



## Summer Reading List 2010

The selections for summer reading are as follows:

### **FRESHMEN: CLASS OF 2014**

#### **Required Novel: Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain**

Floating down the Mississippi on their raft, Huckleberry Finn and Jim, a runaway slave, find life filled with excitement and the spirit of adventure. Join Huck and Jim and their old friend Tom Sawyer as they come up against low-down thieves and murderers, whilst being chased by Huck's evil, drunken father who is after Huck's treasure. As Ernest Hemingway stated, "All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*. All American writing comes from that. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since."

#### **Choice: Chose 1 of the following titles**

##### **Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton**

The most famous and important novel in South Africa's history, and an immediate worldwide bestseller when it was published in 1948, Alan Paton's impassioned novel about a black man's country under white man's law is a work of searing beauty. The eminent literary critic Lewis Gannett wrote, "We have had many novels from statesmen and reformers, almost all bad; many novels from poets, almost all thin. In Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* the statesman, the poet and the novelist meet in a unique harmony."

*Cry, the Beloved Country* is the deeply moving story of the Zulu pastor Stephen Kumalo and his son, Absalom, set against the background of a land and a people riven by racial injustice. Remarkable for its lyricism, unforgettable for character and incident, *Cry, the Beloved Country* is a classic work of love and hope, courage and endurance, born of the dignity of man.

##### **The Boy in the Striped Pajamas by John Boyne**

A 2006 novel about Germans and the Holocaust, from the point of view of a young boy. Unlike the months of planning Boyne devoted to his other books, he said that he wrote the entire first draft of *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* in two and a half days, barely sleeping until he got to the end. <sup>[1]</sup> To date, the novel has sold more than 5 million copies around the world, and was published as ***The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*** in the United States. In both 2007 and 2008 it was the best selling book of the year in Spain. It has also reached number one on the New York Times bestseller list, as well as in the UK, Ireland, Australia and many other countries.

### **SOPHOMORES: CLASS OF 2013**

#### **Required: The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger**

Ever since it was first published in 1951, this novel has been the coming-of-age story against which all others are judged. Read and cherished by generations, the story of Holden Caulfield is truly one of America's literary treasures.

**Choice: Chose 1 of the following titles:**

**The Piano Lesson by August Wilson**

Set in 1936, *The Piano Lesson* is a powerful new play from the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Fences* and *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*. A sister and brother fight over a piano that has been in the family for three generations, creating a remarkable drama that embodies the painful past and expectant future of black Americans.

**Fences by August Wilson**

Through Troy Maxson, playwright August Wilson personifies the man who grew up during the heat of Jim Crow: first proud, hopeful, and passionate in expectation; then emotionally withdrawn and disillusioned from incessant battles with life. Wilson also masterfully illuminates both the strength that lies within community and the adverse impact of a psychology of inequality that devastates the African American male and, in turn, his family and relationships, potentially disintegrating that same community.

**JUNIORS: CLASS OF 2012**

**Required Novel: Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury**

Nowadays firemen start fires. Fireman Guy Montag loves to rush to a fire and watch books burn up. Then he met a seventeen-year old girl who told him of a past when people were not afraid, and a professor who told him of a future where people could think. First published in 1953, *Fahrenheit 451* is a classic novel set in the future when books forbidden by a totalitarian regime are burned. The hero, a book burner, suddenly discovers that books are flesh and blood ideas that cry out silently when put to the torch.

**Choice: Chose 1 of the following titles:**

**The Road by Cormac McCarthy**

**The Road** is the profoundly moving story of a journey. It boldly imagines a future in which no hope remains, but in which the father and his son, "each the other's world entire," are sustained by love. Awesome in the totality of its vision, it is an unflinching meditation on the worst and the best that we are capable of: ultimate destructiveness, desperate tenacity, and the tenderness that keeps two people alive in the face of total devastation.

**The Bonesetter's Daughter by Amy Tan**

Set in contemporary San Francisco and in a Chinese village where Peking Man is unearthed, *The Bonesetter's Daughter* is an excavation of the human spirit: the past, its deepest wounds, its most profound hopes. This is the story of LuLing Young, who searches for the name of her mother, the daughter of the famous Bonesetter from the Mouth of the Mountain. The story conjures the pain of broken dreams, the power of myths, and the strength of love that enables us to recover in memory what we have lost in grief.

## **SENIORS: CLASS OF 2011**

### **Required Novel: Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe**

The 1958 novel chronicles the life of Okonkwo, the leader of an Igbo (Ibo) community, from the events leading up to his banishment from the community for accidentally killing a clansman, through the seven years of his exile, to his return. Addresses the problem of the intrusion in the 1890s of white missionaries and colonial government into tribal Igbo society, and describes the simultaneous disintegration of its protagonist Okonkwo and of his village. The novel was praised for its intelligent and realistic treatment of tribal beliefs and of psychological disintegration coincident with social unraveling. *Things Fall Apart* helped create the Nigerian literary renaissance of the 1960s. A classic of modern African writing, this is the tale of what happens to tribal customs and old ways when white man comes.

### **Choice: Chose 1 of the following titles:**

#### **Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson**

"*Three Cups of Tea* is one of the most remarkable adventure stories of our time. Greg Mortenson's dangerous and difficult quest to build schools in the wildest parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan is not only a thrilling read, it's proof that one ordinary person, with the right combination of character and determination, really can change the world." -**Tom Brokaw**

#### **Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad**

Horror awaits Marlow, a seaman assigned by an ivory company to retrieve a cargo boat and one of its employees, Mr. Kurtz who is stranded in the heart of the Africa, deep in the Belgian Congo. Marlow's journey up the brooding dark river soon becomes a struggle to maintain his own sanity as he witnesses the brutalization of the natives by white traders and discovers the enigmatic Mr. Kurtz. Kurtz, once a genius and the company's most successful representative, has become a savage. His compound is decorated by a row of human heads mounted on spears. The demonic mastermind, liberated from the conventions of European culture, has traded his soul to become ruler of his own horrific dominion.

#### **The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan**

In 1949, four Chinese women begin meeting in San Francisco for fun. Nearly 40 years later, their daughters continue to meet as the Joy Luck Club. Their stories ultimately display the double happiness that can be found in being both Chinese and American. "Intensely poetic, startlingly imaginative and moving, this remarkable book will speak to many women, mothers and grown daughters, about the persistent tensions and powerful bonds between generations and cultures," praised PW . Author tour. (June)

**AP Language and AP Literature students will receive specialized reading lists from their teachers.**