

11th Grade Summer Reading:

For your summer reading, please choose a book from the 11th grade reading list (See below). If you wish to choose a book beyond this list, you are limited to a book that is over 250 pgs. And has not been made into a movie. While you are reading, choose 5 pieces of text evidence (quotes) from throughout the book. These passages should be key moments from the book. Be sure to include the page numbers, and make sure you write the text evidence word for word.

This does not need to be typed, but it is due on the first day of school. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact Mr. Hawkins (hhawkins@c-dh.org), Mrs. Fabel (mfabel@c-dh.org), Mr. Lally (klally@c-dh.org), or Mrs. Malone-Povolny (smalone-povolny@c-dh.org).

Enjoy your summer.

11th Grade List

Non-fiction

The Beautiful Struggle (a memoir) by Ta-Nahisi Coates. Spiegel and Grau, 2009. 227 p. Starred reviews Booklist, Kirkus, Publishers.

Coates grew up in a tough Baltimore neighborhood, subject to the same temptations as other young black boys. But he had a father in the household, a man steeped in race consciousness and willing to go to any lengths—including beatings—to keep his sons on the right path. With sharp cultural observations and emotional depth, Coates recalls an adolescence of surreptitiously standing on corners eying girls, drinking fifths, and earning reps, mindful of his father's admonition about the Knowledge. Central to the Knowledge was the need to confront fears and bullies and beat them in order to live in peace. For a while, his own style was to "talk and duck"; later he found places to be himself in African drumming and writing. The Knowledge focused on alternative paths for race-conscious black men, respectful of the broader culture, but always a bit on the margins. His father had balanced his own life between square jobs and a black book publishing enterprise. As Coates grew up, he replaced his comic books with his father's collection of classic literature on the race struggle and found his own way. A beautifully written, loving portrait of a strong father bringing his sons to manhood.

Sold (National Book Award Finalist)

Patricia McCormick

2006, 260 p.

Summary and Review from National Book Foundation

Lakshmi is a thirteen-year-old girl who lives with her family in a small hut on a mountain in Nepal. Though she is desperately poor, her life is full of simple pleasures, like playing hopscotch with her best friend from school, and having her mother brush her hair by the light of an oil lamp. But when the harsh Himalayan monsoons wash away all that remains of the family's crops, Lakshmi's stepfather says she must leave home and take a job to support her family. He introduces her to a glamorous stranger who tells her she will find her a job as a maid in the city. Glad to be able to help, Lakshmi journeys to India and arrives at "Happiness House" full of hope. But she soon learns the unthinkable truth: she has been sold into prostitution. An old woman named Mumtaz rules the brothel with cruelty and cunning. She tells Lakshmi that she is trapped there until she can pay off her family's debt—then cheats Lakshmi of her meager earnings so that she can never leave. Lakshmi's life becomes a nightmare from which she cannot escape. Still, she lives by her mother's words—Simply to endure is to triumph—and gradually, she forms friendships with the other girls that enable her to survive in this terrifying new world. Then the day comes when she must make a decision—will she risk everything for a chance to reclaim her life? Written in spare and evocative vignettes, this powerful novel renders a world that is as unimaginable as it is real, and a girl who not only survives but triumphs.

Fiction

The Book of Unknown Americans Cristina Henríquez, Vintage, 2015.

When fifteen-year-old Maribel Rivera sustains a terrible injury, the Riveras leave behind a comfortable life in Mexico and risk everything to come to the United States so that Maribel can have the care she needs. Once they arrive, it's not long before Maribel attracts the attention of Mayor Toro, the son of one of their new neighbors, who sees a kindred spirit in this beautiful, damaged outsider. Their love story sets in motion events that will have profound repercussions for everyone involved. Here Henríquez seamlessly interweaves the story of these star-crossed lovers, and of the Rivera and Toro families, with the testimonials of men and women who have come to the United States from all over Latin America. *The Book of Unknown Americans* is a stunning novel of hopes and dreams, guilt and love—a book that offers a resonant new definition of what it means to be American.

The Impossible Knife of Memory (School Library Journal Starred)

Laurie Halse Anderson

Viking Books for Young Readers

2014, 391 p.

Summary and Review from School Library Journal Starred Review

More parent figure than child, Hayley copes with the burden of her war vet dad's severe post-traumatic stress disorder by affecting a snarky bravado. While her father buries his pain in drink and drugs, Haley slowly opens herself to the possibility of love. With flashback chapters from the father's point of view, Anderson offers an emotional—but never overwrought—examination of the devastating effects of war, set alongside an authentic and tender coming-of-age romance.

A Land More Kind Than Home (Library Journal Starred Review)

Wiley Cash
Morrow
2012, 309 p.

Summary and Review by Library Journal

A Land More Kind Than Home is a mesmerizing literary thriller about the bond between two brothers and the evil they face in a small western North Carolina town. For a curious boy like Jess Hall, growing up in Marshall means trouble when your mother catches you spying on grown-ups. Adventurous and precocious, Jess is enormously protective of his older brother, Christopher, a mute whom everyone calls Stump. Though their mother has warned them not to snoop, Stump can't help sneaking a look at something he's not supposed to--an act that will have catastrophic repercussions, shattering both his world and Jess's. It's a wrenching event that thrusts Jess into an adulthood for which he's not prepared. While there is much about the world that still confuses him, he now knows that a new understanding can bring not only a growing danger and evil--but also the possibility of freedom and deliverance as well. Told by three resonant and evocative characters--Jess; Adelaide Lyle, the town midwife and moral conscience; and Clem Barefield, a sheriff with his own painful past--A Land More Kind Than Home is a haunting tale of courage in the face of cruelty and the power of love to overcome the darkness that lives in us all. These are masterful portrayals, written with assurance and truth, and they show us the extraordinary promise of this remarkable first novel.

The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven (Short Stories)

Sherman Alexie
Grove Press
2005, 242 p.

Summary from Goodreads

In this darkly comic short story collection, Sherman Alexie, a Spokane/Coeur d'Alene Indian, brilliantly weaves memory, fantasy, and stark realism to paint a complex, grimly ironic portrait of life in and around the Spokane Indian Reservation. These 22 interlinked tales are narrated by characters raised on humiliation and government-issue cheese, and yet are filled with passion and affection, myth and dream. There is Victor, who as a nine-year-old crawled between his unconscious parents hoping that the alcohol seeping through their skins might help him sleep. Thomas Builds-the-Fire, who tells his stories long after people stop listening, and Jimmy Many Horses, dying of cancer, who writes letters on stationery that reads "From the Death Bed of James Many Horses III," even though he actually writes them on his kitchen table. Against a backdrop of alcohol, car accidents, laughter, and basketball, Alexie depicts the distances between Indians and whites, reservation Indians and urban Indians, men and women, and most poetically, between modern Indians and the traditions of the past.

Proxy

Alex London. Penguin, 2014

Syd's job is to be rich boy Knox's whipping boy (he receives the punishments for Knox's mistakes). When Syd and Knox meet at a party, they realize they must work together to change a messed-up system. Proxy is a unique dystopian thriller that combines page-turning action with difficult moral dilemmas.

We Were Liars

E. Lockhart. Delacorte, 2013

Beauty and wealth can't overcome the disaster caused by a group of four friends: the Liars. When a revolution leads to an accident, secrets are kept, and lies are told. The truth is buried deeply in the mind of a brilliant, damaged girl, where reality becomes an illusion.

Classic Fiction

Catch 22

Joseph Heller, Simon & Schuster, 1955

Catch-22 is like no other novel. It is one of the funniest books ever written, a keystone work in American literature, and even added a new term to the dictionary. At the heart of Catch-22 resides the incomparable, malingering bombardier, Yossarian, a hero endlessly inventive in his schemes to save his skin from the horrible chances of war. His efforts are perfectly understandable because as he furiously scrambles, thousands of people he hasn't even met are trying to kill him. His problem is Colonel Cathcart, who keeps raising the number of missions the men must fly to complete their service. Yet if Yossarian makes any attempts to excuse himself from the perilous missions that he is committed to flying, he is trapped by the Great Loyalty Oath Crusade, the hilariously sinister bureaucratic rule from which the book takes its title: a man is considered insane if he willingly continues to fly dangerous combat missions, but if he makes the necessary formal request to be relieved of such missions, the very act of making the request proves that he is sane and therefore ineligible to be relieved. Catch-22 is a microcosm of the twentieth-century world as it might look to some one dangerously sane -- a masterpiece of our time.