

Incoming 9th Grade Summer Reading List
GENERAL PREPARATORY AND COLLEGE PREPARATORY ENGLISH
Emmaus High School 2014-2015

All ninth grade college preparatory and general preparatory students must read **ONE** fiction book from the list below.

Students, please be prepared to complete an assessment of your summer reading upon your return to school. You may be asked to reflect on conflict, character, theme, setting, and style through writing assignments, projects, and/or class discussion.

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 assist their children in selecting interesting, appropriate titles for their summer reading. Barnes & Noble's website provides information including Lexile level, book reviews, and age levels for specific titles. If no age level is specified in the "Product Details" section on the Barnes & Noble site, the book may be focused toward mature readers for various reasons including mature themes or mature content. Barnes & Noble is suggested as a resource only, not an endorsement of any specific bookseller.

Some of the synopses below are provided courtesy of Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.com

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

Knowles, John. *A Separate Peace*.

Set at a boys' boarding school in New England during the early years of World War II, *A Separate Peace* is a harrowing and luminous parable of the dark side of adolescence. Gene is a lonely, introverted intellectual. Phineas is a handsome, taunting, daredevil athlete. What happens between the two friends one summer, like the war itself, banishes the innocence of these boys and their world.

–amazon.com

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 know 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*

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 where an apparition 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. 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 is urged by her grandmother 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

Classics

London, Jack. Call of the Wild.

This novel by Jack London, published in 1903, is often considered to be his masterpiece. London's version of the classic quest story uses a dog as the protagonist of the novel. Buck, who is shipped to the Klondike to be trained as a sled dog, eventually reverts to his primitive, wolf-like ancestry. He then undertakes an almost mythical journey, abandoning the safety of his familiar world to encounter danger, adventure, and fantasy. When he is transformed into the legendary "Ghost Dog" of the Klondike, he has become a true hero.

-- *The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature*

Smith, Betty. A Tree Grows in Brooklyn.

The beloved American classic about a young girl's coming-of-age at the turn of the century, Betty Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* is a poignant and moving tale filled with compassion and cruelty, laughter and heartache, crowded with life and people and incident. The story of young, sensitive, and idealistic Francie Nolan and her bittersweet formative years in the slums of Williamsburg has enchanted and inspired millions of readers for more than sixty years. By turns overwhelming, sublime, heartbreaking, and uplifting, the daily experiences of the unforgettable Nolans are raw with honesty and tenderly threaded with family connectedness -- in a work of literary art that brilliantly captures a unique time and place as well as incredibly rich moments of universal experience. --amazon.com

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 2014-2015

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.** Upon returning to 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 and Barnes & Noble.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 her husband adopt him. During his childhood years, he is happy living with his sister and her husband Joe, but once Pip 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 difficulties. 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 later eulogized as martyrs for 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), relates her own story, 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. This novel is the prequel to *Pigs in Heaven*.

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*.

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.

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.

Sijie, Dai and Ina Rilke. *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*.

The main characters, Luo and the unnamed narrator, are two male teenagers who are sent to a remote village in China to be re-educated under Mao's regime. This coming of age story includes the discovery of the joys of literature and imagination and a tutorial friendship with a young Chinese girl that leads to a romantic awakening. At the conclusion of the novel, the reader learns that the seamstress, as a result of her relationship with one of the boys, must make some adult decisions and deal with a pregnancy.

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.

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.