

# Summer Reading: Rising 12th Grade, 2023-2024

All rising seniors must read BOTH books! There will be a written response test within the first few days of the school year. The test will evaluate basic comprehension and understanding of key thematic ideas.

## ***Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro (2021)**

A luminous new novel from the Nobel Prize-winning author of *Never Let Me Go* and *The Remains of the Day*, *Klara and the Sun* explores the uncharted implications of AI to human relationships and the abiding question of what it means to love.

The novel tells the story of Klara, an Artificial Friend with outstanding observational qualities, who, from her place in the store, watches carefully the behavior of those who come in to browse, and of those who pass in the street outside. She remains hopeful a customer will soon choose her, but when the possibility emerges that her circumstances may change for ever, Klara is warned not to invest too much in the promises of humans.

"A masterpiece of great beauty, meticulous control and, as ever, clear, simple prose." - *Sunday Times*

"Another masterwork, a work that makes us feel afresh the beauty and fragility of our humanity" - *Observer*

"Intelligent, beautiful, mesmeric and a breeze to read - what more could you want?" - *Metro*

"A delicate, haunting story, steeped in sorrow and hope." - *The Washington Post*

### ISBN:

- 978-0593311295 (paperback)
- 978-0593318171 (hardcover)

## ***Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse (1922)**

Herman Hesse's classic novel has delighted, inspired, and influenced generations of readers, writers, and thinkers. In this story of a wealthy Indian Brahmin who casts off a life of privilege to seek spiritual fulfillment, Hesse synthesizes disparate philosophies — Eastern religions, Jungian archetypes, Western individualism — into a unique vision of life as expressed through one man's search for true meaning.

Written in a prose of almost biblical simplicity and beauty, it is the story of a soul's long quest in search of the ultimate answer to the enigma of man's role on this earth. As a youth, the young Indian Siddhartha meets the Buddha but cannot be content with a disciple's role: he must work out his own destiny and solve his own doubt.

"An evergreen favorite for generations of the young and the malcontent." - Somak Ghoshal

"A friend gave me *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse when we started traveling together. It makes a lot of sense to me. I think it's a really important book." - Harry Styles

Recommended edition: the classic translation by Hilda Rosner

<https://www.amazon.com/Siddhartha-Novel-Hermann-Hesse/dp/0553208845>

ISBN options for the Rosner translation:

- 978-0553208849
- 978-1567310078
- 978-0811200684

# Summer Reading: Rising 11th Grade, 2023-2024

Students are to read both books.

## ***Into the Wild* by John Krakauer**

"In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. How McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of *Into the Wild*."

## ***Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson**

"Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever."

"*Just Mercy* is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice."

# Summer Reading: Rising 10th Grade, 2023-2024

Students are to read both books.

## ***Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card**

"Card has taken the venerable science fiction concepts of a superman and interstellar war against aliens, and, with superb characterization, pacing and language, combined them into a seamless story of compelling power. This is Card at the height of his very considerable powers—a major science fiction novel by any reasonable standards." (Booklist)

"The author says that the origins of the novel are all about leadership. The novel asks: What does it take to successfully lead men into battle? ..... Despite Ender's age, this is not a children's novel. Its profound themes call for intelligent teens who appreciate a complex novel." (School Library Journal)

Awards: Nebula Award/Finalist, ALA Best Book for Young Adults, NY Public Library 100 Best Titles, ALA Recommended Reading - Outstanding Books for the College Bound.

## ***Ordinary Grace* by William Kent Krueger**

"A superb literary novel." — New York Journal of Books

"One cannot read *Ordinary Grace* without feeling as if it is destined to be hailed as a classic work of literature. *Ordinary Grace* is one of those very rare books in which one regrets reaching its end, knowing that the experience of having read it for the first time will never be repeated. Krueger, who is incapable of writing badly, arguably has given us his masterpiece." — BookReporter.com

"A novel that transforms narrator and reader alike." — Kirkus Reviews (starred)

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

WINNER OF THE 2014 EDGAR AWARD FOR BEST NOVEL

WINNER OF THE 2014 DILYS AWARD

A SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL BEST BOOK OF 2013

# Summer Reading: Rising 9th Grade, 2023-2024

Students are to read both books.

*Norse Mythology* by Neil Gaiman

ISBN-10 : 9780393356182

ISBN-13 : 978-0393356182

In his fiction, Gaiman (*American Gods*; *Sandman*) frequently explores the themes and tropes of mythology from around the world. Here, he operates within narrower confines, retelling the classic stories of Norse mythology but with no less humor, sense of adventure, and imagination than when he's playing in worlds of his own making. Here the adventures and misadventures of the Norse gods and goddesses function as short stories that, together, build an arc that leads the reader onward to Ragnarök, the twilight of the gods. Giants, ogres, dwarves, fantastical beasts, and the occasional human freely mingle with Thor, Odin, Loki, Freya, and other, less well-known gods and goddesses, all of whom are passionate, flawed, weird, and divinely entertaining.

*Murder on the Orient Express: A Hercule Poirot Mystery* by Agatha Christie

ISBN-10 : 0062073508

ISBN-13 : 978-0062073501

“The murderer is with us—on the train now . . .”

Just after midnight, the famous Orient Express is stopped in its tracks by a snowdrift. By morning, the millionaire Samuel Edward Ratchett lies dead in his compartment, stabbed a dozen times, his door locked from the inside. Without a shred of doubt, one of his fellow passengers is the murderer.

Isolated by the storm, detective Hercule Poirot must find the killer among a dozen of the dead man’s enemies, before the murderer decides to strike again.

# Summer Reading: Rising 8th Grade, 2023-2024

*The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman

ISBN-10 : 0060530944

ISBN-13 : 978-0060530945

Nobody Owens, known as Bod, is a normal boy. He would be completely normal if he didn't live in a graveyard, being raised by ghosts, with a guardian who belongs to neither the world of the living nor the dead. There are adventures in the graveyard for a boy—an ancient Indigo Man, a gateway to the abandoned city of ghouls, the strange and terrible Sleer. But if Bod leaves the graveyard, he will be in danger from the man Jack—who has already killed Bod's family.

# Summer Reading: Rising 7th Grade, 2023-2024

*Peak* by Roland Smith

ISBN-10 : 0152062688

ISBN-13 : 978-0152062682

Peak is a fourteen-year-old boy who finds himself in trouble after illegally climbing a skyscraper in New York. Peak's long-lost father comes to his rescue, but with strings attached. With selfish motives, he wants Peak to be the youngest person to reach the Everest summit. Will Peak risk everything to appease his father's demands, including his life? There are a lot of mountains left for Peak to climb, both metaphorically and literally.

# Summer Reading: Rising 6th Grade, 2023-2024

*Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen

ISBN-10 : 1416936475

ISBN-13 : 978-1416936473

Hatchet is the story of Brian Robeson, a thirteen-year-old boy from suburban New York City. His parents have recently split, and Brian is spending the summer with his father in northern Canada. When the pilot of the single-engine plane that flies Brian over the Canadian wilderness has a fatal heart attack, Brian manages to crash-land the plane in a small lake. Thrown into a wild and harsh environment, he must learn to survive by trial and error as he constructs a shelter, finds food, creates fire, skirmishes with wildlife and weather, and steadily develops confidence and resilience. Throughout his ordeal, Brian's only tool is the hatchet his mother gave him just before his ill-fated flight. It proves invaluable as Brian learns how best to use it.

*A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle

ISBN-10 : 0312367546

ISBN-13 : 978-0312367541

First published in 1962, Madeleine L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time* is one of the forerunners of the contemporary young adult science fantasy novel, paving the way for the Harry Potters and Katniss Everdeens of the literary world. It received numerous accolades, including a Newbery Medal and the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award, and was also a runner-up for the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award. In spite of the novel's eventual impact, L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time* was rejected by dozens of publishing houses at first. One theory is that publishers at the time were reluctant to put out a science fantasy novel featuring a young girl as its heroine.