Every Nobles student is required to read the community book: *Every Day* by David Levithan.

Every Nobles student is required to read at least three additional books this summer.

Please Note: *Every Day* and the required history/English book may be ordered through [http://www.classbook.com](http://www.classbook.com).

**Class VI (7th grade):**
- You must read *I am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up For Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* by Malala Yousafzai for geography class and *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak for English Via Latin (EVL).
- You will be assigned one of your three choices from the middle school faculty recommendation list below.

**Class V (8th grade):**
- You must read *The Freedom Summer Murders* by Don Mitchell for Civics class and *The Other Side of Dark* by Sarah Smith for English. (Two books with the same title exist, please note author.)
- You will be assigned one of your three choices from the middle school faculty recommendation list below.

**Class IV (9th grade):**
• You must read *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel for English class and *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* by Katherine Boo for History of the Human Community (HHC).

• You must choose one other book from the faculty recommendation list below.

**Class III (10th grade):**
• You must read *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez for English and *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League* by Ron Suskind for U.S. History.

• You must choose one other book from the faculty recommendation list below.

**Class II (11th grade):**
• You must read *Purple Hibiscus: A Novel* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie for English.
• If you are taking a history course, you must read the book listed under the appropriate course in the chart below and then one other book from the faculty recommendation list below.
• If you are not taking a history course, then you must choose two other books from the faculty recommendation list below.

**Class I (12th grade):**
• You must read the book listed under the appropriate English elective in the chart below.
• If you are taking a history course, you must read the book listed under the appropriate course in the chart below and then one other book from the faculty recommendation list below.
• If you are not taking a history course, then you must choose two other books from the faculty recommendation list below.

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**Required Reading for the Following Class I English Electives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African American Literature</th>
<th>Madness in Literature</th>
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| *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*  
  by Malcolm X and Alex Haley | *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë |

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<tr>
<th>Chimera: Mythology, Classical Literature and Modern Analogues</th>
<th>The Modernist Movement</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Minotaur Takes a Cigarette Break: A Novel</em> by Steven Sherrill</td>
<td><em>A Moveable Feast</em> by Ernest Hemingway</td>
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<tr>
<th>Creative Non-Fiction</th>
<th>The Novel</th>
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| *Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*  
  by Rebecca Skloot | *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and...* |
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<th>The Epic</th>
<th>Shakespeare I</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Song of Achilles: A Novel</em></td>
<td><em>A Midsummer Night's Dream</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>by Madeline Miller</td>
<td>(The Complete Pelican Shakespeare)</td>
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<td>and</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>The Meaning of Shakespeare</em></td>
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<td>(Harold Goddard): Vol. 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Essay entitled, &quot;A Midsummer Night's Dream</td>
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<tr>
<th>Ethics and Literature</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>A Constellation of Vital Phenomena</em></td>
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<td>by Anthony Marra</td>
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**Required Reading for Class I and II History Electives**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>(AP) European History</th>
<th>Race and Ethnicity in American Culture and History</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Swerve: How the World Became Modern</em></td>
<td><em>Between God and Gangsta Rap: Bearing Witness to Black Culture</em></td>
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<td>by Stephen Greenblatt</td>
<td>by Michael Eric Dyson</td>
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<tr>
<th>Greek Civilization</th>
<th>The Twentieth-Century World</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Hemlock Cup: Socrates, Athens and the Search for the Good Life (Vintage)</em></td>
<td><em>All Quiet on the Western Front</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>by Bettany Hughes</td>
<td>by Erich Maria Remarque</td>
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<tr>
<th>Macroeconomics</th>
<th>Vietnam War</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist Examines the Markets, Power and Politics of the World Trade</em></td>
<td><em>War</em> by Sebastian Junger</td>
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<tr>
<td>by Pietra Rivoli</td>
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<tr>
<th>Politics &amp; Ethics</th>
<th>World Religions</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty</em></td>
<td><em>The Golem and the Jinni: A Novel</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Peter Singer</td>
<td>by Helene Wecker</td>
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Faculty Recommendation List

**Upper School Fiction**

*26A*, Diana Evans  
(Recommended by Shannon Clark)  
A coming-of-age novel about the two twin daughters (along with their older and younger sisters) of Aubrey Hunter and his Nigerian wife, Ida, who share the attic room of their London house. Apart from their sisters, the twins Georgia and Bessi create their own mysterious world in the attic room, and they share an inexplicable bond so close that they lose track of where one stops and the other begins. As they approach adulthood, the conflicts of separate interests, goals, and secrets from the past threaten to split them apart.

*The Alienist*, by Caleb Carr  
(Recommended by Michael Denning)  
Set in NYC near the turn of the century, this novel brings forensics and psychological profiling to the 19th century. It is really fun.

*All the King’s Men*, Robert Penn Warren  
(Recommended by Tim Carey)  
A political novel focusing on the rise to power of Willy Stark, the central character modeled after Huey Long, the Governor of Louisiana, who was assassinated in 1935. A powerful character study of both Stark and the narrator, Jack Burden, whose life is similar to that of Stark. My favorite book in high school.

*Aloft*, Chang-Rae Lee  
(Recommended by Sarah Snyder)  
This is a story about the redemption of a man in later life as he deals with a myriad of extended family issues – clear, strong writing.

*The Art of Fielding*, Chad Harbach  
(Recommended by Sarah Snyder)  
A compelling, well-written novel about college baseball, friendship, and love.

*Atonement*, Ian McEwan  
(Recommended by Dick Baker)
The story of an imaginative girl whose testimony at a rape trial sends an innocent man to jail. The book traces the fortunes of that man and that girl through WWI and to the point where they finally meet.

**Baker Towers**, Jennifer Haigh  
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)  
Set in a post war America, this novel is a throwback to novels that focus on the events that fall on single family as they make their way in life. This moves fast and will hold your interest.

**Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress**, Dai Sijie  
(Recommended by Nahyon Lee)  
A semi-autobiographical short book on the Chinese Cultural Revolution. For those who just finished HHC, they will love this story about a kid and his family sent to a reeducation camp near Tibet. His family has been deemed enemies of Communist state. For those who studied US and AP Euro, they will love the ties and connections they can make to the rise of communism and the reeducation programs under the Soviet Union.

**Bel Canto**, Ann Patchett  
(Recommended by Sandi MacQuinn)  
I thought I knew all I needed to understand about hostage taking, terrorism, and the clear right and wrong of situations like this--until I read Bel Canto. In a small backwater city in South America, an operatic soprano and other guests at the presidential mansion are unexpectedly taken hostage, and their intense and strangely beautiful interactions with their captors (which lead not to the predictable disaster, but to a sense of hope about the human condition) are revealed through the magic of shared music. Ann Patchett can take the reader anywhere her lyrical imagination and gorgeous language attempts to. I could not put this one down.

**Bless Me, Ultima**, Rudolfo Anaya  
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)  
A boy in rural New Mexico discovers the supernatural powers of his grandmother as he works through the complications of family and school friends, curses, the threat of war, and the magic of the Golden Carp. It is the essential novel of Rudolfo Anaya, a founder of the Chicano literary movement.

**The Bluest Eye**, Toni Morrison  
(Recommended by Sandi MacQuinn)  
A story of deeply intense, painful yearning, Pecola Breedlove, an African-American girl, prays for her eyes to turn blue so that she will fit in with America’s blond, blue-eyed children.

**Bridge of Sighs**, Richard Russo
Another incredibly subtle, moving novel from the writer of *Empire Falls* about a small town in upstate New York, told by a small-town guy named Louis Charles Lynch (aka “Lucy”). As 60-year-old Lucy “writes” the story of his town, he digs through his own and his wife’s memories of their lives, and in the process, uncovers some surprising revelations.

**The Brothers K**, Robert James Duncan
(Recommended by Sandi MacQuinn)
Follow the poignant twists and tangles of family tensions that are humorously abundant in this American saga of the six Chance boys who grow up both during the 1950s while their dad plays minor league baseball and in the 1960s as brothers and friends endure Vietnam War trauma and tragedy.

**Canada**, Richard Ford
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
First two sentences, written by a young male narrator: "First, I'll tell you about the robbery our parents committed. Then about the murders, which happened later." Sure, go ahead. Try to skip this one.

**Ceremony**, Leslie Marmon Silko
(Recommended by Shannon Clark)
The haunting story of Tayo, a young Laguna Pueblo of mixed descent, who survives the horrors of imprisonment by the Japanese in the South Pacific, only to return to his people a broken man, haunted by loss and terrifying memories from his past. When his veteran buddies on the reservation turn to alcohol to numb their feelings, Tayo turns to a strange medicine man and the power of language and stories, not only to heal himself, but to heal his broken people. In my mind, the most ambitious, influential postmodern novel by a Native American novelist in our time.

**Christine Falls**, Benjamin Black
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
"There was another version of him," Black says of his attractively flawed hero, "a personality within a personality, malcontent, vindictive, ever ready to provoke." Great mystery involving a Dublin pathologist. "Crime fiction is a good way of examining evil," says the author. This book fits the bill.

**City of Thieves**, David Benioff
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
Impossible to put down. Set in Leningrad in 1945, the novel, based loosely on a true story, is told through the eyes of a young Russian man who is given one week to find a dozen eggs to be used for a wedding cake—or be executed.

**The Coffee Trader: A Novel**, David Liss
This suspenseful novel takes place in 1659 as Amsterdam's first commodities exchange is developing around the amazing new product called COFFEE! This book has it all as you get the gory details of the underbelly of society, as well as the hidden lives of the wealthy merchants. A can't put down book!

The Collected Stories of Heinrich Böll, Heinrich Böll
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)
Böll, a soldier in Germany's army during WWII, writes with compassion and clarity about characters in all sorts of situations during and after the war. There is not a bad story in the entire lot -- the kinds you will want others to read so you can share the experience. He also wrote novellas and novels of equal power. After Chekhov, my favorite story-writer.

Crime and Punishment or The Brothers Karamazov, Fyodor Dostoyevsky
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)
Challenging language, plots with intertwined stories, both works are profound explorations of love, spirituality, and the range of human character; both are also detective stories.

Cry the Beloved Country, Alan Paton
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Written in the late 1940s, it is a touching, tragic story set in South Africa in the age of Apartheid.

Cutting For Stone, Abraham Verghese
(Recommended by Dan Matlack)
Best novel I have read or listened to in a long time. Set in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia with rich, complex characters from that land, southern India and Britain this story is told by one twin born to a nun in a mission hospital in Addis. The time is post World War II Africa and south Asia, a fascinating period in recent history. I couldn't stop listening to it and when I had to, I couldn't wait to get back to it.

Dreaming Water, Gail Tsukiyama
(Recommended by Nahyon Lee)
This book is a beautiful story of love, loss, and family. It’s told from several perspectives: 1) a daughter, Hana, who is suffering from Werner’s syndrome, a disease that makes a person age quickly; 2) the mother, Cate, who is taking care of her daughter as well as grieving over the loss of her husband; 3) flashbacks to the father/husband, Max. The story is caretaking for those we love who are slowly dying. It’s also about Cate and Max who were married after WWII. Max is a Japanese-American, in a time when interracial marriages were illegal in some parts of the United States, and the animosity they endured. It’s a beautiful story of love, loss, and family.

The End of the Affair, Graham Greene
An exceptional craftsman, Greene offers a love story complicated by war, beliefs, and infidelity.

*Everything is Illuminated*, Jonathan Safran Foer
(Recommended by Mike Kalin)
If you like to read fiction that pushes the boundaries of conventional storytelling, then Foer's novel is for you. The book traces the journey of a young boy seeking to understand his grandfather's experience during the Holocaust. Foer blends fact and fiction to create a magical world full of surprising twists and turns.

*Family Matters*, Rohinton Mistry
(Recommended by Tim Carey)
A compelling story of a modern Indian family, one that mirrors Indian society and the pressures brought to bear on that family.

*Franny and Zooey*, JD Salinger
(Recommended by Gia Batty)
Franny and Zooey, a sister and brother both in their twenties, are the youngest members of the Glass family, which was a frequent focus of Salinger's writings. The short story "Franny" takes place in an unnamed college town during the weekend of "the Yale game" and tells the story of an undergraduate who is becoming disenchanted with the selfishness and inauthenticity she perceives all around her. The novella, *Zooey*, follows Franny's brother, who comes to the aid of his sister when she has a spiritual and existential breakdown in her parents' living room in Manhattan. Zooey tries to offer brotherly love, understanding and sage advice. He is, after all, a "genius."

*Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe*, Fannie Flagg
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Great coming-of-age story set in a small Southern town during the 20th Century. Flagg looks at issues of race and gender, bringing the Civil Rights Movement(s) alive.

*A Friend of the Earth*, T.C. Boyle
(Recommended by Thomas Forteith)
Set in an ecologically-collapsed America in 2025, this dystopian novel has one of the great protagonists of all-time, the tragic and comic Tyrone O'Shaugnessy Tierwater. Frustrated in love and life, Tierwater works for a Michael Jackson-esque figure who has a private animal breeding program, until things go really wrong. This book is hilarious and profoundly sad at the same time, and Boyle is as witty a writer as you will find.
**The Free Frenchman**, Piers Paul Read  
(Recommended by Michael Denning)  
Interesting historical novel that deals with elements of French society from 1900-1945. A great read.

**Gilead**, Marilynne Robinson  
(Recommended by Chris Burr)  
An aging minister marries and becomes a father, something he never expected or imagined. Given his age, he knows he will only see a portion of his child's life. The novel explores what most important lessons the minister decides to teach his child.

**Giovanni’s Room**, James Baldwin  
(Recommended by Dick Baker)  
A story of alienation as a gay, Black ex-patriot tries to adjust to the conflicts of life in Paris after WWII and to the issues of sexual identity that plague him.

**The Handmaid’s Tale**, Margaret Atwood  
(Recommended by Sandi MacQuinn)  
In the near future, the Republic of Gilead replaces the destroyed United States. Our gentle, main character, Offred, tells us how her life has been radically transformed from that of a woman free to be and do what she pleases to that of a woman free from choices by the ruling class who felt that society was “dying from too much choice.” Like other women, she is not allowed to read or to be in control of her body. She serves the new society as one of the handmaids kept as concubines for reproductive purposes. There is chilling acceptance in Offred’s tone as she is manipulated by the Commander’s wife and is eventually taken away by men in a black van to an unknown fate.

**The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter**, Carson McCullers  
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)  
For thoughtful, patient readers. Sweet and sad.

**High Fidelity**, Nicholas Hornby  
(Recommended by Kate Blake)  
For all lovers of music, particularly alternative pop found on vinyl, *High Fidelity* is the story of the record-store owner Rob Fleming as he tries to graduate from adult adolescence. Funny, sad, sweet – songs will be rattling around your head as you read.

**The History of Love**, Nicole Krauss  
(Recommended by Sarah Snyder)  
This a compelling love story told through three narrators, all of whom have strong, endearing voices. This is just clever, creative writing.
**The Honorable Schoolboy**, John Le Carre
(Recommended by Dick Baker)
The best of the tales from Le Carre, the master of spy stories. Cold war espionage in various locales around the world. George Smiley is the thinking person’s James Bond.

**Housekeeping**, Marilynne Robinson
(Recommended by Kate Blake)
A short book, but every page is to be treasured. I found myself reading and rereading lines for their profound beauty and profound thought. For readers and for writers.

**The House of the Spirits**, Isabel Allende
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
A great read that has it all - family tragedy, coming of age, politics, revolution and ghosts.

**In Other Rooms, Other Wonders**, Danyal Myeenuddin
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
One of the most overlooked books (although a finalist for the National Book Award) written in the last decade. A string of short stories, all loosely connected, set in Islamabad society. Never thought a book based in Pakistan could interest you? Think again. Powerful without being heavy-handed. Very readable.

**Jayber Crow**, Wendell Berry
(Recommended by Chris Burr)
At an early age the narrator, Jayber Crow, feels called to become a minister. His time in seminary is brief and unsatisfying, so he becomes a barber in the tiny town of Port William, Kentucky, and he experiences another type of ministry.

**The Joy Luck Club**, Amy Tan
(Recommended by Ellyses Kuan)
A story of four Chinese mothers in the 1950s and how they embraced their family tradition, culture, virtues and values in the raising of their daughters in America. Tan reveals the complex, bittersweet, painful but always tender relationship between the mother and the daughter facing cultural differences.

**Kindred**, Octavia Butler
(Recommended by Julia Russell)
Without a choice, Dana is sent back in time to a plantation knowing in her bones that she cannot change history. Then why go back?
The King Must Die, Mary Renault  
(Recommended by Dan Matlack)  
A historical novel approach to the early part of Theseus' life. Hero of the Athenians, he is born far away from Athens and must grow up, learn of and then make his way to his father, and follow his moira through various adventures.

The Laramie Project, Moses Kaufman  
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)  
A re-enactment of Laramie, WY's experience of the murder of citizen Matthew Shepard.

The Last Unicorn, Peter Beagle  
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)  
A nifty fantasy with memorable characters, imagery, and substance.

Look Homeward, Angel, Thomas Wolfe  
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)  
I loved this when I had to read it in high school.

Love Medicine, Louise Erdrich  
(Recommended by Kate Blake)  
Erdrich can do no wrong. Her prose is lyrical; her tales are magical. In this set of interrelated stories that together form a novel, Erdrich returns to the Chippewa tribe in North Dakota. Her scope is epic, spanning nearly a half-century and covering generations of relationships.

Map of Love, Ahdaf Soueif  
(Recommended by Shannon Clark)  
Shortlisted for the Booker in 2000. A massive family saga and all-consuming love story that reaches across generations and land masses, and ultimately reveals that the very contemporary issues which trouble Isabel Parkman and her Egyptian musician lover are not so very new: the ugly specter of colonialism, rising resistance and nationalism, and a clash between East and West in modern Egypt. This novel is a totally engaging read! Soueif has been compared to Tolstoy, Flaubert, and George Eliot in her lyrical command of a truly epic romance.

Masters of Rome Series, Colleen McCullough  
(Recommended by Dan Matlack)  
- The First Man in Rome  
- The Grass Crown  
- Fortune's Favorites  
- Caesar's Women
- *Caesar: Let the Dice Fly*
- *The October Horse*
- *Antony and Cleopatra*

Power struggles, conniving enemies, assassins, personal tragedies, love triangles, fate and fortune all factor into these well researched historical novels that retell the days of the Roman Republic.

*Monkeys*, Susan Minot  
(Recommended by Julia Russell)  
A short book packed with clues about the saga of the Vincents and their seven children, whom mom nicknames “monkeys,” as Rosie, the mother, tries to do her best while masking her husband’s alcoholism.

*The Moons of Jupiter*, Alice Munro  
(Recommended by Kate Blake)  
In the short story genre, Munro is a master. Let this be your entrance into her work.

*The Name of the Rose*, Umberto Eco  
(Recommended by Michael Denning)  
An awesome murder mystery set in a medieval monastery during the Avignon Papacy. I would pay a lot of money to read this book for the first time again.

*Namesake*, Jhumpa Lahiri  
(Recommended by Sarah Snyder)  
Lahiri is such a fine, unadulterated writer who unveils a family who straddles American and Indian cultures.

*Native Son*, Richard Wright  
(Recommended by Dick Baker)  
Bigger Thomas, a controversial character in the racial politics of the late 1920s, commits a horrendous murder that results in one of the best trial sequences in literature.

Novels by Alan Furst  
(Recommended by Michael Denning)  
For anyone who loves spy novels; set in the period from 1930 through World War II, these novels explore espionage in Europe during the age of Stalin and Fascism. Along with John Le Carre, Furst is probably the most respected and literary of espionage novelists living today.

- *Dark Star*
- *The Polish Officer*
- *The World at Night*
- **Blood Victory**
- **Dark Voyage**

Novels by Chaim Potok
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Ditto what I said about Morrison; I am not sure that I have learned more from any one author than I have learned from Potok.
- **The Chosen**
- **The Promise**
- **My Name is Asher Lev**
- **Davita's Harp**

Novels by James Carroll
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
One of my favorite authors, Carroll deals in his novels with culture, class, religion, politics, and inter-generational dialog.
- **Mortal Friends: A Novel**
- **Fault Lines**
- **Family Trade**
- **Prince of Peace**
- **Supply of Heroes**
- **Memorial Bridge**
- **The City Below**

Novels by Stephen Pressfield
(Recommended by Dan Matlack)
Tragic kings, fierce warriors, emboldened queens, bloody battlefields, Pressfield takes the stuff of myths and legends and crafts gripping stories.
- **Gates of Fire**
- **Tides of War**
- **The Last Amazon**

**The Once and Future King**, T.H. White
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)
If you like H Potter, have a sense of humor and delight, ya oughta read this.

**One Day**, David Nicholls
(Recommended by Lisa Jacobson)
This contemporary love story—though not mushy and sentimental—is organized by where the relationship is on July 15th over a course of many years. The book is thoughtful, funny, and personable.

**Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit,** Jeanette Winterson
(Recommended by Julia Russell)
An unconventional, witty teenage girl moves steadily forward as she stays true to her desires, spirituality and heart while facing religious fervor, fanatic opinions and exorcisms.

**Orphan Master’s Son,** Adam Johnson
(Recommended by Nahyon Lee)
I liked Orphan Master’s Son - about North Korea. It won the Pulitzer Prize last year. It's complex and confusing, but comes together at the end. It gives a glimpse of what it would be like to live in a totalitarian regime.

**Cooked,** Michael Pollan
(Recommended by Lisa Jacobson)
This is a fascinating non-fiction exploration of how and why we cook food using air, water and fire. Not only is this a book about food, it's about science, history and sociology. In a non-preachy way, it made me rethink what I eat and to get excited about food. I never thought I'd be so enthralled to learn about bacteria!

**Our Mutual Friend,** Charles Dickens
(Recommended by Dick Baker)
Dickens’ finest novel, awash in various plots and subplots. Alternately a love story, a murder mystery, a comic tale of numerous eccentric London characters.

**Palace Walk: The Cairo Trilogy, Volume 1,** Naguib Mahfouz
(Recommended by Rachel Weinstock)
This book tells the story of the evolving Egyptian society during the time period spanning the two world wars. The changes in society during that time are reflected in the family where a tyrannical father lives a secret life, cloisters his wife and female children while indulging his sons.

**Passing,** Nella Larsen
(Recommended by Julia Russell)
Reconnecting after many years, two childhood friends, Clare and Irene, forge a tragic path as they confront each other’s choices rooted in their racial identity. Clare, who is part-black, passes as a white woman keeping her blackness a secret from her white racist husband; Irene, who is black, purposefully seeks to rise above her lowly social beginnings and marries a black doctor. Universal themes about
identity, class, and gender are strong undercurrents sweeping the plot’s elements of friendship, secrecy, an alleged affair, and a mysterious death towards a perplexing end.

**Penelopiad: The Myth of Penelope and Odysseus**, Margaret Atwood
(Recommended by Sarah Snyder)
If you liked the Odyssey, you will inhale this slim novella, unveiling Atwood’s imaginative view of some characters in the original epic poem through Penelope’s voice.

**Pillars of the Earth**, Ken Follett
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Murder mystery set in the age of cathedral building.

**The Plot Against America**, Philip Roth
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)
What if Charles Lindbergh had run for president against FDR and won? What would this mean to the Jewish community when Lindbergh's appeasement of the Nazis and his anti-Semitism worked into the laws and cultural mores of America? Roth explores this possibility in the real and imagined historical time of the 1930's.

**Possession**, A.S. Byatt
(Recommended by Gia Batty)
This novel follows the relationship between two fictional Victorian poets--Randolf Henry Ash and Christabel LaMotte, as two present day academics research them. Following a trail of clues from various letters and journals, the two scholars attempt to uncover the truth about Ash and LaMotte's relationship before their rival colleagues do. At the same time, the two of them enter into their own romantic relationship.

**A Prayer for Owen Meany**, John Irving
(Recommended by Gia Batty)
This is really the story of two friends--the narrator, John Wheelright and his small-statured, good-natured friend, Owen Meany who is remarkable in many ways and believes himself to be God's instrument. John tells a complex tale of growing up in New Hampshire in the 1950s and 60s and weaves an incredible tapestry of friendship, class, religion and fate in this book.

**The Housekeeper and the Professor**, Yoko Ogawa
(Recommended by Shannon Clark)
An elegant, tight narrative of a genius math professor who, following a traumatic car accident, has lived with only eighty minutes of short-term memory for years. When a young mother and housekeeper is
hired to care for him, she brings along her 10-year-old son, and the three forge bonds that are surprising and touching, even though they have to reintroduce themselves every single morning! A haunting tale of memory, human connection, and yes, the poetry of numbers.

**The Quiet American**, Graham Greene  
(Recommended by Shannon Clark)  
My favorite of Greene’s novels. Arguably his most controversial. Set in Saigon during the waning years of French control in Indochina, this is a narrative of a people beginning to chafe under western colonial influence, told through the not-so-objective perspective of a jaded British journalist (Fowler). Under his gaze, the Americans began moving into position, represented by the brash young idealist Pyle, and Fowler realizes he cannot remain uninvolved. This one will make you think and keep you guessing to the end.

**Ragtime**, El Doctorow  
(Recommended by Tim Carey)  
A novel that takes place at the turn of the 20th century, probes oppressed segments of American society and involves actual American figures, Houdini for one, in fictional roles.

**Red Sky at Morning**, Richard Bradford  
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)  
Guy grows up in the south while father is away in WWII; funny and sweet.

**Regeneration; Ghost Road**, Pat Barker  
(Recommended by Michael Denning)  
An anthropologist by training, Ms. Barker has a series set in and around World War I. Barker explores questions of PTSD and the impact of war on liberal societies.

**The Reivers**, William Faulkner  
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)  
A sweet action, wonderful last novel of our most stunning dead white author.

**The River of Doubt**, by Candice Millaird  
(Recommended by Chris Burr)  
When Teddy Roosevelt suffered a setback, he would frequently do something that he'd never done before as a way to heal or see his life differently. After losing his quest for presidency, he decided to explore a tributary of the Amazon that virtually no one had navigated. Roosevelt and his son Kermit knew nothing about the geography, the river, or the dangers they would face. They just left and found themselves on a journey that almost costs them their lives.
**Rubyfruit Jungle**, Rita Mae Brown  
(Recommended by Julia Russell)  
With candor and wit, Molly Bolt, makes her way as a lesbian through hostile challenges in the South and New York.

**The Secret History**, Donna Tartt  
(Recommended by Michael Denning.)  
Smart murder mystery set at a small New England college.

**Snow Falling on Cedars**, David Guterson  
(Recommended by Sandi MacQuinn)  
A murder trial in a small town of San Pedro island in Puget Sound after WWII becomes a heart wrenching exploration of racism, presumption, the horrors of war and the tragedy of ill-fated love.

**Sometimes a Great Notion**, Ken Kesey  
(Recommended by Dick Baker)  
Hank and Leland Stamper represent a family of independent loggers living in the Pacific Northwest who battle unions, townspeople and themselves in order to abide by their creed of “Never Give a Inch.”

**A Son of the Circus**, John Irving  
(Recommended by Gia Batty)  
This is a classic Irving story--it has a dizzyingly complicated plot that somehow all comes together in the end, the characters are bizarre but believable and I come away from it with an incredible picture of a place, in this case it's Bombay. This book tells the story of Dr. Farrokh Daruwall, a 59 year old orthopedic surgeon who periodically visits Bombay to see his crippled patients, mostly children and members of Bombay's circus culture. It's actually part murder mystery, part family history, part travelogue... More than anything else, it's a really good, really long story that I could not stop reading once I started.

**The Stories of Anton Chekhov**, Anton Chekhov  
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)  
Chekhov's stories appear under many covers and arrangements, but it doesn't matter which you choose. His tone of gentleness, humor, and care creates wonderfully living characters. Very hard to end a story and not stare into the distance for a while.

**Then We Came to the End: A Novel**, Joshua Ferris  
(Recommended by Mike Kalin)
Did you love the movie Office Space? If so, check out this satirical novel that pokes fun at the corporate world. Told in the first-person-plural narrative, the novel will make you laugh, cry, and quite possibly horrify you at the prospect of working in a cubicle some day.

*This Side of Paradise*, F. Scott Fitzgerald
(Recommended by Gia Batty)
This is one of Fitzgerald's lesser known books. It is said that he wrote and worked to publish this book in order to impress his then girlfriend Zelda Sayre (whom he eventually married). The book examines the life and morality of Amory Blaine, a young Midwesterner who, convinced he has an exceptionally promising future, attends boarding school and later Princeton. The book follows his romantic interests with an overarching theme of how love can be warped by greed and status seeking.

*A Thousand Acres*, Jane Smiley
(Recommended by Tim Carey)
This is the retelling of *King Lear* in the modern setting of a farm in the Midwest.

*Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, John LeCarre
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
Arguably the great spy writer's (and former real-life intelligence operator) finest work. Nobles grad and former CIA Inspector General Fred Hitz called this novel, along with Alan Furst's *Dark Star*, one of the two most realistic spy novels that he has ever read. With one of literature's most interesting fictional characters, British spy George Smiley, coming out of retirement to find a Soviet mole that has infiltrated the M16, the British Secret Intelligence Service.

*Unless*, Carol Shields
(Recommended by Sarah Snyder)
This is a story about a mother's love for her daughters, one of whom is really struggling.

*Vampires in the Lemon Grove*, Karen Russell
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
Short stories from the author of "Swamplandia!" These are not for the casual reader. These stories are for those students who are really into great writing and storytelling. The last story in this collection is one of the best short stories I have read in a decade. If nothing else, find a copy of this and read that last story. Chilling.

*The View From Castle Rock*, Alice Munro
(Recommended by Tim Carey)
Another collection of magical stories from what I consider the best short story writer alive today.

*Watchmen*, Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons
(Recommended by Thomas Forteith)
The seminal graphic novel, as good as it gets in this genre (and any other, I think)... If you've seen the movie, the book is at least a million times better! For juniors and seniors who want to try something a little different... Know that, as is the case with many graphic novels, it is extremely violent.

*Where'd You Go, Bernadette: A Novel*, Maria Semple
(Recommended by Lisa Jacobson)
A fun, fast read, a little bit of a mystery but not scary at all. About a modern day, eccentric family in transition.

*Wolf Hall*, Hilary Mantel
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
Only for serious readers. "A brilliant re-imagining of life under Henry VIII." (Boston Globe) Won nearly every major book award, as did its companion piece "Bringing Up the Bodies." Nothing like these two in the last decade. Legendary stuff.

*The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, Michael Chabon
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)
Michael Chabon may be the preeminent Jewish writer of the last decade; here he creates a detective story in the Post World War II community to which European Jewry has relocated - Sitka, Alaska. Chabon's novel takes on the language and atmosphere of the film noir tradition to imagine a world of troubled detectives, bad guys, and dolls.

*Zorro*, Isabelle Allende
(Recommended by Sarah Snyder)
This is so full of adventure, fun, and love – Allende at her best.

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**Upper School Nonfiction**

*1776*, David McCullough
(Recommended by Michael Herring)
Based upon both American and British historical documents, the author presents a comprehensive history of the American Revolution during 1776, George Washington, and those who followed him.
After Visiting Friends, Michael Hainey
(Recommended by Talya Sokoll)
The deputy editor of GQ's memoir of searching for the truth behind his father's premature death.

Agent Zigzag: A True Story of Nazi Espionage, Love and Betrayal, Ben Macintyre
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Fun, bizarre espionage story from World War II.

American Requiem: God, My Father, and the War that Came Between Us, James Carroll
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Carroll's autobiography of his experiences as an anti-war protester who hailed from a family in which the patriarch was one of the military leaders responsible for prosecuting the Vietnam War; this is a book that I could not put down.

Andrew Wyeth: A Secret Life, Richard Meryman
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)
One of the best biographies that I have ever read and a must for any student interested in American Art during the Twentieth Century. This biography not only explores Andrew Wyeth's place in American Art, it also looks at his place in the Wyeth family that for three generations influenced and confounded the American Art world. A companion text is also great - N. C. Wyeth : A Biography by David Michaelis. The biography of Andrew Wyeth's father.

An Army at Dawn & Day of Battle, Rick Atkinson
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Pulitzer Prize-winning account of US Army's experience in the European Theatre in World War II. This guy is an amazing writer who is trying to do for World War II what Shelby Foote accomplished in his trilogy on the American Civil War.

Ballad of a Whiskey Robber, Julian Rubinstein
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
A tale so bizarre that Johnny Depp bought the movie rights to this story about Attila Ambrus, a horrific Hungarian goaltender (he once gave up 88 goals in six straight games), who found greater success when he decided to rob banks. Using poor disguises but still keeping his identity unknown, Ambrus often left roses after each robbery and never hurt a soul. As a result, he became a cult hero to the people of Hungary. Very funny and all the more so because it is true.

Books by the historian, Doris Kearns Goodwin
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
DKG is one of my favorite authors. She brings to life historical figures better than most biographers. What I like most is the way in which DKG focuses on those qualities in her subjects she admires most, while never losing sight of their humanity.

- *No Ordinary Time*
- *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*
- *Team of Rivals*

*The Beautiful Struggle: A Father, Two Sons, and an Unlikely Road to Manhood*,
Ta-Nehisi Coates
(Recommended by Jenny Carlson)
I LOVED this book. It’s like reading poetry and jazz music. His prose is like verse; his words are like dashes of paint on canvas. He sings, spits, stabs, and celebrates. His ink on paper is powerful.

*The Blank Slate*, Steven Pinker
(Recommended by Mike Kalin)
This is a great book for those who like to think about ancient philosophical questions: Are humans born good or evil? How do we develop a sense of morality? Are some people inherently more violent than others? Pinker references philosophy, science, psychology, and literature to answer these provocative questions. You may not agree with his conclusions, but you'll certainly be challenged to reconsider any preconceived notions about human nature.

*Blue Latitudes: Boldly Going Where Captain Cook Has Gone Before*, Tony Horwitz
(Recommended by Rachel Weinstock)
You may not realize how hilarious historical fiction can be until read this book of the outrageous adventures of Captain Cook as he explores the South Pacific. This is the funniest book I've read since Bill Bryson's A Walk in the Woods.

*Brunelleschi's Dome*, Ross King
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)
Ross King examines one of the great architectural triumphs of Italian Architecture, built in 1436, Brunelleschi’s dome for the Cathedral of Sante Maria in Florence remains the dome with the greatest span. King looks at the dome and its architect in a concise text.

*Citizens of London*, Lynne Olson
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Biographical treatment of how Edward R. Murrow, Averell Harriman, and John Gilbert Winant built the special Anglo-US Partnership that helped win World War II. If you like biography, this is great.

*Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World*, Mark Kurlansky
This is a short and completely interesting read about the fish that provided geographical (think where we all go for the summer!) and financial certainty for New England. But it was not just here; the fishing of cod has been an essential ingredient in Europe as well as America for food and finance, in conflicts between nations, and as a cultural foundation.

*Colored People*, Henry Louis Gates  
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)  
Before he was busted for breaking into his own home, Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates was better known for his leadership in academia and for this wonderful autobiography of growing up in rural West Virginia in the 1950's.

*Coming of Age in Mississippi*, Anne Moody  
(Recommended by Michael Denning)  
This book is a must-read for anyone interested in race, gender, civil rights and the experience of those on the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement in this country in the 1950s and 60s.

*The Control of Nature*, by John McPhee  
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)  
Accounts of four efforts to fight Ma Nature. You'll never forget it. And you'll never move to California, either. Or Iceland. Or Simmesport, La.

*The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion*,  
Stephen L. Carter  
(Recommended by Chris Burr)  
William Nelson Cromwell Professor at Yale University explores a trend I've wondered about for the past twenty five years.

*Daughter of Persia: A Woman's Journey from Her Father's Harem Through the Islamic Revolution*, Sattareh Farman Farmaian & Dona Munker  
(Recommended by Rachel Weinstock)  
Born into a royal Iranian family in 1921, Sattareh Farman Farmaian tells her story of growing up in Iran, being educated in the United States and bringing the concept of social work back to Iran. This book gives an informative point of view of Iran's 20th century history, and powerfully illustrates that one person can positively change the world for many others.

*The Devil in the White City*, by Erik Larsen  
(Recommended by Tim Carey)
The story of the Chicago World's Fair at the turn of the 20th century and a serial killer who preys on young women arriving to find work in the city. It might sound dull, the World's Fair part, but it is one of the best page-turners I have ever read!

_Dispatches_, Michael Herr
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)
Perhaps the greatest non-fiction book about the Vietnam War and one that has influenced other writers and filmmakers in their depictions of that war. Reading this mesmerizing text will add to an understanding of _The Things They Carried, Apocalypse Now, Platoon, In the Lake of the Woods_ as well as the more recent explorations of war from _Jarhead_ to _The Hurt Locker_ to _Restrepo._

_Driving Mr Albert_, Michael Paterniti
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)
What is this book anyway... Physics lesson? Madcap road trip? biography of one of Humanity's greatest scientists? Yes. All of that and more told in an entertaining way by a man who helps drive Albert Einstein's brain across the country; the brain is in a tupperware container... and this is non-fiction!

_Fires in the Mirror_, Anna Deavare Smith
(Recommended by Talya Sokoll)
A play of monologues about the tension between Jews and African-Americans in Crown Heights, Brooklyn in the late 80s.

_A Flame of Pure Fire: Jack Dempsey and the Roaring '20s_, Roger Kahn
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)
Jack Dempsey was one of the great boxers of the early Twentieth Century, but his fighting began before he became a champion. Roger Kahn accounts Dempsey’s rough upbringing and how, despite the odds, Dempsey becomes one of the most famous and revered men of his generation.

(Recommended by Tara Cocozza)
Both of these memoirs are a collection of Dumas' experiences as an Iranian immigrant in the United States. She will have you laughing out loud while also developing empathy for the complex world of an immigrant.

_The Glass Castle_, Jeannette Walls
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
Published in 2006, this autobiography of a young girl growing up and fending for herself in West Virginia has proven over time to be one of the most heralded memoirs written in recent years. Tough stuff but you won't forget it.

*The Great Bridge: The Epic Story of the Building of the Brooklyn Bridge*, David McCullough (Recommended by Alden Mauck)
The building of the Brooklyn Bridge, perhaps the first great American bridge, brings America from the Nineteenth Century into the Twentieth Century. However, it is not easy; there were complications in the construction of the bridge, both below and above the river that it crossed. Read the book, then go to NYC, and walk across the “Great Bridge.”

*Half the Sky*, Nicholas Kristof & Sheryl WuDunn (Recommended by Nahyon Lee)
This is an amazing book that reveals the human rights violations against girls and women in the world, but it’s also a book that empowers us and gives us stories of amazing people (men and women) who fight the injustice. It is one of the most powerful books I’ve read in the past ten years. It will make you cry, but it will make you see the amazing parts of human spirit to live and fight for a better world. It should be read by boys and girls, who are interested in human rights, politics, and in general, the human spirit.

*Hellhound On His Trail: The Stalking of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the International Hunt For His Assassin*, Hampton Sides (Recommended by Ashley Bradley)
Although a longer read, this book is definitely worth it. If I don’t lend enough credibility to this pick, I’ll say that Bill Bussey recommended this book to me the first day that I met him. Hellhound on His Trail, written in the style of a Law and Order thriller, simultaneously tells the stories of Martin Luther King Jr. and James Earl Ray, leading up to the moment where their stories fatefully collide.

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, Rebecca Skloot (Recommended by Erin Twohig)
Who was Henrietta Lacks? Even if you aren’t into science this book is a fascinating account of HeLa, the cancer cells taken from a poor black woman without her consent. Now 60+ years after her death, her immortal cells live on and have helped science in so many ways. Be ready for a mystery that dives into the past, present, and future.

*King Leopold’s Ghost*, Adam Hochschild (Recommended by Michael Denning)
This is a well-written book about a too little-known tragedy in human history--the genocide in the Congo.
King of the World: Muhammad Ali and Rise of an American Hero, David Remnick
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)
There may be no boxer as well known, as admired and as discussed as Muhammad Ali. Cassius Clay from Kentucky, the fight with Sonny Liston, the Vietnam War, the “Thrilla in Manila,” Joe Frazier, and ultimately, the “rope-a-dope” and the “Rumble in the Jungle” – all contribute to one of the most fascinating sports careers ever.

A Long Walk to Freedom, Nelson Mandela
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Nelson Mandela's autobiography; wonderful book by one of the most important, amazing leaders in history.

The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat, Oliver Sacks
(Recommended by Kelly Evans)
Sacks, a clinical neurologist, shares fascinating tales of what life is like for his patients who have brain disorders.

Miracles on the Water: The Heroic Survivors of a World War II U-Boat Attack, Tom Nagorski
(Recommended by Ross Henderson)
A true survival tale of English children who are evacuated out of London to escape bombings are sent to Canada. Their boat gets hit by a German torpedo and sinks.

Muhammad Ali, Thomas Hauser (Recommended by Chris Burr)
Ali was my childhood sports idol, and I've read many biographies about him. This is the best portrait of the most daring, controversial, brash, and talented athlete I have seen in my lifetime.

My Beloved World, Sonia Sotomayor
(Recommended by Rachel Weinstock)
This autobiography from the first Hispanic (and female to boot!) US Supreme Court Justice is an inspirational story of an impoverished girl's childhood, being thrust into the privileged society of an Ivy League college, and her struggles against gender and racial bias on the path to a successful career. A must read for anyone interested in the law and a good read for all!

Packing For Mars, Mary Roach
(Recommended by Bill Bussey)
Dirty, nitty gritty science and space details that will make you laugh out loud. Pulls no punches: Sex in space? Without gravity?
**The Path Between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870-1914,**
David McCullough.
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)
The Panama Canal is one of the great successes of American engineering, fortitude, and expansion. When the American take over the building of the Panama Canal from de Lessards and the French, they inherit a project of immense scale and many problems - geographic, scientific, mechanical, and medical. McCullough the author of many histories tells the tale of this path between the seas.

Books by Peter Connolly
(Recommended by Dan Matlack)
Peter Connolly is a phenomenal artist and writer who has authored a number of books on the ancient world. Most impressive to me are *Pompeii* and *The Ancient Greece of Odysseus.* The former is a brief but comprehensive look at the Roman town Pompeii. He elegantly relates the story of Pompeii's destruction and its much later discovery and excavation. The latter is a chronological telling of the Trojan War and Odysseus' trip home. It even includes the story of the Trojan horse in between those tales! Few know that the commonly known version of the Trojan horse episode comes largely from the Roman epic *The Aeneid* written centuries after Homer. In each book Connolly inserts background information on aspects of life in those times. His drawings are superb, colorful and accurate to the standards of recent finds. My favorite section on armor in Greece includes the boar's tooth helmet, which is mentioned by Homer in the Iliad. For many years scholars did not believe such a thing existed — until one was found in an excavation! *Pompeii* is so rich and accurate that Ms. Cottrell has used it for years as an introduction to the site in her Latin I and Latin III classes. I can’t put his books down when I pick them up. *Pompeii* is among Connolly's The Roman World series. For readers with interest in warfare other volumes include *The Cavalryman, The Legionary,* and *The Roman Fort.*

**The Perfect Mile,** Neal Bascomb
(Recommended by Bob Kern)
Tells the story of Roger Bannister (England), John Landy (Australia) and Wes Santee (U.S.A.) and their quest to break the four-minute mile barrier back in the early 1950's. It's a must read for any runner and anyone interested in the history of athletics. It's well written and reads quickly. I think it would be more suitable for high school students in terms of reading level, but I think a good reader in the middle school could enjoy it as well.

**Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Made a Nation,** John Carlin
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Awesome book on which the movie *Invictus* was based.

**The Prince,** Niccolo Machiavelli
(Recommended by Nahyon Lee)
This short book would be great for students who took AP Euro and loved philosophy, are about to take AP Euro, or just love the political philosophy. This book examines human nature (are we all born selfish or good), role of government, and leadership. A quote from the book, “It is best to be both feared and loved; however, if one cannot be both it is better to be feared than loved” or my personal favorite from the book, “Therefore, it is necessary to be a fox to discover the snares and a lion to terrify the wolves.” Enjoy!

(Recommended by Kate Ramsdell)
Do you think it was easy to create this dictionary? Do you imagine people forging friendships as they worked together creating the hefty volumes? Here’s the unexpected drama behind the making of the OED as we learn the real reason why Dr. William Charles Minor, who contributed 10,000 words to the volumes, never said yes to the editor’s invitations to visit. This true story is a surprising page-turner.

_A Rainbow in the Night_, Domnique Lapierre
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Short, highly readable history of South Africa.

_Salvation on Sand Mountain_, Dennis Covington
(Recommended by Chris Burr)
A southern minister is convicted of trying to kill his wife with poisonous snakes. The author/journalist covers the trial and discovers the bizarre, mysterious, and ultimately irresistible world of holiness snake handling, speaking in tongues, and laying hands on the sick.

_Silent Night_, Stanley Weintraub
(Recommended by Michael Denning.)
Fascinating story about a ceasefire in December 1914 that temporarily halted hostilities in World War I.

_Steve Jobs_, Walter Isaacson
(Recommended by Lisa Jacobson)
Hard to believe I'm recommending a book that is really a History of Computers, but it's a history of modern culture and it's so interesting. It explains why Apple products don't totally support Google stuff and so much more. Jobs is not always a likeable dude but he's brilliant and so creative.

_Stumbling On Happiness_, Daniel Gilbert
(Recommended by Mike Kalin)
Gilbert's book helps us understand why humans are so bad at figuring out what makes us happy in our lives. As you begin to think about the major choices that will define your future, this book will provide some cautionary tales about how to avoid the common pitfalls that many people make when they pursue a life of satisfaction and contentment. Gilbert's book is filled with descriptions of fascinating psychology experiments that help Gilbert justify his claims.

*This Boy's Life: A Memoir*, Tobias Wolff
(Recommended by Ashley Bradley)
I first read this book after Tobias Wolff came to my high school to speak about getting kicked out of my high school for forging his admissions application. His tale was moving and humorous, and this memoir is masterfully charming. This Boy’s Life is a coming of age memoir about a young boy who, along with his mother, experiences divorce, physical and mental abuse, and a desperately nomadic lifestyle. It’s a tale about identity, discovery, deception, illusion, and really, about being human.

*Troublesome Young Men*, Lynne Olson
(Recommended by Michael Denning)
Great story of how young, Tory backbenchers rebelled against Neville Chamberlain, bringing Churchill to power at the outset of World War II.

*A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail*, Bill Bryson
(Recommended by Dan Matlack)
Chocolate bars, noodles, blisters, and bears. Oh my! A laugh out loud account of Bill Bryson’s 2,000+ mile journey of hiking the Appalachian Trail with his similarly out-of-shape buddy, Stephen Katz. Fun travel entertainment at its best.

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**Middle School Fiction**

*Adaptation*, Malindo Lo
(Recommended by Talya Sokoll)
A young adult, dystopian novel, for fans of *The Hunger Games*, is about a girl and her friend who, after a car crash, end up in a mysterious government facility where they seem to have gained special powers that seem not completely human.

*The Earthsea Trilogy*, Ursula K. LeGuin
(Recommended by Sandi MacQuinn)
  - A Wizard of Earthsea
● The Tombs of Atuan
● The Farthest Shore

LeGuin creates a world of wizards and priestesses dealing with struggles, curses and perilous journeys typical of these magical beings; but, the real magic happens inside the reader who begins an internal exploration of themes about creativity, tolerance, equality, and self-understanding. *Earthsea* is a fun world to enter again and again because each reading creates new perspective.

**Ender’s Game**, Orson Scott Card  
(Recommended by Sandi MacQuinn)  
At Battle School genius Ender Wiggins is being trained through simulated war games to defend earth from the aliens called Buggers. Ender has been at the school since age six; he misses his sister Valentine (but his older brother Peter, not so much.) Ender is on track to be a military leader but then he finds out Battle School hasn’t filled him in on everything about his training.

**A Game for Swallows**, Zeina Abirached  
(Recommended by Talya Sokoll)  
Similar to Persepolis, this is the true story of the author's family's experience in Lebanon during the war in the 1980s

**A Gathering of Old Men**, Ernest Gaines  
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)  
An African American community is besieged with racism until they fight back and old men become heroes striving for equality.

**I Am the Cheese**, Robert Cormier  
(Recommended by Sandi MacQuinn)  
This chilling tale about a teenager named Adam has three narrative threads that take us on a bike ride to Vermont, to a visit with a psychiatrist and through a nightmare of being a victim of a witness protection program. Suspense and mystery keep the reader pedaling through the story of Adam’s past and uncertain future. Cormier is a masterful storyteller who gives us courageous youth struggling to endure life’s terrible moments.

**Jellicoe Road**, Melina Marchetta  
(Recommended by Erin Twohig)  
A boarding school in Australia, a manuscript, a disappearance, a relationship with the leader of another group (read: love), friendships, and war. Taylor, abandoned by her mother years earlier, pieces together clues to unlock her past and identify her future.

**A Lesson Before Dying**, Ernest Gaines
A young African American teacher realizes that dignity before dying can be achieved through teaching, and that this teaching is not futile or too late and is just as important as the education that he provides his younger students.

**Lucas**, Kevin Brooks  
(Recommended by Erin Twohig)  
The endings of Brooks’ novels aren’t always perfect. Typically, his main character is a boy, with a bit of an edge, who lives life on the outskirts. Lucas is exactly that. He is an outsider on a island who always manages to appear when Caitlin is in danger. Caitlin, the only one who accepts Lucas, is drawn to his mysterious nature. This is a story of love and hate.

**Maze Runner Trilogy**, James Dashner  
(Recommended by Chris Averill)  
It was great, I read the first two using the new nobles Overdrive account. Then we bought the third from Amazon. My wife and I read em all in a week (couldn't put them down). The first one is about a teenage boy who suddenly wakes up in a village of about a hundred other teenage boys who are trying to escape through this giant maze. A fast paced story similar to the Hunger Games. Thomas has to figure out not only what is going on but how to get out of the maze before it is too late! These are great summer books.

**Murder on the Orient Express**, Agatha Christie  
(Recommended by Alden Mauck)  
Perhaps the most famous of Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot detective stories if not the first. Trapped by avalanche in the snowy mountains of Europe on board the Orient Express a murder has been committed. Can Hercule Poirot solve the case before the train (and the murderer) is freed from the snow? Of course! He is Hercule Poirot who uses the little gray cells.

**Ophelia: A Novel**, Lisa Klein  
(Recommended by Tim Carey)  
This novel is the retelling of *Hamlet* from Ophelia's point of view.

**Out of the Easy**, Ruta Septys  
(Recommended by Talya Sokoll)  
A young adult novel about a 16 year old girl growing up in New Orleans in the 1950's whose mother is a prostitute and the the lengths she will go to to get accepted to college.

**Shane**, Jack Shaefer  
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)
Best cowboy story ever.

_Speak_, Laurie Halse Anderson  
(Recommended by Tim Carey)  
The story of a young high school student who has a traumatic experience prior to entering high school and how she gains the courage to face the issue.

_Siddhartha_, Hermann Hesse  
(Recommended by Thomas Forteith)  
A short, quiet story inspired by the life of the Buddha. For the spiritual reader who likes to get deep!  
Famed NBA coach Phil Jackson gave this book to Shaquille O'Neal, hoping that Shaq would see the perils and possibilities of living a charmed life. This book will address many of the ideas you will discuss in HHC.

_Twisted_, Laurie Halse Anderson  
(Recommended by Tim Carey)  
The story of high school life and a character's struggle to deal with a difficult home life and being picked on in school.

**Middle School Nonfiction**

_Boys of Summer_, Roger Kahn  
(Recommended by Dick Baker)  
The best baseball book I've read. Evokes the historical period of the 1930s and ‘40s, the marvels of the old Brooklyn Dodgers and their World Series battles in ’52 and ’53 with the Evil Empire.

_Cry of the Kalahari_, Mark James & Cordelia Dykes  
(Recommended by Dick Baker)  
The authors spend years in the deserts of Botswana getting to know the animals (particularly the lions) of the region.

_Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow_, Susan Campbell Bartoletti  
(Recommended by Talya Sokoll)  
How was Hitler able to convince an entire nation that the extermination on Non-Aryans was a good idea? He started young. This engaging book tells the story of the Hitler Youth, and how easily people can be swayed to join a cause that has terrible plans.

_In These Girls, Hope is a Muscle_, Madeleine Blais
A look at the trials and triumphs of high school girls’ basketball team Lady Hurricanes of Amherst, Massachusetts as they bond into a championship team.

*Into Thin Air*, Jon Krakauer
(Recommended by Peter Raymond)
An account of a catastrophic week on Mt. Everest, with a thorough examination of the mentality of elite climbers.