



2025 Summer Reading for PMS and PHS

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Princeton Middle School – Recommendations for Rising Sixth Graders

At Princeton Middle School, our readers benefit from the variety of fiction and nonfiction titles we offer during Reading Workshop in our English classes. As we believe in and stress the importance of reading beyond the school year, we will be offering a few suggested titles that are developmentally appropriate for all our students who share varied ability levels, learning styles, and interests.

As a result, we are offering multiple *fiction* and *nonfiction* suggested titles or series at each grade level in our middle school as a reflective example of what students will find in each classroom library. ***In September, students should bring a copy of one of the texts read over the summer*** and expect to answer a variety of reader-response questions regarding their summer choices during the first full week of school. As this list is not exhaustive, other texts may be read. If the text selected for use in class is not on this list, it may be brought to class if it is of comparable merit and the student has a parent's or guardian's permission.

Fiction Selections

Among the Hidden by Margaret Peterson Haddix
Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis
Chasing Vermeer by Blue Balliett
Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library by Chris Grabenstein
Front Desk by Kelly Yang
The Greenglass House by Kate Milford
Keeper of The Lost Cities by Shannon Messenger
The Parker Inheritance by Varian Johnson
The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan
Notorius by Gordon Korman
Save Me a Seat by Sarah Weeks & Gita Varadarajan
The Season of Styx Malone by Kekla Magoon
Spy School Series by Stuart Gibbs
The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin
When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead

Nonfiction Selections

Alexander the Great: Master of the Ancient World by Doug Wilhelm
Becoming RBG: Ruth Bader Ginsberg's Journey to Justice by Debbie Levy and Whitney Garver
Bodies from the Ash: Life and Death in Ancient Pompeii by James M. Deem
Claudette Colvin: Towards Justice by Phillip M. Hoose
Hazardous Tales Series by Nathan Hale
Knots in My Yo-Yo String by Jerry Spinelli
Lincoln's Grave Robbers by Steve Sheinkin
Saved by the Boats by Julie Gassman
Scientists in the Field Series (various authors)
This Promise of Change: One Girl's Story in the Fight for School Equality by Jo Ann Allen Boyce & Debbie Levy
Women Who Changed the World by Laurie Calkhovem

Dear Parents or Guardians:

Please encourage your child to read 20-minutes a day all summer long. We partner with the Princeton Public Library and recommend all students register for the Youth Summer Reading Program.

Appreciatively,
English Department
Princeton Middle School

Please indicate below your approval of your child's reading:

Title: _____

Author: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Student: _____ Period: _____

(Students: Return this completed form to your English teacher during the first week of school and come to school with any notes from your reading.)

Questions students can expect to see from their teachers upon their return from summer vacation...

Fiction:

1. Was there one character like you in any book? Would the story be different if you were the main character?
2. Discuss one memorable moment of the story? Why is it memorable?
3. What was one major theme you recognized in any book?

Nonfiction:

1. What is something new that you learned? Please explain why it is significant to you.
2. Did any new information surprise you? Please explain that surprise and how it added to your knowledge of the subject.
3. Did anything change, challenge, or confirm what you already knew? Please explain.

Princeton Middle School – Recommendations for Rising Seventh Graders

At Princeton Middle School, our readers benefit from the variety of fiction and nonfiction titles we offer during Reading Workshop in our English classes. As we believe in and stress the importance of reading beyond the school year, we will be offering a few suggested titles that are developmentally appropriate for all our students who share varied ability levels, learning styles and interests.

As a result, we are offering twelve *fiction* and twelve *nonfiction* suggested titles at each grade level in our middle school as a reflective example of what students will find in each classroom library. ***In September, students should bring a copy of one of the texts read over the summer*** and expect to answer a variety of reader-response questions regarding their summer choices during the first full week of school. As this list is not exhaustive, other texts may be read. If the text selected for use in class is not on this list, it may be brought to class if it is of comparable merit and the student has a parent's or guardian's permission.

Fiction Selections

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Sáenz

The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis

Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson

City of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau

Esperanza Rising by Pam Muñoz

Ghost Boys by Jewell Parker Rhodes

Hoops by Walter Dean Myers

The Legend of Auntie Po by Shing Yin Khor

Life as We Knew It by Susan Beth Pfeffer

The Maze Runner by James Dashner

Running Dream by Wendelin Van Draanen

The School for Good and Evil by Soman Chainani

Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech

Nonfiction Selections

I am Malala (Young Readers Edition) by Malala Yousafzai

Native American Doctor: The Story of Susan LaFlesche Picotte by Jeri Chase Ferris

Red Scarf Girl by Ji-li Jiang

Rolling Warrior: The Incredible, Sometimes Awkward, True Story of a Rebel Girl on Wheels

Who Helped Spark a Revolution by Judith Heumann

Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story by Caren Stelson

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You by Jason Reynolds and Ibram Kendi

Strong Inside (Young Readers Edition) by Andrew Maraniss

Dear Parents or Guardians:

Please encourage your child to read 20-minutes a day all summer long. We partner with the Princeton Public Library and recommend all students register for the Youth Summer Reading Program .

Appreciatively,
English Department
Princeton Middle School

Please indicate below your approval of your child's reading:

Title:

Author:

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Student: _____ Period: _____

(Students: Return the completed [Summer Reading Notice & Note Signposts](#) to your English teacher during the first week of school and come to school with any additional notes from your reading.)

Princeton Middle School – Recommendations for Rising Eighth Graders

At Princeton Middle School, our readers benefit from the variety of fiction and nonfiction titles we offer during Reading Workshop in our English classes. As we believe in and stress the importance of reading beyond the school year, we will be offering a few suggested titles that are developmentally appropriate for all our students who share varied ability levels, learning styles and interests.

As a result, we are offering twelve *fiction* and twelve *nonfiction* suggested titles at each grade level in our middle school as a reflective example of what students will find in each classroom library. ***In September, students should bring a copy of one of the texts read over the summer*** and expect to answer a variety of reader-response questions regarding their summer choices during the first full week of school. As this list is not exhaustive, other texts may be read. If the text selected for use in class is not on this list, it may be brought to class if it is of comparable merit and the student has a parent's or guardian's permission.

Fiction Selections

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith
Bull Run by Paul Fleischman
Children of Blood and Bone: Legacy of Orisha, Book 1 by Tomi Adeyemi
Counting by 7's by Holly Goldberg Sloan
Darius the Great Is Not Okay by Adib Khorram
Flygirl by Sherri Smith
Furthermore by Tahereh Mafi
Genius: The Game by Leopoldo Gout *Heartless* by Marissa Meyer
Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys
That Was Then, This Is Now by S.E. Hinton
Zen and the Art of Faking It by Jordan Sonnenblick

Nonfiction Selections

The Beloved World of Sonia Sotomayor by Sonia Sotomayor
Blizzard of Glass: The Halifax Explosion of 1917 by Sally M. Walker
The Boys in the Boat (YA Adaptation) by Daniel James Brown
Chasing Lincoln's Killer by James L. Swanson
Flying Higher: Women Airforce Service Pilots of WWII by Wanda Langley
Freedom Walkers by Russell Freedman
Photo By Brady: A Picture of the Civil War by Jennifer Armstrong
The Plot to Kill Hitler by Patricia McCormick
The Race to Save the Lord God Bird by Phillip Hoose
Samurai Rising: The Epic Life of Minamoto Yoshitsune by Pamela S. Turner
The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees by Don Brown
Witches: The Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem by Rosalyn Schanzer

Dear Parents or Guardians:

Please encourage your child to read 20-minutes a day all summer long. We partner with the Princeton Public Library and recommend all students register for the Youth Summer Reading Program.

Appreciatively,
English Department
Princeton Middle School

Please indicate below your approval of your child's reading:

Title:

Author:

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Student: _____ Period: _____

(Students: Return the completed [8th Grade Summer Reading Assignment](#) to your English teacher during the first week of school and come to school with any additional notes from your reading.)

Princeton Middle School: 6th - 8th Grade Extension Texts

If you read through the whole list and need more suggestions, below are a few book award winners, favorite lists of book recommendations created by others, and audiobook pairings. While perusing the lists, bear in mind that most include books that are appropriate for middle school reading levels but may contain content that may not be appropriate for all middle school students.

[Amelia Bloomer Book List](#) – books with feminist themes

[American Indian Youth Literature Award](#) – books by and about Native Americans and Indigenous peoples of North America

The American Library Association [Summer Reading List Grades 6-8](#)

[Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature](#) promoting Asian American cultures and heritages

[Batchelder Award](#) – books originally published in another country and translated to English

Book Riot's [50 Must Read Middle Grade Graphic Novels](#)

[Charlotte Huck Award](#) for fiction from the National Council of Teachers of English

[Charlotte Zolotow Award](#) for best picture book text

[Children's Choice Awards](#) and [Children's Choices Reading List](#) chosen for kids by kids

[Coretta Scott King Award](#) – books about African American culture and universal human values

[Día Booklist Grades 6-8](#)

[Jane Addams Children's Book Award](#) – books about peace, social justice, global community, and equity

[I Read This Book](#)

[Manga Librarian - Manga & Light Novels for Middle Grades \(6-8\)](#)

[Mathical Award Winners](#) – books with a mathematical theme

[Human Rights Campaign List of Great LGBTQ+ Inclusive Picture & Middle Grade Books](#)

NCTE's [Excellence in Poetry](#) Award for poets who publish for children

NSTA's [Outstanding Trade Books in Science](#)

[Newbery Award](#) for distinguished contributions to children's literature (usually middle grade fiction)

[New York Public Library's Best Books for Children](#) Lists

[Orbis Pictus Award](#) National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)'s award for non-fiction

PPL Suggestions for Teens <https://princetonlibrary.org/book-suggestions-teens/>

[Project Lit](#) - A grassroots network of book groups that aims to get students excited about reading by highlighting diverse, high-interest, culturally relevant books.

[Pura Belpré Award](#) celebrating the Latinx experience

[Schneider Family Book Award](#) for artistic representation of the disability experience

[Scott O'Dell Award](#) for historical fiction

[Sibert Informational Book Award](#) for distinguished non-fiction

[Stonewall Award](#) for LGBTQIA+ books (Children's and Young Adult Category)

[Sync Audiobooks for Teens](#)

[We Are Kid Lit Collective](#) Summer Reading List

[We Need Diverse Books Summer Reading Series](#)

Resources for Discussing Antiracism and Social Justice

Young Adult Literature (best for ages 12+)

[*The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime that Changed Their Lives*](#): by Daska Slater

[Discussion Guide](#)

[*All American Boys*](#) by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely [Discussion Questions](#) [Additional Resources](#)

[*Black Enough: Stories of Being Young and Black in America*](#) Edited by Ibi Zoboi

[*Dear Martin*](#) by Nic Stone [Discussion Questions](#)

[*The Hate U Give*](#) by Angie Thomas

[*Homegoing*](#) by Yaa Gyasi [Discussion Guide](#)

[Linked](#) by Gordon Korman

[*Miles Morales Spider-man*](#) by Jason Reynolds [Discussion Guide](#)

[*Monster*](#) by Walter Dean Myers [Discussion Guide](#)

[*Noughts and Crosses*](#) by Majorie Blackman

[*One Person, No Vote: How Not All Voters Are Treated Equally*](#) by Carol Anderson and Tonya Bolden [Discussion Questions](#) are for the adult version.

[*Piecing Me Together*](#) by Renée Watson [Discussion Guide](#)

[*Speak No Evil*](#) by Uzodinma Iweala

[*This Book is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on how to wake up, take action and do the work*](#) by Tiffany Jewell

[*We Are Not Yet Equal: Understanding Our Racial Divide*](#) by Carol Anderson with Tonya Bolden [Discussion Questions](#) for *White Rage* (adult version)

Adult Literature to Facilitate Discussions on Race and Antiracism (ages 14+)

[*Above Ground*](#) by Clint Smith

[*All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto*](#) by George M. Johnson

[*All You Can Never Know*](#) by Nicole Chung

[*America for Americans: A History of Xenophobia in the United States*](#) by Erika Lee

[*A Question of Freedom: A Memoir of Learning, Survival and Coming of Age in Prison*](#) by R. Dwayne Betts [Discussion Questions](#)

[*Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*](#) by Isabel Wilkerson

[*Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from The Twenty-First Century*](#) edited by Alice Wong

[*Fight Like Hell: The Untold History of American Labor*](#) by Kim Kelly

[*The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks About Race*](#) Edited by Jesmyn Ward

[*Geisha, A Life*](#) by Mineko Iwasaki with Rande Brown

[*Hood Feminism: Notes From The Women That A Movement Forgot*](#) by Mikki Kendall

[*How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*](#) by Clint Smith

[*How to Be an Antiracist*](#) by Ibram X. Kendi [Discussion Guide](#)

[*How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective*](#) by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor

[*An Indigenous People's History of the United States*](#) by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

[*The Making of Asian America: A History*](#) by Erika Lee

[*Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World and Become a Good Ancestor*](#) by Layla F. Saad

[*Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning*](#) by Cathy Park Hong

[*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Color Blindness*](#) by Michelle Alexander [Discussion Guide](#)

[*One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying Our Democracy*](#) by Carol Anderson [Discussion Questions](#)

[The Other Talk](#) by Brendan Kiely

[The Person You Mean to Be](#) by Dolly Chugh [Discussion Questions](#)

[Searching for Zion: The Quest for Home in the African Diaspora](#) by Emily Raboteau

[So You Want to Talk About Race](#) by Ijeoma Oluo [Discussion Questions](#)

[Stamped from the Beginning: The definitive guide of racist ideas in America](#) by Ibram X. Kendi
[Discussion Guide](#)

[The Talk: Conversations about Race, Love, and Truth](#) edited by Wade Hudson and Cheryl Willis Hudson
[They Called Us Enemy: Expanded Edition](#) by George Takei, Justin Eisinger, Steven Scott, and Harmony

Becker

[Viral Justice: How We Grow the World We Want](#) by Ruha Benjamin

[Wake: The Hidden History of Women-Led Slave Revolts](#) by Rebecca Hall

[Waking Up White: And Finding Myself in the Story of Race](#) by Debby Irving

[When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir](#) by Patrisse Khan-Coullers and ashe
bandele [Discussion Questions](#)

[White Fragility](#) by Robin DiAngelo [Discussion Guide](#)

[White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide](#) by Carol Anderson [Discussion Guide](#)

Videos and Movies for Young Adults – Adults

[13th](#) (Netflix) by Ava DuVernay [Discussion Guide](#)

[A Conversation About Racism: All American Boys, 5 years later](#) with Jason Reynold and Brendan
Kiely

[Asian Americans](#) executive produced by Jeff Bieber, Stephen Gong, Donald Young, Sally Jo
Fifer, and Jean Tsien

[Hasan Minhaj: Homecoming King](#)

[The Hate U Give](#) based on Angie Thomas's novel of the same name [Discussion Guide](#)

[The House I Live In](#) directed by Eugene Jarecki

[Just Mercy](#) based on Bryan Stevenson's memoir of the same name [Discussion Guide](#)

[#KidLit Rally for Black Lives](#) (all of it - but the second hour is specifically directed to adults)

[Toni Morrison's Powerful Words on Racism](#) by the Guardian News

[When They See Us](#) (Netflix) miniseries based upon the 5 Harlem teenagers falsely accused of an
attack in Central Park) [Discussion Guide](#)

[Whiteness Project](#)

Other Resources:

[Anti-Defamation League](#)

[Black Lives Matter Comics Reading List](#) by American Library Association

[Coretta Scott King Books Awards](#)

[Don't Just Read About Racism - Read Stories About Black People Living](#) by Nic Stone

[Facing History & Ourselves](#)

[KidLit Rally 4 Black Lives: Anti-racist Resources for Children, Families and Educators](#)

[Learning for Justice](#)

[Not in Our Town Princeton](#)

Princeton Public Library – [Racial Literacy Resources](#)

[Talking About Race](#) from the National Museum of African American History & Culture

[Two Thumbs Up: Movies and Documentaries to Use \(and Avoid\) When Teaching Civil Rights](#)
by Hasan Kwame Jeffries on the Zinn Education Project

A Note on Sensitive Topics in PHS Summer Reading

Our summer reading lists are designed to offer a variety of texts that will be meaningful for and hold the interest of high school students. We seek to create what Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop describes as “mirrors, windows and sliding glass doors”: reading experiences that allow individuals both to understand the lives of others and to see themselves and their experiences in books. Given the realities of our world and of the transition from young adult to adult literature, sensitive topics like domestic violence; sexual abuse; suicide; mental health struggles; and discrimination and violence based on race, gender and/or LGBTQ+ status are thus addressed in some of the titles on this list.

We feel it important and necessary to acknowledge that the content outlined above could be triggering to those who have experienced trauma, and we thus want to share resources that can support youth while reading and processing. Please access our mental health website, which offers a variety of helplines, at <https://sites.google.com/pps.princetonk12.org/pps-mental-health/resources>. If you or your child has experienced a trauma that could lead to heightened sensitivity to a challenging topic, please read more about the titles before making a selection—the brief summaries offered on these lists are intended only as “teasers,” not as trigger warnings.

We want summer reading to be enriching. However, if any text on this list (required or otherwise) is upsetting to a student, please reach out to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction to be directed to someone who will be happy to suggest another pedagogically appropriate text in its place.

Princeton High School – Freshman Students’ Summer Reading

Arriving from different schools, places, and backgrounds, the students at PHS all have the power to contribute equally to our community. Together, we will create an environment in which learning extends beyond the walls of the classroom and helps to build the foundation needed for college-level reading, writing, and thought. By the end of the Freshman year of high school, students will have developed ideas to help answer the following essential questions:

- How does literature help us learn about the journey of life?
- How does the individual interact within his/her community, and why are these interactions necessary for the survival and well-being of all involved?

The Freshman year of high school summer reading assignment is the first opportunity for students to take ownership of their education at PHS and to engage with our community of learners. We are offering choices of texts that will entertain and inform students about the world, from ancient times to today.

REQUIRED: Choose and read at least **TWO** of the following texts. (Of course, feel free to read as many as you like!)

Plays

Agamemnon

Aeschylus

In *Agamemnon*, a father and daughter deal with the devastating effects of the Trojan War on their family. Each play tells a different side of the same journey...a journey of love, fear, war, betrayal. It is a sad story...but an important one that shows how the decisions of a few can affect the lives of so many.

A Raisin in the Sun

Lorraine Hansberry

A Raisin in the Sun is a classic. It tells the story of the multi-generational Younger family, who live on the South Side of Chicago during the 1950s. As each member of the family works, studies and dreams, their frustrations over financial struggles and systemic racism threaten to tear the family apart. Their transcendence, in the face of all, speaks to the Youngers’ strength of spirit and resilience.

Novels

The Poet X

Elizabeth Acevedo

The Poet X is the award-winning debut by famed slam poet Elizabeth Acevedo. Not surprisingly, the main character--Xiomara, or X--finds her strength and her voice through slam poetry. She navigates a community that tells her she needs to conform, but conform to what? X is confronted by her mother’s prescriptive religiosity, her Harlem neighborhood’s stereotypes of a teen female, and the pressures she finds at school. Written entirely in verse, *The Poet X* depicts a deeply emotional journey and confronts serious social issues.

Turtles All the Way Down

John Green

Turtles All the Way Down is one of John Green’s newest books and is just as captivating as *The Fault in our Stars*. You’ll love reading this story of Aza, a teenager who is investigating the disappearance of a billionaire even as she is managing her own struggles, including her anxiety and obsessive thoughts.

The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali**Sabina Khan**

Trying to respect her strict Bangladeshi Muslim parents, Rukhsana hides much of her life from them, figuring that she'll be off to Caltech soon enough, where she will live openly. But when her parents discover her kissing her girlfriend, they send Rukhsana to family in Bangladesh. Rukhsana must find the balance between her love for her family and culture and her own identity. Facing homophobia and physical and sexual violence, her journey is challenging but redeeming.

The Secret Life of Bees**Sue Monk Kidd**

The Secret Life of Bees is written from the perspective of fourteen-year-old Lily Owens, whose journey begins when she runs away from her abusive father. While seeking the story of her mother's life and death in Tiburon, South Carolina, she chances upon a group of beekeeping sisters who provide her sanctuary and wisdom that defies her preconceptions about race, family, and femininity. This book features beautiful word choice, authentic characters, a sense of humor, and wisdom.

The Chosen**Chaim Potok**

In *The Chosen*, two teenage boys from different worlds struggle to maintain their friendship despite prejudice, ignorance, and tradition. Reuven Malter, a modern orthodox Jew, and his friend Daniel Saunders, a Hasidic Jew, begin as rivals on the baseball field, but soon learn that a lasting friendship is a journey toward understanding. Their story is so sweet....so challenging....so informative....so important.

The 57 Bus**Dashka Slater**

The 57 Bus is a narrative nonfiction piece based on an incident that lasted only minutes but changed the lives of two teenagers and forced a reckoning in the community. Sasha hails from a privileged home in the hills of Oakland while Richard is from the flatlands of Oakland; he's troubled and struggling but wants to do well. Richard, his cousin, and friend make an impulsive decision, and the ramifications for both Sasha and Richard cause everyone to contemplate issues of race, privilege, justice, and redemption.

The Hate U Give**Angie Thomas**

The Hate U Give introduces us to Starr, a Black teen from a tight-knit community. She straddles two lives, one in her predominately Black neighborhood, the other in her predominately white, privileged private school. One night, she and her friend Khalil are pulled over; during the stop, the officer mistakes Khalil's phone for a gun, and fatally shoots him. This event causes Starr to wrestle with her identity as a young Black woman and to determine how she can fight for Khalil's legacy to bring him and their community justice.

Boxers**Gene Luen Yang**

In the graphic novel, *Boxers*, Little Bao's community is threatened by a group of mysterious foreigners who accuse Bao's village of worshipping false idols. After studying under the Kung Fu master, Red Lantern Chu, Little Bao embarks on a journey to defend his country from the invaders who threaten to destroy his ancient culture. In *Boxers*, Yang uses magical realism and a clear narrative voice to distill the Boxer Rebellion into an accessible, yet deeply personal narrative.

Epic***The Iliad*****Homer**

In *The Iliad*, Homer masterfully recounts the ways in which one warrior can turn the tide of a ten-year battle. This is a tale about a lost love, a jealous warrior, an angry leader, a clever commander, and of course, a famous wooden horse. It recounts the warrior's journey and represents all that a true epic can be.

Princeton High School – Sophomore Students' Summer Reading

Rising sophomore year of high school students must read two books during the summer. You may want to take notes or keep a journal to stay actively engaged. In September, students will spend several class periods participating in activities related to their selections and will then complete one or more writing assignments involving their two texts. We encourage you to read with attention, consideration, and curiosity.

REQUIRED: Marjane Satrapi's *The Complete Persepolis*

This graphic autobiography dives deeply into the author's childhood and young adult years in Iran. As the Islamic Revolution unfolds, Satrapi faces the challenge of coming of age amidst the profound changes taking place in her country and family. Please note that some versions of this text are divided into Book 1 and Book 2, but students should read *The Complete Persepolis*, which contains both books.

All rising sophomore year of high school students **must also read one additional text** from the following list:

Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*

This work depicts a dystopian society in which access to knowledge is severely restricted and books are forbidden. Everything is turned on its head in this world as the firemen are called to light fires rather than extinguish them.

Ijeoma Oluo's *So You Want to Talk About Race*

Many of us need a guide to understanding both the sweeping truths and the intricacies of race. It's ok to be overwhelmed or insecure when discussing this challenging topic, but if we hope to become anti-racist and contribute to a more just society, we need help developing the language and methodology for these tough, but critical, conversations. This book is hard-hitting but incredibly valuable.

Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist*

This novel depicts a young man's journey to find worldly goods, which ultimately turns into a quest to find the treasure within.

Uzodinma Iweala's *Speak No Evil*

This modern, violent tragedy introduces us to prep-school educated, Harvard-bound Niru, the son of doting, conservative Nigerian parents, and his best friend, Meredith. After Niru's father discovers that Niru is gay, the characters' multi-dimensionality is revealed as they struggle to figure out how to balance their paths between the extremes of conformity and resistance.

Richard Kim's *Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood*

In this novel, Kim tells the story of a young boy growing up in Korea during the Japanese occupation. He struggles with his identity while his extended family struggles simply to survive.

Pablo Neruda's *Fully Empowered*

This collection of poetry includes thirty-six poems that vary from short, intense lyrics to longer odes that speak to Neruda's declared purpose: "to be in his poems a voice for all those people -- and things -- that have no voice: that is the poet's obligation." (from Alastair Reid's *Introduction to the Collection*)

Mine Okubo's *Citizen 13660*

This autobiographical graphic novel explores life in a Japanese internment camp during World War II, focusing on one woman's struggles during that dark time.

George Orwell's *1984*

This classic dystopian novel chronicles life in a government-controlled country that, in some ways, shines light on trends in our contemporary world.

Art Spiegelman's *Maus I*

In this Pulitzer Prize winning graphic novel, the novelist depicts his father's experiences during the Holocaust while also examining their troubled father-son relationship.

Princeton High School – Junior Year Students’ Summer Reading

All rising junior year of high school students must complete the following reading assignments prior to the start of school in September. While no written work is required, students should read carefully and thoughtfully. You may want to take notes or keep a journal to stay actively engaged. All students will participate in activities related to summer reading in early September and will complete one or more writing assignments involving these texts.

Required for ALL rising junior year of high school students entering English III or AP English III:

Choose and read **ONE OF THE FOUR NOVELS on this list**. In addition, all rising junior year of high school students must read **ONE additional text** from the list below (either a second novel, a drama, a poetry collection, or a non-fiction text).

Novels

*** *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

This novel is the story of a Nigerian young woman who moves from Nigeria to Princeton and back again, sharing the milestones and obstacles, large and small, that mark her coming of age journey.

*** *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston**

In this classic novel, a young woman in the rural South faces a series of choices in following her heart to find love, her voice, and herself.

*** *Let The Great World Spin* by Colum McCann**

This post-9/11 novel centers on multiple narrators – each of whom faces difficult choices in New York City in the early 1970s. This contemporary text highlights a range of voices and a great tapestry of life experiences built around the exploits of a daredevil acrobat who walks across a tightrope between the two World Trade Center buildings.

*** *There, There* by Tommy Orange**

Weaving together multiple narratives in distinct voices, Orange's contemporary novel pulls together his character's stories. The novel's narrators are all indigenous Americans, but their perspectives are diverse—and nearly all of them find their way to the same pow-wow for a profound conclusion.

Drama

*** *Water by the Spoonful* by Quiara Alegria Hudes**

Set in Philadelphia, the protagonist, Elliot, returns from fighting in Iraq and is struggling to find his place in the world while elsewhere, in a chatroom, recovering addicts forge a bond of love and support. This acclaimed play won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

*** *The Humans* by Stephen Karam**

Breaking with tradition, Erik Blake and his wife descend upon their daughter's apartment in lower Manhattan for Thanksgiving. As they sit down to share their meal, the family confronts its history, exposing the horrors that exist at its core. A Pulitzer Prize finalist and Tony Award-winning play, *The Humans* asks what it means to be a family in contemporary America.

* ***Angels in America* by Tony Kushner**

Set during the early days of the AIDS crisis, Kushner explores family, political will, religious faith, and the myth of America. While this Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning play focuses primarily on a gay couple living in Manhattan, it also incorporates a much broader array of stories and voices.

Poetry

* ***An Atlas of the Difficult World* by Adrienne Rich**

A 1992 Pulitzer Prize finalist, Rich's two-part collection of poems investigates the individual's sometimes unnoticed identities. The poems consider the sadness as well as the significance of the tensions that individuals manage. Often political, Rich's images illuminate the conflicted and nuanced nature of existence in society.

* ***Night Sky with Exit Wounds* by Ocean Vuong**

In this thought-provoking and engaging collection of poetry, Vuong expresses conflicted emotions and perspectives as he reflects on his life as a refugee. His poetry wrestles with violence, the immigrant experience, sexuality, and the struggle between the inner life and the outer face.

* ***Song of Myself* by Walt Whitman**

The epic poem by "America's Bard," written in 1855, analyzes the world through an exploration of the poet's inner life.

Non-Fiction

* ***How Does It Feel to Be a Problem* by Moustafa Bayoumi**

This collection of stories, told from the perspective of seven young Arab immigrants, examines what it means to be young and Arab in America. Each young voice encounters unique struggles in trying to forge a new life, while constantly confronted by the fear of what others do not understand.

* ***Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel**

Bechdel's graphic novel explores the life of her father, a closeted gay man, in the aftermath of his death, perhaps a tragic accident, perhaps a suicide. In learning about him, Bechdel dives deep into her identity and what her father's identity means for her.

* ***A Question of Freedom* by Reginald Dwayne Betts**

The text focuses on Betts's experiences with the American criminal justice system and the ways in which our society pushes to label and define people based on one action. His memoir considers the role of literature in helping him navigate his time in prison and questions how someone can remain free.

* ***The Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin* by Jill Lepore**

This book tells the story of Ben Franklin's younger sister Jane – an avid reader, a prolific writer, and a biting political commentator. Yet, unlike her brother, her primary work was not as a statesman but as a mother of twelve children. Lepore explores this lesser known – but not lesser – life.

* ***The Way to Rainy Mountain* by N. Scott Momaday**

This short novel features three voices that each tell the story of the Kiowa people: Momaday's memories of stories from his childhood, the ancient Kiowa voice of his ancestors, and the historical record of these moments.

Princeton High School – Senior Year Students' Summer Reading

All rising senior year of high school students must complete the following reading assignments prior to the start of school in September. While no written work is required, students should read carefully and thoughtfully. You may want to take notes or keep a journal to stay actively engaged. All students will participate in activities related to summer reading in early September and will complete one or more writing assignments involving these texts.

REQUIRED TEXT:

All rising senior year of high school students taking AP English IV will read *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver.

In this Pulitzer Prize winning reimagining of Dickens' *David Copperfield*, Kingsolver tells the story of Demon Copperhead, a Melungeon boy born to a drug-addicted mother and abusive stepfather in southern Appalachia. In a plot that never pauses for breath, relayed in his own unsparing voice, he braves the modern perils of foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses. Through all of it, he reckons with his own invisibility in a popular culture where even the superheroes have abandoned rural people in favor of cities (goodreads.com).

This novel includes mature language, depictions of drug use and some sexual content.

All rising senior year of high school students taking English IV will read *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover.

Tara Westover is born in the mountains of Idaho to Mormon survivalist parents who homeschool their children, practice herbal healing, labor in scrap metal and prepare for the end times. This shocking memoir, a #1 New York Times bestseller, tells the story of Westover's transformation into an Oxford PhD while unflinchingly depicting the realities of abuse, mental illness, family ties and, of course, education.

In addition to the required text designated above, all rising senior year of high school students must choose and read one text from this list of ten options (continued on the next page):

FICTION

*** *One World: A Global Anthology of Short Stories***

This is an international collection of 23 short stories from a diverse group of world-renowned writers – all of whom share a talent and a desire to write engaging, provocative stories.

*** *Disgraced* by Ayad Akhtar**

This 2012 play centers around a dinner party with four people from vastly different backgrounds. The play specifically addresses themes related to Islamophobia and the self-identity of Muslim Americans.

*** *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee**

"Richly told and profoundly moving, Pachinko is a story of love, sacrifice, ambition, and loyalty. From bustling street markets to the halls of Japan's finest universities to the pachinko parlors of the criminal

underworld, Lee's complex, and passionate characters--strong, stubborn women, devoted sisters and sons, fathers shaken by moral crisis--survive and thrive against the indifferent arc of history."

NON-FICTION

*** *The Best American Essays 2020***

This collection of creative nonfiction essays addresses a wide variety of facets of the American experience in 2020, from politics to sports to love, through the varied perspectives of our greatest writers.

*** *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* by Nikole Hannah-Jones**

"This new book substantially expands on that work, weaving together eighteen essays that explore the legacy of slavery in present-day America with thirty-six poems and works of fiction that illuminate key moments of oppression, struggle, and resistance. The essays show how the inheritance of 1619 reaches into every part of contemporary American society, from politics, music, diet, traffic, and citizenship to capitalism, religion, and our democracy itself."

*** *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* by Maxine Hong Kingston**

Kingston details her struggles with her individual and cultural identity as a first-generation Chinese American woman. This award-winning text is a unique blend of Chinese folktales and memoirs that involves five interconnected chapters, each of which functions like a short story.

*** *Savage Inequalities* by Jonathan Kozol**

Kozol describes the overwhelming disparities among the many public schools that he has visited throughout the country. He includes interviews with students, teachers, and parents in this seminal sociological work that is simultaneously inspiring and heartbreaking.

*** *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks About Race* edited by Jesmyn Ward**

Envisioned as a response to James Baldwin's groundbreaking 1963 work *The Fire Next Time*, these contemporary writers reflect on the past, present, and future of race in America.

*** *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf**

This 1929 piece is Woolf's essay response when asked to speak about women and fiction. She ponders how women find the space – both literally and figuratively – to write and to live.

Where can I find my Summer Reading books?

- The **local bookstores** receive our booklists and make an effort to supply the books for you.
- The **PHS English Department** has a small number of the Summer Reading books for distribution.
- **Princeton Public Library and Cranbury Public Library** are provided our lists so that they can supply in-hand books for you.
- Remember, all PPS students qualify for a **free Princeton Public Library card** which allows you to borrow from the collection.
- **Princeton Public Library** (PPL) offers a database that can also source your eBooks and audiobooks. Your PPL card is needed for virtual checkout.
 - **Hoopla** offers many eBook and audiobook titles
- **PHS Learning Commons** has multiple in-hand copies of any required Summer Reading and at least one copy of your-choice Summer Reading options.
- **Princeton Public Schools, Princeton Public Library, and Cranbury Public Library** also have **OverDrive** copies of most of these titles in both eBook and Audiobook formats.
 - Download the OverDrive or Sora (school-orientation) app. Both apps allow you to add both the school's library and the public libraries' libraries. Libby is also an option, but only for the public libraries' books.
 - Once in the app, you can use your public library card's ID and pin to authorize that library.
 - Or go to 'sign in', then click on the SSO on the left-hand side, enter your school email address (princetonk12.org) and password to add the Princeton Public School's library.
 - Borrow the book in the format of your choice to your eReader, tablet, or smartphone. Some formats also allow for downloading onto a computer.