

SUMMER READING LIST FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 11

Students must select **one** title from this list, **and** must complete Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* before beginning of 2009-2010 school year.

Angelou / I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings: In this first of five volumes of autobiography, poet Maya Angelou recounts a youth filled with disappointment, frustration, tragedy, and finally hard-won independence. (Amazon Editorial Review)

Brown / Manchild in the Promised Land: This thinly fictionalized account of Claude Brown's childhood as a hardened, streetwise criminal trying to survive the toughest streets of Harlem has been heralded as the definitive account of everyday life for the first generation of African Americans raised in the Northern ghettos of the 1940s and 1950s. (Amazon Editorial Review)

Clark / The Ox-Bow Incident: Set in 1885, *The Ox-Bow Incident* is a searing and realistic portrait of frontier life and mob violence in the American West. First published in 1940, it focuses on the lynching of three innocent men and the tragedy that ensues when law and order are abandoned. (Amazon Editorial Review)

Dos Passos / The Big Money: World War One has ended, and Dos Passos's characters are facing life in post-war USA. They find that, overall, it's not really a land fit for heroes to live in: the capitalist system is still creating huge economic and social differences. The War has increased the power of large corporations and further eroded workers' rights. (Amazon Editorial Review)

Dreiser / American Tragedy: Published in 1925, this work is a complex and compassionate account of the life and death of a young antihero named Clyde Griffiths. The novel begins with Clyde's blighted background, recounts his path to success, and culminates in his apprehension, trial, and execution for murder. (The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature)

Hawthorne / House of the Seven Gables: Set in mid-19th-century Salem, Mass., the work is a somber study in hereditary sin based on the legend of a curse pronounced on Hawthorne's own family by a woman condemned to death during the infamous Salem witchcraft trials. (Amazon Editorial Review)

Heaney / Beowulf: Composed toward the end of the first millennium, *Beowulf* is the classic Northern epic of a hero's triumphs as a young warrior and his fated death as a defender of his people. The poem is about encountering the monstrous, defeating it, and then having to live on, physically and psychically exposed in the exhausted aftermath. (Amazon Editorial Review)

Hemingway / For Whom the Bell Tolls: The story of Robert Jordan, a young American in the International Brigades attached to an antifascist guerilla unit in the mountains of Spain, it tells of loyalty and courage, love and defeat, and the tragic death of an ideal. (Amazon Editorial Review)

Kincaid / Annie John: A haunting and provocative story of a young girl growing up on the island of Antigua. A classic coming-of-age story in the tradition of *The Catcher in the Rye* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* . . . (Amazon Editorial Review)

Lopez / Field Notes: Infused with magic and mystery, these 12 stories are frequently more lyric than narrative. The protagonists include anthropologists, botanists, and investment counselors, and settings range from Greenland to Australia, with intermediate stops in Manhattan and inside the Washington, D.C., beltway. (Library Journal)

Melville / Moby Dick: The title refers to the name given to an enormous whale who is being hunted by Captain Ahab, the ruthless, single-minded, driven master of a whaling ship. (Amazon Editorial Review)

O'Brien / *The Things They Carried*: A series of stories about the Vietnam experience, based on the author's recollections. O'Brien begins by sharing the talismans and treasures his select small band of young soldiers carry into battle. (School Library Journal)

Schwarz-Bart / *The Last of the Just*: Schwarz-Bart's 1959 novel is a chronicle of Jewish persecution beginning in England in 1105 and ending with the Holocaust. This book was a huge hit when first released, eventually being translated into several languages. (Library Journal)

Shields / *The Stone Diaries*: After a youth marked by sudden death and loss, Daisy escapes into conventionality as a middle-class wife and mother. Years later she becomes a successful garden columnist and experiences the kind of awakening that thousands of her contemporaries in mid-century yearned for but missed in alcoholism, marital infidelity and bridge clubs. (Amazon Editorial Review)

Sinclair / *The Jungle*: When it was first published in 1906, *The Jungle* exposed the inhumane conditions of Chicago's stockyards and the laborer's struggle against industry and 'wage slavery.' It was an immediate bestseller and led to new regulations that forever changed workers' rights and the meatpacking industry. (Amazon Editorial Review)

Stowe / *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: Harriet Beecher Stowe was appalled by slavery, and she took one of the few options open to nineteenth century women who wanted to affect public opinion: she wrote a novel, a huge, enthralling narrative that claimed the heart, soul, and politics of pre-Civil War Americans. (500 Great Books by Women)

Tan / *The Joy Luck Club*: Explores the tender and tenacious bond between four daughters and their mothers. The daughters know one side of their mothers, but they don't know about their earlier never-spoken of lives in China. (Washington Post Book World)

Vonnegut / *Slaughterhouse-Five*: One of the world's great anti-war books. Centering on the infamous fire-bombing of Dresden, Billy Pilgrim's odyssey through time reflects the mythic journey of our own fractured lives as we search for meaning in what we are afraid to know. (From the Inside Flap of the Book)

Wharton / *The Age of Innocence*: Wharton's story of the upper classes of Old New York, and Newland Archer's impossible love for the disgraced Countess Olenska, is a perfectly wrought book about an era when upper-class culture in this country was still a mixture of American and European extracts, and when 'society' had rules as rigid as any in history. (Amazon Editorial Review)