

Summer Reading 2026

Incoming 12th Grade Honors

Parents,

Our summer reading program opts to give students more choice in what they read, hoping that students can find books that are true page turners. Our goal has always been to keep students reading through the summer months, but getting students to put down the phone and pick up a book is even more challenging. In expanding our recommended list, we hope to ensure there is something for everyone, and that the summer read is a positive experience and a fun adventure. Our English Department invested time developing reading lists per grade level, to include a few classics, nonfiction, realistic and historical fiction, science fiction, fantasy, and dystopia.

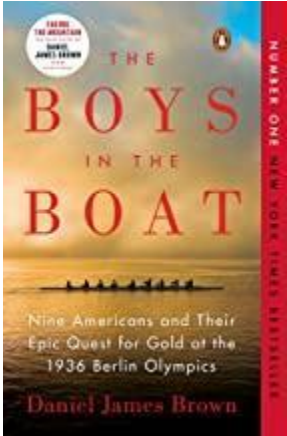
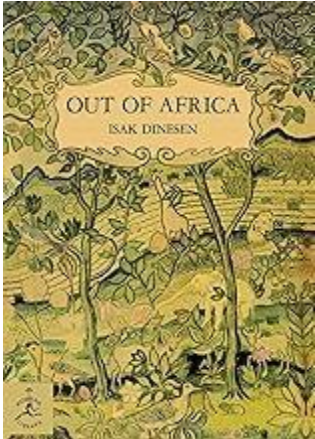
Take time with your student(s) to peruse the list, making sure their book choices meet with your parental approval. A synopsis is included with each title to assist with selection. If you are not sure where to look for more information regarding the content of the text for your child, you can consult [Common Sense Media \(www.commonsensemedia.org\)](http://www.commonsensemedia.org) or look at the publisher's recommendations.

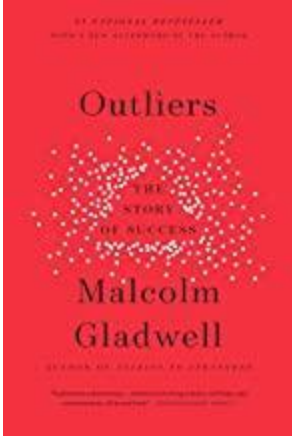
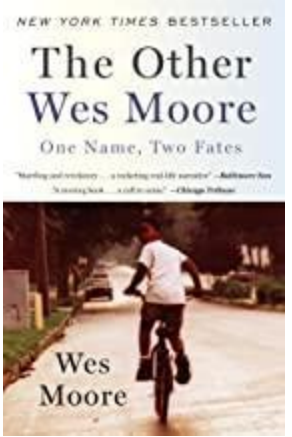
The assignment and rubric for the honors-level non-fiction text is located at the end of this document. Teachers will also ask students to respond to a written prompt referencing the title of their fiction text once they are back in the classroom in late August.

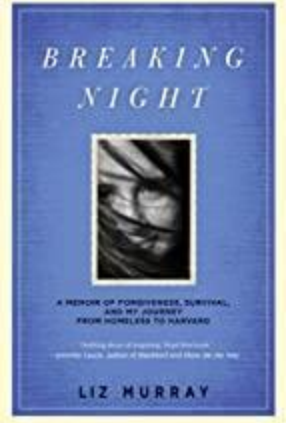
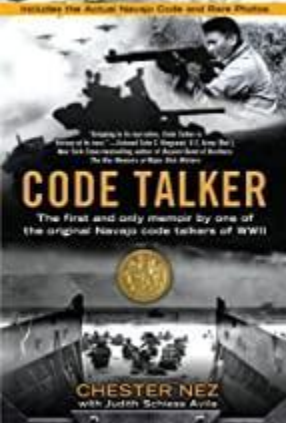
We wish your family a safe and fun-filled summer, and invite all of you to pick up one of the titles listed to enjoy on the beach, by the pool, on a long car ride, or in a shady chair in the backyard. Happy reading, everyone!

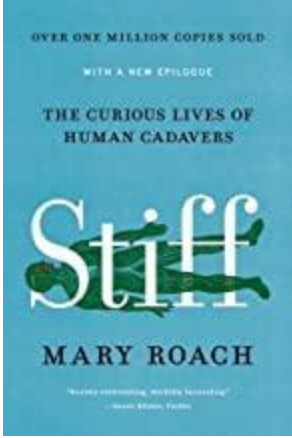
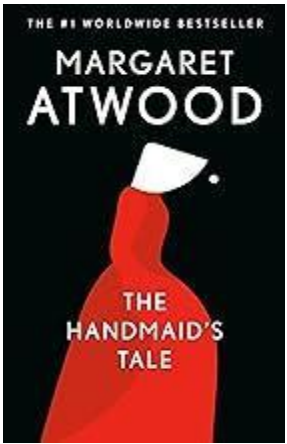
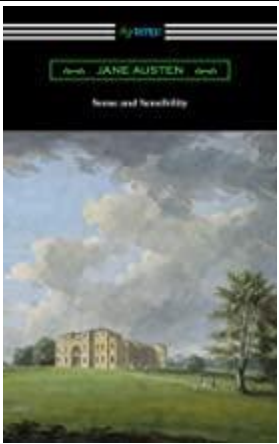
Mrs. Kathy Hand
Principal

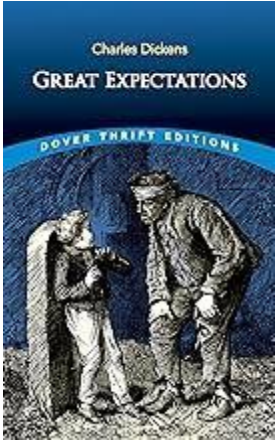
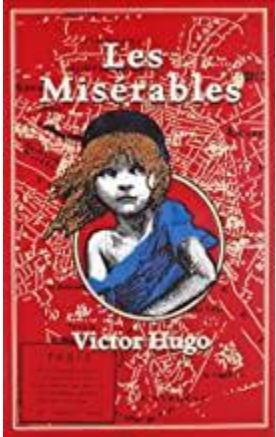
You should read two books during the summer. Choose one of the following nonfiction books AND one of the fiction books. (Note that if a text is NOT labeled nonfiction, it is considered a fiction text.) When you return to school in August, your chosen books will be the topics of your first writings.

Genre	Title/Author	Summary
<p>Nonfiction/ Memoir</p> <p><i>The Boys in the Boat</i></p> <p>Daniel James Brown</p>		<p>It was an unlikely quest from the start. With a team composed of the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington’s eight-oar crew team was never expected to defeat the elite teams of the East Coast and Great Britain, yet they did, going on to shock the world by defeating the German team rowing for Adolf Hitler. The emotional heart of the tale lies with Joe Rantz, a teenager without family or prospects, who rows not only to regain his shattered self-regard but also to find a real place for himself in the world. Drawing on the boys’ own journals and vivid memories of a once-in-a-lifetime shared dream, Brown has created an unforgettable portrait of an era, a celebration of a remarkable achievement, and a chronicle of one extraordinary young man’s personal quest.</p>
<p>Nonfiction/ Memoir</p> <p><i>Out of Africa</i></p> <p>Isaak Dinesen</p>		<p>In this book, the author of <i>Seven Gothic Tales</i> gives a true account of her life on her plantation in Kenya. She tells with classic simplicity of the ways of the country and the natives, of the beauty of the Ngong Hills and coffee trees in blossom, of her guests, from the Prince of Wales to Knudsen, the old charcoal burner, who visited her, of primitive festivals, of big game that were her near neighbors—lions, rhinos, elephants, zebras, buffaloes—and of Lulu, the little gazelle who came to live with her, unbelievably ladylike and beautiful.</p>

<p>Nonfiction/ Memoir</p> <p>Outliers</p> <p>Malcolm Gladwell</p>		<p>In this stunning book, Malcolm Gladwell takes us on an intellectual journey through the world of "outliers"—the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? His answer is that we pay too much attention to what successful people are like, and too little attention to where they are from: that is, their culture, their family, their generation, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing. Along the way he explains the secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, why Asians are good at math, and what made the Beatles the greatest rock band.</p>
<p>Nonfiction/ Memoir</p> <p>The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates</p> <p>Wes Moore</p>		<p>The chilling truth is that his story could have been mine. The tragedy is that my story could have been his. In December 2000, the <i>Baltimore Sun</i> ran a small piece about Wes Moore, a local student who had just received a Rhodes Scholarship. The same paper also ran a series of articles about four young men who had allegedly killed a police officer in a spectacularly botched armed robbery. The police were still hunting for two of the suspects who had gone on the lam, a pair of brothers. One was named Wes Moore. Wes just couldn't shake off the unsettling coincidence, or the inkling that the two shared much more than space in the same newspaper. After following the story of the robbery, the manhunt, and the trial to its conclusion, he wrote a letter to the other Wes, now a convicted murderer serving a life sentence without the possibility of parole. His letter tentatively asked the questions that had been haunting him: Who are you? How did this happen?</p>

<p>Nonfiction/ Memoir</p> <p><i>Breaking Night</i></p> <p>Liz Murray</p>		<p>Liz Murray was born to loving but drug-addicted parents in the Bronx. In school she was taunted for her dirty clothing and lice-infested hair, eventually skipping so many classes that she was put into a girls' home. At age fifteen, Liz found herself on the streets. She learned to scrape by, foraging for food and riding subways all night to have a warm place to sleep. When Liz's mother died of AIDS, she decided to take control of her own destiny and go back to high school, often completing her assignments in the hallways and subway stations where she slept. Liz squeezed four years of high school into two while homeless, won a <i>New York Times</i> scholarship, and made it into the Ivy League. <i>Breaking Night</i> is an unforgettable and beautifully written story of one young woman's indomitable spirit to survive and prevail against all odds.</p>
<p>Nonfiction/ Memoir</p> <p><i>Code Talker: The First and Only Memoir by One of the Original Navajo Code Talkers of WWII</i></p> <p>Chester Nez</p>		<p>His name wasn't Chester Nez. That was the English name he was assigned in kindergarten, and in boarding school at Fort Defiance, he was punished for speaking his native language as the teachers sought to rid him of his culture and traditions. Discrimination didn't stop Chester from answering the call to defend his country after Pearl Harbor, for the Navajo have always been warriors, and his upbringing on a New Mexico reservation gave him the strength—both physical and mental—to excel as a Marine. During World War II, the Japanese had managed to crack every code the United States used. But when the Marines turned to its Navajo recruits to develop and implement a secret military language, they created the only unbroken code in modern warfare—and helped assure victory for the United States over Japan in the South Pacific.</p>

<p>Nonfiction/ Memoir</p> <p><i>Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers</i></p> <p>Mary Roach</p>		<p>For two thousand years, cadavers – some willingly, some unwittingly – have been involved in science’s boldest strides and weirdest undertakings. They’ve tested France’s first guillotines, ridden the NASA Space Shuttle, been crucified in a Parisian laboratory to test the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin, and helped solve the mystery of TWA Flight 800. For every new surgical procedure, from heart transplants to gender confirmation surgery, cadavers have helped make history in their quiet way. “Delightful—though never disrespectful” (Les Simpson, <i>Time Out New York</i>), <i>Stiff</i> investigates the strange lives of our bodies postmortem and answers the question: What should we do after we die?</p>
<p>Classics</p> <p><i>The Handmaid’s Tale</i></p> <p>Margaret Atwood</p>		<p>In Margaret Atwood’s dystopian future, environmental disasters and declining birthrates have led to a Second American Civil War. The result is the rise of the Republic of Gilead, a totalitarian regime that enforces rigid social roles and enslaves the few remaining fertile women. Offred is one of these, a Handmaid bound to produce children for one of Gilead’s commanders. Deprived of her husband, her child, her freedom, and even her own name, Offred clings to her memories and her will to survive.</p>
<p>Classics</p> <p><i>Sense and Sensibility</i></p> <p>Jane Austen</p>		<p><i>Sense and Sensibility</i> is the classic coming of age story of two sisters, Elinor and Marianne Dashwood, who have contrasting temperaments. On the surface Elinor, the older sister represents sense, or reason, while Marianne represents sensibility, or emotion; however, upon closer examination we find that they both exhibit varying aspects of each characteristic. Set in southwest England, in the towns of London and Kent, the novel follows the lives of the two sisters as they struggle to find love, romance, and ultimately deal with the heartbreaks along the way. The novel</p>

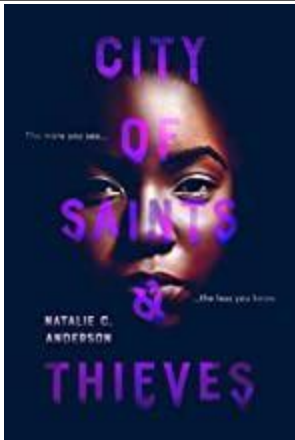
		<p>ponders the question of which is the best characteristic, sense or sensibility.</p>
<p>Classics</p> <p>Great Expectations</p> <p>Charles Dickens</p>		<p>In this unflaggingly suspenseful story of aspirations and moral redemption, humble, orphaned Pip, a ward of his short-tempered older sister and her husband, Joe, is apprenticed to the dirty work of the forge but dares to dream of becoming a gentleman. And, indeed, it seems as though that dream is destined to come to pass — because one day, under sudden and enigmatic circumstances, he finds himself in possession of "great expectations." In telling Pip's story, Dickens traces a boy's path from a hardscrabble rural life to the teeming streets of 19th-century London, unfolding a gripping tale of crime and guilt, revenge and reward, and love and loss. Its compelling characters include Magwitch, the fearful and fearsome convict; Estella, whose beauty is excelled only by her haughtiness; and the embittered Miss Havisham, an eccentric jilted bride.</p>
<p>Classics</p> <p>Les Miserables</p> <p>Victor Hugo</p>		<p><i>Les Misérables</i> is widely considered one of the greatest novels of the 19th century. First published in France in 1862, it is Victor Hugo's greatest achievement—the ultimate tale of redemption. Former prisoner Jean Valjean struggles to live virtuously after an unexpected act of forgiveness by a kindly bishop changes his life. His righteous actions change people's lives in surprising ways and culminate in romance between two young people.</p>

<p>Classics</p> <p><i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i></p> <p>Erich Maria Remarque</p>		<p>“I am young, I am twenty years old; yet I know nothing of life but despair, death, fear, and fatuous superficiality cast over an abyss of sorrow.” This is the testament of Paul Bäumer, who enlists with his classmates in the German army during World War I. They become soldiers with youthful enthusiasm. But the world of duty, culture, and progress they had been taught breaks in pieces under the first bombardment in the trenches. Through years of vivid horror, Paul holds fast to a single vow: to fight against the principle of hate that meaninglessly pits young men of the same generation but different uniforms against one another... if only he can come out of the war alive.</p>
<p>Classics</p> <p><i>Frankenstein</i></p> <p>Mary Shelley</p>		<p><i>Frankenstein</i> details the story of scientist Victor Frankenstein who succeeds in giving life to a being of his own creation. Rather than being the perfect specimen he imagined, the hideous creature is rejected by Victor together with the rest of mankind, driving the Monster to seeks revenge through murder and terror.</p>
<p>Modern Classic</p> <p><i>The Alchemist</i></p> <p>Paul Coehlo</p>		<p>This story, dazzling in its powerful simplicity and soul-stirring wisdom, is about an Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago who travels from his homeland in Spain to the Egyptian desert in search of a treasure buried near the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself a king, and an alchemist, all of whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest. No one knows what the treasure is, or if Santiago will be able to surmount the obstacles in his path. But what starts out as a journey to find worldly goods turns into a profound journey of spiritual self-discovery.</p>

**Realistic/
Historical
Fiction**

***The City of Saints
and Thieves***

**Natalie
Anderson**

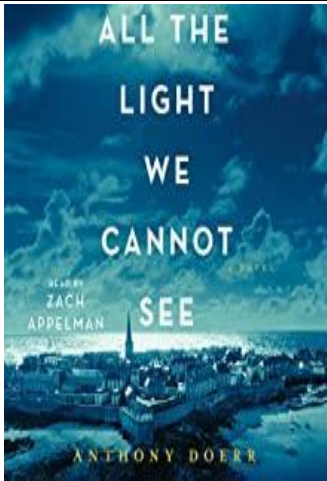


In the shadows of Sangui City, there lives a girl who doesn't exist. After fleeing the Congo as refugees, Tina and her mother arrived in Kenya looking for the chance to build a new life and home. Her mother quickly found work as a maid for a prominent family, headed by Roland Greyhill, one of the city's most respected business leaders. But Tina soon learns that the Greyhill fortune was made from a life of corruption and crime. So when her mother is found shot to death in Mr. Greyhill's personal study, she knows exactly who's behind it. With revenge always on her mind, Tina spends the next four years surviving on the streets alone, working as a master thief for the Goondas, Sangui City's local gang. It's a job for the Goondas that finally brings Tina back to the Greyhill estate, giving her the chance for vengeance she's been waiting for, but as soon as she steps inside the lavish home, she's overtaken by the pain of old wounds and the pull of past friendships, setting into motion a dangerous cascade of events that could, at any moment, cost Tina her life. Finally uncovering the incredible truth about who killed her mother—and why—keeps her holding on in this fast-paced nail-biting thriller.

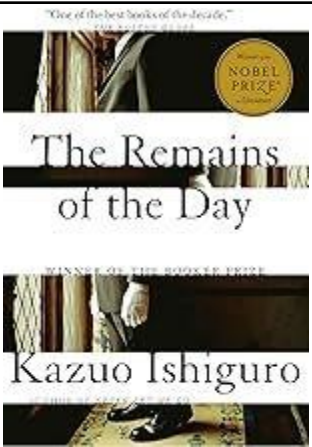
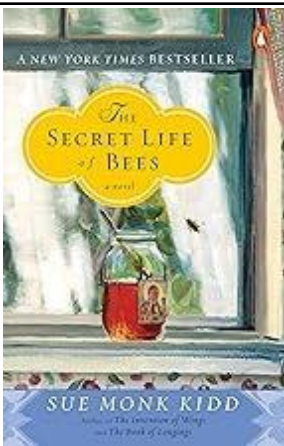
**Realistic/
Historical
Fiction**

***All the Light We
Cannot See***

Anthony Doerr



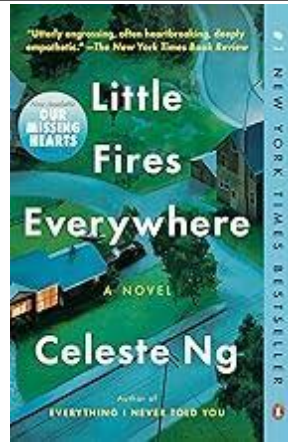
Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where he works as the master of its thousands of locks. When she is six, Marie-Laure goes blind and her father builds a perfect miniature of their neighborhood so she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home. When she is 12, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great-uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel.

		<p>In a mining town in Germany, the orphan Werner grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments, a talent that wins him a place at a brutal academy for Hitler Youth, then a special assignment to track the resistance. More and more aware of the human cost of his intelligence, Werner travels through the heart of the war and, finally, into Saint-Malo, where his story and Marie-Laure's converge.</p>
<p>Realistic/Historic Fiction</p> <p><i>The Remains of the Day</i></p> <p>Kazuo Ishiguro</p>		<p>This is Kazuo Ishiguro's profoundly compelling portrait of a butler named Stevens. Stevens, at the end of three decades of service at Darlington Hall, spending a day on a country drive, embarks as well on a journey through the past in an effort to reassure himself that he has served humanity by serving the "great gentleman," Lord Darlington. But lurking in his memory are doubts about the true nature of Lord Darlington's "greatness," and much graver doubts about the nature of his own life.</p>
<p>Realistic/Historic Fiction</p> <p><i>The Secret Life of Bees</i></p> <p>Sue Monk Kidd</p>		<p>Set in South Carolina in 1964, <i>The Secret Life of Bees</i> tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed. When Lily's fierce-hearted Black "stand-in mother," Rosaleen, insults three of the deepest racists in town, Lily decides to spring them both free. They escape to Tiburon, South Carolina—a town that holds the secret to her mother's past. Taken in by an eccentric trio of Black beekeeping sisters, Lily is introduced to their mesmerizing world of bees and honey, and the Black Madonna. This is a remarkable novel about divine female power, a story that women will share and pass on to their daughters for years to come.</p>

Realistic/Historic Fiction

Little Fires Everywhere

Celeste Ng

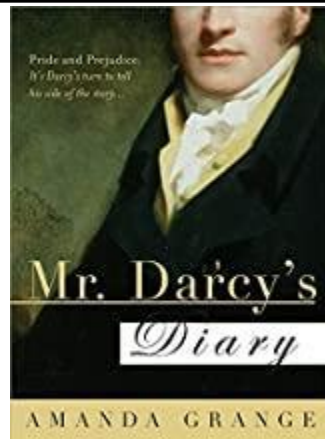


In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is planned—from the layout of the winding roads, to the colors of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules. Enter Mia Warren—an enigmatic artist and single mother—who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenaged daughter Pearl, and rents a house from the Richardsons. Soon Mia and Pearl become more than tenants: all four Richardson children are drawn to the mother-daughter pair. But Mia carries with her a mysterious past and a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community. When old family friends of the Richardsons attempt to adopt a Chinese-American baby, a custody battle erupts that dramatically divides the town—and puts Mia and Elena on opposing sides. Suspicious of Mia and her motives, Elena is determined to uncover the secrets in Mia’s past. But her obsession will come at unexpected and devastating costs.

Realistic/ Historical Fiction

Mr. Darcy's Diary

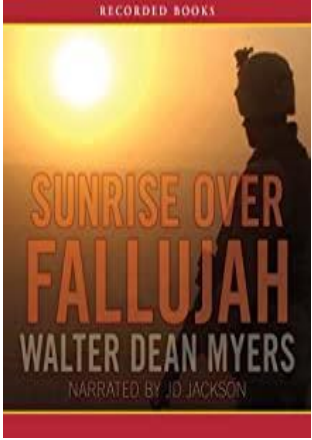
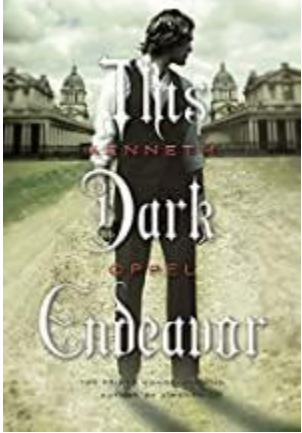
Amanda Grange



Torn between his sense of duty to his family name and his growing passion for Elizabeth Bennet, all he can do is struggle not to fall in love. *Mr. Darcy's Diary* presents the story of the unlikely courtship of Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy from Darcy's point of view. This graceful imagining and sequel to *Pride and Prejudice* explains Darcy's moodiness and the difficulties of his reluctant relationship as he struggles to avoid falling in love with Miss Bennet. Though seemingly stiff and stubborn at times, Darcy's words prove him also to be quite devoted and endearing—qualities that eventually win over Miss Bennet's heart. This continuation of a classic romantic novel is

		<p>charming and elegant, much like Darcy himself.</p>
<p>Realistic/ Historic Fiction</p> <p><i>The Pelican Brief</i></p> <p>John Grisham</p>		<p>In suburban Georgetown a killer's Reeboks whisper on the front floor of a posh home... In a seedy D.C. porno house, a patron is swiftly garroted to death... The next day America learns that two of its Supreme Court justices have been assassinated, and in New Orleans, a young law student prepares a legal brief...</p> <p>To Darby Shaw it was no more than a legal shot in the dark, a brilliant guess. To the Washington establishment it was political dynamite. Suddenly, Darby is witness to a murder—a murder intended for her. Going underground, she finds there is only one person she can trust—an ambitious reporter after a news-break hotter than Watergate—to help her piece together the deadly puzzle.</p> <p>Somewhere between the bayous of Louisiana and the White House's inner sanctums, a violent cover-up is being engineered. For someone has read Darby's brief. Someone who will stop at nothing to destroy the evidence of an unthinkable crime.</p>
<p>Realistic/ Historic Fiction</p> <p><i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time</i></p> <p>Mark Haddon</p>		<p>Fifteen-year-old Christopher Boone has Asperger's Syndrome, a condition similar to autism. He doesn't like to be touched or meet new people, he cannot make small talk, and he hates the colors brown and yellow. He is a math whiz with a very logical brain who loves solving puzzles that have definite answers.</p> <p>One night, he observes that the neighbor's dog has been killed, since it is not moving and has a large garden fork stuck in its body. Christopher knows this is wrong. He has never left his street on his own before, but now he'll have to in order to find out who killed the dog. What he discovers will shake the very foundation of his perfectly ordered life.</p>

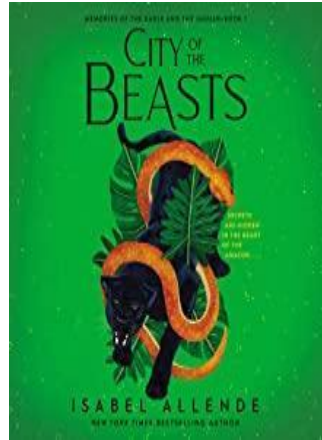
<p>Realistic/ Historic Fiction</p> <p><i>Brooklyn Bridge</i></p> <p>Karen Hesse</p>	 <p>A NOVEL BY NEWBERY MEDALIST KAREN HESSE BROOKLYN BRIDGE</p>	<p>On that day in 1903, 14-year-old Joseph Michtom's life changed irrevocably when his parents - Russian immigrants - created the first teddy bear. No longer did the Michtom's gather family and friends around the kitchen table to talk. No longer was Joseph at leisure to play stickball with the guys. No longer were Joseph and his book-loving sister free from watching their pesky two-year-old brother. Now—when it was summer vacation and more than anything Joseph wanted to experience the thrill, the grandeur, the electricity of Coney Island—Joseph worked, and complained, and fell in and out of love, and argued, and hoped that everything would go back to how it used to be. All the while no one let him forget that he was lucky. Because "There are other children. The unwanted, the forgotten, the lost ones. They gather under the bridge each night to sit, to talk, to sleep. They know, they know, they know that to everyone beyond the bridge they are invisible...." These are the children who live under the bridge. <i>The Brooklyn Bridge</i>.</p>
<p>Realistic/ Historic Fiction</p> <p><i>Behold the Dreamers</i></p> <p>Imbolo Mbue</p>	 <p><i>Behold the</i> DREAMERS A Novel IMBOLO MBUE READ BY PHOENIX HUSTON • AN UNABRIDGED PRODUCTION</p>	<p>Jende Jonga, a Cameroonian immigrant living in Harlem, has come to the United States to provide a better life for himself; his wife, Neni; and their six-year-old son. In the fall of 2007, Jende can hardly believe his luck when he lands a job as a chauffeur for Clark Edwards, a senior executive at Lehman Brothers. Clark demands punctuality, discretion, and loyalty—and Jende is eager to please. Clark's wife, Cindy, even offers Neni temporary work at the Edwardses' summer home in the Hamptons. With these opportunities, Jende and Neni can at last gain a foothold in America and imagine a brighter future; however, the world of great power and privilege conceals troubling secrets, and soon Jende and Neni notice cracks in their employers' façades. When the financial world is rocked by the collapse of</p>

		<p>Lehman Brothers, the Jongas are desperate to keep Jende's job—even as their marriage threatens to fall apart. As all four lives are dramatically upended, Jende and Neni are forced to make an impossible choice.</p>
<p>Realistic/ Historic Fiction</p> <p><i>Sunrise Over Fallujah</i></p> <p>Walter Dean Myers</p>		<p>Acclaimed author Walter Dean Myers presents a compelling novel that looks at America's occupation of Iraq through the eyes of those who live it first-hand. Charged with building up relations between the U.S. military and the Iraqi people, a team of soldiers strives to make real connections and bridge the divide between two very different cultures. On constant guard from frequent suicide bomb attacks and deadly skirmishes, their situation reveals a tragic human toll.</p>
<p>Realistic/ Historic Fiction</p> <p><i>This Dark Endeavor: The Apprenticeship of Victor Frankenstein</i></p> <p>Kenneth Oppel</p>		<p>Victor Frankenstein leads a charmed life. He and his twin brother, Konrad, and their beautiful cousin Elizabeth take lessons at home and spend their spare time fencing and horseback riding. Along with their friend Henry, they have explored all the hidden passageways and secret rooms of the palatial Frankenstein chateau. Except one. The Dark Library contains ancient tomes written in strange languages, and filled with forbidden knowledge. Their father makes them promise never to visit the library again, but when Konrad becomes deathly ill, Victor knows he must find the book that contains the recipe for the legendary Elixir of Life. The elixir needs only three ingredients. But impossible odds, dangerous alchemy and a bitter love triangle threaten their quest at every turn. Victor knows he must not fail. But his success depends on how far he is willing to push the boundaries of nature, science and love—and how much he is willing to sacrifice.</p>

Science Fiction/
Fantasy/
Dystopia

City of the Beasts

Isabel Allende

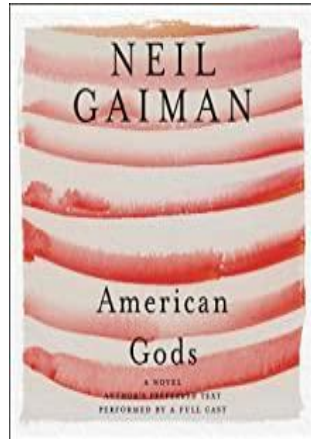


Fifteen-year-old Alexander Cold has the chance to take the trip of a lifetime. Parting from his family and ill mother, Alexander joins his fearless grandmother, a magazine reporter for *International Geographic*, on an expedition to the dangerous, remote world of the Amazon. Their mission, along with the others on their team—including a celebrated anthropologist, a local guide and his young daughter Nadia, and a doctor—is to document the legendary Yeti of the Amazon known as the Beast. Under the dense canopy of the jungle, Alexander is amazed to discover much more than he could have imagined about the hidden worlds of the rain forest. Drawing on the strength of the jaguar, the totemic animal Alexander finds within himself, and the eagle, Nadia's spirit guide, both young people are led by the invisible People of the Mist on a thrilling and unforgettable journey to the ultimate discovery.


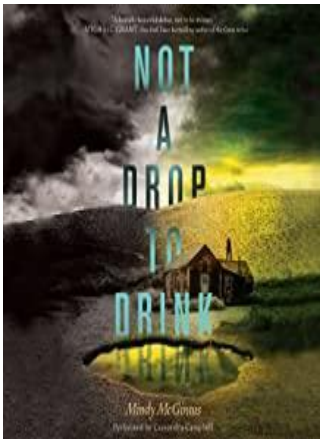
Science Fiction/
Fantasy/
Dystopia

American Gods

Neil Gaiman



Locked behind bars for three years, Shadow did his time, quietly waiting for the day when he could return to Eagle Point, Indiana. A man no longer scared of what tomorrow might bring, all he wanted was to be with Laura, the wife he deeply loved, and start a new life. But just days before his release, Laura and Shadow's best friend are killed in an accident. With his life in pieces and nothing to keep him tethered, Shadow accepts a job from a beguiling stranger he meets on the way home, an enigmatic man who calls himself Mr. Wednesday. A trickster and a rogue, Wednesday seems to know more about Shadow than Shadow does himself. Life as Wednesday's bodyguard, driver, and errand boy is far more interesting and dangerous than Shadow ever imagined. Soon Shadow learns that the past never dies...and that beneath the placid surface of everyday life a storm is brewing—an epic

		<p>war for the very soul of America—and that he is standing squarely in its path.</p>
<p>Science Fiction/ Fantasy/ Dystopia</p> <p><i>Dune</i></p> <p>Frank Herbert</p>	 <p>The poster for the movie 'Dune: Part One' features a central figure, Paul Atreides, looking forward. He is surrounded by other characters in a desert setting. The title 'DUNE' is written in large, stylized letters across the middle, with 'FRANK HERBERT' below it. At the bottom, it lists the cast: 'READ BY SIMON VANCE WITH SCOTT BRICK, OLEKAH CASSIDY, LIVANA KAZDGHIN, EGAN MORTON, SCOTT POWERS, OLIVER WYMAN, AND MORE'. A yellow circle in the top left corner says 'NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE'.</p>	<p>Set on the desert planet Arrakis, <i>Dune</i> is the story of the boy Paul Atreides, who would become the mysterious man known as Maud'dib. He would avenge the traitorous plot against his noble family—and would bring to fruition humankind's most ancient and unattainable dream.</p>
<p>Science Fiction/ Fantasy/ Dystopia</p> <p><i>Not a Drop to Drink</i></p> <p>Mindy McGinnis</p>	 <p>The book cover for 'Not a Drop to Drink' shows a dark, stormy sky over a landscape with a small wooden house and a pond. The title 'NOT A DROP TO DRINK' is written in large, blue, block letters. The author's name 'Mindy McGinnis' is at the bottom. A quote from NPR's 'Q&A' is visible at the top: 'A beautiful, heart-breaking story of survival'.</p>	<p>Regret was for people with nothing to defend, people who had no water. Lynn knows every threat to her pond: drought, a snowless winter, coyotes, and, most important, people looking for a drink. She makes sure anyone who comes near the pond leaves thirsty or doesn't leave at all. Confident in her own abilities, Lynn has no use for the world beyond the nearby fields and forest. Having a life means dedicating it to survival and the constant work of gathering wood and water, and having a pond requires the fortitude to protect it, something Mother taught her well during their quiet hours on the rooftop, rifles in hand, but wisps of smoke on the horizon mean one thing: strangers. The mysterious footprints by the pond, the nighttime threats, and the gunshots make it all too clear that Lynn has exactly what they want, and they won't stop until they get it.</p>

Honors Level Non-Fiction Assignment

Your assignment for your non-fiction text is to create a museum piece, an artifact, that speaks for itself to express a complex idea put forth by your text. Maybe it represents a thematic idea, a claim your author is putting forth, an event described by your author, or a character presented.

The choice of idea to represent is yours. The choice of medium is yours.

It should be accompanied by a reflective piece that deconstructs the artifact/museum piece you created, describing its complex ideas and the intersection of your object/creation and that which you are trying to convey to your audience. It should reference the text itself, whether directly quoted or paraphrased, and appropriately cited in text as well as in a Works Cited at the end of the reflection.

Please keep in mind that this does not require an expensive trip to Michael's or Hobby Lobby. Household supplies (toilet paper and paper towel rolls, dried beans, pasta, rice, sprinkles, candy), old toys (Legos, blocks, etc.), and items from nature are all acceptable building materials. Of course, you can always create the old standby—a collage—but it is preferred for you to get outside of your comfort zone to think in metaphorical ways.

Because this is something that may challenge your comfort in being successful, please feel free to reach out to your teacher, Ms. Baker, this summer to check in (bbaker@yorkcatholic.org). Also, keep in mind the following:

1. You must have an artifact that can stand on its own or be hung without falling apart.
2. It must be transportable to school and left behind in your English teacher's classroom.
3. It must be a new creation, not simply an object you locate and then name a symbol of something from your text.
4. It should not be comprised of overwhelming amounts of written word, as the goal is to use a different mode of expression to represent your ideas.
5. It must be accompanied by a paragraph explaining the connection of the artifact to the text. Ensure you are using an MLA heading at the top of the page:
Your name
Your teacher's name
Your class name
The due date (28 August 2026)

Museum Artifact for Non-Fiction Text Rubric

Criteria	5 — Exemplary	4 — Strong	3 — Proficient	2 — Developing	1 — Beginning
Concept & Effort	Artifact shows a highly original, thoughtful idea that clearly represents a complex idea from the text. Work shows sustained effort, careful planning, and strong attention to detail.	Artifact shows a clear, thoughtful idea from the text. Work shows strong effort, with only minor gaps in detail.	Artifact represents a relevant idea from the text with a clear purpose. Work shows steady effort and is completed with adequate care.	Artifact shows a basic idea from the text, but the connection may be simple, unclear, or only partly developed. Effort is uneven or rushed in places.	Artifact shows little evidence of thought about the text. Effort is minimal, and the piece appears unfinished or poorly planned.
Creative Risk Taking	Uses an imaginative medium or approach that goes beyond the obvious and takes meaningful creative risks to communicate the idea. Choice of materials or form strengthens the message in a memorable way.	Uses an original approach that shows clear creativity and some risk taking. The medium supports the message well.	Uses a thoughtful creative approach, though it may rely on familiar ideas or common materials. The medium communicates the message clearly.	Uses limited creativity or falls back on a very basic approach. The medium only partly supports the message or feels predictable.	Shows little creativity or willingness to try a new approach. The artifact relies on a simple, obvious, or copied idea.
Artifact Construction & Presentation	Artifact is sturdy, transportable, and neatly constructed. It stands on its own or hangs safely, and the finished piece is polished and ready for display.	Artifact is sturdy and transportable, with only small construction flaws. It is presented neatly and works as intended.	Artifact is complete and transportable, though it may have some weak spots or uneven finishing. It generally functions as required.	Artifact has noticeable construction issues or presentation problems. It may be unstable, messy, or only partly functional.	Artifact is incomplete, unstable, or difficult to transport. It does not meet basic presentation needs.
Reflection & Text Evidence	Reflection thoroughly explains the artifact's meaning, the complex idea it represents, and the connection between form and message. Uses well-chosen direct quotes or paraphrased evidence with correct in-text citation and a complete Works Cited.	Reflection clearly explains the artifact and its connection to the text. Uses relevant text evidence with mostly correct citation and a Works Cited that is nearly complete.	Reflection explains the artifact and includes a basic connection to the text. Uses at least one piece of text evidence with some citation support and a Works Cited that is mostly correct.	Reflection gives limited explanation of the artifact or text connection. Text evidence is weak, incomplete, or poorly cited, and the Works Cited may have major errors.	Reflection is missing, very brief, or does not explain the artifact. Little or no text evidence is used, and citation/Works Cited requirements are not met.
Guidelines Followed	Fully follows all assignment guidelines: new creation, transportable, stable, limited written text, and appropriate use of materials. Every requirement is met with care.	Follows nearly all guidelines with only a minor issue that does not interfere with the project's purpose. Requirements are clearly addressed.	Follows the main guidelines, though one requirement may be only partly met. The project still fits the assignment overall.	Follows some guidelines, but several requirements are missed or only weakly addressed. The artifact may not fully match the assignment.	Does not follow key assignment guidelines. The project misses multiple required features or does not fit the task.