

10th Grade Summer Reading List

Books to Enjoy this Summer

2008

STUDENTS ENTERING 10TH GRADE REGENTS:

You must read one book.

STUDENTS ENTERING 10TH GRADE HONORS:

You must read two books.

Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes (Drama/Science Fiction) – Charlie Gordon, a retarded adult who cleans floors and toilets, becomes a genius through an experimental operation.

Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer (Nonfiction) – Why did Christopher McCandless trade a bright future—a college education, material comfort, uncommon ability, and charm—for living and dying in an abandoned bus in the wilds of Alaska? Krakauer’s book tries to answer that question.

Wait Till Next Year: A Memoir by Doris Kearns Goodwin (Memoir) - When Pulitzer Prize winning author Goodwin was six years old, her father taught her how to keep score for "their" team, the Brooklyn Dodgers. While this activity forged a lifelong bond between father and daughter, it also provides a great background to stories about what it was to be like growing up in Long Island. Goodwin recounts some wonderful stories about the national pastime that brought whole communities together.

Rules of the Road by Joan Bauer (Fiction) - Jenna Boller, 16, is an earnest teenager who has the job chauffeuring a crabby, wealthy woman from Chicago to Dallas. Jenna is too tall for a sophomore and she's not much good in school but she's great at selling shoes and has just received her driver's license. This is the story of one young person's attempt at finding her way in a world that sometimes has it out for her. Winner of the Golden Kite Award and the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Young Adult Fiction.

The Bean Trees by Barbara Kingsolver (Fiction) – Clear-eyed and spirited, Taylor Greer grew up poor in rural Kentucky with the goals of avoiding pregnancy and getting away. But when she heads west with high hopes and a barely functional car, she meets the human condition head-on. By the time Taylor arrives in Tucson, Arizona, she has acquired a completely unexpected child, a three-year-old American Indian girl named Turtle, and must somehow come to terms with both motherhood and the necessity for putting down roots. Hers is a story about love and friendship, abandonment and belonging, and the discovery of surprising resources in apparently empty places.

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Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America by Erik Larson (Nonfiction) – A gripping tale about two men -- one a creative genius, the other a mass murderer -- who turned the 1893 Chicago World's Fair into their playground. Set against the dazzle of a dream city whose technological marvels presaged the coming century, this real-life drama of good and evil unfolds with all the narrative tension of a fictional thriller. The Devil in the White City is made all the more appealing by a supporting cast of real-life characters, including Buffalo Bill, Susan B. Anthony, Thomas Edison, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and others.

The Natural by Bernard Malamud (Fiction) – Bernard Malamud's first novel, published in 1952, is also the first -- and some would say still the best -- novel ever written about baseball. In it Malamud takes on the story of a superbly gifted "natural" at play in the fields of the old daylight baseball era -- and invested it with the hardscrabble poetry, at once grand and altogether believable, that runs through all his best work. Four decades later, Alfred Kazin's comment still hold true: "Malamud...has really raised the whole passion and craziness and fanaticism of baseball as a popular spectacle to its ordained place in mythology.

Annie John by Jamaica Kincaid (Fiction) – Growing up in Antigua should be a sojourn in paradise for Annie John. Adolescence takes this head-strong girl into secret discoveries.

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (Fiction) – This is one of the most chilling novels ever written about the oppression of totalitarian regimes and the first to open Western eyes to the terrors of Stalin's prison camps. This book allowed Solzhenitsyn to challenge the brutal might of the Soviet Union.

Last Chance to See by Douglas Adams (Science Fiction/Humor) – In the past, Adams, best-selling author of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, has introduced readers to many incredible things. But in this book he invites readers to explore a world of exotic and endangered species captured here in words and pictures.

The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan (Fiction) – In 1949, four Chinese women begin meeting in San Francisco for fun, forming The Joy Luck Club. This novel tells the emotionally honest and intensely moving story of several generations of Chinese-American women and their families, illuminating the special mysteries of the bonds between mothers and daughters.

Life of Pi by Yann Martel (Fiction) – A work of wonder, this novel tells a fabulous tale about an intrepid sixteen-year-old boy who spends 227 days at sea with a 450-pound Bengal tiger. The protagonist is a dreamer and a desperado, a zookeeper's son steeped in animal lore and religion (he's a practicing Hindu, Muslim and Catholic). A cross-cultural feast, the book ranges from India to North America; it's also packed with curious discussions of philosophy, zoology, linguistics and God. But in the end, it's the story you'll remember, the kind of twist-and-turns spellbinder that's almost impossible to forget.