

Adams, Douglas. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (Random House Publishing Group, 1997). This is the story of Arthur Dent, an average British citizen, who gets caught up in a myriad of space adventures when his house, and then Earth is demolished. 🍏

Brunt, Carol Rifka. *Tell the Wolves I'm Home* (Limerence Press, 2018). It is 1987, and only one person has ever truly understood fourteen-year-old June Elbus -- her uncle, the renowned painter Finn Weiss. Shy at school and distant from her older sister, June can only be herself in Finn's company; he is her godfather, confidant, and best friend. So when he dies, far too young, of a mysterious illness her mother can barely speak about, June's world is turned upside down. But Finn's death brings a surprise acquaintance into June's life -- someone who will help her to heal, and to question what she thinks she knows about Finn, her family, and even her own heart.. 🍏🍏

Martel, Yann. *Life of Pi* (Knopf Canada, 2001). After deciding to sell their zoo in India and move to Canada, Santosh and Gita Patel board a freighter with their sons and a few remaining animals. Tragedy strikes when a terrible storm sinks the ship, leaving the Patel's' teenage son, Pi (Suraj Sharma), as the only human survivor. However, Pi is not alone; a fearsome Bengal tiger has also found refuge aboard the lifeboat. As days turn into weeks and weeks drag into months, Pi and the tiger must learn to trust each other if both are to survive 🍏🍏

Bui, The. *The Best We Could Do* (Abrams ComicArts, 2017). The author describes her experiences as a young Vietnamese Immigrant, highlighting her family's move from their war-torn home to the United States in graphic novel format. 4 starred reviews, YALSAs Great Graphic Novels for Teens list. 🍏🍏

Thomas, Angie. *The Hate U Give* (Harper Collins, 2017). Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is soon shattered. Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil, who was unarmed and shot by a police officer. 🍏🍏🍏

Asante, MK. *Buck: A Memoir* (Random House Inc., 2013). A coming-of-age story about navigating the wilds of urban America and the shrapnel of a self-destructing family. MK's memoir is an unforgettable tale of how one precocious, confused kid educated himself through gangs, rap, mystic cults, ghetto philosophy, and, eventually, books. 🍏🍏🍏

Roach, Mary. *Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers* (New York; W.W. Norton, 2003). Mary Roach focuses on the age-old question, "What happens to us after we die?" In *Stiff*, she explores the "lives" of human cadavers from the time of the ancient Egyptians to current campaigns for human composting. 🍏

Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451* (Ballantine Books, 1953). Guy Montag is a fireman. In his world, where television rules and literature is on the brink of extinction, firemen start fires rather than put them out. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden. 🍏🍏

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved* (Knopf, 1987). Sethe was born a slave and escaped to Ohio, but eighteen years later she is still not free. She has too many memories of Sweet Home, where so many hideous things happened. And Sethe's new home is haunted by the ghost of her baby, who is engraved with a single word: Beloved. 🍏🍏🍏

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me* (Spiegel & Grau, 2015). For Ta-Nehisi Coates, history has always been personal. At every stage of his life, he's sought in his explorations of history answers to the mysteries that surrounded him -- most urgently, why he, and other black people he knew, seemed to live in fear. What were they afraid of? In *Between the World and Me*, Coates takes readers along on his journey through America's history of race and its contemporary resonances through a series of awakenings -- moments when he discovered some new truth about our long, tangled history of race, 🍏🍏

Ireland, Justina. *Dread Nation* (Balzer and Bray, 2018). When families go missing in Baltimore County, Jane McKeene, who is studying to become an Attendant, finds himself in the middle of a conspiracy that has her fighting for her life against powerful enemies. 6 starred reviews. 🍏🍏

Harewood, Fiona. *I Did it... You Can, Too!* *I Did It ... You Can, Too!* is both an inspirational and motivational book that explores what happens for anyone who has ended their academic education too soon - whether they've considered going back to school or not. 🍏



Grades 11-12



## Summer Reading

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Some books may contain graphic content in the form of themes, language, violence, and/or explicit sexual content:

- 🍏 Mild
- 🍏🍏 Moderate
- 🍏🍏🍏 High

O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1990). A groundbreaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling, depicting the men of Alpha Company and the character Tim O'Brien who has survived his tour of Vietnam. 🍏🍏

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man* (Ishi Press, 2015). The nameless narrator of the novel describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood", and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be. 🍏

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple* (Harcourt Brace, 1982). Celie is a poor black woman whose letters tell the story of 20 years of her life, beginning at age 14, when she is being abused and raped by her father and attempting to protect her sister from the same fate, and continuing over the course of her marriage to "Mister," a brutal man who terrorizes her. Celie eventually learns that her abusive husband has been keeping her sister's letters from her and the rage she feels, combined with an example of love and independence provided by her close friend Shug, pushes her finally toward an awakening of her creative and loving self. 🍏🍏🍏

Camus, Albert. *The Stranger* (Vintage International, 1989). Through the story of an ordinary man unwittingly drawn into a senseless murder on an Algerian beach, Camus explores what he termed "the nakedness of man faced with the absurd". 🍏🍏

Gladwell, Malcolm. *Outliers: The Story of Success* (Little, Brown, and Co. 2008). Bill Gates, the Beatles and Mozart have in common an unusual opportunity to intensively cultivate a skill that allowed them to rise above their peers. Gladwell tears down the myth of individual merit to explore how culture, circumstance, timing, birth and luck account for success. 🌟

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart* (Anchor Books, 1994). Intertwining stories, both of which center around Okonkwo, a "strong man" of an Ibo village in Nigeria. The first of these stories traces Okonkwo's fall from grace with the tribal world in which he lives. The second story concerns the clash of cultures and the destruction of Okonkwo's world through the arrival of aggressive, proselytizing European missionaries. This book is the most illuminating and permanent monument we have to the modern African experience as seen from within. 🌟

Sedaris, David. *Me Talk Pretty One Day* (Little, Brown and Company, 2001). David Sedaris' move to Paris from New York inspired these hilarious pieces, including the title essay, about his attempts to learn French from a sadistic teacher who declares that "every day spent with you is like having a caesarean section". No one hones a finer fury in response to such modern annoyances as restaurant meals presented in ludicrous towers of food and cashiers with six-inch fingernails. 🌟

Callahan, David. *The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead* (Mariner Books, 2004). Do you take your chance to cheat? David Callahan thinks many of us would; witnesses corporate scandals, doping athletes, and plagiarizing journalists. Callahan's "Winning Class" has created a separate moral reality where it cheats without consequences-while the "Anxious Class" believes choosing not to cheat could cancel its only shot at success in a winner-take-all world. 🌟

Myers, Walter Dean. *Sunrise Over Fallujah* (Scholastic Press, 2006). Instead of heading to college as his father wishes, Robin leaves Harlem and joins the army to stand up for his country after 9/11. While stationed in Iraq with a war looming that he hopes will be averted, he begins writing letters home to his parents and to his Uncle Richie. Robin finds himself in a diverse Civil Affairs unit of both men and women, with a mission to serve as a buffer between winning over the Iraqi people and concurrent military operations. 🌟

Jemisin, N.K. *How Long Till Black Future Month* (Orbit, 2018). In these stories, Jemisin sharply examines modern society, infusing magic into the mundane, and drawing parallels in the fantasy realms of her imagination. Dragons and hateful spirits haunt the flooded streets of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In a parallel universe, a utopian society watches our world, trying to learn from our mistakes. A black mother in the Jim Crow South must save her daughter from a Fey offering impossible promises. And in the Hugo award-nominated short story "The City Born Great," a young street kid fights to give birth to an old metropolis's soul. 3 starred reviews, YALSA ALEX award. 🌟

Joukhadar, Jennifer Zeynab. *The Map of Salt and Stars* (Touchstone, 2018). The story of two girls living eight hundred years apart—a modern-day Syrian refugee seeking safety and a medieval adventurer apprenticed to a legendary mapmaker. 2019 Alex Awards Nominee; author is a member of the Radius of Arab American Writers, a 2017-2020 Montalvo Arts Center Lucas Artists Program Literary Arts Fellow, and a 2019 Artist in Residence at the Arab American National Museum. 🌟

Ribay, Randy. *After the Shot Drops* (Houghton Mifflin, 2018). Told from alternating perspectives, Bunny takes a basketball scholarship to an elite private school to help his family, leaving behind Nasir, his best friend, in their tough Philadelphia neighborhood. 🌟

Perez, Ashley Hope. *Out of Darkness* (Carthoda Lab, 2015). Loosely based on a school explosion that took place in New London, Texas in 1987, this is the story of two teenagers: Naomi, who is Mexican, and Wash, who is black, and their dealings with race, segregation, love, and the forces that destroy people. 2 starred reviews, Printz Honor Book. 🌟

## Let's Read!

Summer reading is necessary for students to continue using good literacy practice beyond school. It's also a great way to spend time together! Many of the titles on the list are available to borrow for free at the Free Library of Philadelphia. Check the website at [www.freeibrary.org](http://www.freeibrary.org) for locations, book title availability, and other great summer programs for students.

Dyer, Lucinda. *Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007). Ishmael Beah is 12 and living with his mother and brothers in a rural town in Sierra Leone. He loves dancing, rap music, and Shakespeare and can recite monologues from Julius Caesar and Macbeth. The civil war that's gripping Sierra Leone still seems a long way off. But while he and his brothers are away, rebels attack the town, his family disappears, and the boys are left to fend for themselves. 🌟



Tsukiyama, Gail. *The Samurai's Garden* (St. Martin's Press, 1994). On the eve of WWII, a young Chinese man is sent to his family's summer home in Japan to recover from TB. Once there, he is cared for by Matsuo, a reticent housekeeper and master gardener. Over the course a remarkable year, Stephen learns Matsuo's secret and gains not only physical strength, but also profound spiritual insight. Matsuo is a samurai of the soul, a man devoted to doing good and finding beauty in a cruel and arbitrary world, and Stephen is a student learning to appreciate Matsuo's generous and nurturing way of life and to love Matsuo's soul mate, gentle Sachii, a woman afflicted with leprosy. 🌟

Burcaw, Shane. *Laughing at My Nightmare* (Roaring Book, 2014). Refusing to let his spinal muscular atrophy dampen his spirits, 21-year-old Shane Burcaw uses humor to show readers how he handles handshakes, girlfriend issues, and other everyday events with a smile and a sense of humor despite his potentially fatal disease. 🌟

Jackson, Tiffany D. *Monday's Not Coming* (Harper Collins, 2018). Monday Charles is missing, and Claudia seems to be the one person who notices. They've always been inseparable, and when Monday doesn't show up for school for two weeks, Claudia knows that something is wrong. Monday's mother refuses to give Claudia a straight answer, and her sister April is even less help. How can a teenage girl just vanish without anyone noticing that she's gone? 3 starred reviews, WNDB Walter Award Honor book, Coretta Scott King - John Steptoe Award for New Talent. 🌟