

Incoming 9th Grade Summer Reading List
GENERAL PREPARATORY AND COLLEGE PREPARATORY ENGLISH
Emmaus High School 2008-2009

All ninth grade college preparatory and general preparatory students must read **two** books from the list, one fiction, one non-fiction. The list is divided into two themes—both books should come from the same theme group.

Dear Students:

The books you choose to read over the summer will serve as the basis for an in-class, one-hundred-point, five-paragraph essay. The mode of writing will be persuasive, and you will be asked to evaluate your books based on their quality. Please consider setting, plot, character development, and theme in fictional works and memoirs, and timeliness, uniqueness, accessibility, and depth of information in non-fiction works. Students must illustrate an understanding of the structure of an essay by developing an introduction, central idea, three body paragraphs with supporting details, and a conclusion. To aid you in completing your essay, you may use any **original, handwritten** notes you collect over the summer. We look forward to reading your responses to the books in September.

Please Note: In the English Department's attempt to provide rich and varied reading experiences for our students, we have selected titles for the summer reading lists written mostly by contemporary authors. Some selections are focused toward mature readers. We encourage parents to read the book descriptions carefully with their children and assist them in selecting interesting, appropriate titles for their summer reading.

School Fiction

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Twisted*.

Tyler Miller, a high school senior, tries to clean up his reputation, succeed in school, and deal with his demanding, explosive father and his alcoholic, distant mother. In addition, he tries to win the affection and attraction of the most popular girl at school while enduring the torment of her brother. He must tackle the complex issues of integrity, raging hormones, personal responsibility, and identity on his own as he struggles to understand what it means to be a man. With gripping scenes and a rousing ending, Anderson authentically portrays Tyler's emotional instability as he contemplates darker and darker solutions to his situation.

National Book Award (author) and a Penguin Book Club pick

Sitomer, Alan Lawrence. *Hip Hop High School*.

Andre's younger sister, Theresa, tries to make her way through the racial hotbed of her poverty-stricken L.A. high school by keeping her eyes on her goal: admission to USC. Devon, a fellow academic in hip-hop clothing, takes her under his wing as they work like fiends to learn all they will need to ace their SATs; however, Devon's Harvard hopes come to an untimely end amid the violence of the inner city streets. Not until the very end of the book do readers find out if the main characters rise above their situations to achieve their goals. *CA Literacy Teacher of the Year*

Sittenfeld, Curtis. *Prep*.

Prep is the story of Lee Fiora, a teenager from South Bend, Indiana, who wins a scholarship to the prestigious Ault School. This coming-of-age novel is filled with boarding school stereotypes. Lee does not know how to fit in on this college campus where immature high school students behave like college students, experimenting with alcohol and sex. Throughout the novel, Lee constantly worries and doubts her own self-worth, which often keeps her from developing long-term relationships with the people she meets. However, she does learn several life lessons on the road to graduation. *Recommended by amazon.com and Publisher's Weekly*

Bruchac, Joseph. *The Heart of a Chief*.

Chris Nicola is a Penacook Indian boy who is just starting middle school, who is plunged into making a decision about who he is and what he stands for. At school, Chris becomes involved in a conflict over the school's football team—the Chiefs—a name that he finds offensive, along with the mock-Indian war whoops and tomahawk chops of the crowd at the games. At home, he finds himself caught up in a controversy over whether to build a casino on the reservation.

School Non-fiction

The Freedom Writers and Zlata Filipovic. *The Freedom Writers Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them*.

This work presents the lives of inner-city high school students in their own voices. The authentic language lends an immediacy and stark realism to their stories. The kids must fight all the negatives in their lives, such as violence, abuse, neglect, homelessness, and poverty, against the backdrop of the usual adolescent issues of maturation, friendships, schoolwork, and sexuality. Despite what seem to be insurmountable obstacles, the Freedom Writers begin to find themselves through learning about other iconic teenagers like Anne Frank and Zlata Filipovic, who transcended the hate and ignorance surrounding them.

1998 Spirit of Anne Frank Award (the Freedom Writers)

Freedman, Samuel G. *Small Victories: The Real World of a Teacher, Her Students, and Their High School*.

This narrative follows one year in the life of New York City's Seward Park High School. Freedman's approach in depicting the daily activities of one teacher--Jessica Siegel--and the students, faculty, parents, and administrators who touch her life is forthright and honest. Siegel's self-doubts, triumphs, and unflinching desire to lead her students to help themselves out of a life of poverty is all the more inspiring because, even though the victories may be small, she returns each year to meet the same situations where only the faces change. *1990 National Book Award Nonfiction Nominee*

Jurmain, Suzanne. *The Forbidden Schoolhouse: The True Dramatic Story of Prudence Crandall and Her Students.*

Jurmain, an award-winning author of historical books for young people, details the "little-known historical" figure of Prudence Crandall. This very inspirational book shows how Crandall dramatically and successfully influenced education for women. In 1833, Crandall was one of the first to open a school for African-American girls in a small Connecticut town. Jurmain champions the will and efforts of Crandall to educate despite great prejudice and torment from the community. Crandall's mantra is to refuse to "answer evil with evil." Crandall's arguments for equality are later relied on by Attorney Thurgood Marshall in the desegregation case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Jurmain does not shy away from directly quoting some historically accurate derogatory language.

2006 ALA Notable Book for Children, 2006 Orbis Pictus Honor Book, 2006 Notable Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies 2005 Booklist Editors' Choice, 2006 ALA Best Book for Young Adults

Sports Fiction

Coyne, John. *The Caddie Who Knew Ben Hogan.*

Known more for his novels of the macabre, Coyne moves onto the links and comes up with a terrific blend of golfing lore, PGA tournament drama, and country club soap opera. It's 1946, and Jack Handley is a 14-year-old caddy at a posh country club near Chicago. He loves the game, and his mother needs the money. When Ben Hogan shows up one day to play a practice round before the Open, Jack caddies for Hogan and for Jack's pal, assistant pro Matt Richardson, as the two men play a not-very-friendly round. Coyne's descriptions of the strained practice round and the gripping first day of the Chicago Open are masterful sports fiction, with Jack reliving every drive, chip and putt, adding savvy golf tips and caddy tricks. Add in Jack's entanglement in Matt's secret romance with the daughter of the club's rich and powerful president, and anecdotes of other legendary players (like Jimmy Demaret, Gene Sarazen and Lefty Stackhouse), and the results rank with James Dodson's nonfiction, and John Corrigan's PGA golf mysteries.

National Book Award-winning author, Washington Irving Book Award

Lamott, Anne. *Crooked Little Heart.*

Some girls, like Rosie's friend and tennis partner on the Northern California tennis circuit, enter adolescence with young womanly grace and appeal; others like Rosie find the onset of a metamorphosing body and questionable social status burdened with a seemingly endless string of bad days. Driven by the constant fear that she's a loser, Rosie starts to cheat on the tennis court. Meanwhile, her boy-crazy friend dabbles in off-court disaster and a weird loner begins obsessively following Rosie's tennis matches. Author Anne Lamott has turned in a fair depiction of the struggles of adolescence that is lightened by humor and inspirational moments. Lamott provides the characters of Rosie's mother and adult friends with that same understanding; although they have problems of their own, they provide Rosie with admirable support that encourages her maturation rather than suffocating her with overwhelming concern.

Cited in The Best Novels of the Nineties: A Reader's Guide Author won a Guggenheim Fellowship

Peet, Mal. *Keeper.*

When acclaimed South American journalist Paul Faustino begins his interview with World Cup soccer star El Gato, he expects to be recording the thoughts of a goalkeeper at the height of his career. He never envisioned hearing about a young, lonely boy growing up in the middle of a rain forest, who wandered upon a mysterious soccer field, and an apparition that appeared to him daily and trained him to become the greatest goalkeeper ever known. Is El Gato crazy or is there some truth to be discovered in his fantastic tale? This is an entirely new kind of soccer story, including not only the experience of play, but also mesmerizing readers with a supernatural mystery in a tale about relationships, loneliness, and believing in oneself.

2004 Branford Boase Award, 2004 Shortlist Hampshire Book Award, 2005 The Boston Globe-Horn Book Awards, 2005 Nestlé Smarties Book Prize

Sitomer, Alan Lawrence. *The Hoopster,*

Andre Anderson spends his summer playing basketball with his pals and working at a magazine, where he is assigned to write an article dealing with race. As an African American, the teen is reluctant to write about the topic, but he comes to think about it more deeply and writes an explosive piece. In fact, the article stirs such passions that a group of racists assault him, smashing his hand and sending him to the hospital. At the novel's end, Andre has recovered and is praised for his courage and talent.

Finalist Independent Publisher Award, CA Literacy Teacher of the Year

Swanson, Julie A. *Going For the Record.*

Leah Weiczynkowski is a promising soccer player with Olympic aspirations. However, the summer before senior year, she learns her father has pancreatic cancer. He has three months to live. Called "obsessed with soccer" by her mom, she continues to practice her sport intently, hoping for phone calls from college recruiters. However, as her dad's illness progresses, she begins feeling selfish and guilty. Her first-person narrative conveys emotional vulnerability with increased self-reflection. Part of an extended Catholic family, Leah's grandmother urges her to consider the power of prayer. Then, with her father's death, Leah comes to recognize that soccer is just a game and that what really matters are relationships and making a difference in the world.

2005 International Reading Association Young Adult's Choices, 2005 YALSA's Popular Paperbacks, 2005 Booklist Top Ten Sports Books for Youth

Sports Non-Fiction

Armstrong, Lance and Sally Jenkins. *It's Not About the Bike.*

This is the autobiographical story of Lance Armstrong, the world-class cyclist nearly struck down by cancer. He not only beats the disease, but returns to the top of his game. The changes and revelations the illness brings to his life are startling and powerful. While his vocabulary is a bit coarse, his humane actions – the initiation of his cancer foundation and benefit bike ride and his appreciation for those who helped him succeed -- are heartwarming.

2000 William Hill Sports Book of the Year

Denlinger, Ken. *For The Glory.*

Joe Paterno, who became head football coach at Penn State in 1965, has a reputation as both a winner and a mentor who cares about his players' academic success. That reputation is scrutinized by Washington Post staffer Denlinger, as he follows the progress of 28 scholarship players who entered State in 1988, with the possibility of five-year careers permitted by the NCAA. Five years later, 17 were still in school, but only nine were active players; and the teams had not been brilliantly successful. But this excellent volume is not an attack on Paterno. Instead, it is an attack on college football. Denlinger concludes that although "the world could get along nicely" without the sport, it doesn't want to.

Feinstein, John. *The Last Amateurs.*

Army, Navy, Lafayette, Lehigh, Bucknell, Holy Cross, and Colgate: these seven colleges make up the Patriot League, basketball's smallest Division I conference. In this book, sportswriter Feinstein gives an exhaustive account of the Patriot League's 1999-2000 season. He illustrates that exciting basketball can be played in front of crowds that can be as small as 1,000 and that rivalries such as Lafayette-Lehigh can be just as intense as those played by colleges in major conferences on national television. However, Feinstein's intent is to do more than just provide details about the year's important games; he uses the Patriot League as an example of "what college sports are supposed to be about." Feinstein maintains that the conference's members are among the few colleges that can call their players student-athletes. *Award-winning sportswriter*

Halberstam, David. *The Teammates.*

Famed journalist and baseball fan Halberstam presents a short but sweet account of the lives and friendship of four ballplayers from the legendary Boston Red Sox teams of the 1940s: Ted Williams, Dominic DiMaggio, Johnny Pesky, and Bobby Doerr. Told in a series of flashbacks as DiMaggio and Pesky drive from Massachusetts to Florida to see an ailing Williams for the last time, Halberstam's story is less a biography and more a tale for "men of a certain generation, born right at the end of World War I" who "had seized on baseball as their one chance to get ahead in America." The book tells the various ways each player "shared an era," from their childhoods to their first meetings through their long tenures with the Red Sox. *Pulitzer-prize winning author*

Hamilton, Bethany, Sheryl Berk, and Rick Bundschuh. *Soul Surfer.*

This is the amazing story of a thirteen-year-old girl who lost her arm in a shark attack but never lost her faith -- and of her triumphant return to competitive surfing. They say Bethany Hamilton has saltwater in her veins. How else could one explain the tremendous passion that drives her to surf? How else could one explain that nothing -- not even the loss of her arm in a horrific shark attack -- could come between her and the waves? When the first thing Bethany wanted to know after surgery was "When can I surf again?" it became clear that her unfaltering spirit and determination were part of a greater story -- a tale of courage and faith that this modest and soft-spoken girl would come to share with the world. *Soul Surfer* is a moving account of Bethany's life as a young surfer, her recovery in the wake of the shark attack, the adjustments she's made to her unique surfing style, and her unprecedented bid for a top showing in the World Surfing Championships. *SC Book Award Junior Book Nominee, Bethany Hamilton ESPY Award for Best Comeback Athlete*

Alternate Titles (Classics)**Buck, Pearl. *The Good Earth.***

Though more than sixty years have passed since this remarkable novel won the Pulitzer Prize, it has retained its popularity and become one of the great modern classics. In *The Good Earth*, Buck presents a graphic view of a China when the last emperor reigned and the vast political and social upheavals of the twentieth century were but distant rumblings for the ordinary people. This moving, classic story of the honest farmer Wang Lung and his selfless wife O-lan is must reading for those who would fully appreciate the sweeping changes that have occurred in the lives of the Chinese people during this century. Nobel Prize winner Pearl S. Buck traces the whole cycle of life: its terrors, its passions, its ambitions and rewards. Her brilliant novel -- beloved by millions of readers -- is a universal tale of the destiny of man. --*Amazon.com*

Grahame, Kenneth. *The Wind in the Willows.*

Grahame introduces readers to a society filled with animal etiquette. Livelihoods vary depending on location: river bankers, wood dwellers, and those who live underground. The underground Badger appears to be society hating, but does follow protocol; it bothers him most that vain and trendy Toad (the most entertaining character) does just what he wants. Toad gets bored with boating and finds a new hobby: motor cars. His great motor car passion results in a prison break and a somewhat reformed Toad sees the error of his ways through the help of his pals. Friendship drives this social structure, and this story. --Tara L. Rivera, commonsensemedia.org

Resources

Below are some ways to acquire free or inexpensive copies of the required summer reading, provided for your reference:

- 1 – Students with demonstrated financial need should see their guidance counselor, as the books can be generously provided by the Emmaus High School Angel Network
- 2 – The Emmaus High School Library has purchased copies of all books on the list and they are available to borrow free of charge. Your local public library also has copies of most of them. Note: If you wait until the last minute, your selection will likely be limited.
- 3 - There are a number of websites where new or used copies of books can be purchased at up to a 90% discount. Hundreds such sites are available on the web. A few sites we have used and can recommend are listed below:
 - Ebay (www.ebay.com) Type in the title of your book and bid on copies available from individual sellers around the country.
 - Half.com (<http://www.half.ebay.com/>) Type in the title of your book and directly purchase new or used copies directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required
 - Amazon.com marketplace (www.amazon.com) Select 'books' in the menu and type in the title of your book. You can purchase the book new from amazon.com or click on 'buy used and new' and purchase a copy directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required.
 - Book Closeouts.com (www.bookcloseouts.com) - This site sells books at bargain prices. They have a limited selection of titles but those they do carry are very inexpensive.

Incoming 9th Grade Summer Reading List - HONORS ENGLISH Emmaus High School 2008-2009

Students who have chosen to take honors English in 9th grade are encouraged to prepare for a rigorous course in literary analysis through reading, writing, and discussion. In concordance with these objectives, students must read three different selections during the summer. **All students must read *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens and two additional selections from the list below.** During the first week of school, each honors student should be prepared to engage in critical analysis of all three books. The format for the summer reading assessments will be chosen at the discretion of the teacher. *Some of the synopses below are provided courtesy of Amazon.com.*

Required reading for ALL students:

Dickens, Charles. *Great Expectations*.

Dickens' classic novel traces Pip's life from childhood to adulthood. After Pip is orphaned, his older sister and husband adopt him. During his childhood years, he is happy living with his sister and her husband Joe, but once he meets Miss Havisham and her haughty but beautiful daughter, Estella, his views change. Due to their influence and his unexpected inheritance, Pip develops "great expectations" and aspires to live the life of a gentleman where he can win the love of Estella. During his journey, Pip experiences moral, physical, and financial difficulty. Ultimately, adversity reminds Pip of his life before he had such "great expectations."

All students should choose TWO additional titles from the following list:

Alvarez, Julia. *In the Time of the Butterflies*.

This novel, framed by the narrative of the one surviving sister, Dede, chronicles the lives the Mirabel sisters, who become involved in the revolution to overthrow the nearly thirty-year reign of the oppressive Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. Due to their commitment to the revolution, three of the four Mirabel sisters are assassinated and eulogized as martyrs by their country. The courage and desperation of the sisters is inspiring, but readers are forced to contemplate the terrible atrocities committed by dictatorships throughout history and the lives that have been wasted as a result. Each of the girls, Patria, Minerva, and Maria Therese (Mate), relate their own stories, starting when they are children in the 1940s. *In the Time of the Butterflies* is an American Library Association Notable Book and a 1995 National Book Critics Circle Award nominee.

Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*.

Despite this literary classic's Victorian setting, the story continues to resonate with young adults in the 21st century. Jane is orphaned at a young age and subjected to the cruelty of her new guardian, Aunt Reed. When Jane attends Lowood charity school, her situation does not improve. The girls at the school ostracize Jane, intensifying her feelings of alienation and worthlessness. Jane's life seems to improve when she secures a position as governess at Thornfield Hall and falls in love with the mysterious Rochester. When he deceives her, Jane's indomitable spirit does not allow her to wallow in self-pity. Readers admire Jane because in spite of her seemingly miserable lot, she transcends misery and betrayal to find love, happiness, and acceptance.

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*.

A classic since its publication in 1952, *Invisible Man* recounts the story of a young, nameless, black man as he experiences the insidiousness of American intolerance, prejudice, and cultural blindness. "I am an invisible man," he says in his prologue. "When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination--indeed, everything and anything except me." However, this is hard-won self-knowledge, earned over many years of degradation, oppression, chastisement, and alienation inflicted on him by the society in which he lives. The narrator's search for identity and journey toward self-actualization become the reader's, proving that truth is subjective and elusive.

Heller, Joseph. *Catch 22*.

Published in 1962, this grim satire attacks the foolishness and senselessness of war. Set during World War II, Yossarian, the main character, sums up his feelings when he says to one of his comrades, "You're talking about winning the war, and I am talking about winning the war and staying alive." When asked to choose between winning the war or staying alive, Yossarian, replies, "It doesn't make a damn bit of difference who wins the war to someone who's dead." Even though the subject matter is intensely serious, the story, mainly due to the Yossarian's brutal realism and caustic sarcasm, is often humorous with the intent of illuminating the horror and absurdity of the situation in which he is mired.

Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*.

Huxley's novel, published in 1932, is a classic work of science fiction that still serves as a warning to readers. The society depicted seems to be a utopia. Life appears to be perfect because no one has the concerns associated with the modern world. Warfare and poverty do not exist, and everyone is happy. The irony occurs when the reader realizes that the ideal society is created by eliminating individual identity and freedom. Huxley's prediction of the future asks the reader to reconsider the effects and pitfalls of our fast-paced society and of our reliance on governmental control.

Irving, John. *A Prayer for Owen Meany*.

Johnny Wheelwright, the narrator and best friend of Owen Meany, describes Owen as a boy with a "wrecked voice" and "the smallest person I ever knew." Johnny also claims he is a Christian because of Owen's influence on his life. Owen's dwarfishness and strangely squeaky, scratchy voice are the source of much humor, and his religious convictions contribute to the novel's moral and political overtones. Ironically, Owen accidentally kills Johnny's mother with a baseball. Owen's tragic end is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Bean Trees*.

Marietta Greer changes her name to Taylor after she leaves her home in Kentucky. As Taylor travels west in her '55 Volkswagen, she enjoys her freedom. However, her life changes one day in Oklahoma when a Cherokee woman leaves her baby on Taylor's front passenger seat and begs her to take it. Taylor keeps the baby and names her Turtle. When in Arizona, Taylor's car gets two flat tires, so she decides to stay. Taylor finds her new responsibility as a mother difficult and overwhelming as well as a rewarding miracle.

Kingsolver, Barbara. *Pigs in Heaven*.

When a Cherokee tribal lawyer informs Taylor that she must relinquish her illegally adopted daughter, Taylor refuses to give up her daughter, and a life of flight and uncertainty ensues. Taylor is forced to work for minimum wage while she and Turtle travel throughout the West to flee the threat of separation. In the meantime, Taylor's mother, Alice, leaves her husband and meets a full-blooded Indian named Cash who longs to recapture his heritage. When Taylor and Turtle join Alice and Cash in Oklahoma, Taylor is forced to admit her helplessness. This novel is the sequel to *The Bean Trees*.

Remarque, Erich Maria. *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

Paul Baumer, a victim of propaganda and patriotism, decides, with his German classmates, to join the army during World War I. Believing in the German cause, they are enthusiastic about going to war. The first battle in the trenches destroys their idealistic views of war: some of them die in agony, and others receive gruesome wounds. Year after year, Paul fights to stay alive and swears that he will speak against war if only he can live.

Shaara, Jeff. *Gods and Generals*

In this prequel to his father's best selling and Pulitzer Prize winning novel *Killer Angels* (1974), Jeff Shaara depicts the lives of Generals Lee, Hancock, Jackson, and Chamberlain before the pivotal battle of Gettysburg changes the suspected outcome of the American Civil War. Through the perspectives of the four generals, Shaara makes clear the strengths and weakness of each man while illustrating the realities of war. FYI: Many ninth grade honors students will read *Killer Angels* and write a research paper on the novel in their history classes. Reading *God and Generals* may allow students to approach their history assignment with an informed perspective.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Uncle Tom's Cabin is the best selling novel of the nineteenth century. In her fictional account of the pre-Civil war era, Stowe paints an appalling view of slavery. The novel chronicles the lives of slaves on Arthur Shelby's farm. When Arthur is faced with the reality that he may lose his farm, he considers selling some of his slaves to cover his debts. His wife, Emily, hates the idea because she had promised one of her housekeepers, Eliza, that she and her child would never be sold. When Eliza overhears Arthur's plan, she plans her escape from slavery to save her son.

Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Woman Warrior*.

Kingston's poignant memoir tells the story of a Chinese American growing up in Stockton, California. Like many child immigrants, Kingston (China Men) grew up in two very different worlds: the one portrayed in her mother's "talk-stories" where her mother was still a doctor in China and the other, a fast-paced, hectic life they live in California where her mother runs a Laundromat. As she grows up, Kingston begins to create her own stories to fill in the gaps between her mother's world and the reality in which she lives.

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse Five*.

The main character, Billy Pilgrim, "has become unstuck in time" after aliens from the planet Tralfamadore abduct him. Billy time travels at will, while the reader follows the protagonist through the different stages of his life, including his eye-witness account of the 1945 bombing of Dresden, Germany. The poignant story is a unique combination of humor and horror. The book is considered part science fiction and part memoir by some critics because Vonnegut combines elements of sci-fi with his experiences as a prisoner of war. Vonnegut uses caustic language and vivid descriptions to depict the realities of war.

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- 3 - There are a number of websites where new or used copies of books can be purchased at up to a 90% discount. Hundreds such sites are available on the web. A few sites we have used and can recommend are listed below:
 - Ebay (www.ebay.com) - Type in the title of your book and bid on copies available from individual sellers around the country.
 - Half.com (<http://www.half.ebay.com/>) - Type in the title of your book and directly purchase new or used copies directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required
 - Amazon.com marketplace (www.amazon.com) - Select 'books' in the menu and type in the title of your book. You can purchase the book new from amazon.com or click on 'buy used and new' and purchase a copy directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required.
 - Book Closeouts.com (www.bookcloseouts.com) - This site sells books at bargain prices. They have a limited selection of titles but those they do carry are very inexpensive

Incoming 9th Grade Summer Reading List ENGLISH/READING Emmaus High School 2008-2009

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Please Note: In the English Department's attempt to provide rich and varied reading experiences for our students, we have selected titles for the summer reading lists written mostly by contemporary authors. Some selections are focused toward mature readers. We encourage parents to read the book descriptions carefully with their children and assist them in selecting interesting, appropriate titles for their summer reading.

School Fiction

Oates, Joyce Carol. *Big Mouth & Ugly Girl*. (Grade Level: 7-12)

Matt Donaghy has always been a Big Mouth. But it's never gotten him in trouble—until the day Matt is accused of threatening to blow up Rocky River High School. Ursula Riggs has always been an Ugly Girl. A loner with fierce, staring eyes, Ursula has no time for petty high school stuff like friends and dating—or at least that's what she tells herself. Ursula is content with minding her own business. She doesn't even really know Matt Donaghy, but Ursula is the only person who knows what Matt really said that day...and she is the only one who can help him. *ALA Best Book for Young Adults, ALA Booklist for Editor's Choice, New York Public Library Best Books for the Teen Age, Book Sense Pick*

Avi. *Nothing But The Truth: A Documentary Novel*. (Grade Level: 6-12)

Philip Malloy is a ninth-grader at Harrison High School in the fictional town of Harrison, New Hampshire. His main goal in high school is to join the track team, but he cannot because of his low grade in English. Malloy believes that his English teacher, Miss Margaret "Peg" Narwin, is purposely giving him failing grades because he believes she dislikes him. So, Malloy decides to hum along with "The Star-Spangled Banner" even though he is asked to stop. He refuses and is suspended. Philip is testing authority and exploring his own independence. *Newberry Honor Book, Bulletin Blue Ribbon, Boston Globe-Horn Book*

Sittenfeld, Curtis. *Prep*. (Grade Level: 8-12)

Prep is the story of Lee Fiora, a teenager from South Bend, Indiana, who wins a scholarship to the prestigious Ault School. This coming-of-age novel is filled with boarding school stereotypes. Lee does not know how to fit in on this college campus where immature high school students behave like college students, experimenting with alcohol and sex. Throughout the novel, Lee constantly worries and doubts her own self-worth, which often keeps her from developing long-term relationships with the people she meets. However, she does learn several life lessons on the road to graduation. *Recommended by amazon.com and Publisher's Weekly*

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Speak*. (Grade Level: 9-12)

Melinda Sordino begins her ninth grade year as the total outcast of the school. Melinda called 911 at the end-of-the-summer party, resulting in the arrival of the police. As the novel continues, the reader is given more hints about that night in which she attended the party. The isolation at school is continued at home, because her parents are so engrossed in work and life. They hardly notice the signs of depression from Melinda. She refuses to speak, her grades are plummeting, and her reputation as a "weirdo" is growing. When Andy attempts to attack Melinda again, she fights back and the truth is finally revealed to the school. *1999 National Book Award Finalist, 2000 ALA Quick Pick, 2000 Printz Honor Book, SCBWI Golden Kite Award*

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Twisted*. (Grade Level: 8-12)

Tyler Miller, a high school senior, tries to clean up his reputation, succeed in school, and deal with his demanding, explosive father and his alcoholic, distant mother. In addition, he tries to win the affection and attraction of the most popular girl at school while enduring the torment of her brother. He must tackle the complex issues of integrity, raging hormones, personal responsibility, and identity on his own as he struggles to understand what it means to be a man. With gripping scenes and a rousing ending, Anderson authentically portrays Tyler's emotional instability as he contemplates darker and darker solutions to his situation. *National Book Award (author) and a Penguin Book Club pick*

Strasser, Todd. *The Wave*. (Grade Level: 6-12)

This is a story based upon an event that took place as the result of a History class experiment in a California high school in 1969. Ben Ross, a high school history teacher, begins his usual unit on World War II with a film about the horrors that occurred in Nazi concentration camps. His students have mixed reactions to the topic. Laurie, a popular student, raises questions that the teacher cannot answer and states that this could never happen again. The teacher concocts an experiment to illustrate to his students that blind following can easily happen, even in their own school. *1982 Best Books for Young Adults, 1983 Great Britain Federation of Children's Book Award*

School Non-Fiction

Gruwell, Erin. *Freedom Writers*. (Grade Level: 9-12)

The Freedom Writers and Zlata Filipovic. *The Freedom Writers Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them*.

This work presents the lives of inner-city high school students in their own voices. The authentic language lends an immediacy and stark realism to their stories. The kids must fight all the negatives in their lives, such as violence, abuse, neglect, homelessness, and poverty, against the backdrop of the usual adolescent issues of maturation, friendships, schoolwork, and sexuality. Despite what seem to be insurmountable obstacles, the Freedom Writers begin to find themselves through learning about other iconic teenagers like Anne Frank and Zlata Filipovic, who transcended the hate and ignorance surrounding them. *1998 Spirit of Anne Frank Award (the Freedom Writers)*

Jurmain, Suzanne. *The Forbidden Schoolhouse: The True Dramatic Story of Prudence Crandall and Her Students.*

Jurmain, an award-winning author of historical books for young people, details the "little-known historical" figure of Prudence Crandall. This very inspirational book shows how Crandall dramatically and successfully influenced education for women. In 1833, Crandall was one of the first to open a school for African-American girls in a small Connecticut town. Jurmain champions the will and efforts of Crandall to educate despite great prejudice and torment from the community. Crandall's mantra is to refuse to "answer evil with evil." Crandall's arguments for equality are later relied on by Attorney Thurgood Marshall in the desegregation case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Jurmain does not shy away from directly quoting some historically accurate derogatory language. *2006 ALA Notable Book for Children, 2006 Orbis Pictus Honor Book, 2006 Notable Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies 2005 Booklist Editors' Choice, 2006 ALA Best Book for Young Adults*

Sports Fiction

De la Pena, Matt. *Ball Don't Lie.* (Grade Level: 9-12)

Sticky finds a break from his tough life in the Los Angeles foster care system by playing basketball at Lincoln Rec Center. De la Pena writes with the words and rhythms of hip-hop and the street. *ALA Best Books for Young Adults, ALA Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers*

Rottman, S.L. *Head Above Water.* (Grade level: 8-12)

Skye Johnson, a junior, is training too hard to qualify for state championships. She needs a swimming scholarship to go to college. Between her swimming, and keeping up her grades, Skye doesn't have time for much else. But because her mother works two jobs to support the family, Skye must spend the rest of her time caring for her older brother, Sunny, who has Down Syndrome. To find time for her new boyfriend, Skye chooses to break a trust, never dreaming of the complications that will follow. *2000 ALA Best Book for Young Adults, 2000 Finalist Oklahoma and Colorado Book Award*

Peet, Mal. *Keeper.* (Grade level: 7-12)

When acclaimed South American journalist Paul Faustino begins his interview with World Cup soccer star El Gato, he expects to be recording the thoughts of a goalkeeper at the height of his career. He never envisioned hearing about a young, lonely boy growing up in the middle of a rain forest, who wandered upon a mysterious soccer field, and an apparition that appeared to him daily and trained him to become the greatest goalkeeper ever known. Is El Gato crazy or is there some truth to be discovered in his fantastic tale? This is an entirely new kind of soccer story, including not only the experience of play, but also mesmerizing readers with a supernatural mystery in a tale about relationships, loneliness, and believing in oneself. *2004 Branford Boase Award, 2004 Shortlist Hampshire Book Award, 2005 The Boston Globe-Horn Book Awards, 2005 Nestlé Smarties Book Prize*

Koertge, Ron. *Shakespeare Bats Cleanup.* (Grade level: 7-12)

Kevin is a great baseball player—until he's sidelined with mono. He is forced to spend weeks in bed, and, out of boredom, he picks up a journal his father gives him and starts experimenting with writing poetry. In various poetic forms, he writes about his life, his illness, and his mother's death.

Wallace, Rich. *Wrestling Sturbridge.* (Grade level 8-12)

Set in the small northern Pennsylvania town of Sturbridge, this is the story of a high school senior Ben, the second-best 135-pound wrestler in the state. Unfortunately the state's best 135-pound wrestler, Al, goes to the same school as Ben, so Ben spends a lot of time sitting on the bench and serving as Al's workout partner. Frustrated by the limitations of small town life, Ben becomes determined to win a wrestling scholarship to college. Only two things stand in his way—Al, and his own lack of self-confidence. To further complicate matters, Ben considers Al not only a worthy opponent, but also his best friend.

Sports Non-fiction

Hamilton, Bethany. *Soul Surfer: A True Story of Faith, Family, and Fighting to Get Back on the Board.* (Grade level: 6-9)

This is the amazing story of a thirteen-year-old girl who lost her arm in a shark attack but never lost her faith -- and of her triumphant return to competitive surfing. They say Bethany Hamilton has saltwater in her veins. How else could one explain the tremendous passion that drives her to surf? How else could one explain that nothing -- not even the loss of her arm in a horrific shark attack -- could come between her and the waves? When the first thing Bethany wanted to know after surgery was "When can I surf again?" it became clear that her unflinching spirit and determination were part of a greater story -- a tale of courage and faith that this modest and soft-spoken girl would come to share with the world. *Soul Surfer* is a moving account of Bethany's life as a young surfer, her recovery in the wake of the shark attack, the adjustments she's made to her unique surfing style, and her unprecedented bid for a top showing in the World Surfing Championships. *SC Book Award Junior Book Nominee, Bethany Hamilton ESPY Award for Best Comeback Athlete*

Resources

Below are some ways to acquire free or inexpensive copies of the required summer reading, provided for your reference:

- 1 – Students with demonstrated financial need should see their guidance counselor, as the books can be generously provided by the Emmaus High School Angel Network
- 2 – The Emmaus High School Library has purchased copies of all books on the list and they are available to borrow free of charge. Your local public library also has copies of most of them. Note: If you wait until the last minute, your selection will likely be limited.
- 3 - There are a number of websites where new or used copies of books can be purchased at up to a 90% discount. Hundreds such sites are available on the web. A few sites we have used and can recommend are listed below:
 - Ebay (www.ebay.com)
Type in the title of your book and bid on copies available from individual sellers around the country.
 - Half.com (<http://www.half.ebay.com/>)
Type in the title of your book and directly purchase new or used copies directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required
 - Amazon.com marketplace (www.amazon.com)
Select 'books' in the menu and type in the title of your book. You can purchase the book new from amazon.com or click on 'buy used and new' and purchase a copy directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required.
 - Book Closeouts.com (www.bookcloseouts.com) - This site sells books at bargain prices. They have a limited selection of titles but those they do carry are very inexpensive.