

Pearl R. Miller School

Required Summer Reading List
Incoming 8th Grade
Summer 2008

Students are required to read 2 of the following books over the summer.

Realistic Fiction

- Banerjee, Anjali. *Maya Running*
Maya, a Canadian of East Indian descent, struggles with her ethnic identity and the presence of her beautiful Bengali cousin, Pinky, who comes for a visit bearing a powerful statue of the god Ganesh, the Hindu elephant boy.
- Cabot, Meg. *All-American Girl*
Sophomore Samantha Madison stops a presidential assassination attempt, is appointed teen ambassador to the United Nations, and catches the eye of the very cute First Son.
- Caroline B. Cooney. *Hit The Road*
Sixteen-year-old Brittany acts as chauffeur for her grandmother and three other eighty-plus-year-old women going to what is supposedly their college reunion, on a long drive that involves lies, theft, and kidnappings.
- Cormier, Robert.
 - *The Chocolate War*
A high school freshman discovers the devastating consequences of refusing to join in the school's annual fund raising drive and arousing the wrath of the school bullies.
 - *Beyond the Chocolate War : a Novel*
Sequel to: The chocolate war. Dark deeds continue at Trinity High School, climaxing in a public demonstration of one student's homemade guillotine.
- Deuker, Carl. *Night Hoops*
While trying to prove that he is good enough to be on his high school's varsity basketball team, Nick must also deal with his parents' divorce and erratic behavior of a troubled classmate who lives across the street.
- Hesser, Terry Spencer. *Kissing Doorknobs*
Fourteen-year-old Tara describes how her increasingly strange compulsions begin to take over her life and affect her relationships with her family and friends.
- Lubar, David,
 - *Hidden Talents*
A 13-year-old boy who has been sent to an alternative school, discovers that he and his classmates have psychic powers.

- *True talents*
Sequel to: Hidden talents. A group of psychic friends from Edge view Alternative School unite to rescue Eddie "Trash" Thalmeyer who has been kidnapped by a shady character after testing his telekinetic abilities in a bank by moving a stack of cash into his pocket.
- Lynch, Chris.
 - *Slot Machine*
When overweight thirteen-year-old Elvin Bishop is sent to camp at St. Paul's Seminary Retreat Center, he and his two best friends are forced to try out various sports in order to find out where they belong.
 - *Extreme Elvin.*
Sequel to: Slot machine. As he enters high school, fourteen-year-old Elvin continues to deal with his weight problem as he tries to find his place among his peers.
- McDonald, Joyce. *Shades of Simon Gray*
Seventeen-year-old Simon lies in a coma, finding his space and time overlapping with that of a man who was lynched over 200 years ago, while a member of the cheating ring he has been helping wonders if their actions have caused the plagues assaulting their New Jersey town.
- Na, An. *A Step From Heaven.*
A young Korean girl and her family find it difficult to learn English and adjust to life in America.
- Perkins, Mitali. *The Not-So-Star-Spangled Life of Sunita Sen : a novel*
The arrival of her grandparents from India causes thirteen-year-old Sunita to resent her Indian heritage and to be embarrassed by the differences she feels between herself and her friends in California.
- Pixley, Marcella. *Freak*
Twelve-year-old Miriam, poetic, smart, and quirky, is considered a freak by the popular girls at her middle school, and she eventually explodes in response to their bullying, revealing an inner strength she did not know she had.
- Trueman, Terry. *Stuck in Neutral*
Fourteen-year-old Shawn McDaniel, who suffers from severe cerebral palsy and cannot function, relates his perceptions of his life, his family, and his condition, especially as he believes his father is planning to kill him.
- Van Draanen, Wendelin. *Flipped*
In alternating chapters, two teenagers describe how their feelings about themselves, each other, and their families have changed over the years.
- Wolff, Virginia Euwer.
 - *Make Lemonade*
Fourteen-year-old LaVaughn, trying to earn the money for college, takes a job caring for the two children of Jolly, a single teenage mom, and must find the courage to make the right decision for all of them after Jolly is fired.

- *True believer*

Sequel to: *Make Lemonade*.; "A novel in the *Make Lemonade* trilogy"--Jacket. Living in the inner city amidst guns and poverty, fifteen-year-old LaVaughn learns from old and new friends, and inspiring mentors, that life is what you make it--an occasion to rise to.

- Zevin, Gabrielle. *Elsewhere*

After fifteen-year-old Liz Hall is hit by a taxi and killed, she finds herself in a place that is both like and unlike Earth, where she must adjust to her new status and figure out how to "live."

Historical Fiction

- Auch, Mary Jane. *Ashes of Roses*.

Sixteen-year-old Margaret Rose Nolan, newly arrived from Ireland, finds work at New York City's Triangle Shirtwaist Factory shortly before the 1911 fire in which 146 employees died.

- Bagdasarian, Adam. *Forgotten fire*.

The story of how Vahan Kenderian survived the Turkish massacre of the Armenians in 1915.

- Boyne, John, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas : A Fable*

Bored and lonely after his family moves from Berlin to a place called "Out-With" in 1942, Bruno, the son of a Nazi officer, befriends a boy in striped pajamas who lives behind a wire fence.

- Crowe, Chris. *Mississippi Trial, 1955*

In Mississippi in 1955, a sixteen-year-old finds himself at odds with his grandfather over issues surrounding the kidnapping and murder of a fourteen-year-old African American from Chicago.

- Donnelly, Jennifer. *A Northern Light*

In 1906, sixteen-year-old Mattie, determined to attend college and be a writer against the wishes of her father and fiance, takes a job at a summer inn where she discovers the truth about the death of a guest. Based on a true story.

- Fago, John Norwood. *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

Hank Morgan, an ingenious yankee mechanic, finds himself in Camelot in the year 1528. It's his technical expertise that lands him in / or rescues him from more adventures.

- Levine, Ellen. *Catch a Tiger by the Toe*

In the Bronx, New York, during the McCarthy era, twelve-year-old Jamie keeps a terrible secret about her family, but when the truth is exposed, her parents lose their jobs and she is fired from the school newspaper.

- O'Dell, Scott, *Sing Down the Moon*.

A young Navajo girl recounts the events of 1864 when her tribe was forced to march to Fort Sumner as prisoners of the white soldiers.

- Park, Linda Sue. *When My Name Was Keoko*.

With national pride and occasional fear, a brother and sister face the increasingly oppressive occupation of Korea by Japan during World War II, which threatens to suppress Korean culture entirely.

- Paulsen, Gary. *Soldier's Heart : Being the Story of the Enlistment and due Service of the Boy Charley Goddard in the First Minnesota Volunteers : a novel of the Civil War.*
Eager to enlist, fifteen-year-old Charley has a change of heart after experiencing both the physical horrors and mental anguish of Civil War combat.
- Salisbury, Graham, *Eyes of the Emperor*
Following orders from the United States Army, several young Japanese American men train K-9 units to hunt Asians during World War II.
- Wulffson, Don L. *Soldier X.*
In 1943 sixteen-year-old Erik experiences the horrors of war when he is drafted into the German army and sent to fight on the Russian front.

Mystery, Suspense Fantasy and Science Fiction

- Adlington, L.J.. *The Diary of Pelly D*
When Toni V, a construction worker on a futuristic colony, finds the diary of a teenage girl whose life has been turned upside-down by holocaust-like events, he begins to question his own beliefs.
- Alexander, Lloyd. *Any Book By This Author*
(excluding the "Black Cauldron" Series")
- Avi, *Wolf Rider : A Tale of Terror*
After receiving an apparent crank call from a man claiming to have committed murder, fifteen-year-old Andy finds his close relationship with his father crumbling as he struggles to make everyone believe him.
- Bradbury, Ray, *Something Wicked This Way Comes.*
Story of two young boys who begin to encounter evil secrets when a lightning rod salesman gives them one of his contraptions covered with mystical symbols.
- Chabon, Michael. *Summerland*
The ferishers, little creatures who ensure perfect weather for Summerland, recruit Ethan Feld, one of history's worst baseball players, to help them in their struggle to save Summerland, and ultimately the world, from giants, goblins, and other legendary, terrible creatures.
- Coles, William E. *Another Kind of Monday.*
When Mark discovers money and a note concealed in the pages of a copy of Dickens' Great expectations, he undertakes a quest with his classmate Zeena that leads to more money, more clues to follow, and ultimately more knowledge of himself.
- Cooney, Caroline B. *Goddess of Yesterday*
Taken from her home on an Aegan island as a six-year-old girl, Anaxndra calls on the protection of her goddess as she poses as two different princesses over the next six years, before ending up as a servant in the company of Helen and Paris as they make their way to Troy.

- Feinstein, John. *Last shot: a Final Four mystery*
After winning a basketball reporting contest, eighth graders Stevie and Susan Carol are sent to cover the Final Four tournament, where they discover that a talented player is being blackmailed into throwing the final game.
- Farmer, Nancy,
 - *The Sea of Trolls* - After Jack becomes apprenticed to a Druid bard, he and his little sister Lucy are captured by Viking Berserkers and taken to the home of King Ivar the Boneless and his half-troll queen, leading Jack to undertake a vital quest to Jotunheim, home of the trolls.
 - *The Land of the Silver Apples* - After escaping from the Sea of Trolls, the apprentice bard Jack plunges into a new series of adventures, traveling underground to Elfland and uncovering the truth about his little sister Lucy.
- Gallego Garcia, Laura. *The legend of the Wandering King*
Motivated by jealousy and the desire to receive acclaim as a great poet, Walid ibn Huyr, a prince of ancient Arabia, commits acts which completely change the course of his life.
- Oppel, Kenneth.
 - *Airborn* - Matt, a young cabin boy aboard an airship, and Kate, a wealthy young girl traveling with her chaperone, team up to search for the existence of mysterious winged creatures reportedly living hundreds of feet above the Earth's surface.
 - *Skybreaker* - Matt Cruse, a student at the Airship Academy, and Kate de Vries, a young heiress, team up with a gypsy and a daring captain, to find a long-lost airship, rumored to carry a treasure beyond imagination.
- Philbrick, W. R. *The Last Book in the Universe*
After an earthquake has destroyed much of the planet, an epileptic teenager nicknamed Spaz begins the heroic fight to bring human intelligence back to the Earth of a distant future.
- Pierce, Tamora.
 - *Trickster's Choice* - Alianne must call forth her mother's courage and her father's wit in order to survive on the Copper Isles in a royal court rife with political intrigue and murderous conspiracy
 - *Trickster's queen* - Aly fails to foresee the dangers that await as she uses her magic to safeguard Dova and her younger siblings, despite knowing that her thirteen-year-old charge might be queen of the Copper Isles when the colonial rulers are defeated.
- Vande Velde, Vivian. *Never Trust a Dead Man*.
Wrongly convicted of murder and punished by being sealed up in the tomb with the dead man, seventeen-year-old Selwyn enlists the help of a witch and the resurrected victim to find the true killer.
- Yancey, Richard.
 - *The Extraordinary Adventures of Alfred Kropp* - Through a series of dangerous and violent misadventures, teenage loser Alfred Kropp rescues King Arthur's legendary sword Excalibur from the forces of evil.
 - *Alfred Kropp: the seal of Solomon* - The last descendant of Sir Lancelot, teenage misfit

Alfred Kropp is drawn back into the OIPEP to battle a group of demons bent on freeing themselves from the confines of an ancient relic.

Biographies and Non-Fiction

- Armstrong, Jennifer. *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World : The Extraordinary True Story of Shackleton and the Endurance*
Describes the events of the 1914 Shackleton Antarctic expedition when, after being trapped in a frozen sea for nine months, their ship, Endurance, was finally crushed, forcing Shackleton and his men to make a very long and perilous journey to reach inhabited land.
- Brokaw, Tom. *The Greatest Generation*
Pays tribute to the generation of Americans who fought in World War II, telling the stories of individual men and women who, united by common purpose and values, served their country overseas and returned to create modern America.
- Crowe, Chris. *Getting Away with Murder : The True Story of the Emmett Till Case.*
Presents a true account of the murder of fourteen-year-old, Emmett Till, in Mississippi, in 1955. The boy who triggered the civil rights movement .
- Dash, Joan. *The Longitude Prize.*
The story of John Harrison, inventor of watches and clocks, who spent forty years working on a time-machine which could be used to accurately determine longitude at sea.
- Dendy, Leslie A. *Guinea pig scientists : bold self-experimenters in science and medicine.*
Recounts the true stories of ten scientists and medical researchers that have endured extreme hardship and discomfort in order to test new discoveries and inventions in the fields of medicine and science.
- Fleischman, John. *Phineas Gage : a Gruesome But True Story About Brain Science*
The true story of Phineas Gage, whose brain had been pierced by an iron rod in 1848, and who survived and became a case study in how the brain functions.
- Fradin, Dennis B. *Ida B. Wells : Mother of the Civil Rights Movement*
An illustrated biography of nineteenth-century activist Ida B. Wells, focusing on her crusade against the practice of lynching, and discussing her role in the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the campaign for women's voting rights.
- Giblin, James. *The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler*
Chronicles the life of Adolf Hitler and describes the consequences his quest for German dominance and his hatred of the Jews brought upon the entire world.
- Greenberg, Jan, *Vincent Van Gogh : Portrait of an Artist*
Chronicles the life of nineteenth-century painter Vincent Van Gogh, describing his childhood in Holland, his years in France, his relationships with his brother and with fellow artist Paul Gauguin, his difficulties with women, his mental health, and his artistic vision.
- Hampton, Wilborn. *Meltdown : a race against nuclear disaster at Three Mile Island : a reporter's story*

Account of the Three Mile Island nuclear disaster as written by reporter and eyewitness Wilborn Hampton.

- Herriot, James. *All Creatures Great and Small*
An English veterinarian reminisces about his life, career, and animal patients in a small village.
- Hill, Laban Carrick. *Harlem Stomp! : A cultural History of the Harlem Renaissance*
Offers a cultural history of the Harlem Renaissance, discussing how it sparked a period of intellectual, artistic, literary, and political blossoming for many African-Americans.
- Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki.. *Farewell to Manzanar : A True Story of Japanese American Experience During and After the World War II Internment*
An Autobiographical account of a Japanese American family's attempt to survive the indignities of internment during World War II.
- Levine, Ellen. *Darkness Over Denmark : The Danish Resistance And the Rescue of the Jews*
An account of people in Denmark who risked their lives to protect and rescue their Jewish neighbors from the Nazis during World War II.
- Lord, Walter, *A Night to Remember*.
Provides an account of the sinking of the "Titanic," a reputedly unsinkable ship that went down in the Atlantic on April 10, 1912 after hitting an iceberg, resulting in the deaths of over 1,500 people.
- Myers, Walter Dean, *Malcolm X : By Any Means Necessary : a Biography*
Chronicles the life of controversial militant leader Malcolm X.
- Orgill, Roxane. *Shout, Sister, Shout! : Ten Girl Singers Who Shaped a Century*
A collective biography of ten outstanding female singers of popular music in the twentieth century.
- Wiesel, Elie, *Night*.
A true account of the author's experiences as a Jewish boy with his family in a Nazi concentration camp.