

Eleventh and Twelfth Grade Summer Reading List

If there are any books on this list that your parents may not approve of, select another book!

Albom, Mitch. *Tuesdays With Morrie*. The author, an alumnus of Brandeis University, tells of his meetings with a former professor suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease and of the lessons he learned about life and death from his college mentor.

Angelou, Maya. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. Poet Maya Angelou chronicles her early life, focusing on her childhood in 1930's rural Arkansas, including her rape at the age of five, her subsequent years of muteness, and the strength she gained from her grandmother and Mrs. Bertha Flowers, a respected African-American woman in her town.

Armstrong, Lance. *It's Not About the Bike*. Champion cyclist Lance Armstrong describes his triumph over cancer.

Bissinger, H. G. *Friday Night Lights: A Town, a Team, and a Dream*. The author permeates the culture of high school football as it is lived in Odessa, Texas.

Caletti, Deb. *Honey, Baby, Sweetheart*. Ruby McQueen, high school junior, focuses on the relationships in her life. Conflicts arise with teenage issues, her thieving first boyfriend, her parent's separation, and a book club called the Casserole Queens.

Capote, Truman. *In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences*. The senseless brutal murder of four members of the Clutter family by two psychotic young men shocked their small-town community of Holcomb, Kansas and the entire community.

Chevalier, Tracy. *Girl With a Pearl Earring*. The author imagines the young woman in Johannes Vermeer's mysterious painting "The Girl With a Pearl Earring" as a sixteen-year-old Dutch girl named Griet who sparks the interest of the artist when she becomes a maid in his turbulent household.

Cox, Lynne. *Swimming to Antarctica: Tales of a Long-Distance Swimmer*. Distance swimmer Lynne Cox describes her emotional and spiritual need to swim and about the mythical act of swimming itself, and chronicles some of her more memorable swims.

Desai, Hidier, Tanuja. *Born Confused*. Seventeen-year-old Dimple, whose family is from India, finds that she is not Indian enough for the Indians and not American enough for the Americans, as she sees her beautiful and manipulative best friend take possession of both her heritage and the boy she likes.

Doctorow, Corey. *Little Brother*. Interrogated for days by the Department of Homeland Security in the aftermath of a major terrorist attack on San Francisco, California, seventeen-year-old Marcus is released into what is now a police state, and decides to use his expertise in computer hacking to set things right.

- Donnelly, Jennifer. *A Northern Light*. Sixteen-year-old Mattie, determined to attend college and be a writer against the wishes of her father and boyfriend, takes a job at a hotel in 1906 where the death of a guest renews her determination to live her own life.
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*. Presents all of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's works featuring the detective Sherlock Holmes, including fifty-six short stories and four novellas.
- Dungy, Tony. *Quiet Strength*. NFL football coach Tony Dungy reflects on his personal and professional life; discussing his childhood, family, religious beliefs, coaching practices, Super Bowl victory, and more.
- Edwards, Kim. *The Memory Keeper's Daughter*. During a snowstorm in 1964, David Henry is forced to deliver his own twins. Seeing that one twin is normal and the other has Down Syndrome, he makes a split-second decision that will forever alter their lives.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Nickel and Dimed: On (not) Getting by in America*. Author Barbara Ehrenreich relates her experiences from 1998 to 2000, during which time she joined the ranks of the working poor as a waitress, hotel housekeeper, cleaning woman, nursing home aide, and Wal-Mart clerk to see for herself how America's "unskilled" workers are able to survive on only \$6 or \$7 an hour.
- Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. In the course of his wanderings from a Southern college to New York's Harlem, an African-American man becomes involved in a series of adventures.
- Feinstein, John. *The Punch: One Night, Two Lives, and the Fight That Changed Basketball Forever*. Recounts the events surrounding a fistfight between the Houston Rockets and the Los Angeles Lakers in 1977 in which Rudy Tomjanovich was nearly killed by a blow from Kermit Washington and discusses how both men's lives, and the game of basketball, were affected by the fight.
- Goldberg, Myla. *Bee Season*. Eliza Naumann is used to being the unremarkable member of her family, but when she wins a series of spelling bees, her once distant family begins to lavish praise on her, bringing about surprising complications.
- Grimes, Nikki. *Bronx Masquerade*. While studying the Harlem Renaissance, students at a Bronx high school read aloud poems they've written, revealing their innermost thoughts and fears to their formerly clueless classmates.
- Grogan, John. *Marley and Me*. The author presents a tender story of his family's love for their golden retriever, Marley, and recalls how he grew from a mischievous puppy into a nearly impossible adult that no amount of obedience school training could correct, and of the love they felt for him.
- Haley, Alex. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Malcolm X, who rose from drug pusher to charismatic leader of the Black Power movement of the sixties, was murdered in Harlem in 1965.

- Hawking, Stephen. *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*. Provides an introduction to today's scientific ideas about the cosmos and reviews past theories. Also covers black holes, quarks, antimatter, and other mysteries of physics.
- Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. Amir, haunted by his shocking betrayal of Hassan, the son of his father's servant and a childhood friend, returns to Kabul as an adult in an attempt to redeem himself by rescuing Hassan's son from a Taliban official.
- Kaysen, Susanna. *Girl Interrupted*. The author describes her two-year stay at a psychiatric hospital renowned for its famous clientele and for its progressive methods of treatment.
- Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Bean Trees*. Taylor, a poor Kentuckian, makes her way west with an abandoned baby girl and stops in Tucson. There she finds friends and discovers resources in apparently empty places.
- Le Couteur, Penny, and Hay Burreson. *Napoleon's Buttons: 17 Molecules That Changed History*. Chemically, tin falls apart in very cold temperatures. That Napoleon's army used tin for many ordinary items, such as buttons, may have hastened his defeat by the Russian army. The authors recount sixteen more fascinating stories of how chemistry changed history.
- Lester, Julius. *Guardian*. In a rural southern town in 1946, a white man and his son witness the lynching of an innocent black man. Includes historical note on lynching.
- Letts, Billie. *Where the Heart Is*. Novalee Nation, seventeen, pregnant, and living in a Wal-Mart store discovers friendship, encouragement, direction and love with a group of caring people in Sequoyah, Oklahoma.
- Martel, Yann. *Life of Pi*. Pi Patel, having spent an idyllic childhood in Pondicherry, India, as the son of a zookeeper, sets off with his family at the age of sixteen to start anew in Canada, but his life takes a marvelous turn when their ship sinks in the Pacific, leaving him adrift on a raft with a 450-pound Bengal tiger for company.
- McMurtry, Larry. *Lonesome Dove*. Two former Texas Rangers, Augustus McCrae and Woodrow Call, leave their Texas ranch to lead a cattle drive to Montana, encountering outlaws, Native Americans, and ex-loves along the way.
- Meyer, Stephanie. *The Host*. Melanie, whose mind has been almost completely taken over by an alien named Wanderer, convinces the alien to search for her lost lover, who fled the extraterrestrial invasion, and tries to find a way in which she and Wanderer can coexist.
- Mortenson, Greg. *Three Cups of Tea*. Greg Mortenson recounts the experiences he had while trying to help impoverished villages in Pakistan's Karakoram Himalaya build schools for their children.
- O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. Contains a collection of related fiction short stories with recurring characters, interwoven plot and themes told by a foot soldier retelling his experiences in the Vietnam War.

- Picoult, Jodi. *My Sister's Keeper*. Thirteen-year-old Anna, conceived specifically to provide blood and bone marrow for her sister Kate who was diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia at the age of two, decides to sue her parents for control of her body when her mother wants her to donate a kidney to Kate.
- Picoult, Jodi. *Nineteen Minutes*. The people of Sterling, New Hampshire, are forever changed after a shooting at the high school leaves ten people dead, and the judge presiding over the trial tries to remain unbiased, even though her daughter witnessed the events and was friends with the assailant.
- Plath, Sylvia. *The Bell Jar*. This autobiographical novel describes an ambitious and brilliant young woman's search for values and her eventual breakdown.
- Pullman, Philip. *The Amber Spyglass*. Lyra and Will find themselves at the center of a battle between the forces of the Authority and those gathered by Lyra's father, Lord Asriel.
- Reinhardt, Dana. *How to Build a House*. Seventeen-year-old Harper Evans hopes to escape the effects of her father's divorce on her family and friendships by volunteering her summer to build a house in a small Tennessee town devastated by a tornado.
- Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*. The author charges that the fast food has hastened the malling of the American landscape widened the chasm between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and propelled U.S. cultural imperialism abroad.
- Tan, Amy. *Bonesetter's Daughter*. Ruth, American born daughter of a Chinese immigrant mother, arranges for a translation of her mother's handwritten life story in China and learns some long hidden truths about her family, which help her to understand and appreciate her mother better.
- Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. Tells the story of two African-American sisters: Nettie, a missionary in Africa, and Celie, a child-wife living in the south, in the medium of their letters to each other and in Celie's case, the desperate letters she begins, "Dear God."
- Walls, Jeannette. *The Glass Castle*. The successful MSNBC.com gossip columnist, who "made it" against all odds, shares her astonishing memoir of a childhood lived in a seriously dysfunctional, but uniquely vibrant family.
- White T. H. *The Once and Future King*. Tells the story of the youth and reign of King Arthur, the establishment of the Round Table, and the search for the Holy Grail.