

Summer Reading Suggested List Grade 9 going into Grade 10



| | Title and Author | Brief introduction |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | <i>Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother</i> , by Amy Chua Non-fiction | If you think your mother is strict, read this memoir of a Chinese woman who lived in the US and was determined to raise her daughters in the Chinese style, American values be damned. Should self-esteem come before accomplishment, or accomplishment before self-esteem? If the latter, should it be achieved by threats and constant monitoring? Chua's teenage daughters are undeniably accomplished, but at what emotional cost? |
| 2. | <i>Coraline</i> , by Neil Gaiman Fiction | What's on the other side of the door in Coraline's new house? A distorted-mirror world, containing presumably everything Coraline has ever dreamed of: people who pronounce her name correctly, delicious meals, an unusually pink and green bedroom, and plenty of horrible marvels, like a man made out of live rats. The creepiest part, however, is her mirrored parents, her "other mother" and her "other father" — people who look just like her own parents, but with big, shiny, black button eyes, paper-white skin... and a keen desire to keep her on their side of the door. |
| 3. | <i>The Dark Knight Returns</i> , by Frank Miller Fiction | The graphic novel that redefined Batman and started the whole concept of grim and gritty superheroes. Batman comes out of retirement and takes on a tough young thug, Two-Face, the Joker, and Superman himself. |
| 4. | <i>The Hot Zone</i> , by Richard Preston Non-fiction | The history of the first outbreak of Ebola in the early 1990s. Full of horribly gross scenes like the one where a man's insides have been liquidated by the virus, and he bleeds out of every hole in his body. |
| 5. | <i>Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children</i> , by Ransom Riggs Fiction | As a kid, Jacob formed a special bond with his grandfather over his bizarre tales and photos of levitating girls and invisible boys. Now 16, he is given a mysterious letter that propels him on a journey to the remote Welsh island where his grandfather grew up. There he finds the children from the photographs alive and well, despite the islanders' assertion that all were |

| | | |
|-----|---|--|
| | | killed decades ago. As Jacob learns about his grandfather's childhood, he suspects he is being trailed by a monster only he can see. |
| 6. | <i>Moonwalking with Einstein: The Art and Science of Remembering Everything</i> , by Joshua Foer Non-fiction | A science journalist covers the US Memory Championship, and decides to train for the competition himself. Full of great techniques and stories about memory and memorization. |
| 7. | <i>The Perfect Storm</i> , by Sebastian Junger Non-fiction | The true story of a massive storm in the North Atlantic, and the fishing boat that got caught in it. The moment-by-moment description of what happens as a person drowns is scarier than most horror novels. |
| 8. | <i>The Rook</i> , by Daniel O'Malley Fiction | Myfanwy Thomas awakes in a London park surrounded by dead bodies. With her memory gone, her only hope of survival is to trust the instructions left in her pocket by her former self. She soon learns that she is a Rook, a high-level operative in a secret agency that protects the world from supernatural threats. But there is a mole inside the organization, and this person wants her dead. |
| 9. | <i>A Walk in the Woods</i> , by Bill Bryson Non-fiction | Two middle aged men try to hike the 2,100 mile Appalachian Trail in the eastern US. One of the funniest books I've ever read. |
| 10. | <i>The Worst Jobs in History</i> , by Tony Robinson Non-fiction | All the dull, difficult, dangerous, and disgusting things that people have done for a living, from ancient Rome to modern times. |
| 11. | <i>Children of War: Voices of Iraqi Refugees</i> Non Fiction By Deborah Ellis | In this book, Deborah Ellis turns her attention to the Iraqi war's most tragic victims - Iraqi children. She interviews more than 20 young Iraqis, mostly refugees living in Jordan, but also a few trying to build new lives in North America. Some families left Iraq with money; others are penniless, ill, or disabled. Most of the parents are working illegally or not at all, and the fear of deportation is a constant threat. The children speak for themselves, with little editorial comment, and their stories are frank, harrowing, and often reveal a surprising resilience in surviving the consequences of a war in which they played no part. |
| 12. | <i>The Andromeda Strain</i> By Michael Crichton | Five prominent biophysicists have warned the United States government that sterilization procedures for returning space probes may be inadequate to guarantee uncontaminated re-entry to the atmosphere. Two years later, a probe satellite falls to the earth and lands in a desolate region of northeastern Arizona. Nearby, in the town of Piedmont, bodies lie heaped and flung across |

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| | | the ground, faces locked in frozen surprise. What could cause such shock and fear? The terror has begun, and there is no telling where it will end |
| 13. | <i>Go Set a Watchman</i> By Harper Lee | <i>Go Set a Watchman</i> is set during the mid-1950s and features many of the characters from <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> some twenty years later. Scout (Jean Louise Finch) has returned to Maycomb from New York to visit her father Atticus. She is forced to grapple with issues both personal and political as she tries to understand both her father's attitude toward society, and her own feelings about the place where she was born and spent her childhood. |
| 14. | <i>The Shakespeare Stealer</i> By Gary Blackwood | Widge is an orphan with a rare talent for shorthand. His fearsome master has just one demand: steal Shakespeare's play "Hamlet"--or else. Widge has no choice but to follow orders, so he works his way into the heart of the Globe Theatre, where Shakespeare's players perform. As full of twists and turns as a London alleyway, this entertaining novel is rich in period details, colorful characters, villainy, and drama. "A fast-moving historical novel that introduces an important era with casual familiarity." |
| 15. | <i>A Long Walk to Water</i> By Linda Sue Parks | <i>A Long Walk to Water</i> begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about a girl in Sudan in 2008 and a boy in Sudan in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two-hour walk from her home: she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the "lost boys" of Sudan; refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay. Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor, and his story goes on to intersect with Nya's in an astonishing and moving way. |
| 16. | <i>Elizabeth is Missing</i> By Emma Healey | In this darkly riveting debut novel—a sophisticated psychological mystery that is also a heartbreakingly honest meditation on memory, identity, and aging—an elderly woman descending into dementia embarks on a desperate quest to find the best friend she believes has disappeared, and her search for the truth will go back decades and have shattering consequences. |

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 17. | <i>The Shadow of the Wind</i> By Carlos Ruis Zafròn | Barcelona, 1945: A city slowly heals in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, and Daniel, an antiquarian book dealer's son who mourns the loss of his mother, finds solace in a mysterious book entitled <i>The Shadow of the Wind</i> , by one Julián Carax. But when he sets out to find the author's other works, he makes a shocking discovery: someone has been systematically destroying every copy of every book Carax has written. In fact, Daniel may have the last of Carax's books in existence. Soon Daniel's seemingly innocent quest opens a door into one of Barcelona's darkest secrets--an epic story of murder, madness, and doomed love. |
| 18. | <i>The Machine Gunners</i> By Robert Westall | With Nazi planes raining bombs on England night after night, every boy in Garmouth has a collection of shrapnel and other war souvenirs. But nothing comes close to the working machine gun Chas McGill pulls out of a downed bomber. While the police search frantically for the missing gun, Chas and his friends build a secret fortress to fight the Germans themselves. |
| 19. | <i>Private Peaceful</i> By Michael Morpurgo | From the Children's Laureate of England, a stunning novel of the First World War, a boy who is on its front lines, and a childhood remembered. "They've gone now, and I'm alone at last. I have the whole night ahead of me, and I won't waste a single moment of it . . . I want tonight to be long, as long as my life . . ." For young <i>Private Peaceful</i> , looking back over his childhood while he is on night watch in the battlefields of the First World War, his memories are full of family life deep in the countryside: his mother, Charlie, Big Joe, and Molly -- the love of his life. Too young to be enlisted, Thomas has followed his brother to war and now, every moment he |

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 20. | <p><i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> By Erich Maria Remarque</p> | <p>This is the testament of Paul Bäumer, who enlists with his classmates in the German army of World War I. These young men become enthusiastic soldiers, but their world of duty, culture, and progress breaks into pieces under the first bombardment in the trenches.</p> <p>Through years of vivid horror, Paul holds fast to a single vow: to fight against the hatred that meaninglessly pits young men of the same generation but different uniforms against one another... if only he can come out of the war alive.</p> |
| 21. | <p><i>Redwall Series</i> By Brian Jacques</p> | <p>Redwall Abbey, tranquil home to a community of peace-loving mice is threatened by Cluny the Scourge - the evil-one-eyed rat warlord - and his battle-hardened horde of predators. Cluny is certain that Redwall will fall easily to his fearsome army but he hasn't bargained for the courage and strength of the combined forces of the Redwall mice and their loyal woodland friends.</p> |