LAGUNA BLANCA SCHOOL
SUMMER READING 2026
FOR STUDENTS ENTERING 8TH GRADE

All Laguna Blanca students entering Grades 5-12 in the fall are required to read books this summer. Because the reading will form the basis for class discussion and writing assignments in English classes during the opening weeks of school, we ask that students use a pen/pencil to do a close reading.

To close read means to:

- make notes in the margins
- mark confusing and/or favorite passages
- highlight interesting information
- comment on significant language

Please buy only new books or used books that have no markings on them at all. The books (the specific required edition as indicated by the ISBN # listed below) can be purchased online. I also encourage you to look for the book on Thriftbooks online for a discounted price.

Every student will read BOTH a required book (*Tangerine* or *You Bring the Distant Near*) and ONE of the choice books.

REQUIRED READING: Please choose one of the following books. Remember, you will use your close reading annotations and notes for an essay at the beginning of the year in class.
It is highly recommended that students read these books closer to the start of school so they remember the reading for in-class work.

***Tangerine* by Edward Bloor**
Paul Fisher sees the world from behind glasses so thick he looks like a bug-eyed alien. But he's not so blind that he can't see there are some very unusual things about his family's new home in Tangerine County, Florida. Where else does a sinkhole swallow the local school, fire burn underground for years, and lightning strike at the same time every day? The chaos is compounded by constant harassment from his football-star brother.

Adjusting to life in Tangerine isn't easy for Paul—until he joins the soccer team at his middle school. With the help of his new teammates, Paul begins to discover what lies beneath the surface of his strange new hometown. He also gains the courage to face up to some secrets his family has been keeping from him for far too long. In Tangerine, it seems, anything is possible.

ISBN-13: 978-0152057800

You Bring the Distance Near **by Mitali Perkins**
This elegant young adult novel captures the immigrant experience for one Indian-American family with humor and heart. Told in alternating teen voices across three generations, *You Bring the Distant Near* explores sisterhood, first loves, friendship, and the inheritance of culture—for better or worse.

From a grandmother worried that her children are losing their Indian identity to a daughter wrapped up in a forbidden biracial love affair to a granddaughter social-activist fighting to preserve Bengali tigers, award-winning author Mitali Perkins weaves together the threads of a family growing into an American identity.

Here is a sweeping story of five women at once intimately relatable and yet entirely new.

ISBN-13 : 978-1250233868

CHOICE BOOKS: Select ONE book from the list below. These are some excellent books to choose from for enjoyment reading during summer! There is a wide variety of books so read through the descriptions before you choose.

All Summer Long by Hope Larson
In this graphic novel, 13-year-old Bina turns to music after her parents shut down screen time. She uses music to work through her emotions about how her relationships with family and friends are changing as she gets older.

The Circle by Dave Eggers
The Circle, run out of a sprawling California campus, links users' personal emails, social media, banking, and purchasing with their universal operating system, resulting in one online identity and a new age of civility and transparency. What begins as the story of one woman's ambition soon raises questions about memory, privacy, democracy, and the limits of human knowledge.

From Twinkle, With Love by Sandhya Menon
Aspiring filmmaker and wallflower Twinkle Mehra has stories she wants to tell and universes she wants to explore, if only the world would listen. So when fellow film geek Sahil Roy approaches her to direct a movie for the upcoming Summer Festival, Twinkle is all over it. The chance to publicly showcase her voice as a director? Dream come true. The fact that it gets her closer to her longtime crush, Neil Roy–a.k.a. Sahil's twin brother? Dream come true x 2.

Book Thief by Markus Zuzak
When Death has a story to tell, you listen. It is 1939. Nazi Germany. Death has never been busier and will become busier still. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist - books. She shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement.

Ready Player One by Ernest Cline
It's the year 2044, and the real world is an ugly place. Wade escapes his grim surroundings by spending his waking hours jacked into the OASIS, a virtual utopia that lets you be anything you want to be, where you can

live and play on 10,000 planets. And then Wade stumbles upon the first puzzle. Suddenly, thousands of competitors join the hunt - ready to kill for this prize. WARNING: SOME OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE

Divergent by Veronica Roth
In Tris Prior's dystopian Chicago, society is divided into five factions, each dedicated to the cultivation of a particular virtue - Candor (the honest), Abnegation (the selfless), Dauntless (the brave), Amity (the peaceful), and Erudite (the intelligent). All sixteen-year-olds must select their faction for life. Tris makes a choice that surprises everyone, including herself. But as she discovers a growing conflict that threatens to unravel her seemingly perfect society, she also learns that her own secret might help her save those she loves....or it might destroy her.

Project Hail Mary by Andy Weir
Ryland Grace is the sole survivor on a desperate, last-chance mission—and if he fails, humanity and the earth itself will perish. Except that right now, he doesn't know that. He can't even remember his own name, let alone the nature of his assignment or how to complete it. All he knows is that he's been asleep for a very, very long time. And he's just been awakened to find himself millions of miles from home, with nothing but two corpses for company. His crewmates dead, and his memories fuzzily returning, Ryland realizes that an impossible task now confronts him. Hurtling through space on this tiny ship, it's up to him to puzzle out an impossible scientific mystery—and conquer an extinction-level threat to our species. And with the clock ticking down and the nearest human being light-years away, he's got to do it all alone. Or does he?

Dodger Boy by Sarah Ellis
In 1970s Vancouver 13-year-old Charlotte is learning how to navigate the life of a teenager. Her family are Quakers and practice non-violence so it is only natural for them to help out Tom Ed, a young Texan escaping the Vietnam War draft. Tom Ed and Charlotte have conversations about everything from politics, civil rights, women's lib, and civil disobedience. Meanwhile, Charlotte is working on an important speech that she has to give when her best friend becomes unavailable.

Beast Rider by Tony Johnston & María Elena Fontanot de Rhoads
This is a captivating and harrowing tale of 12-year-old Manuel's journey on "the beast" from his home in a Mexican village to the United States. Migrants refer to the northbound train as "the beast" and Manuel's journey is anything but easy and safe. He encounters violence, and setbacks as well as helpful and compassionate persons. When he finally makes it across the border and reunites with his older brother he tries to settle into a new way of life, but it is difficult and he must decide where he wants his home to be.

Sophia's War by Avi
In 1776, Sophia witnesses the execution of Nathan Hale in New York. Sophia resolves to do all she can to help the American cause. Recruited as a spy, she uncovers a plot that will grievously damage the Americans if it succeeds. Sophia decides to stop the treacherous plot herself, at great personal peril: She's young, she's a girl, and she's running out of time. And if she fails, she's facing an execution of her own.

Okay For Now by Gary Schmidt
As a 14-year-old who just moved to a new town, Doug struggles to be more than the skinny thug that his teachers and the police think him to be. He finds an ally in Lil Spicer, and their friendship helps him find the strength to endure an abusive father and the return of his brother, forever scarred, from Vietnam. Together, they

find a safe haven in the library, inspiration in learning about John James Audubon's birds, and a hilarious adventure on a Broadway stage.

Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson
In vivid poems, Woodson shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world.

FEED by M.T. Anderson
For Titus and his friends, it started out like any ordinary trip to the moon—a chance to party during spring break and play with some stupid low-grav at the Ricochet Lounge. But that was before Titus met Violet, a beautiful, brainy teenage girl who has decided to fight the feed and its omnipresent ability to categorize human thoughts and desires. Following in the footsteps of George Orwell, Anthony Burgess, and Kurt Vonnegut Jr., M. T. Anderson has created a not-so-brave new world—and a smart, savage satire that has captivated readers with its view of an imagined future that veers unnervingly close to the here and now.

Legend by Marie Lu
What was once the western United States is now home to the Republic, a nation perpetually at war. Born into an elite family, fifteen-year-old June is a prodigy being groomed for success in the Republic. Born into the slums, fifteen-year-old Day is the country's most wanted criminal. Day is in a race for his family's survival, while June seeks to avenge her brother’s death. Their destinies intertwine as they uncover the sinister lengths their country will go to keep its secrets.

Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel
Twenty years later after a devastating flu pandemic wipes out civilization as we know it, Kirsten moves between the settlements of the altered world with a small troupe of actors. They call themselves The Traveling Symphony, and they have dedicated themselves to keeping the remnants of art alive. But when they arrive in St. Deborah by the Water, they encounter a violent prophet. And as the story moves back and forth in time, vividly depicting life before and after the pandemic, the strange twist of fate that connects them all will be revealed.