Please read a minimum of THREE books this summer.

- **Book 1:** ALL rising eleventh graders must read ***The History of Love*** by Nicole Krauss. Please read this book in August so it's fresh in your mind.
- **Book 2:** Choose your second book from the list below.
- **Book 3:** Choose at least ONE other book based on personal preferences (it may be from this list but does not need to be).

Bring paper copies of all books to the first week of school and be prepared for an assessment on them.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Booth **by Karen Joy Fowler.** *Realistic fiction. 2022.* An epic and intimate look at the historical moment of Abraham Lincoln and the family behind one of the most infamous figures in American history: John Wilkes Booth.

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

In the Heart of the Heart of the Country and Other Stories **by William Gass.** *Classic fiction. 1965.* Two novellas and three short stories, set in the Midwest, exhibiting Gass's characteristic and wildly original verbal brilliance and philosophical acuity.

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

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

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

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

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

A Prayer for Owen Meany **by John Irving.** *Realistic fiction. 1989.* In 1953, two best friends are playing in a Little League baseball game. One of the boys hits a foul ball that kills the other boy's mother. The boy who hits the ball doesn't believe in accidents; Owen Meany believes he is God's instrument. What happens to Owen after that 1953 foul ball is extraordinary.

The Spear Cuts through Water **by Simon Jimenez.** *Magical realism. 2022.* In a theater of dreams, a modern narrator watches an epic tale of two warriors shepherding an ancient god across a broken land as they try to end a royal family's tyrannical reign.

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

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

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

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

Dead Wake: the Last Crossing of the Lusitania **by Erik Larson.** *Nonfiction. 2016.* Grippingly describes the sinking of the *Lusitania* and captures the sheer drama and emotional power of a disaster whose intimate details and true meaning have long been obscured by history.

The Good Lord Bird **by James McBride.** *Realistic fiction. 2013.* Henry Shackleford, an enslaved boy living in the Kansas Territory, a battleground region between anti- and pro-slavery forces (c. 1857), encounters legendary abolitionist John Brown. In the aftermath of a deadly argument, Henry finds himself fleeing town with Brown, who believes Henry is a girl. Over the ensuing months, Henry conceals the truth of his identity as he struggles to stay alive.

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

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

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

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

The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals **by Michael Pollan.** *Nonfiction; journalism. 2006.* An ecological and anthropological study of eating offers insight into food production and consumption in the 21st century.

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

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

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

The Lincoln Highway **by Amor Towles.** *Historical fiction. 2021.* The year is 1954, and recently-paroled Emmett Watson, age eighteen, returns home to his family farm planning to retrieve his little brother and head to California in search of a fresh start. Unfortunately, his plans go awry when two fellow inmates escape and persuade Emmett to travel to New York City on a journey that spans ten days packed with eclectic characters, misadventures, and self-discovery.

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

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

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

Educated: A Memoir **by Tara Westover.** *Nonfiction; memoir. 2018.* A memoir that chronicles the author's journey from a homeschooling, survivalist family in the hills of Idaho to a Ph.D. at Cambridge. It's a gutting yet hope-filled story of self-discovery, challenging beliefs, and finding one's own truth.

Black Boy **by Richard Wright.** *Nonfiction; memoir. 1945.* Wright's unforgettable autobiography of growing up in the Jim Crow South offers an unsurpassed portrait of the struggles against the ingrained racism and poverty faced by African Americans.