

2011 Summer Reading Lists

Summer assignments are posted separately on the PV website @ www.pvhs.k12.nj.us

Choose one of the following books to read over the summer and complete the summer assignment posted online. Libraries in Little Falls, Totowa and Woodland Park have copies of all books. Some books are also available online at www.books.google.com & Project Gutenberg @ www.gutenberg.org.

English I summer reading list

The Sledding Hill: Chris Crutcher

Eddie Proffit is the very definition of a sympathetic character, losing his Dad and best friend to violent accidents in the opening pages. His story is narrated by the dead friend, Billy, who, if not in Heaven, is in a very good place—free of pain and full of neat tricks to employ during his ghostly mission to help Eddie overcome sadness so deep he has stopped speaking.

Life As We Knew It: Susan Beth Pfeffer

It's almost the end of Miranda's sophomore year in high school, and her journal reflects the busy life of a typical teenager: conversations with friends, fights with mom, and fervent hopes for a driver's license. When Miranda first begins hearing the reports of a meteor on a collision course with the moon, it hardly seems worth a mention in her diary. But after the meteor hits, pushing the moon off its axis and causing worldwide earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanoes, all the things Miranda used to take for granted begin to disappear.

The Astonishing Adventures of Fanboy and Goth Girl: Barry Lyga

On good days, Fanboy is invisible to the students at his high school. On bad ones, he's a target for bullying and violence. His only real friend, Cal, is a jock who can't be seen with him in public. Their love of comics, though, keeps them close friends outside of school. When Goth Girl Kyra IMs him with photos of him being beaten up, he's skeptical. Why does she care what happens to him?

Anansi Boys: Neil Gaiman

Charles 'Fat Charlie' Nancy leads a normal, boring existence in London. However, when he calls the U.S. to invite his estranged father to his wedding, he learns that the man just died. After jetting off to Florida for the funeral, Charlie not only discovers a brother he didn't know he had, but also learns that his father was the West African trickster god, Anansi. Charlie's brother, who possesses his own magical powers, later visits him at home and spins Charlie's life out of control, getting him fired, sleeping with his fiancée, and even getting him arrested for a white-collar crime.

Good Omens: Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett

These two novelists join forces to create a story about the end of the world and a witch named Agnes Nutter who predicts it all. With lots of humor and satire, the story of good and evil will keep you entertained

The Rag and Bone Shop: Robert Cormier

This final novel is from the grand master of young-adult fiction who died in November 2000. In it he continues to explore the themes that are so characteristic of his work: guilt and forgiveness, misuse of authority, and the corruption of innocence. A 7-year-old girl has been battered to death, and there are no suspects, no leads. The police, under political pressure to make an arrest, bring in Trent, a cold, ambitious professional interrogator who prides himself on his ability to extract confessions.

English I Honors Things Fall Apart – Chinua Achebe

(Honors students have different summer assignment given by the English I Honors teacher)

English II summer reading list

Girl with a Pearl Earring: Tracy Chevalier

The novel tells the story of sixteen-year-old Griet whose life is transformed by her brief encounter with genius even as she herself is immortalized in canvas and oil. Chevalier brings the real artist Vermeer and a fictional muse to life in a jewel of a novel.

Pride and Prejudice: Jane Austen

Austen's own 'darling child'--tells the story of fiercely independent Elizabeth Bennet, one of five sisters who must marry rich, as she confounds the arrogant, wealthy Mr. Darcy. What follows is one of the most delightful and engrossingly readable courtships known to literature, written by a precocious Austen when she was just twenty-one years old.

Brisings: Chris Paolini

The much-anticipated third book in Paolini's "Inheritance Cycle" continues to rely heavily on classic fantasy. The novel launches with magician and Dragon Rider Eragon, his cousin Roran and the dragon Saphira on a quest to rescue Roran's betrothed. The cousins soon split up, and Roran undergoes his own series of heroic tests, culminating in a well-choreographed and intense fight. Eragon, at the same time, encounters treacherous dwarves, undergoes even more training with the elf Oromis and gains a magical sword suitable for a Dragon Rider.

Charms for the Easy Life: Kaye Gibbons

Three generations of Southern women live together during World War II. Unworthy men marry into this formidable tribe, but they cannot break the women's circle of strength and grace. Margaret, the narrator, gently and humorously charms readers with the adventures of her grandmother, Charlie Kate, a respectable yet unlicensed physician.

Thirteen Reasons Why: Jay Asher

When Clay Jensen plays the cassette tapes he received in a mysterious package, he's surprised to hear the voice of dead classmate Hannah Baker. He's one of 13 people who receive Hannah's story, which details the circumstances that led to her suicide. Clay spends the rest of the day

and long into the night listening to Hannah's voice and going to the locations she wants him to visit.

Freakonomics: Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner (non fiction)

Levitt chooses to draw connections between some cultural hot topics: Does increased police presence decrease crime? Do African American names affect opportunities in employment? Is Sumo wrestling, an "honor bound art form," as rigged as WWF? Do drug dealers beat minimum wage? And which is more dangerous: a swimming pool or a loaded gun? If you are curious about thinking and think that you are curious, this is the book for you.

Any book in Wheel of Time series: Robert Jordan

If you like the Tolkien trilogy or are a Harry Potter fan, then you'll love the worlds Jordan creates with fantastic creatures, adventures and fantasy. Try the Wheel of Time book series.

Silent Warrior or Marine Sniper: 93 Confirmed Kills by Charles Henderson (non fiction)

Both books give a rare inside look at US Marines and their most challenging missions narrated by Henderson. In a series of recollections from his time in active combat, Henderson speaks honestly about war and the choices soldiers sometimes have to make.

A Long Way Gone: Memoir of a Boy Soldier: Ishmael Beah (non fiction)

This absorbing true account is by a young man who, as a boy of 12, gets swept up in Sierra Leone's civil war. It reveals the life and mind of a child abducted into the horrors of warfare. Beah's harrowing journey transforms him overnight from a child enthralled by American hip-hop music and dance to an internal refugee without family, wandering from village to village. Beah then finds himself in the army—in a drug-filled life of casual mass slaughter that lasts until he is 15, when he's brought to a rehabilitation center in the US.

English II Honors

The Color of Water: James McBride

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time: Mark Haddon

The Scarlet Letter: Nathaniel Hawthorne

(Honors students have different summer assignments given by the English II Honors teacher)

English III summer reading list

Ender's Game: Orson Scott Card

In order to develop a secure defense against a hostile alien race's next attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. A brilliant young boy, Andrew "Ender" Wiggin lives with his kind but distant parents, his sadistic brother Peter, and the person he loves more than anyone else, his sister Valentine. Peter and Valentine were

candidates for the soldier-training program but didn't make the cut--young Ender is the Wiggin drafted to the orbiting Battle School for rigorous military training.

The Kite Runner: Khaled Hosseini

Set in Afghanistan, this is the unforgettable story of two motherless boys who grow up as friends in Kabul. *The Kite Runner* is a novel about friendship and betrayal and about the price of loyalty. The novel is also about the bonds between fathers and sons and the power of fathers over sons — their love, their sacrifices, and their lies

Second Glance: Jodi Picoult Picoult brings the past alive and peoples it with a cast of extraordinarily well-realized characters. *Second Glance* is an intricate and suspenseful ghost story that enchants and illuminates all the way to its powerful conclusion. Suspense and the supernatural are artfully interwoven in this 10th novel by Picoult in which a man desperately seeks to join his fiancée in death. Ever since his beloved Aimee was killed in a car accident, Ross Wakeman has deliberately put himself at risk, hoping to die. When nothing works, and a job with a paranormal investigator brings him no closer to Aimee, he moves in with his sister, Shelby, in Vermont.

Into the Wild: Jon Krakauer (non fiction)

After graduating from Emory University in Atlanta in 1992, top student and athlete Christopher McCandless abandoned his possessions, gave his entire \$24,000 savings account to charity and hitchhiked to Alaska, where he went to live in the wilderness. Four months later, he turned up dead. His diary, letters and two notes found at a remote campsite tell of his desperate effort to survive, apparently stranded by an injury and slowly starving.

The Book Thief: Markus Zusak Death himself narrates the World War II-era story of Liesel Meminger from the time she is taken, at age nine, to live in Molching, Germany, with a foster family in a working-class neighborhood of tough kids, acid-tongued mothers, and loving fathers who earn their living by the work of their hands. The child arrives having just stolen her first book—although she has not yet learned how to read—and her foster father uses it, *The Gravediggers Handbook*, to lull her to sleep when she's awakened by regular nightmares about her younger brother's death.

Bleachers: John Grisham The story centers on the impending death of the Messina Spartans' football coach Eddie Rake. One of the most victorious coaches in high school football history, Rake is a man both loved and feared by his players and by a town that relishes his 13 state titles. The hero of the novel is Neely Crenshaw, a former All-American whose NFL prospects ended abruptly after a cheap shot to the knees. Neely has returned home for the first time in years to join a nightly vigil for Rake at the Messina stadium. Having wandered through life with little focus since his college days, he struggles to reconcile his conflicted feelings towards his former coach, and he tries to rekindle love in the ex-girlfriend he abandoned long ago

Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers by Mary Roach (non fiction)

Those curious or brave enough to find out what really happens to a body that is donated to the scientific community can do so with this book. Dissection in medical anatomy classes is about the least bizarre of the purposes that science has devised. Mostly dealing with such contemporary uses such as stand-ins for crash-test dummies, Roach also pulls together considerable historical and background information

Eleven Seconds: A Story of Tragedy, Courage and Triumph by Travis Roy (non fiction)

Within the 11 seconds that inspired this memoir, Travis Roy realized his dream, then smashed into his nightmare. On an October night in 1995, Roy, a talented young hockey player, skated onto the ice for his varsity debut with Boston University. Eleven fateful seconds later, he was paralyzed from the neck down. Aided by the sure touch of *Sports Illustrated* hockey writer E.M. Swift, live Roy's moving account of his accident and his rehabilitation--confined to a wheelchair.

**English III Honors
The Glass Castle
To Kill a Mockingbird
The Glass Menagerie**

(Honors students have different summer assignment given by the English III Honors teacher)

English IV summer reading list

Speaker for the Dead (Ender Book 2) by Orson Scott Card

Card's novel *Ender's Game* introduced Ender Wiggin, a young genius who used his military prowess to all but exterminate the "buggers," the first alien race mankind had ever encountered. Wiggin then transformed himself into the "Speaker for the Dead," who claimed it had been a mistake to destroy the alien civilization. Many years later, when a new breed of intelligent life forms called the "piggies" is discovered, Wiggin takes the opportunity to atone for his earlier actions.

When I Was Puerto Rican – by Esmeralda Santiago

Esmeralda and her seven siblings live in a metal shack in Puerto Rico. She is uprooted as a result of poverty and her parents' quarreling and suffers blows to her ego from their expectations of her. The girl goes to New York, where her grandmother lives, and relies on her intelligence and talents to help her survive in an alien world in which being Puerto Rican is not an advantage.

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society: by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows

If you ever wanted to join a book group- this is the one for you. The letters in this funny novel begin in 1946, when single, 30-something author Juliet Ashton (nom de plume Izzy Bickerstaff) writes to her publisher to say she is tired of covering the sunny side of war and its aftermath. When Guernsey farmer Dawsey Adams finds Juliet's name in a used book and invites his neighbors to write to Juliet with their stories, the circle widens, putting Juliet back in the path of war as she travels to Guernsey to meet the Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society.

The Big Field or Summer Ball or Heat: by Mike Lupica

Try one of Mike Lupica's many novels for sports fans. His columns for the *New York Daily News* are syndicated nationally, and he is a regular on ESPN's *The Sports Reporters*.

Nineteen Minutes by Jodi Picoult

Picoult's 14th novel, *Nineteen Minutes*, deals with the truth and consequences of a small-town high-school shooting. Set in Sterling, New Hampshire, Picoult offers readers a glimpse of what would cause a 17-year-old to wake up one day, load his backpack with four guns, and kill nine students and one teacher in the span of nineteen minutes.

The Tenth Circle by Jodi Picoult

The Tenth Circle is a metaphorical journey through Dante's *Inferno*, told through the eyes of 14 year old Trixie Stone a girl from a small Maine family, whose hidden demons haunt every aspect of their seemingly peaceful existence. Woven throughout the novel are a series of dramatic illustrations that pay homage to the family's patriarch (comic book artist Daniel Stone), and add a unique twist to this gripping tale.

The Tipping Point by Malcolm Gladwell

Little changes can have big effects; when small numbers of people start behaving differently, that behavior can ripple outward until a critical mass or "tipping point" is reached, changing the world. Gladwell's thesis that ideas, products, messages and behaviors "spread just like viruses do" remains a metaphor as he follows the growth of "word-of-mouth epidemics" triggered with the help of three pivotal types. These are Connectors, sociable personalities who bring people together; Mavens, who like to pass along knowledge; and Salesmen, adept at persuading the unenlightened. (Paul Revere, for example, was a Maven and a Connector).

The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien

Every story in *The Things They Carried* speaks another truth that Tim O'Brien learned in Vietnam; it is this blurred line between truth and reality, fact and fiction that makes his book unforgettable.

Unaccustomed Earth by Jhumpa Lahiri

A collection of 8 tales that revolve around a family of Indian-born American-raised children and parents who struggle to find their place in two worlds. The stories include themes of exile, identity, disappointment and maturity

I Am the Messenger by Markus Zusak

Ed Kennedy is a 19-year-old loser only marginally connected to the world; he's the son that not even his mother loves. But his life begins to change after he acts heroically during a robbery. Perhaps it's the notoriety he receives that leads to his receiving playing cards in the mail and almost immediately his life begins to swerve off its beaten-down path.

AP English Honors
Life of Pi: Yann Martel
Brave New World: George Orwell
The Great Gatsby: F Scott Fitzgerald

(AP students have different summer assignment given by the AP teacher)