them.

Invisible Son by Kim Johnson

Life can change in an instant.

When you're wrongfully accused of a crime.

When a virus shuts everything down.

When the girl you love moves on.

Andre Jackson is determined to reclaim his identity. But returning from juvie doesn't feel like coming home. His Portland, Oregon, neighborhood is rapidly gentrifying, and COVID-19 shuts down school before he can return. And Andre's suspicions about his arrest for a crime he didn't commit even taint his friendships. It's as if his whole life has been erased.

The one thing Andre is counting on is his relationship with the Whitaker kids—especially his longtime crush, Sierra. But Sierra's brother Eric is missing, and the facts don't add up as their adoptive parents fight to keep up the act that their racially diverse family is picture-perfect. If Andre can find Eric, he just might uncover the truth about his own arrest. But in a world where power is held by a few and Andre is nearly invisible, searching for the truth is a dangerous game.

Where You See Yourself by Claire Forrest

Minneapolis high school senior Effie Galanos (white) has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. Effie hopes to go to Prospect University in New York City for college, and she worries less about getting in than about telling her parents her plan. She knows proving she can advocate for herself will go a long way toward getting their approval, and her high school is providing plenty of opportunities to rise to the challenge. Her IEP says she can have two lockers, but one is taken away. And now that she's a senior, Effie is allowed to leave campus for lunch, but the only door the school leaves unlocked isn't accessible. Effie is also working with Wilder, another member of student council, on a school beautification project that will be welcoming to physically disabled students. When Effie finally tells her parents about Prospect, and they take a family trip to visit campus, she's dismayed to discover how inaccessible Prospect (and the subway) is; in fact, a

wheelchair user has *never* graduated from Prospect. In contrast, she also gets into U.C. Berkeley, which has achieved great strides in accessibility and in making disabled students feel welcome. Effie's starry-eyed crush on Wilder and their developing romance is yet another aspect of this story that offers eye-opening insights for readers who aren't physically disabled as Effie is confronted again and again with the small and large challenges of mobility in a world in which accessibility is an too often an afterthought.

Thieves' Gambit by Kayvion Lewis

At only seventeen years old, Ross Quest is already a master thief, especially adept at escape plans. Until her plan to run away from her legendary family of thieves takes an unexpected turn, leaving her mother's life hanging in the balance.

In a desperate bid, she enters the Thieves' Gambit, a series of dangerous, international heists where killing the competition isn't exactly off limits, but the grand prize is a wish for anything in the world—a wish that could save her mom. When she learns two of her competitors include her childhood nemesis and a handsome, smooth-talking guy who might also want to steal her heart, winning the Gambit becomes trickier than she imagined.

Ross tries her best to stick to the family creed: trust no one whose last name isn't Quest. But with the stakes this high, Ross will have to decide who to con and who to trust before time runs out. After all, **only one of them can win.**

She Is A Haunting by Trang Thanh Tran

This house eats and is eaten . . .

"A riveting debut from a remarkable new voice! Trang Thanh Tran weaves an impressive gothic mystery in which Jade's father is determined to restore a decrepit home to its former glory and Jade is the only person who feels the soul-crushing devastation of colonialism lingering within its walls." --Angeline Boulley, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Firekeeper's Daughter*

A House with a terrifying appetite haunts a broken family in this atmospheric horror, perfect for fans of *Mexican Gothic*.

When Jade Nguyen arrives in Vietnam for a visit with her estranged father, she has one goal: survive five weeks pretending to be a happy family in the French colonial house Ba is restoring. She's always lied to fit in, so if she's straight enough, Vietnamese enough, American enough, she can get out with the college money he promised.

But the house has other plans. Night after night, Jade wakes up paralyzed. The walls exude a thrumming sound while bugs leave their legs and feelers in places they don't belong. She finds curious traces of her ancestors in the gardens they once tended. And at night Jade can't ignore the ghost of the beautiful bride who leaves cryptic warnings: Don't eat.

Neither Ba nor her sweet sister Lily believe that there is anything strange happening. With help from a delinquent girl, Jade will prove this house--the home they have always wanted--will not rest until it destroys them. Maybe, this time, she can keep her family together. As she roots out the house's rot, she must also face the truth of who she is and who she must become to save them all.

Ander & Santi Were Here by Jonny Garza Villa

Finding home. Falling in love. Fighting to belong.

The Santos Vista neighborhood of San Antonio, Texas, is all Ander Martínez has ever known. The smell of pan dulce. The mixture of Spanish and English filling the streets. And, especially their job at their family's taquería. It's the place that has inspired Ander as a muralist, and, as they get ready to leave for art school, it's all of these things that give them hesitancy. That give them the thought, are they ready to leave it all behind?

To keep Ander from becoming complacent during their gap year, their family "fires" them so they can transition from restaurant life to focusing on their murals and prepare for college. That is, until they meet Santiago López Alvarado, the hot new waiter. Falling for each other becomes as natural as breathing. Through Santi's eyes, Ander starts to understand who they are and want to be as an artist, and Ander becomes Santi's first steps toward making Santos Vista and the United States feel like home.

Until ICE agents come for Santi, and Ander realizes how fragile that sense of home is. How love can only hold on so long when the whole world is against them. And when, eventually, the world starts to win.

Give Me A Sign by Anna Sortino

Lilah is stuck in the middle. At least, that's what having a hearing loss seems like sometimes—when you don't feel "deaf enough" to identify as Deaf or hearing enough to meet the world's expectations. But this summer, Lilah is ready for a change.

When Lilah becomes a counselor at a summer camp for the deaf and blind, her plan is to brush up on her ASL. Once there, she also finds a community. There are cute British lifeguards who break hearts but not rules, a YouTuber who's just a bit desperate for clout, the campers Lilah's responsible for (and overwhelmed by)—and then there's Isaac, the dreamy Deaf counselor who volunteers to help Lilah with her signing.

Romance was never on the agenda, and Lilah's not positive Isaac likes her that way. But all signs seem to point to love. Unless she's reading them wrong? One thing's for sure: Lilah wanted change, and things here . . . they're certainly different than what she's used to.

Royal Blood by Aimee Carter

As the King of England's illegitimate daughter, 17-year-old Evan Bright knows a thing or two about keeping secrets.

But when she's forced to spend the summer in London with her father and the royal family, who aren't exactly thrilled she exists, her identity is mysteriously revealed, and suddenly the world is dying to know every juicy lie the press prints about her.

After a fun night turns deadly and Evan becomes the primary suspect in a murder investigation, the escalating rumors and fallout threaten to tear her life apart. As she fights to uncover the truth about what happened, she discovers royal secrets that are even more scandalous than she imagined – secrets that could change the monarchy forever.

And her own may be next.

Divine Rivals by Rebecca Ross

When two young rival journalists find love through a magical connection, they must face the depths of hell, in a war among gods, to seal their fate forever.

After centuries of sleep, the gods are warring again. But eighteen-year-old Iris Winnow just wants to hold her family together. Her mother is suffering from addiction and her brother is missing from the front lines. Her best bet is to win the columnist promotion at the Oath Gazette.

To combat her worries, Iris writes letters to her brother and slips them beneath her wardrobe door, where they vanish—into the hands of Roman Kitt, her cold and handsome rival at the paper. When he anonymously writes Iris back, the two of them forge a connection that will follow Iris all the way to the front lines of battle: for her brother, the fate of mankind, and love.

My Father, The Panda Killer by Jamie Jo Hoang

San Jose, 1999. Jane knows her Vietnamese dad can't control his temper. Lost in a stupid daydream, she forgot to pick up her seven-year-old brother, Paul, from school. Inside their home, she hands her dad the stick he hits her with. This is how it's always been. She deserves this. Not because she forgot to pick up Paul, but because at the end of the summer she's going to leave him when she goes away to college. As Paul retreats inward, Jane realizes she must explain where their dad's anger comes from. The problem is, she doesn't quite understand it herself.

Đà Nẵng, 1975. Phúc (pronounced /fōok/, rhymes with duke) is eleven the first time his mother walks him through a field of mines he's always been warned never to enter. Guided by cracks of moonlight, Phúc moves past fallen airplanes and battle debris to a refugee boat. But before the sun even has a chance to rise, more than half the people aboard will perish. This is only the beginning of Phúc's perilous journey across the Pacific, which will be fraught with Thai pirates, an unrelenting ocean, starvation, hallucination, and the unfortunate murder of a panda.

Told in the alternating voices of Jane and Phúc, *My Father, The Panda Killer* is an unflinching story about war and its impact across multiple generations, and how one American teenager forges a path toward accepting her heritage and herself.

If Tomorrow Doesn't Come by Jen St. Jude

Avery Byrne has secrets. She's queer; she's in love with her best friend, Cass; and she's suffering from undiagnosed clinical depression. But on the morning Avery plans to jump into the river near her college campus, the world discovers there are only nine days left to live: an asteroid is headed for Earth, and no one can stop it.

Trying to spare her family and Cass additional pain, Avery does her best to make it through just nine more days. As time runs out and secrets slowly come to light, Avery would do anything to save the ones she loves. But most importantly, she learns to save herself. Speak her truth. Seek the support she needs. Find hope again in the tomorrows she has left.

If Tomorrow Doesn't Come is a celebration of queer love, a gripping speculative narrative, and an urgent, conversation-starting book about depression, mental health, and shame.

Project Nought by Chelsey Furedi

Ren Mittal's last memory in the year 1996 is getting on a bus to visit his mystery pen pal Georgia. When he wakes up in 2122, he thinks he might be hallucinating...he's not!

Tech conglomerate Chronotech sponsors a time-travel program to help students in 2122 learn what history was really like...from real-life subjects who've been transported into the future...and Ren is one of them.

In 2122, Ren's life in the 1990s is practically ancient history—and Ren's not sure how to feel about that. On top of it all, he learns that his memory will be wiped of all things 2122 before he's sent back to the '90s. Adding to Ren's complicated feels, he's forming a crush on his student guide, Mars.

And when he crosses paths with the absolute last person he expected to see in the future, he has a bigger problem on his hands: What if Chronotech isn't the benevolent organization they claim to be, and he and his fellow subjects are in great danger?

In Nightfall by Suzaqne Young

In the quaint town of Nightfall, Oregon, it isn't the dark you should be afraid of—it's the girls. *The Lost Boys* meets *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* in this propulsive novel from the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Treatment*.

Theo and her brother, Marco, threw the biggest party of the year. And got caught. Their punishment? Leave Arizona to spend the summer with their grandmother in the rainy beachside town of Nightfall, Oregon—population 846 souls.

The small town *is* cute, when it's not raining, but their grandmother is superstitious and strangely antisocial. Upon their arrival she lays out the one house rule: always be home before dark. But Theo and Marco are determined to make the most of their summer, and on their first day they meet the enigmatic Minnow and her friends. Beautiful and charismatic, the girls have a magnetic pull that Theo and her brother can't resist.

But Minnow and her friends are far from what they appear.

And that one rule? Theo quickly realizes she should have listened to her grandmother. Because after dark, something emerges in Nightfall. And it doesn't plan to let her leave.

To Shape A Dragon's Breath by Moniquill Blackgoose

The remote island of Masquapaug has not seen a dragon in many generations—until fifteen-year-old Anequs finds a dragon's egg and bonds with its hatchling. Her people are delighted, for all remember the tales of the days when dragons lived among them and danced away the storms of autumn, enabling the people to thrive. To them, Anequs is revered as Nampeshiweisit—a person in a unique relationship with a dragon.

Unfortunately for Anequs, the English conquerors of her land have different opinions. They have a very specific idea of how a dragon should be raised, and who should be doing the raising—and Anequs does not meet any of their requirements. Only with great reluctance do they allow Anequs to enroll in a proper English dragon school on the mainland. If she cannot succeed there, her dragon will be killed.

For a girl with no formal schooling, a non-English upbringing, and a very different understanding of the history of her land, challenges abound—both socially and academically. But Anequs is smart, determined, and resolved to learn what she needs to help her dragon, even if it means teaching herself. The one thing she refuses to do, however, is become the meek English miss that everyone expects.

Anequs and her dragon may be coming of age, but they're also coming to power, and that brings an important realization: the world needs changing—and they might just be the ones to do it.

Star Splitter by Matthew J. Kirby

2199. Deep-space exploration is a reality and teleportation is routine. But this time something has gone very, very wrong. Seventeen-year-old Jessica Mathers wakes up in a lander that's crashed onto the surface of Carver 1061c, a desolate, post-extinction planet fourteen light-years from Earth. The planet she was supposed to be viewing from a ship orbiting far above.

The corridors of the empty lander are covered in bloody hand prints; the machines are silent and dark. And outside, in the alien dirt, there are fresh graves carefully marked with names she doesn't recognize. Now Jessica must unravel the mystery of the destruction all around her—and the questionable intentions of a familiar stranger.

The Killing Code by Ellie Marney

Virginia, 1943: World War II is raging in Europe and on the Pacific front when Kit Sutherland is recruited to help the war effort as a codebreaker at Arlington Hall, a former girls' college now serving as the site of a secret US Signal Intelligence facility. But Kit is soon involved in another kind of fight: government girls are being brutally murdered in Washington DC, and when Kit stumbles onto a bloody homicide scene, she is drawn into the hunt for the killer.

To find the man responsible for the gruesome murders and bring him to justice, Kit joins forces with other female codebreakers at Arlington Hall—gossip queen Dottie Crockford, sharp-tongued intelligence maven Moya Kershaw, and cleverly resourceful Violet DuLac from the segregated codebreaking unit. But as the girls begin to work together and develop friendships—and romance—that they never expected, two things begin to come clear: the murderer they're hunting is closing in on them...and Kit is hiding a dangerous secret.