# *Monroe Township High School*

200 Schoolhouse Road · Monroe Township, NJ 08831
*732.521.2882*
*www.monroe.k12.nj.us*

June 2026

Dear Parents or Guardians:

The Language Arts Department of Monroe Township High School is dedicated to preparing college and career-ready students. Equally important to us is fostering a love of reading that will last a lifetime. To achieve these goals, teachers have worked collaboratively to design a summer reading program that will provide students with a choice of high-interest literature that is either linked by genre or theme to the grade-level curriculum, or connects to the teenage experience. Student feedback and input is sought to ensure our lists are relevant and engaging. Students **must choose at least one book from the recommended list** and read as many other books, articles, essays and other forms of text of their choice over the summer. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to take notes and annotate text by using post-it notes or marking it directly (if the copy belongs to the student). On the attached pages are recommended titles for each grade level; students are encouraged to seek out books they want to read and continue to hone their personal reading preferences. We also suggest listening to audiobook versions of these, or any other titles, as well as podcasts on topics of interest. Students will engage in class activities in the fall that utilize their range of reading, helping to build a community of readers in every classroom. Titles highlighted in **yellow** are new for 2026. Students will use the book(s) they read in class the first two weeks of school.

Books are available at the Monroe Township Public Library, local bookstores, or internet booksellers (Amazon, BN.com). Audio versions of many titles are also available through the Monroe Township Public Library and through Learning Ally (for students approved for an account, these are marked with an *). We encourage parents to take an active role in helping their children select literature as well as discuss the topics and themes in the books selected. In order to do this effectively, we recommend Good Reads (www.goodreads.com), Common Sense Media (www.commonsensemedia.org), and School Library Journal (www.slj.com). These sites contain synopses, reviews, and recommended discussion points for thousands of titles. The librarians at the Monroe Township Public Library are also valuable resources to help find engaging titles appropriate for the individual student. Care has been taken to ensure there is accessibility for a range of reading levels and interests, and we encourage those who need assistance navigating the list to ask a teacher or case manager for assistance.

This information will also be published on the district homepage. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at kelly.roselle@monroe.k12.nj.us. Thank you and enjoy your summer!

Sincerely,

Kelly F. Roselle, Ed.D.
Supervisor of Language Arts, ESL/Bilingual,
World Language, and Media Literacy

*Excellence is Our Expectation*

# Monroe Township High School
# Summer Reading 2026

| Grade 9 | |
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| **Title and Synopsis** | **Author(s)** |
| ***Clap When You Land***<br>Camino and Yahaira, two teenagers in different countries who have never met, are suddenly thrust into each other's lives when their biological father dies in a plane crash. They piece together their Papi's life in New York and the Dominican Republic, joining their partial memories to finally see the whole person. Told in alternate narratives, this novel in verse is a cathartic exploration of grief, love, and family secrets. | Elizabeth Acevedo |
| ***We Are Not Free***<br>Fourteen narrators, all born in the United States and of Japanese descent, provide viewpoints after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. They and their families are no longer trusted, and the Exclusion Orders mean forced relocation. This novel is moving, personal, and well researched, with abundant curricular tie-ins and a realistic range of authentic character reactions, from "Don't make trouble" to "How dare they require this of us?" | Traci Chee |
| ***Frankly In Love***<br>High school senior Frank Li is a Limbo--his term for Korean-American kids who find themselves caught between their parents' traditional expectations and their own Southern California upbringing. His parents have one rule when it comes to romance--"Date Korean"--which proves complicated when Frank falls for Brit Means, who is smart, beautiful--and white. Fellow Limbo Joy Song is in a similar predicament, and so they make a pact: they'll pretend to date each other in order to gain their freedom. Frank thinks it's the perfect plan, but in the end, Frank and Joy's fake-dating maneuver leaves him wondering if he ever really understood love--or himself--at all. | David Yoon |
| ***I Must Betray You****<br>A gut-wrenching, startling historical thriller about communist Romania and the citizen spy network that devastated a nation. Romania, 1989. Communist regimes are crumbling across Europe. Seventeen-year-old Cristian Florescu dreams of becoming a writer, but Romanians aren't free to dream; they are bound by rules and force. Amidst the tyrannical dictatorship of Nicolae Ceauescu in a country governed by isolation and fear, Cristian is blackmailed by the secret police to become an informer. He's left with only two choices: betray everyone and everything he loves--or use his position to creatively undermine the most notoriously evil dictator in Eastern Europe. Cristian risks everything to unmask the truth behind the regime, give voice to fellow Romanians, and expose to the world what is happening in his country. He eagerly joins the revolution to fight for change when the time arrives. But what is the cost of freedom? | Ruta Sepetys |
| ***I Will Always Write Back****<br>The true story of an all-American girl and a boy from an impoverished city in Zimbabwe and the letter that changed both of their lives forever. It started as an assignment. Everyone in Caitlin's class wrote to an unknown student somewhere in a distant place. All the other kids picked countries like France or Germany, but when Caitlin saw Zimbabwe written on the board, it sounded like the most exotic place she had ever heard of--so she chose it. That letter was the beginning of a correspondence that spanned six years and changed two lives. | Caitlin Alifirenka<br>Martin Ganda |
| ***This One Summer*** **(graphic novel)**<br>Every summer, Rose goes with her mom and dad to a lake house in Awago Beach. It's their getaway, their refuge. Rosie's friend Windy is always there, too, like the little sister she never had. But this summer is different. Rose's mom and dad won't stop fighting, and when Rose and Windy seek a distraction from the drama, they find themselves with a whole new set of problems. It's a summer of secrets and sorrow and growing up, and it's a good thing Rose and Windy have each other. In *This One Summer,* two stellar creators redefine the teen graphic novel. | Mariko Tamaki |
| ***Piecing Me Together****<br>Jade believes she must get out of her neighborhood if she's ever going to succeed. Her mother says she has to take every opportunity. She has. She accepted a scholarship to a mostly-white private school and even Saturday morning test prep opportunities. But some opportunities feel more demeaning than helpful. Like an invitation to join Women to Women, a mentorship program for "at-risk" girls. Except really, it's for black girls. From "bad" neighborhoods. Friendships, race, privilege, identity—this compelling and thoughtful story explores the issues young women face. | Renee Watson |
| ***Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks****<br>A collection of ten short stories that all take place in the same day about kids walking home from school. | Jason Reynolds |

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| ***Shame the Stars***<br>In the midst of racial conflict and at the edges of a war at the Texas-Mexico border in 1915, Joaquin and Dulceña attempt to maintain a secret romance in this reimagining of Romeo and Juliet. | Guadalupe Garcia McCall |
| ***Six of Crows****<br>Ketterdam: a bustling hub of international trade where anything can be had for the right price—and no one knows that better than criminal prodigy Kaz Brekker. Kaz is offered a chance at a deadly heist that could make him rich beyond his wildest dreams. But he can't pull it off alone. . . | Leigh Bardugo |
| ***A Good Girl's Guide to Murder***<br>Pretty and popular high school senior Andie Bell was murdered by her boyfriend, Sal Singh, who then killed himself. It was all anyone could talk about. And five years later, Pip sees how the tragedy still haunts her town.But she can't shake the feeling that there was more to what happened that day. She knew Sal when she was a child, and he was always so kind to her. How could he possibly have been a killer? Now a senior herself, Pip decides to reexamine the closed case for her final project, at first just to cast doubt on the original investigation. But soon she discovers a trail of dark secrets that might actually prove Sal innocent . . . and the line between past and present begins to blur. Someone in Fairview doesn't want Pip digging around for answers, and now her own life might be in danger. | Holly Jackson |
| ***Caraval***<br>Scarlett Dragna has never left the tiny island where she and her sister, Tella, live with their powerful, and cruel, father. Now Scarlett's father has arranged a marriage for her, and Scarlett thinks her dreams of seeing Caraval—the faraway, once-a-year performance where the audience participates in the show—are over.<br><br>But this year, Scarlett's long-dreamt-of invitation finally arrives. With the help of a mysterious sailor, Tella whisks Scarlett away to the show. Only, as soon as they arrive, Tella is kidnapped by Caraval's mastermind organizer, Legend. It turns out that this season's Caraval revolves around Tella, and whoever finds her first is the winner.<br><br>Scarlett has been told that everything that happens during Caraval is only an elaborate performance. Nevertheless she becomes enmeshed in a game of love, heartbreak, and magic. And whether Caraval is real or not, Scarlett must find Tella before the five nights of the game are over or a dangerous domino effect of consequences will be set off, and her beloved sister will disappear forever. | Stephanie Garber |
| ***In My Hands: Memories of a Holocaust Rescuer***<br>"You must understand that I did not become a resistance fighter, a smuggler of Jews, a defier of the SS and the Nazis all at once. One's first steps are always small: I had begun by hiding food under a fence."<br>Through this intimate and compelling memoir, we are witness to the growth of a hero. Irene Gut was just a girl when the war began: seventeen, a Polish patriot, a student nurse, a good Catholic girl. As the war progressed, the soldiers of two countries stripped her of all she loved -- her family, her home, her innocence -- but the degradations only strengthened her will.<br>She began to fight back. Irene was forced to work for the German Army, but her blond hair, her blue eyes, and her youth bought her the relatively safe job of waitress in an officers' dining room. She would use this Aryan mask as both a shield and a sword: She picked up snatches of conversation along with the Nazis' dirty dishes and passed the information to Jews in the ghetto. She raided the German Warenhaus for food and blankets. She smuggled people from the work camp into the forest. And, when she was made the housekeeper of a Nazi major, she successfully hid twelve Jews in the basement of his home until the Germans' defeat. This young woman was determined to deliver her friends from evil. It was as simple and as impossible as that. | Irene Gut Opdyke with Jennifer Armstrong |
| ***Make Your Bed: Little Things That Can Change Your Life...and Maybe the World***<br>If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed.<br>On May 17, 2014, Admiral William H. McRaven addressed the graduating class of the University of Texas at Austin on their Commencement day. Taking inspiration from the university's slogan, "What starts here changes the world," he shared the ten principles he learned during Navy Seal training that helped him overcome challenges not only in his training and long Naval career, but also throughout his life; and he explained how anyone can use these basic lessons to change themselves-and the world-for the better. | William H. McRaven |

| Grade 10 | |
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| **Title and Synopsis** | **Author(s)** |
| ***Ordinary Hazards***<br>Growing up with a mother suffering from paranoid schizophrenia and a mostly absent father, Nikki Grimes found herself terrorized by babysitters, shunted from foster family to foster family, and preyed upon by those she trusted. At the age of six, she poured her pain onto a piece of paper late one night - and discovered the magic and impact of writing. For many years, Nikki's notebooks were her most enduring companions. In this accessible and inspiring memoir that will resonate with young readers and adults alike, Nikki shows how the power of those words helped her conquer the hazards - ordinary and extraordinary - of her life. | Nikki Grimes |
| ***Spare Parts****<br>In 2004, four Latino teenagers arrived at the Marine Advanced Technology Education Robotics Competition at the University of California, Santa Barbara. They were born in Mexico but raised in Phoenix, Arizona, where they attended an underfunded public high school. No one had ever suggested to Oscar, Cristian, Luis, or Lorenzo that they might amount to much - but two inspiring science teachers had convinced these impoverished, undocumented kids from the desert who had never even seen the ocean that they should try to build an underwater robot. | Joshua Davis |
| ***Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda****<br>When an email falls into the wrong hands, sixteen-year-old, not-so-openly gay Simon is blackmailed into playing wingman for a classmate or risk having his sexual identity revealed and the privacy of the boy he's been emailing compromised. | Becky Albertalli |
| ***The Rise and Fall of Charles Lindburgh****<br>This balanced biographical account centers on Charles Lindbergh, the first pilot to complete a solo transatlantic flight. Fleming examines Lindbergh's complicated life, including his rather unusual childhood, his years flying in obscurity, the kidnapping of his son, and his pro–Nazi Germany and anti-immigrant rhetoric. | Candace Fleming |
| ***1984****<br>Among the seminal texts of the 20th century, Nineteen Eighty-Four is a rare work that grows more haunting as its futuristic purgatory becomes more real. Published in 1949, the book offers political satirist George Orwell's nightmarish vision of a totalitarian, bureaucratic world and one poor stiff's attempt to find individuality. The brilliance of the novel is Orwell's prescience of modern life—the ubiquity of television, the distortion of the language—and his ability to construct such a thorough version of hell. Required reading for students since it was published, it ranks among the most terrifying novels ever written. | George Orwell |
| ***Atomic Habits***<br>Using a framework called the Four Laws of Behavior Change, **Atomic Habits** teaches readers a simple set of rules for creating good habits and breaking bad ones. | James Clear |
| ***Pride: An Inspirational History of the LGBTQ+ Movement***<br>An inspiring look at LGBTQIA+ history from ancient times to the present day. While not shying from somber truths, this title serves equally for research or browsing with bright colors and a vivid layout, an episodic design with multiple sidebars, and rich, informative illustrations. | Stella Caldwell |
| ***Killers of the flower moon : the Osage murders and the birth of the FBI***<br><br>In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Nation in Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, the Osage rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions, and sent their children to study in Europe.<br><br>Then, one by one, the Osage began to be killed off. The family of an Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, became a prime target. One of her relatives was shot. Another was poisoned. And this was just the beginning, as more and more Osage were dying under mysterious circumstances, and many of those who dared to investigate the killings were themselves murdered.<br><br>As the death toll rose, the newly created FBI took up the case, and the young director, J. Edgar Hoover, turned to a former Texas Ranger named Tom White to try to unravel the mystery. White put together an undercover team, including a Native American agent who infiltrated the region, and together with the Osage began to expose one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history. | David Grann |

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| ***I am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter**** <br>When the sister who delighted their parents by her faithful embrace of Mexican culture dies in a tragic accident, Julia, who longs to go to college and move into a home of her own, discovers from mutual friends that her sister may not have been as perfect as believed. | Erika Sánchez |
| ***America Redux: Visual Stories from Our Dynamic History*** <br>In this illustrated work that features collage and unconventional text formatting, Aberg-Riger explores different facets of American history and their lasting effects on society. Including stories often untold and highlighting the contributions of diverse individuals, this unique title is compelling and thought-provoking. | Ariel Aberg-Riger |
| ***Between the Raven and the Dove*** <br>For as long as she can remember, thirteen-year-old Mag has lived with her father at a home for the mentally ill.<br>The patients are all clearly mad, so when the usually silent Grace claims that she's Mag's real mother – and also a witch – Mag's world is turned upside down.<br>As things take a turn for the weird, and Mag sees things that others can't, it may just be that she is a witch after all.<br>In this new world, Mag discovers that the difference between good and evil isn't exactly black and white… | Sophia Kingshill |
| ***#murdertrending*** <br>Falsely accused of murdering her stepsister, seventeen-year-old Dee fights to survive paid assassins on Alcatraz 2.0, the most popular prison on social media. | Gretchen McNeil |
| ***War Girls*** <br>The year is 2172. Climate change and nuclear disasters have rendered much of earth unlivable. Only the lucky ones have escaped to space colonies in the sky. In a war-torn Nigeria, battles are fought using flying, deadly mechs and soldiers are outfitted with bionic limbs and artificial organs meant to protect them from the harsh, radiation-heavy climate. Across the nation, as the years-long civil war wages on, survival becomes the only way of life. Two sisters, Onyii and Ify, dream of more. Their lives have been marked by violence and political unrest. Still, they dream of peace, of hope, of a future together. And they're willing to fight an entire war to get there. | Tochi Onyebuchi |
| ***Invisible Son*** <br>In this gripping young adult novel, themes of vindication and self-discovery take center stage as seventeen-year-old Andre navigates the challenges of rebuilding his life after being wrongfully incarcerated. Set against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, Andre returns to his old neighborhood determined to uncover the truth behind his friend's disappearance. As he delves deeper into the mysteries surrounding him, Andre confronts a tangled web of secrets and deception that not only sheds light on the issues plaguing his community, but also offers him a chance at redemption. With each revelation, Andre inches closer to clearing his name and reclaiming his rightful place in the world. A taut and stirring narrative, this novel captivates readers with its exploration of resilience, justice, and the power of perseverance in the face of adversity. | Kim Johnson |
| ***We Hunt the Flame*** <br>Zafira is the Hunter, disguising herself as a man when she braves the cursed forest of the Arz to feed her people. Nasir is the Prince of Death, assassinating those foolish enough to defy his autocratic father, the sultan. If Zafira was exposed as a girl, all of her achievements would be rejected; if Nasir displayed his compassion, his father would punish him in the most brutal of ways. Both Zafira and Nasir are legends in the kingdom of Arawiya--but neither wants to be.<br><br>War is brewing, and the Arz sweeps closer with each passing day, engulfing the land in shadow. When Zafira embarks on a quest to uncover a lost artifact that can restore magic to her suffering world and stop the Arz, Nasir is sent by the sultan on a similar mission: retrieve the artifact and kill the Hunter. But an ancient evil stirs as their journey unfolds--and the prize they seek may pose a threat greater than either can imagine. | Hafsah Faizal |

| Grade 11<br>*(Please note that required AP Language and Composition texts are listed on the last page)* | |
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| **Title and Synopsis** | **Author(s)** |
| ***Watch Us Rise***<br>Jasmine and Chelsea are best friends on a mission--they're sick of the way women are treated even at their progressive NYC high school, so they decide to start a Women's Rights Club. They post their work online--poems, essays, videos of Chelsea performing her poetry, and Jasmine's response to the racial microaggressions she experiences--and soon they go viral. But with such positive support, the club is also targeted by trolls. When things escalate in real life, the principal shuts the club down. Not willing to be silenced, Jasmine and Chelsea will risk everything for their voices--and those of other young women--to be heard.<br>These two dynamic, creative young women stand up and speak out in a novel that features their compelling art and poetry along with powerful personal journeys that will inspire readers and budding poets, feminists, and activists. | Renée Watson<br>Ellen Hagan |
| ***Can't Hurt Me: Master Your Mind and Defy the Odds***<br>For David Goggins, childhood was a nightmare -- poverty, prejudice, and physical abuse colored his days and haunted his nights. But through self-discipline, mental toughness, and hard work, Goggins transformed himself from a depressed, overweight young man with no future into a U.S. Armed Forces icon and one of the world's top endurance athletes. The only man in history to complete elite training as a Navy SEAL, Army Ranger, and Air Force Tactical Air Controller, he went on to set records in numerous endurance events, inspiring Outside magazine to name him "The Fittest (Real) Man in America."In Can't Hurt Me, he shares his astonishing life story and reveals that most of us tap into only 40% of our capabilities. Goggins calls this The 40% Rule, and his story illuminates a path that anyone can follow to push past pain, demolish fear, and reach their full potential. | David Goggins |
| ***We Are Not From Here***<br>Concluding that there is no future for them in Guatemala, Pequeña and brothers Pulga and Chico take off north, following the tracks of La Bestia and risking everything, including their lives, to reach the U.S. border. Desperation permeates the pages, as Sanchez's richly drawn characters confront the lack of legal options and the undaunted hope of those compelled to attempt the journey. | Jenny Torres Sanchez |
| ***Invisible Differences*** **(graphic novel)**<br>Marguerite feels awkward, struggling every day to stay productive at work and keep up appearances with friends. She's sensitive, irritable at times. She makes her environment a fluffy, comforting cocoon, alienating her boyfriend. The everyday noise and stimuli assaults her senses, the constant chatter of her coworkers working her last nerve. Then, when one big fight with her boyfriend finds her frustrated and dejected, Marguerite finally investigates the root of her discomfort: after a journey of tough conversations with her loved ones, doctors, and the internet, she discovers that she has Aspergers. Her life is profoundly changed – for the better | Julie Daschez |
| ***Sabrina & Corina***<br>Latinas of Indigenous descent living in the American West take center stage in this haunting debut story collection—a powerful meditation on friendship, mothers and daughters, and the deep-rooted truths of our homelands. | Kali Fajardo-Anstine |
| ***Where'd You Go, Bernadette?***<br>When her notorious, hilarious, volatile, talented, troubled, and agoraphobic mother goes missing, teenage Bee begins a trip that takes her to the ends of the earth to find her. | Maria Semple |
| ***Joy Luck Club****<br>Four mothers, four daughters, four families whose histories shift with the four winds depending on who's "saying" the stories. In 1949 four Chinese women, recent immigrants to San Francisco, begin meeting to eat dim sum, play mahjong, and talk. United in shared unspeakable loss and hope, they call themselves the Joy Luck Club. Rather than sink into tragedy, they choose to gather to raise their spirits and money. "To despair was to wish back for something already lost. Or to prolong what was already unbearable." Forty years later the stories and history continue. | Amy Tan |
| ***Lore***<br>Every seven years, the Agon begins. As punishment for a past rebellion, nine Greek gods are forced to walk the earth as mortals, hunted by the descendants of ancient bloodlines, all eager to kill a god and seize their divine power and immortality. Long ago, Lore Perseous fled that brutal world in the wake of her family's sadistic murder by a rival line, turning her back on the hunt's promises of eternal glory. For years she's pushed away any thought of revenge against the man--now a god--responsible for their deaths.<br><br>Yet as the next hunt dawns over New York City, two participants seek out her help: Castor, a childhood friend of Lore believed long dead, and a gravely wounded Athena, among the last of the original gods.The goddess offers an alliance against their mutual enemy and, at last, a way for Lore to leave the Agon behind forever. But Lore's decision | Alexandra Bracken |

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| to bind her fate to Athena's and rejoin the hunt will come at a deadly cost--and still may not be enough to stop the rise of a new god with the power to bring humanity to its knees. | |
| ***Circe***<br>Winner of the Goodreads Choice Award for Fantasy, *Circe* is the story of the mythological sorceress who transforms her enemies into monsters and crosses paths with some of the most famous figures in mythology, from Daedalus to Zeus. Miller's prose in this novel contains vividly crafted characters and spells, while exploring themes of family rivalry, palace intrigue, and female strength in a world of male-dominated gods and mortals. | Madeline Miller |
| ***Dear Evan Hansen****<br>An original musical that explores the poignant desire for human connection in the tumultuous life of one young man. Evan is shy, lonely, and bullied for it -- teeming with the irrepressible emotions all too familiar with anyone who's ever been a teenager. After a tragedy strikes, Evan's life suddenly gets turned around, but is it ultimately for the better? | Val Emmich, Steven Levenson, Benj Pasek, Justin Paul |
| ***The FInal Diadem*** **(graphic novel)**<br>Ariel imagined two weeks at Camp Juniper would be a peaceful escape from all the trouble he keeps finding himself in back home in Houston. He expected to exchange his unaccepting family for fresh mountain air, the loudness of inner-city life for calm hiking trails—but he didn't expect to meet four other campers who've been searching for him for hundreds of years. Ariel never imagined that in a past life, he was part of The Diadem: a five-piece superhero team on Mars that was defeated by The Gemini during an alien invasion. Though skeptical at first, Ariel can't help but consider this story when the four campers begin to display otherworldly powers. As the four campers work to unlock Ariel's past life memories, they soon discover that they're not the only ones who have been searching for him. The fate of The Diadem rests on Ariel's shoulders—if only he can remember his power. | Gume Laurel III |
| ***The Hobbit*** **(graphic novel)**<br>When Thorin Oakenshield and his band of dwarves embark upon a dangerous quest to reclaim the hoard of gold stolen from them by the evil dragon Smaug, Gandalf the wizard suggests an unlikely accomplice: Bilbo Baggins, an unassuming Hobbit dwelling in peaceful Hobbiton.<br><br>Along the way, the company faces trolls, goblins, giant spiders, and worse. But as they journey from the wonders of Rivendell to the terrors of Mirkwood and beyond, Bilbo will find that there is more to him than anyone—himself included—ever dreamed. Unexpected qualities of courage and cunning, and a love of adventure, propel Bilbo toward his great destiny . . . a destiny that waits in the dark caverns beneath the Misty Mountains, where a twisted creature known as Gollum jealously guards a precious magic ring. | J.R.R. Tolkien |
| ***They Both Die at the End***<br>On September 5, a little after midnight, Death-Cast calls Mateo Torrez and Rufus Emeterio to give them some bad news: They're going to die today.<br><br>Mateo and Rufus are total strangers, but, for different reasons, they're both looking to make a new friend on their End Day. The good news: There's an app for that. It's called the Last Friend, and through it, Rufus and Mateo are about to meet up for one last great adventure—to live a lifetime in a single day.<br><br>Adam Silvera reminds us that there's no life without death and no love without loss in this devastating yet uplifting story about two people whose lives change over the course of one unforgettable day. | Adam Silvera |
| ***Good Braider***<br>In spare free verse laced with unforgettable images, Viola's strikingly original voice sings out the story of her family's journey from war-torn Sudan, to Cairo, and finally to Portland, Maine. Here, in the sometimes too close embrace of the local Southern Sudanese Community, she dreams of South Sudan while she tries to navigate the strange world of America—a world where a girl can wear a short skirt, get a tattoo, or even date a boy; a world that puts her into sharp conflict with her traditional mother who, like Viola, is struggling to braid together the strands of a displaced life. Terry Farish's haunting novel is not only a riveting story of escape and survival, but the universal tale of a young immigrant's struggle to build a life on the cusp of two cultures. | Terry Farish |
| ***What the Fact: Finding Truth in All the Noise***<br>From acclaimed writer, journalist, and physician Dr. Seema Yasmin comes a "savvy, accessible, and critical" ( Kirkus Reviews , starred review) book about the importance of media literacy, fact-based reporting, and the ability to discern truth from lies.<br>What is a fact? What are reliable sources? What is news? What is fake news? How can anyone make sense of it anymore? Well, we have to. As conspiracy theories and online hoaxes increasingly become a part of our national discourse and "truth" itself is being questioned, it has never been more vital to build the discernment necessary to tell fact from fiction, and media literacy has never been more important. | Seema Yasmin |

| Grade 12<br>*(Please note that required AP Literature and Composition texts are listed on the last page)* | |
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| **Title and Synopsis** | **Author(s)** |
| ***The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business**** <br>In The Power of Habit, award-winning New York Times business reporter Charles Duhigg takes us to the thrilling edge of scientific discoveries that explain why habits exist and how they can be changed. With penetrating intelligence and an ability to distill vast amounts of information into engrossing narratives, Duhigg brings to life a whole new understanding of human nature and its potential for transformation. | Charles Duhigg |
| ***Fasting, Feasting*** <br>A wonderful novel in two parts, moving from the heart of a close-knit Indian household, with its restrictions and prejudices, its noisy warmth and sensual appreciation of food, to the cool centre of an American family, with its freedom and strangely self-denying attitudes to eating. In both it is ultimately the women who suffer, whether, paradoxically, from a surfeit of feasting and family life in India, or from self-denial and starvation in the US. or both. Uma, the plain, older daughter still lives at home, frustrated in her attempts to escape and make a life for herself. Her Indian family is difficult , demanding but mostly, good hearted. Despite her disappointments, Uma comes through as the survivor, avoiding an unfulfilling marriage, like her sister's or a suicidal one, like that arranged for her pretty cousin. And in America, where young Arun goes as a student, men in the suburbs char hunks of bleeding meat while the women don't appear to cook or eat at all - seems bewildering and terrifying to the young Indian adolescent far from home. | Anita Desai |
| ***Not So Pure and Simple*** <br>Del attends church to get his crush Kiera's attention. When she and other teens approach the altar during a service, Del joins them to get close to Kiera, then realizes he just became a Purity Pledger, promising to stay sexually pure until marriage. With humor and honesty, this novel addresses the impact of sexism, social media, religion, and adults' fears of teen sexuality, adeptly showing how even "good guys" indulge in toxic masculinity. | Lamar Giles |
| ***You Too?: 25 Voices Share Their #MeToo Stories*** <br>Authors detail their experiences of sexual harassment, trauma, exploitation, and assault in this revelatory, empowering collection that emphasizes speaking up and the importance of the support and community that many have found in the #MeToo movement. | Janet Gurtler |
| ***Something I've Been Meaning To Tell You*** <br>In the thirteen stories in her remarkable second collection, Alice Munro demonstrates the precise observation, straightforward prose style, and masterful technique that led no less a critic than John Updike to compare her to Chekhov. The sisters, mothers and daughters, aunts, grandmothers, and friends in these stories shimmer with hope and love, anger and reconciliation, as they contend with their histories and their present, and what they can see of the future. | Alice Munro |
| ***Childhood's End**** <br>The author questions the survival of mankind in this science fiction tale about Overlords from outer space who dominate the world. | Arthur C. Clarke |
| ***Outliers*** <br>In this stunning book, Malcolm Gladwell takes us on an intellectual journey through the world of "outliers"—the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? | Malcom Gladwell |
| ***Abuela Don't Forget Me*** <br>Ogle's free verse memoir, a series of vignettes, reflects on parental abuse, poverty, bullying, bigotry, coming out, trauma, and the vital impact one person can have on a life. The magnitude of intergenerational relationships, deep connections, and acceptance shine in Ogle's foreword and poems, which are clearly love letters to his abuela. | Rex Ogle |
| ***The Namesake*** <br>In *The Namesake*, Lahiri enriches the themes that made her collection an international bestseller: the immigrant experience, the clash of cultures, the conflicts of assimilation, and, most poignantly, the tangled ties between generations. Here again Lahiri displays her deft touch for the perfect detail — the fleeting moment, the turn of phrase — that opens whole worlds of emotion. | Jhumpa Lahiri |
| ***Caste (The Origins of Our Discontent)*** | Isabel Wilkerson |

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| Wilkerson reframes the United States' history of racial disparities and racism as a classic caste system, and compares America's caste system with those operating in India and Nazi-era Germany. She identifies the eight "pillars of caste" that can be clearly observed in all three systems. In one very memorable and disturbing passage, she describes how the Jim Crow laws of the American South served as inspiration and model for the anti-Semitic, racist Nuremberg laws enacted in 1935 Germany. | |
| ***The Moon is a Harsh Mistress**** <br>It is a tale of revolution, of the rebellion of a former penal colony on the Moon against its masters on the Earth. It is a tale of a culture whose family structures are based on the presence of two men for every woman, leading to novel forms of marriage and family. It is the story of the disparate people, a computer technician, a vigorous young female agitator, and an elderly academic who become the movement's leaders, and of Mike, the supercomputer whose sentience is known only to the revolt's inner circle, who for reasons of his own is committed to the revolution's ultimate success. | Robert A. Heinlein |
| ***Felix Ever After*** <br>Felix Love, a transgender seventeen-year-old, attempts to get revenge by catfishing his anonymous bully, but lands in a quasi-love triangle with his former enemy and his best friend. | Kacen Callender |
| ***American Betiya*** <br>Rani Kelkar has never lied to her parents, until she meets Oliver. The same qualities that draw her in--his tattoos, his charisma, his passion for art--make him her mother's worst nightmare.<br><br>They begin dating in secret, but when Oliver's troubled home life unravels, he starts to ask more of Rani than she knows how to give, desperately trying to fit into her world, no matter how high the cost. When a twist of fate leads Rani from Evanston, Illinois to Pune, India for a summer, she has a reckoning with herself--and what's really brewing beneath the surface of her first love. | Anuradha D. Rajurkar |
| ***Go Tell It on the Mountain*** <br>*Go Tell It On The Mountain*, first published in 1953, is Baldwin's first major work, a semi-autobiographical novel that has established itself as an American classic. With lyrical precision, psychological directness, resonating symbolic power, and a rage that is at once unrelenting and compassionate, Baldwin chronicles a fourteen-year-old boy's discovery of the terms of his identity as the stepson of the minister of a storefront Pentecostal church in Harlem one Saturday in March of 1935. Baldwin's rendering of his protagonist's spiritual, sexual, and moral struggle of self-invention opened new possibilities in the American language and in the way Americans understand themselves. | James Baldwin |
| ***The Bluest Eye*** <br>*The Bluest Eye* is Toni Morrison's first novel, a book heralded for its richness of language and boldness of vision. Set in the author's girlhood hometown of Lorain, Ohio, it tells the story of black, eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove. Pecola prays for her eyes to turn blue so that she will be as beautiful and beloved as all the blond, blue-eyed children in America. In the autumn of 1941, the year the marigolds in the Breedloves' garden do not bloom. Pecola's life does change—in painful, devastating ways. <br>With its vivid evocation of the fear and loneliness at the heart of a child's yearning, and the tragedy of its fulfillment, *The Bluest Eye* remains one of Toni Morrison's most powerful, unforgettable novels. | Toni Morrison |
| ***Bright Before Us Like a Flame*** <br>A diverse collection of youth-authored memoirs, poetry, fiction, comics, and children's literature, featuring underrepresented voices.Also included are creative writing prompts and behind-the-scenes insights to inspire students and emerging writers to tell their own stories. | Edited by Sasa Aakil and Kathy Crutcher |

| **AP: Language and Composition (Grade 11)**<br>*Students are to read two of the nonfiction options below.* | |
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| **Title** | **Author** |
| ***Choose <u>TWO</u> of the following <u>nonfiction</u> title options:*** | |
| ***Between the World and Me****<br>In his trademark style -- a mix of lyrical personal narrative, reimagined history, essayistic argument, and reportage -- Coates provides readers a thrillingly illuminating new framework for understanding race: its history, our contemporary dilemma, and where we go from here. | Ta-Nehisi Coates |
| ***How to Say Babylon***<br>With echoes of *Educated* and *Born a Crime*, *How to Say Babylon* is the stunning story of the author's struggle to break free of her rigid Rastafarian upbringing, ruled by her father's strict patriarchal views and repressive control of her childhood, to find her own voice as a woman and poet. | Safiya Sinclair |
| ***Educated: A Memoir***<br>Tara Westover's memoir tells the story of her upbringing in a survivalist Idaho family where formal schooling was set aside for a life on the land. Through incredible self-study, she eventually found her way into the world of higher education. Her journey highlights the delicate balance of discovering her own identity through learning while navigating the complex ties to the family and home she left behind. | Tara Westover |
| **AP: Literature and Composition (Grade 12)**<br>*Students are required to read <u>**both**</u> titles below.* | |
| **Title** | **Author** |
| ***Light in August***<br>Light in August, published in 1932, is one of William Faulkner's most acclaimed and accessible novels. Set in Faulkner's fictional Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi, the story explores themes of race, religion, and identity through the intertwining lives of three memorable characters. This Southern Gothic masterpiece is renowned for its complex narrative structure and profound examination of the American South's troubled history. | William Faulkner |
| ***A Canticle for Leibowitz***<br>In a nightmarish ruined world slowly awakening to the light after sleeping in darkness, the infant rediscoveries of science are secretly nourished by cloistered monks dedicated to the study and preservation of the relics and writings of the blessed Saint Isaac Leibowitz. From here the story spans centuries of ignorance, violence, and barbarism, viewing through a sharp, satirical eye the relentless progression of a human race damned by its inherent humanness to recelebrate its grand foibles and repeat its grievous mistakes. | Walter M. Miller, Jr. |
| **AP Seminar and AP Research**<br>*Students are to complete the summer preparation sheet linked below for the course they will begin in the fall. Students must be logged into their Monroe Google account to access the document.* | |
| ***2026 AP Seminar Summer Work***<br>***2026 AP Research Summer Work*** | |