"We read to know we are not alone." (C.S. Lewis)

Please read a minimum of THREE books this summer.

- **Book 1: ALL rising seniors should read *Unaccustomed Earth* by Jhumpa Lahiri.** 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).

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

***Eva Luna* by Isabel Allende.** *Realistic fiction. 1987.* From nuns to sex workers, poor revolutionaries to gifted transgender artists, Muslim immigrants to privileged elites, orphaned Eva creates families around her–and learns to love–by telling magical stories.

***Going to Meet the Man* by James Baldwin.** *Fiction; short stories. 1965.* By turns haunting, heartbreaking, and horrifying, these stories are informed by Baldwin's knowledge of the wounds racism has left in both its victims and its perpetrators.

***The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History* by John Barry.** *Nonfiction; history. 2005.* A brilliantly written account of the 1918 flu epidemic which killed 100 million worldwide.

***Colors of the Mountain* by Da Chen.** *Nonfiction; memoir. 2001.* A true story of growing up during China's Cultural Revolution.

***Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky.** *Classic fiction. 1866.* The poverty and hopelessness of pre-Revolutionary Russian society are tangible in this story of a student who murders two women and then tries to live with his crime.

***Finding Nouf* by Zoë Ferraris.** *Mystery fiction. 2009.* Saudi Arabian desert guide Nayir al-Sharqi is hired to find a girl. When she turns up dead, he forms an unexpected partnership with a female technician at the coroner's office to solve the case.

***Hot Comb* by Ebony Flowers.** *Graphic novel; memoir. 2019.* Autobiographical stories linked by the topic of black women's hair.

***Orbital* by Samantha Harvey.** *Literary fiction. 2023.* A slim novel that packs a philosophical punch, this winner of the Booker Prize snapshots one day in the lives of two women and four men orbiting earth on the International Space Station. Their reflections–alternately scientific, speculative, theological, and mundane–are revelatory and poignant. The book ends up an elegy to the planet we call home.

***The Pacific and Other Stories* by Mark Helprin.** *Realistic fiction. 2005.* A British paratrooper barely survives a jump into occupied territory; a September 11th widow receives an astonishing gift from the contractor working on her new apartment—these and other stories exhibit the variety of the ocean itself, the peaks and troughs of life.

***One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez.** *Magical realism; classic. 1967.* One of the most influential literary works of our time, this novel tells the story of the rise and fall, birth and death of the mythical town of Macondo through the history of the Buendiá family. Inventive, amusing, magnetic, sad and alive with unforgettable characters.

***Democracy in Black: How Race Still Enslaves the American Soul* by Eddie S. Glaude, Jr.** *Social science journalism. 2016.* A powerful call for "a revolution of value and a radical democratic awakening" aimed at ending America's persistent racial crisis.

***Thinking in Pictures: My Life with Autism* by Temple Grandin.** *Nonfiction; memoir. 1995.* Grandin brings the dual perspectives of scientist and autistic person to this classic, groundbreaking report from "the country of autism."

***The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid.** *Realistic fiction. 2008.* One evening in an outdoor Lahore cafe, a bearded Pakistani man called Changez tells a nervous American stranger about his love affair with America.

***Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro.** *Speculative fiction. 2020.* A deft, dystopian fable about the innocence of a robot that asks big questions about existence.

***Ayesha at Last* by Uzma Jalaluddin.** *Realistic fiction. 2018.* A modern romance inspired by *Pride and Prejudice* between a Pakistani American poet/substitute teacher and a software developer in Atlanta. The novel explores career and relationship

challenges both universal and culturally specific. Fans of Austen's novel will enjoy the parallels between Elizabeth and Ayesha, Mr. Darcy and Khalid Mirza.

The Fifth Season **by N. K. Jemisin.** *Science fiction; Afro-futurist. 2015.* In an imagined world, a woman hides her supernatural ability to bend rocks and embarks on a quest to find her kidnapped daughter, only to find herself tempted to start a new epoch.

News of the World **by Paulette Jiles.** *Realistic fiction. 2016.* Captain Jefferson Kidd embarks on a 400-mile odyssey to deliver a young orphan to her relatives near San Antonio. As they wind through harsh and unforgiving terrain and encounter the anarchy and lawlessness of corrupt Reconstruction-era towns, the two lonely survivors develop a tender bond.

Waiting **by Ha Jin.** *Historical fiction. 2000.* Lin Kong, a man living in two worlds, is struggling with the conflicting claims of two utterly different women as he moves through the political minefields of a society designed to regulate his every move.

The Trial **by Franz Kafka.** *Classic literature. 1925.* Chilling tale of a respectable bank officer who is suddenly arrested and put on trial for a charge about which he can get no information. If you liked *1984*, this is a good choice.

When Breath Becomes Air **by Paul Kalanithi.** *Nonfiction; memoir. 2016.* While training as a neurosurgeon, Kalanithi was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. He reflects on being a medical expert, dying patient, and new father all at the same time.

Pachinko **by Min Jin Lee.** *Historical fiction. 2017.* In the early 1900s, teenaged Sunja, the adored daughter of a crippled fisherman, falls for a wealthy stranger at the seashore near her home in Korea, setting off an epic tale moving from bustling street markets to the halls of Japan's finest universities to the pachinko parlors of the criminal underworld.

Black Hole Blues and Other Songs from Outer Space **by Janna Levin.** *Nonfiction; science. 2016.* In 1916, Einstein predicted the existence of gravitational waves: sounds without a material medium generated by the collision of black holes. Levin, herself an astrophysicist, recounts the surprising and fascinating story of the search, over the last fifty years, for these elusive waves.

The Three-Body Problem **by Cixin Liu.** *Science fiction. 2015.* Set against the backdrop of China's Cultural Revolution, a secret military project sends signals into space. A civilization on the brink of destruction captures the signal and plans to invade Earth.

Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela **by Nelson Mandela.** *Autobiography. 1995.* Imprisoned for twenty-seven years by an unjust political system, Mandela endured, befriended his jailers, and eventually became the first black president of post-apartheid South Africa, helping to end more than 300 years of oppressive minority rule. In this book he tells the extraordinary story of his life–an epic of struggle, setback, renewed hope, and ultimate triumph.

The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store **by James McBride.** *Historical fiction. 2023.* McBride tells us the story of a Depression era community of Jewish immigrants and African Americans in a novel that is uplifting, inventive, kind, and witty.

The Wright Brothers **by David McCullough.** *Nonfiction*; *history. 2016.* Celebrated historian McCullough offers a carefully-researched and very readable account of the lives of Wilbur and Orville Wright, the brothers from Ohio whose intelligence and persistence revolutionized aviation and taught the world to fly.

The Bluest Eye **by Toni Morrison.** *Realistic fiction. 1970.* Morrison's bestselling first novel, telling the story of Pecola, growing up in Ohio following the Great Depression and struggling to love herself when she believes whiteness is the standard of beauty.

In Other Rooms, Other Wonders **by Daniyal Mueenuddin.** *Fiction; short stories. 2009.* A stellar linked set of short stories–some funny, some tragic, some adventurous, some lyrical–telling lives of a single extended household in and around modern-day Lahore.

Reading Lolita in Tehran **by Azar Nafisi.** *Nonfiction; memoir. 2003.* Nafisi writes about her two years in Iran and the study group she hosted with seven former female students who met every Thursday morning at her house to discuss forbidden Western literature.

A Tale for the Time Being **by Ruth Ozeki.** *Realistic fiction. 2013.* A Hello Kitty lunchbox washes up on the shore of Vancouver Island. Inside are artifacts presenting a puzzle that when put together reveal the unexpected life of a Japanese teenager.

Snow **by Orhan Pamuk.** *Suspense. 2005.* This political thriller follows an exiled writer who returns to Turkey to investigate a religious youth protest movement, but it ends up being about so much more.

The Ministry for the Future **by Kim Stanley Robinson.** *Science fiction. 2020.* In this near future climate-focused novel, Robinson explores potential solutions and catastrophes to the unfolding climate crisis. The book is gripping, scary, and hopeful.

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What I Was **by Meg Rosoff.** *Realistic fiction. 2008.* Finn was a beautiful orphan; H, a prep school misfit. They met on a beach on the coast of England where Finn lived alone in a hut. He recounts, in his old age, the story of their coming of age.

Midnight's Children **by Salman Rushdie.** *Fiction; magical realism. 1981.* This iconic masterpiece portrays India's transition from British colonial rule to independence and the partition into India and Pakistan through the magical abilities of the children born alongside their country, at midnight on the day of independence.

Kusamakura **by Natsume Sōseki.** *Classic fiction. 1906.* The lyrical story of the encounters of an artist on a walking tour of the mountains; its author describes this classic of Japanese literature as "a haiku-style novel that lives through beauty."

Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail **by Cheryl Strayed.** *Nonfiction; memoir. 2012.* A powerful, blazingly honest, and inspiring memoir; the story of a 1,100 mile solo hike that broke down a young woman reeling from catastrophe–and built her back up again.

The Book of Salt **by Monique Truong.** *Historical fiction. 2003*. Binh is a young, gay, Vietnamese immigrant in 1930s Paris. He is also personal chef to the legendary Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas. Their famous relationship, successful careers, and committed home contrast to and fuel his secret loves, personal losses, and hope-filled ambitions.

Fire Weather: A True Story from a Hotter World **by John Vaillant.** *Nonfiction. 2023.* A true story detailing a climate disaster that engulfed a community and industry, underscoring our toxic relationship with fossil fuels. Moving back and forth in time, across subjects, and from the particular to the global, this meticulously researched, thrillingly told book forces readers to engage with one of the most urgent issues of our time.

The Genius Plague **by David Walton.** *Science fiction. 2017.* What if the pandemic you thought would kill you made you more intelligent instead? In the Amazon, a disease is spreading. It grants enhanced brainpower–to those who survive.

Sing, Unburied, Sing **by Jesmyn Ward.** *Realistic fiction. 2017.* National Book Award. Jojo struggles with his mother's addictions and his grandmother's cancer before the release of his father from prison prompts a dangerous, hopeful road trip.

Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal? **by Jeanette Winterson.** *Nonfiction; memoir. 2012.* In this memoir, Winterson, an award-winning British novelist, recounts her challenging coming-of-age as the gay daughter of a rigid adoptive mother.

Mrs. Dalloway **by Virginia Woolf.** *Classic literature. 1925.* Considered one of the most brilliant novels of its age, the story covers one day in the life of Mrs. Dalloway, but in that one day we see many of the threads that make up her life.

Native Son **by Richard Wright.** *Fiction; social realism. 1940.* When a wealthy white family offers Bigger Thomas, a twenty-year-old black Chicagoan, a chauffeur's position, Bigger is torn between gratitude and resentment.

Wandering Stars **by Tommy Orange.** *Fiction; social realism. 2024.* Beginning with a retelling of the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864, *Wandering Stars* reexamines the history of our country through the stories of the people who endured it and seeks to explain why so much suffering put in motion more than a hundred and fifty years ago continues to shape the lives of people today.