

Summer Reading
Students Entering 9th Grade – Choose Two

1. ***A Child Called It*** by Dave Pelzer: Dave Pelzer shares his unforgettable story of the many abuses he suffered at the hands of his alcoholic mother and the averted eyes of his neglectful father. Someone with no one to turn to, his dreams barely kept him alive.

2. ***After the First Death*** by Robert Cormier: Events of the hijacking of a bus of children by terrorists seeking the return of their homeland are described from the perspectives of a hostage, a terrorist, an Army general involved in the rescue operation, and his son, chosen as the go-between.

3. ***Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty and the Beast*** by Robin McKinley: Kind Beauty grows to love the Beast at whose castle she is compelled to stay and through her love releases him from the spell which had turned him from a handsome prince into an ugly beast.

4. ***Fat Kid Rules the World*** by K.L. Going: Seventeen-year-old Troy, depressed, suicidal, and weighing nearly 300 pounds, gets a new perspective on life when a homeless teenager who is a genius on guitar wants Troy to be the drummer in his rock band.

5. ***First Part Last*** by Angela Johnson: Bobby is your classic urban teenaged boy. On his sixteenth birthday he gets some news from his girlfriend, Nia, that changes his life forever. She's pregnant. Bobby's going to be a father. Suddenly things like school and house parties and hanging with friends no longer seem important.

6. ***Flowers for Algernon*** by Daniel Keyes: Charlie Gordon, born with an unusually low IQ, participates in an experiment which turns him into a genius but only temporarily.

7. ***Inside Delta Force*** by Eric L. Haney: Delta Force. They are the U.S. Army's most elite top-secret strike force. Here, a founding member of Delta Force takes us behind the veil of secrecy and into the action-to reveal the never-before-told story of 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-D (Delta Force).

8. ***Ironman*** by Chris Crutcher: While training for a triathlon, seventeen-year-old Bo attends an anger management group at school which leads him to examine his relationship with his father.

9. ***Life as We Knew It*** by Susan Beth Pfeffer: When an asteroid hits the moon, Miranda must learn to survive the unimaginable . . .

10. ***Life in Prison*** by Stanley Williams: 'The true stories I've written in this book are my living nightmares. My greatest hope is that the lessons the stories offer will help you make better choices than I did.'

11. ***Marked –The House of Night Series #1*** by P.C. Cast, Kristen Cast: Enter the dark, magical world of the House of Night, a world very much like our own, except here vampires have always existed.

12. ***Shizuko's Daughter*** by Kyoko Mori: After her mother's suicide, Yuki spends years living with her distant father and his resentful new wife, cut off from her mother's family, and relying on her own inner strength to cope with the tragedy.

13. ***Stargirl*** by Jerry Spinelli: Leo Borlock follows the unspoken rule at Mica Area High School: don't stand out--under any circumstances! Then Stargirl arrives at Mica High and everything changes--for Leo and for the entire school.

14. ***Taking Sides*** by Gary Soto: Fourteen-year-old Lincoln Mendoza, an aspiring basketball player, must come to terms with his divided loyalties when he moves from the Hispanic inner city to a white suburban neighborhood.

15. ***The Teacher's Funeral*** by Richard Peck: In rural Indiana in 1904, fifteen-year-old Russell's dreams of quitting school and joining a wheat threshing crew are disrupted when his older sister takes over the teaching at his one-room schoolhouse after mean, old Myrt Arbuckle "hauls off and dies."

16. ***Uglies*** by Scott Westerfeld: Tally is about to turn sixteen and she can't wait - to turn pretty. In Tally's world, your sixteenth birthday brings an operation that turns you from a repellent ugly into a stunningly attractive pretty and catapults you into a high-tech paradise where your only job is to have a really great time. Tally first learns about a whole new side of the pretty world – and it isn't very pretty.

17. ***Al Capone Does My Shirts*** by Gennifer Choldenko: The year is 1935 and Moose Flanagan's father takes a job as an electrician and guard at the high-security prison on Alcatraz Island near San Francisco. Moose, who is 12, struggles with the problems of fitting in at a new school, caring for his autistic sister, and dealing with the warden's daughter who is determined to get Moose into trouble.

18. ***A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*** by Betty Smith: In this classic tale, young, sensitive, and idealistic Francie Nolan grows up in the turn-of-the-century Williamsburg slums of Brooklyn.

19. ***Gentlehands*** by M.E. Kerr: Buddy Boyle and Skye Pennington live on opposite sides of town, but they fall in love anyway. Then a reporter appears, searching for a man known as Gentlehands, a man with a horrifying past. Who is Gentlehands—and what is his connection to Buddy's grandfather?

20. ***How to Steal a Car*** by Pete Hautman: Before the start of sophomore year, Kelleigh Monahan begins to act out—by stealing cars. Author Pete Hautman takes readers on a thrilling, scary ride through one suburban girl's turbulent life, one car theft at a time.

21. ***The Alchemist*** by Paulo Coelho: Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy, follows his dream. He travels to Egypt where he learns many lessons, particularly from a wise old alchemist.

22. ***Code Talker: A Novel about the Navajo Marines of World War Two*** by Joseph Bruchac: After being taught in a boarding school run by whites that Navajo is a useless language, Ned Begay and other Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become Code Talkers, sending messages during World War II in their native tongue.

Students Entering 10th Grade – Choose Two

1. ***The Bean Trees*** by Barbara Kingsolver: Taylor Greer grew up poor in rural Kentucky with the goals of avoiding pregnancy and getting away. But when she heads west with high hopes and a barely functional car, she meets the human condition head-on. Hers is a story about love and friendship, abandonment and belonging, and the discovery of surprising resources in apparently empty places.

2. ***Briar Rose*** by Jane Yolen: Jane Yolen sets her version of the classic fairy tale, "Sleeping Beauty," against the harsh backdrop of Nazi Germany and their campaign to extinguish the Jews, gays and Gypsies.

3. ***Buried Onions*** by Gary Soto: Eddie tries to escape from the poverty and gang society that surrounds him by taking vocational classes and staying away from his old "cholos," (gang friends). In the end, with his money gone and a dangerous gang member stalking him, Eddie's only choice is to join the military and hope that they can give him a better future than the one Fresno seems to offer.

4. ***The Color of Water*** by James McBride: A man whose mother was white and his father black, tells two stories: that of his mother and his own. It is a wonderful story of a bi-racial family who succeeded and achieved the American dream, despite the societal obstacles placed in its way.

5. ***Crank*** by Ellen Hopkins is the story of the turbulent and often disturbing relationship between Kristina, a character based on her own daughter, and the "monster," the highly addictive drug crystal meth, or "crank."

6. ***Fahrenheit 451*** by Ray Bradbury: A classic novel set in the future when books forbidden by a totalitarian regime are burned. The hero, a book burner, suddenly discovers that books are flesh and blood ideas that cry out silently when put to the torch.

7. ***Forgotten Fire*** by Adam Bagdasarian: Forced to watch his father escorted out of their lives by Turkish police, his brothers shot to death in their backyard, his grandmother murdered by a rock-wielding guard, and his sister take poison rather than be raped by soldiers, 12-year-old Vahan Kendarian abruptly begins to learn what his father meant when he used to say, "This is how steel is made. Steel is made strong by fire."

8. ***Go Ask Alice*** by Anonymous: Lonely, awkward, and under extreme pressure from her "perfect" parents, "Anonymous" swings madly between optimism and despair. When one of her new friends spikes her drink with LSD, this diarist begins a frightening journey into darkness.

9. ***Hiroshima*** by John Hersey: An emotionally wrenching account of 6 survivors of the Hiroshima bombing. They vividly recount the horrors of the first few days and explain how their lives have been forever changed. The descriptions of what happened to the victims and the death that occurred are nightmarish yet all too real.

10. ***Into Thin Air*** by Jon Krakauer: Journalist-mountaineer Jon Krakauer, standing on the summit of Mt. Everest, saw nothing that "suggested that a murderous storm was bearing down." He was wrong.

11. ***John Lennon: All I Want is the Truth*** by Elizabeth Partridge: Partridge cuts through the mythology and misinformation surrounding the life of the legendary singer/songwriter and goes a long way toward revealing the complexities of his personality. She relies heavily on Lennon's own writings and the wealth of interviews he granted during his lifetime.

12. ***The Rag and Bone Shop*** by Robert Cormier: A 7-year-old girl has been battered to death, and there are no suspects, no leads. The police, under political pressure to make an arrest, bring in Trent, a cold, ambitious professional interrogator who prides himself on his ability to extract confessions. His victim is 12-year-old Jason--the last person to see the girl.

13. ***The Secret Life of Bees*** by Sue Monk Kidd: 14-year-old Lily Owen, neglected by her father and isolated on their South Carolina peach farm, spends hours imagining a blissful infancy when she was loved and nurtured by her mother, Deborah, whom she barely remembers. All Lily has left of Deborah is a strange image of a Black Madonna, with the words "Tiburon, South Carolina" scrawled on the back.

14. ***Shoeless Joe*** by W. P. Kinsella: The novel begins with the magic of a godlike voice in a cornfield, and ends with the magic of a son playing catch with the ghost of his father. In Kinsella's hands, it's all about as simple, and complex, as the object of baseball itself: coming home.

15. ***Wrestling Sturbridge*** by Rich Wallace: Stuck in a small town where no one ever leaves and relegated by his wrestling coach to sit on the bench while his best friend becomes state champion, Ben decides he can't let his last high school wrestling season slip by without challenging his friend and the future.

16. ***Slam*** by Nick Hornby: When 15-year-old skateboarder Sam "Slam" Jones learns that his ex-girlfriend is pregnant, he turns to the only person he feels can help—his hero, skating legend Tony Hawk. Since Tony is only a poster, he does not offer answers, so it is up to Sam, thrust suddenly into maturity, to figure out the right thing to do.

17. ***Born to Rock*** by Gordan Korman: After Young Republican Leo Caraway discovers that his biological father is none other than millionaire King Maggot, lead singer of the punk band Purge, he accepts a roadie job on King's tour in the hope of securing sorely needed college tuition.

18. ***Romiette and Julio*** by Sharon Draper: Like the Shakespearean characters whose names echo theirs, Romiette Cappelle and Julio Montague discover that not everyone approves of their budding romance—especially the Devildogs, a dangerous local gang.

19. ***Woodson*** by Gary Paulsen: In this book, award-winning novelist Gary Paulsen is the hero of his own story: He attempts to complete the Iditarod, the 1,180-mile dogsled race across Alaska.

20. ***Hole in the Sky*** by Pete Hautman: In a future world ravaged by a mutant virus, sixteen-year-old Ceej and three other teenagers seek to save the Grand Canyon from being flooded while trying to avoid capture by a band of renegade survivors.

21. ***True Grit*** by Charles Portis: Fourteen-year-old Mattie Ross decides to avenge the death of her father by catching his murderer. The story takes Mattie (and the reader) from Arkansas to “Indian Territory” in the 1870s, shortly after the Civil War.

22. ***Twisted*** by Laurie Halse Anderson: Meet Tyler Miller: His transformation from a meek, social Mr. Cellophane to a chiseled, admired “tough guy” sets his world on end.

Students Entering 11th Grade – Choose Two

1. ***An Abundance of Katherines*** by John Green: When it comes to relationships, Colin Singleton’s type is girls named Katherine. And when it comes to girls named Katherine, Colin is always getting dumped. Nineteen times, to be exact.

2. ***Animal Farm*** by George Orwell: A classic political fable where pigs rule. See what happens when animals replace people and try to create order.

3. ***Digital Fortress*** by Dan Brown: When the NSA's invincible code-breaking machine encounters a mysterious code it cannot break, the agency calls its head cryptographer, Susan Fletcher, a brilliant and beautiful mathematician. Caught in an accelerating tempest of secrecy and lies, Fletcher battles to save the agency she believes in.

4. ***Fade*** by Robert Cormier: Paul Moreaux, the thirteen-year-old son of French Canadian immigrants, inherits the ability to become invisible, but this power soon leads to death and destruction.

5. ***Getting Away with Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case*** by Chris Crowe: Emmett Till, a fourteen-year-old Black teenager from Chicago, was visiting family in a small town in Mississippi during the summer of 1955. Emmett allegedly whistled at a white woman. Three days later, his brutally beaten body was found floating in the Tallahatchie River. The extreme violence of the crime put a national spotlight on the Jim Crow ways of the South, and many Americans—Black and white—were further outraged at the speedy trial of the white murderers.

6. ***Godless*** by Pete Hautman: Fed up with his parents' boring old religion, agnostic-going-on-atheist Jason Bock invents a new god — the town's water tower. He recruits an unlikely group of worshippers: his snail-farming best friend, Shin, cute-as-a-button (whatever *that* means) Magda Price, and the violent and unpredictable Henry Stagg.

7. ***The Last Juror*** by John Grisham: In 1970, Willie Traynor came to Mississippi. Within a year, the twenty-three-year-old college dropout found himself the owner of Ford County’s only newspaper, famous for its well-crafted obituaries. While the rest of America was in the grips of social turmoil, Willie’s adopted town of Clanton lived on the edge of another age, until the brutal murder of a young mother rocked the sleepy community—and thrust Willie into the center of a storm.

8. ***Look for Me by Moonlight*** by Mary Downing Hahn: When sixteen-year-old Cynda goes to stay with her father and his second wife, Susan, at their remote bed-and-breakfast inn in Maine, everything starts off well despite legends about ghosts and a murder at the inn. But Cynda feels like a visitor in Dad's new life, an

outsider. Then intense, handsome stranger Vincent Morthanos arrives at the inn and seems to return Cynda's interest.

9. ***Player Piano*** by Kurt Vonnegut: A human revolt against the machines which control life was arranged by the machines themselves to prove the futility of such resistance. Visionary and unrelenting, this is felt by some critics to be Vonnegut's best and most original novel.

10. ***A Prayer for Owen Meany*** by John Irving: In the summer of 1953, during a Little League baseball game, 11-year-old Owen Meany hits a foul ball that kills his best friend's mother. What happens to him after that fateful day makes *A Prayer for Owen Meany* extraordinary, terrifying, and unforgettable.

11. ***Real Time*** by Pnina Moed Kass: Set in contemporary Israel, this powerful novel is narrated in real time by many voices: Sixteen-year-old Thomas, from Berlin, seeking answers to questions about his grandfather, a Nazi officer in World War II. Vera from Odessa, reclaiming her Jewish heritage. Baruch Ben Tov, a Holocaust survivor. Sameh Laham, illegally employed at a diner. His boss. Sameh's friend Omar. A Palestinian doctor in an Israeli hospital. A mother. A soldier. A newscaster . . . Minute by minute, hour by hour, these lives and many others unfold—and then intersect in one violent moment on a highway outside Jerusalem.

12. ***Sarah's Key*** by Tatiana de Rosnay: Paris, July 1942: Sarah, a ten year-old Jewish girl, is brutally arrested with her family by the French police in the Vel' d'Hiv' roundup, but not before she locks her younger brother in a cupboard in the family's apartment, thinking that she will be back within a few hours. Paris, May 2002: On Vel' d'Hiv's 60th anniversary, journalist Julia Jarmond is asked to write an article about this black day in France's past.

13. ***Slaughterhouse-Five*** by Kurt Vonnegut: Unstuck in time, Billy Pilgrim, Vonnegut's shattered survivor of the Dresden bombing, relives his life over and over again under the gaze of aliens. This is perhaps the signature student's novel in the 1960's embracing protest and the absurdity of war.

14. ***Snow in August*** by Pete Hamill: Set in a working-class Brooklyn neighborhood in 1947, this poignant tale revolves around two of the most endearing characters in recent fiction: an 11-year-old Irish Catholic boy named Michael Devlin and Rabbi Judah Hirsch, a refugee from Prague.

15. ***Under the Black Flag: The Romance and the Reality of Life among the Pirates*** by David Cordingly: For this rousing, revisionist history, the former head of exhibitions at England's National Maritime Museum has combed original documents and records to produce a most authoritative and definitive account of piracy's "Golden Age."

16. ***Burned*** by Ellen Hopkins: Raised in a religious yet abusive family, Pattyn Von Stratten is sent to live with an aunt in the wilds of Nevada to find salvation and redemption. What she finds instead is love and acceptance—until she realizes that her old demons will not let her go.

17. ***My Sister's Keeper*** by Jodi Picoult: There are two sisters in a family of five, one is very sick and the other conceived to save the oldest sister. What happens to the entire family is told in this story.

18. ***Thirteen Reasons Why*** by Jay Asher: High school student Clay Jenkins receives a box in the mail containing seven cassette tapes recorded by his crush, Hannah Baker, who committed suicide; he spends a bewildering and heartbreaking night crisscrossing their town, listening to Hannah's voice recounting the events leading up to her death.

19. ***I Am Scout: The Biography of Harper Lee*** by Charles Shields: This biography provides interesting facts and sheds light on the reclusive life of Nelle Harper Lee, author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Readers will see many parallels between the feisty author's life in a small Southern town and the characters she created in the only novel she has ever written.

20. ***Dawn*** by Elie Wiesel: Two men wait through the night in British-controlled Palestine for dawn—and death. One is a captured English officer. The other is Elisha, a young Israeli freedom fighter whose assignment is to kill the officer in reprisal for Britain’s execution of a Jewish prisoner. Will a principled man commit cold-blooded murder?

21. ***Living up the Street*** by Gary Soto: In these “narrative reflections,” author Gary Soto writes about growing up in a barrio in California. In “The Beauty Contest,” for example, young Gary enters his young half brother in a playground beauty contest.

22. ***Wintergirls*** by Laurie Halse Anderson: Eighteen-year-old Lia comes to terms with her best friend's death from anorexia as she struggles with the same disorder.

Students Entering 12th Grade – Choose Two

1. ***Bleachers*** by John Grisham: High school all-American Neely Crenshaw was probably the best quarterback ever to play for the legendary Messina Spartans. Fifteen years have gone by since those glory days, and Neely has come home to Messina to bury Coach Eddie Rake, the man who molded the Spartans into an unbeatable football dynasty.

2. ***The Body of Christopher Creed*** by Carol Plum-Ucci: Torey Adams, a high school junior with a seemingly perfect life, struggles with doubts and questions surrounding the mysterious disappearance of the class outcast.

3. ***The Book Thief*** by Markus Zusak: Set during World War II in Germany, this is the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. Liesel scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can’t resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids.

4. ***The Breadwinner*** by Deborah Ellis: Young Parvana lives with her family in one room of a bombed-out apartment building in Kabul, Afghanistan. Because the Taliban impose strict limitations on women's freedom and behavior, eleven-year-old Parvana must disguise herself as a boy so that her family can survive after her father's arrest.

5. ***Catch-22*** by Joseph Heller: Set in the closing months of World War II, in an American bomber squadron on a small island off Italy, its hero is a bombardier named Yossarian, who is frantic and furious because thousands of people he hasn't even met keep trying to kill him.

6. ***The Color Purple*** by Alice Walker: This novel, which begins in the early 1900’s and ends in the mid-1940’s is the story of Celie, a poor, barely literate Southern black woman who struggles to escape the brutality and degradation of her treatment by men. The tale is told primarily through her own letters, which, out of isolation and despair, she initially addresses to God.

7. ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*** by Mark Haddon: Christopher Boone is fifteen and has Asperger's, a form of autism. He knows a great deal about math and very little about human beings. When he finds his neighbors' dog murdered, he sets out on a terrifying journey which will turn his world upside down.

8. ***In Cold Blood*** by Truman Capote: As Capote reconstructs the 1959 murder of a Kansas farm family and the investigation that led to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers, he generates suspense and empathy in this detached yet penetrating account of the savage and senseless murder of a family.

9. ***Freewill*** by Chris Lynch: A teenager trying to recover from the tragic death of his father and stepmother believes himself to be responsible for the rash of teen suicides occurring in his town.

10. ***A Lesson before Dying*** by Ernest J. Gaines: A young man who returns to 1940's Cajun country to teach visits a black youth on death row for a crime he didn't commit. Together they come to understand the heroism of resisting.

11. ***Nineteen Minutes*** by Jodi Picoult: Sterling is a small, ordinary New Hampshire town where nothing ever happens -- until the day it is shattered by a shocking act of violence. In the aftermath, the town's residents must not only seek justice in order to begin healing but also come to terms with the role they played in the tragedy.

12. ***The Perks of Being a Wallflower*** by Stephen Chbosky: This is a deeply affecting coming-of-age story of what it's like to grow up in high school. More intimate than a diary, Charlie's letters are singular and unique, hilarious and devastating. We may not know where he lives. We may not know to whom he is writing. All we know is the world he shares.

13. ***Persepolis*** by Marjane Satrapi: This graphic novel is a wise, funny, and heartbreaking memoir of growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. The intelligent and outspoken only child of committed Marxists and the great-granddaughter of one of Iran's last emperors, Marjane bears witness to a childhood uniquely entwined with the history of Iran.

14. ***Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers*** by Mary Roach: For 2,000 years, cadavers—some willingly, some unwittingly—have been involved in science's boldest strides and weirdest undertakings. In this fascinating account, Mary Roach visits the good deeds of cadavers over the centuries and, in so doing, tells the engrossing story of our bodies when we are no longer with them.

15. ***Identical*** by Ellen Hopkins: Identical twins Kaeleigh and Raeanne keep dark secrets. Their politician mother is emotionally remote, and their district court judge father is abusive. This novel in verse alternates first person descriptions of abuse, alcoholism, bulimia, drugs, and mental illness. Be ready for a revelation at the end of this disturbing and insightful book.

16. ***Catching Fire*** by Suzanne Collins: in the second book of the *Hunger Games* trilogy, the Capitol is angry and wants revenge. Will Katniss and Peeta survive?

17. ***Mockingjay*** by Suzanne Collins: In this third and final installment of the *Hunger Games* trilogy, the Capitol seeks revenge not only on Katniss but her family, her friends, and the people of District 12. Is no one safe from the Capitol?

18. ***Outliers: The Story of Success*** by Malcolm Gladwell: The author explores why some people are high achievers and others are not, citing culture, family, and upbringing as possible reasons some people are not as successful as others.

19. ***Catalyst*** by Laurie Halse Anderson: Kate Malone, minister's daughter and straight A science and math geek, is waiting to hear from the only college to which she has applied: MIT. Then, like a string of chemical reactions, everything happens.

20. ***The Road*** by Cormac McCarthy: In a post-apocalyptic landscape, a man and a boy struggle toward the unknown. This dark and doomed quest offers a spiritual sense of soul and humanity.

21. ***Me Talk Pretty One Day*** by David Sedaris: Sedaris shares hilarious, satirical stories of his dysfunctional family, his French lessons, and his bizarre career path.

22. ***Paper Towns*** by John Green: One month before graduating from his Central Florida high school, Quentin "Q" Jacobsen basks in the predictable boringness of his life. Then, the beautiful and exciting Margo Roth Spiegelman, Q's neighbor and classmate, takes him on a midnight adventure and she mysteriously disappears.