

SUMMER READING LIST 2026 FOR STUDENTS ENTERING ENGLISH GRADE 7

All Laguna Blanca students entering grades 5-12 in the fall are required to read two books during the summer. The required books can be purchased at Chaucer's Bookstore, 3321 State Street, Loreto Plaza, Santa Barbara, CA, Amazon, or sites like ThriftBooks.

2 Required Books:

-**The Circuit** by Francisco Jimenez, ISBN-13:978-0826317971

-**White Bird** by R.J. Palacio (Graphic novel) ISBN-13: 978-0525645535 (no need to annotate White Bird)

Required Task While Reading: Students **must annotate *The Circuit***

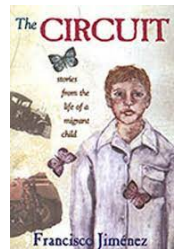
The story of a migrant family is told through a child's anecdotes, offering readers a glimpse into the lives of agricultural laborers in California. Challenges posed by poverty and constant change are overcome through hard work, faith, and a hopeful outlook on life in the United States.



Annotating *The Circuit* means adding little notes to help you understand what you're reading. **It doesn't have to be heavy or long, just quick thoughts!**

Here's what you can do:

1. **Write the Big Idea** – Jot down what the paragraph or section is mostly about.
2. **Underline or highlight** – Pick out the main sentence or an important part.
3. **Make Predictions** – Take a guess about what might happen next.
4. **Ask Questions** – Write down any questions you have.
5. **Share Your Thoughts** – Add your opinion or say what it reminds you of.
6. **Find New Words** – Circle or write down words you don't know.



Keep it simple and fun—it's just a way to help your brain stay active while reading and to jump back into the story more easily in the fall!

IN ADDITION, STUDENTS MUST READ ONE BOOK (NOT PREVIOUSLY READ BEFORE) FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST:

DAVE AT NIGHT Gail Levine - **Teen & Young Adult Historical Fiction**

When his father dies, Dave knows nothing will ever be the same. And then it happens. Dave lands at the cold, strict Hebrew Home for Boys in Harlem—the orphanage far from the life he knew on the Lower East Side. But he's not so worried. He knows he'll be okay. He always is. If it doesn't work out, he'll just leave and find a better place to stay. But it's not that simple. Outside the gates of the orphanage, the nighttime streets of Harlem buzz with jazz musicians and swindlers, exclusive parties, and mystifying strangers. Inside, another world unfolds, thick with rare friendships and bitter enemies. Perhaps somewhere, among it all, Dave can find a place that feels like home.

Continued...

FEVER 1793 Laurie Halse Anderson - **Teen & Young Adult Historical Fiction**

During the summer of 1793, Mattie Cook lived above the family coffee shop with her widowed mother and grandfather. Mattie spends her days avoiding chores and making plans to turn the family business into the finest Philadelphia has ever seen. But then the fever breaks out. Disease sweeps the streets, destroying everything in its path and turning Mattie's world upside down. At her feverish mother's insistence, Mattie flees the city with her grandfather to discover something terrible.

SOUNDER William H. Armstrong - **Teen & Young Adult Historical Fiction**

The boy knows that times are tough for his family. Every night, his father goes out hunting with their great coon dog, Sounder, to try to put food on the table. But even with the little they bring back, there is still never enough for the family to eat. When the boy awakens one morning to a sweet-smelling ham on the table, it seems like a blessing. But soon, the sheriff and his deputies come to the house and take the boy's father away in handcuffs. Suddenly, the boy must grow up fast in a world that isn't fair, keeping hope alive through the love he has for his father's faithful dog, Sounder.

THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PAJAMAS John Boyne - **Teen & Young Adult Historical Fiction**

Berlin, 1942: When Bruno returns home from school one day, he discovers that his belongings are being packed in crates. His father has been promoted, and the family must move to a new house far, far away, where there is no one to play with and nothing to do. A tall fence stretches as far as the eye can see and cuts him off from the strange people in the distance. But Bruno longs to be an explorer and decides that there must be more to this desolate new place than meets the eye. While exploring his new environment, he meets another boy whose life and circumstances are very different from his own, and their meeting leads to a friendship with devastating consequences.

TIES THAT BIND, TIES THAT BREAK Lensey Namioka - **Teen & Young Adult Historical Fiction**

Third Sister in the Tao family, Ailin, has watched her two older sisters go through the painful process of having their feet bound. In China in 1911, all the women of good families followed this ancient tradition. But Ailin loves to run away from her governess and play games with her male cousins. Knowing she will never run again once her feet are bound, Ailin rebels and refuses to follow this torturous tradition. As a result, however, the family of her intended husband broke their marriage agreement. As she enters adolescence, Ailin finds that her family is no longer willing to support her. Chinese society offers few options for a single woman of good family, but with bold conviction and an indomitable spirit, Ailin is determined to forge her own destiny.

FINDING MIRACLES Julia Alvarez - **Teen & Young Adult Fiction**

Milly Kaufman is an ordinary American teenager living in Vermont until she meets Pablo, a new student at her high school. His exotic accent, strange fashion sense, and intense interest in Milly force her to confront her identity as an adopted child from Pablo's native country. As their relationship grows, Milly decides to undertake a courageous journey to her homeland and, along the way, discovers how her birth is intertwined with the story of a country recovering from a brutal history.

HOPE WAS HERE Joan Bauer - **Teen & Young Adult Fiction**

When Hope and her aunt move to small-town Wisconsin to take over the local diner, Hope's not sure what to expect. But what they find is that the owner, G.T., isn't quite ready to give up yet--in fact, he's decided to run for mayor against a corrupt candidate. As Hope starts to make her place at the diner, she also finds herself caught up in G.T.'s campaign--particularly his visions for the future. After all, as G.T. points out, everyone can use a little hope to help get through the tough times . . . even Hope herself.

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ELIJAH OF BUXTON Christopher Paul Curtis - **Teen & Young Adult Fiction**

Elijah's the first child in town to be born free, and he ought to be famous just for that -- not to mention for being the best at chunking rocks and catching fish. Unfortunately, all that most people see is a "fragile" boy who's scared of snakes and tends to talk too much. But everything changes when a former slave steals money from Elijah's friend, who has been saving to buy his family out of captivity in the South.

STARGIRL Jerry Spinelli - **Teen & Young Adult Fiction**

From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of "Stargirl, Stargirl." She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first. Then they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different, and Leo, panicked and desperate with love, urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her: normal. In this celebration of nonconformity, Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli weaves a tense, emotional tale about the perils of popularity and the thrill and inspiration of first love.

THE HOUSE OF THE SCORPION Nancy Farmer - **Teen & Young Adult Sci-Fi**

Matt is a clone of El Patrón, a powerful drug lord of the land of Opium, which is located between the United States and Mexico. For six years, he has lived in a tiny cottage in the poppy fields with Celia, a kind and deeply religious servant woman who is charged with his care and safety. He knows little about his existence until he is discovered by a group of children playing in the fields, who wonder why he isn't like them. Though Matt has been spared the fate of most clones, who have their intelligence destroyed at birth, the evil inhabitants of El Patrón's empire consider him a "beast" and an "eejit". When El Patrón dies at the age of 146, 14-year-old Matt escapes Opium with the help of Celia and Tam Lin, his devoted bodyguard, who wants to right his own wrongs.

AMONG THE HIDDEN Margaret Haddix - **Teen & Young Adult Sci-Fi**

Luke has never been to school. He's never had a birthday party or gone to a friend's house for an overnight. In fact, Luke has never had a friend. Luke is one of the shadow children, a third child forbidden by the Population Police. He's lived his entire life in hiding, and now, with a new housing development replacing the woods next to his family's farm, he is no longer even allowed to go outside.

THE WATER WARS Cameron Stracher - **Teen & Young Adult Sci-Fi**

Hundreds of millions of people have already died, and millions more will soon fall victim to disease, hunger, and dehydration. It is a time of drought and war. The rivers have dried up, the polar caps have melted, and drinkable water is now in the hands of the powerful few. There are fines for wasting it and prison sentences for exceeding the quotas. But Kai didn't seem to care about any of this. He stood in the open road drinking water from a plastic cup, then spilled the remaining drops into the dirt. He didn't go to school, and he traveled with armed guards. Kai claimed he knew a secret—something the government is keeping from us... And then he was gone. Vanished in the middle of the night. Was he kidnapped? Did he flee? Is he alive or dead? There are no clues, only questions. And no one can guess the lengths to which they will go to keep him silent.

INKHEART Cornelia Funke - **Teen Fantasy**

One cruel night, Meggie's father reads aloud from a book called INKHEART-- and an evil ruler escapes the boundaries of fiction and lands in their living room. Suddenly, Meggie is smack in the middle of the kind of adventure she has only read about in books. Meggie must learn to harness the magic that has conjured this nightmare. For only she can change the course of the story that has changed her life forever.

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THE AMULET OF SAMARKAND Jonathan Stroud - Teen Fantasy

Nathaniel is a young magician's apprentice, taking his first lessons in the arts of magic. But when a devious hotshot wizard named Simon Lovelace ruthlessly humiliates Nathaniel in front of everyone he knows, Nathaniel decides to kick up his education a few notches and show Lovelace who's boss. With revenge on his mind, he masters one of the toughest spells of all: summoning the all-powerful djinni, Bartimaeus. But summoning Bartimaeus and controlling him are two different things entirely, and when Nathaniel sends the djinni out to steal the powerful Amulet of Samarkand, Nathaniel finds himself caught up in a whirlwind of magical espionage, murder, blackmail, and revolt.

THE GUILDED ONES Namina Forna - Teen Dark Fantasy

Sixteen-year-old Deka lives in fear and anticipation of the blood ceremony that will determine whether she will become a member of her village. Already different from everyone else because of her unnatural intuition, Deka prays for red blood so she can finally feel like she belongs. But on the day of the ceremony, her blood runs gold, the color of impurity—and Deka knows she will face a consequence worse than death. Then a mysterious woman comes to her with a choice: stay in the village and submit to her fate, or leave to fight for the emperor in an army of girls just like her. They are called alaki—near-immortals with rare gifts. And they are the only ones who can stop the empire's greatest threat.

PET Akwaeke Emezi - Teen & Young Adult Genre Defying Fiction

There are no monsters anymore, or so the children in the city of Lucille are taught. Jam and her best friend, Redemption, have grown up with this lesson all their life. But when Jam meets Pet, a creature made of horns and colors and claws, who emerges from one of her mother's paintings and a drop of Jam's blood, she must reconsider what she's been told. Pet has come to hunt a monster, and the shadow of something grim lurks in Redemption's house. Jam must fight not only to protect her best friend, but also to uncover the truth, and the answer to the question—How do you save the world from monsters if no one will admit they exist?

I WILL ALWAYS WRITE BACK: HOW ONE LETTER CHANGED TWO LIVES Caitlin

Alifirenka - Teen & Young Adult Social Activists Biography

True story of an all-American girl and a boy from 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. Martin was lucky to even receive a pen-pal letter. There were only ten letters, and fifty kids in his class. But he was the top student, so he got the first one. That letter was the beginning of a correspondence that spanned six years and changed two lives. In this compelling dual memoir, Caitlin and Martin recount how they became best friends—and better people—through their long-distance exchange. Their story will inspire you to look beyond your own life and wonder about the world at large and your place in it.

THEY CALLED US THEIR ENEMY Justin Elsing - Teen & Young Adult Biography Comics

*George Takei has captured hearts and minds worldwide with his captivating stage presence and outspoken commitment to equal rights. But long before he braved new frontiers in Star Trek, he woke up as a four-year-old boy to find his own birth country at war with his father's -- and their entire family forced from their home into an uncertain future. In 1942, at the order of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, every person of Japanese descent on the West Coast was rounded up and shipped to one of ten "relocation centers," hundreds or thousands of miles from home, where they would be held for years under armed guard. *They Called Us Enemy* is Takei's firsthand account of those years behind barbed wire, the joys and terrors of growing up under legalized racism, his mother's hard choices, his father's faith in democracy, and the way those experiences planted the seeds for his astonishing future.*

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ICEBERG Jennifer A. Nielsen - **Historical Fiction**

Hazel Rothbury is traveling all alone from her home in England aboard the celebrated ship Titanic. Following the untimely death of her father, Hazel's mother is sending her to the US to work in a factory, so that she might send money back home to help her family make ends meet. But Hazel harbors a secret dream: she wants to be a journalist, and she just knows that if she can write and sell a story about the Titanic's maiden voyage, she could earn enough money to support her family and avoid a sweatshop. When Hazel discovers that her mother didn't send her with enough money for a ticket, she decides she must stow away on board the storied ship. With the help of a porter named Charlie and a sweet first-class passenger named Sylvia, Hazel explores the opulent ship in secret, but a haunting mystery quickly finds her. The danger only intensifies when calamity strikes, and readers will be caught up in the terror and suspense alongside Hazel as she fights to save her friends and herself.

JUST A DROP OF WATER Kerry O'Malley Cerra - **Historical Fiction**

In this story about growing up during a difficult period in American history, Jake Green is introduced as a cross-country runner who wants to be a soldier and an American hero when he grows up. Before he can work towards these goals, September 11th happens, and it is discovered that one of the hijackers lives in Jake's town. The children in Jake's town try to process everything, but they struggle. Jake's classmate Bobby beats up Jake's best friend, Sam Madina, just for being an Arab Muslim. According to his own code of conduct, Jake wants to fight Bobby for messing with his best friend. The situation gets more complicated when Sam's father is detained and interrogated by the FBI. Jake's mother doubts Sam's father's innocence. Jake must choose between believing his parents and leaving Bobby alone or defending Sam.