

Summer Reading: Rising 12th Grade - 2021 (Updated 6/2021)

Students are to read both books.

***Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse**

“In the shade of a banyan tree, a grizzled ferryman sits listening to the river. Some say he's a sage. He was once a wandering samana and, briefly, like thousands of others, he followed Gautama the Buddha, enraptured by his sermons. But this man, Siddhartha, was not a follower of any but his own soul. Born the son of a Brahmin, Siddhartha was blessed in appearance, intelligence, and charisma. In order to find meaning in life, he discarded his promising future for the life of a wandering ascetic.” --Amazon Book Review

This text provides students with a baseline for developing a deeper understanding of content and structure in 12th grade English.

***Circe* by Madeline Miller**

“With lyric beauty of language and melancholy evocative of Keats’ “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, *Circe* asks all the big questions of existence while framing them in the life story of the famous goddess who had the magic of transformations. A veritable Who’s Who of the gods of Olympus and the heroes of ancient Greece, Circe knows them all and we see them through her perceptive eyes. This is as close as you will ever come to entering the world of mythology as a participant. Stunning, touching, and unique.” —Margaret George, author of *The Confessions of Young Nero*

This novel has been selected to assist in discussions of literary history, theory, adaptations, and understanding multiple viewpoints.

Summer Reading: Rising 11th Grade - 2021 (Updated 6/2021)

Students are to read both books.

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

"At 18, in a dream, he saw himself ... wandering through the romantic waste places of the world. No man with any of the juices of boyhood in him has forgotten those dreams." *Into the Wild* shows that McCandless, while extreme, was hardly unique; the author makes the hermit into one of us, something McCandless himself could never pull off. By book's end, McCandless isn't merely a newspaper clipping, but a sympathetic, oddly magnetic personality. Whether he was "a courageous idealist, or a reckless idiot," you won't soon forget Christopher McCandless. —Amazon.com Review

***Nisei Daughter* by Monica Itoi Sone**

"Sone reminds us that the anti-Japanese sentiment and threat of war [was] looming over them but it doesn't stop the family members from going forward with their lives – showing the kind of strength we all wish we had" —Samantha Pak, Northwest Asian Weekly

Summer Reading: Rising 10th Grade - 2021 (Updated 6/2021)

Students are to read both books.

***Animal Farm* by George Orwell**

“All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others. Immerse yourself in George Orwell’s story of absolute power and corruption and follow the ups and downs of Animalism.”

***A Separate Peace* by John Knowles**

“Set at a boys' boarding school in New England during the early years of WWII, *A Separate Peace* is a harrowing and luminous parable of the dark side of adolescence. What happens between two friends one summer, like the war itself, banishes the innocence of these boys and their world.”

Summer Reading: Rising 9th Grade - 2021 (Updated 6/2021)

Students are to read both books.

***War Child: A Child Soldier's Story* by Emmanuel Jal, Megan Lloyd Davies**

ISBN-10: 0312602979 **ISBN-13:** 978-0312602970

In the mid-1980s, Emmanuel Jal was a seven year old Sudanese boy, living in a small village with his parents, aunts, uncles, and siblings. But as Sudan's civil war moved closer—with the Islamic government seizing tribal lands for water, oil, and other resources—Jal's family moved again and again, seeking peace. Then, on one terrible day, Jal was separated from his mother, and later learned she had been killed; his father Simon rose to become a powerful commander in the Christian Sudanese Liberation Army, fighting for the freedom of Sudan. Soon, Jal was conscripted into that army, one of 10,000 child soldiers, and fought through two separate civil wars over nearly a decade. But, remarkably, Jal survived, and his life began to change when he was adopted by a British aid worker. He began the journey that would lead him to change his name and to music: recording and releasing his own album, which produced the number one hip-hop single in Kenya, and from there went on to perform with Moby, Bono, Peter Gabriel, and other international music stars.

Shocking, inspiring, and finally hopeful, *War Child* is a memoir by a unique young man, who is determined to tell his story and in so doing bring peace to his homeland.

***The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak**

ISBN-10: 0375842209 **ISBN-13:** 978-0375842207

Liesel Meminger is only nine years old when she is taken to live with the Hubermanns, a foster family, on Himmel Street in Molching, Germany, in the late 1930s. She arrives with few possessions, but among them is *The Grave Digger's Handbook*, a book that she stole from her brother's burial place. During the years that Liesel lives with the Hubermanns, Hitler becomes more powerful, life on Himmel Street becomes more fearful, and Liesel becomes a full-fledged book thief. She rescues books from Nazi book-burnings and steals from the library of the mayor. Liesel is illiterate when she steals her first book, but Hans Hubermann uses her prized books to teach her to read. This is a story of courage, friendship, love, survival, death, and grief. This is Liesel's life on Himmel Street, told from Death's point of view.

Summer Reading: Rising 8th Grade - 2021 (Updated 6/2021)

Students are to read both books.

- ***Peak* by Roland Smith**

“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.”

- ***The Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin**

“A bizarre chain of events begins when sixteen unlikely people gather for the reading of Samuel W. Westing’s will. And though no one knows why the eccentric, game-loving millionaire has chosen a virtual stranger—and a possible murderer—to inherit his vast fortune, on things for sure: Sam Westing may be dead...but that won’t stop him from playing one last game!”

Summer Reading: Rising 7th Grade - 2021 (Updated 6/2021)

Students are to read both books.

- ***Out Of My Mind* by Sharon M. Draper**

“Eleven-year-old Melody has a photographic memory. She's the smartest kid in her whole school - but no one knows it, because Melody can't talk. She can't walk. She can't write. Melody's story is one full of heartache and hope. Get ready to meet a girl whose voice you'll never, ever forget.”

- ***A Long Walk To Water* by Linda Sue Park**

“A Long Walk to Water tells the stories of two eleven-year-olds in Sudan, Nya, a girl in 2008, and Salva, a boy in 1985, in alternating sections. Salva Dut is chased from his village and family by militants at the age of 11. He becomes a “Lost Boy” of Sudan and completes many dangerous treks to refugee camps before being adopted into an American family. Salva’s narrative parallels that of Nya, an 11-year-old Nuer girl who walks eight hours a day to retrieve life-saving water for her family. Their stories eventually intersect, in both an astonishing and moving way.”

Summer Reading: Rising 6th Grade - 2021 (Updated 6/2021)

Students are to read both books.

***Refugee* by Alan Gratz**

“We encounter Jesus in those who are poor, rejected, or refugees. Do not let fear get in the way of welcoming our neighbour in need.” Pope Francis, June 20, 2018

"Gratz accomplishes a feat that is nothing short of brilliant, offering a skillfully wrought narrative laced with global and intergenerational reverberations that signal hope for the future. . . . Poignant, respectful, and historically accurate while pulsating with emotional turmoil, adventure, and suspense." *Kirkus Reviews*

***The Ruins of Gorlan (Ranger's Apprentice Book One)* by John Flanagan**

Starred Review, *Booklist*: “The last few years have seen the publication of many fantasies, but few have the appeal of this original story. Rather than creating a host of strange creatures and magical powers, Flanagan concentrates on character, offering readers a young protagonist they will care about and relationships that develop believably over time. Will's world is a colorful place, threatened by an evil warlord and his fierce minions, but it's the details of everyday living and the true-to-life emotions of the people that are memorable.”

Aurealis Award 2004

Children's Book Council of Australia Notable Book 2005

IRA/CBC Choice

YALSA Popular Paperbacks

YALSA Quick Picks for Reluctant YA