



**To:** All Rising English 9 Students

**From:** The English 9 Team

**Date:** June 6, 2018

**Re:** Summer Reading for English 9

Dear Students,

It is the policy of Fairfax County Public Schools that all students are required to read one book over the summer. This policy is repeatedly supported by educational research.

“Research has demonstrated that choice makes a very important contribution to achievement” (Allington 2010)

“Just like hockey players lose some of their skills if they stay off their skates and off the ice for three months, children who do not read in the summer lose two to three months of reading development.” (McGill-Franzen 2010)

High school is a time to experience new ideas, define your identity, and discover the role of education in your life. To start this journey, you will select one novel from the list or pick four of the short stories. The short stories are hyperlinked in this document. You can acquire the novels from local libraries, local booksellers, or online.

In the first weeks of the school year, all students will be responsible for completing a written task in their English classes based upon their reading. Students are encouraged to annotate their texts (take notes) in order to more successfully complete this assignment.

#### REQUIREMENTS OF ALL STUDENTS:

1. You are required to read one novel from the list **or** four of the ten short stories.

#### HONORS EXTENSION ASSIGNMENT:

1. You must read one novel **and** four of the ten short stories

# Summer Reading Choice List 2018

**Directions: Select one novel from the following list, or four of the short stories, and read it this summer. Novels are grouped thematically with a short description to help you pick which one you might like. You can also preview the novels with the “Look Inside” feature on Amazon.com or by going to your local book store.**

## Coming of Age

- [The Water is Wide: A Memoir](#) by Pat Conroy (ISBN-10:0553381571)

From Amazon.com: “The island is nearly deserted, haunting, beautiful. Across a slip of ocean lies South Carolina. But for the handful of families on Yamacraw island, America is a world away. For years the people here lived proudly from the sea, but now its waters are not safe. Waste from industry threatens their very existence—unless, somehow, they can learn a new life. But they will learn nothing without someone to teach them, and their school has no teacher. Here is Pat Conroy’s extraordinary drama based on his own experience—the true story of a man who gave a year of his life to an island and the new life its people gave him.”

- [Deadline](#) by Chris Crutcher (ISBN-10:1613837968)

From Books-A-Million: “How can a pint-sized, smart-ass eighteen-year-old make his mark on the world from Nowheresville, Idaho especially when he only has one year left to do it? When Ben Wolf learns his senior year of high school will be his last year, period, he is determined to go out in a blaze of glory. That means not letting anyone know about his diagnosis. It means trying out for the football team. It means giving his close-minded civics teacher a daily migraine. It means going for the amazingly perfect, fascinating Dallas Suzuki. But living with a secret isn't easy . . . What will Ben do when he realizes he isn't the only person who's keeping one?”

- [A Girl Named Disaster](#) by Nancy Farmer (ISBN-10:05453566281 )

From Books-A-Million: “Eleven-year-old Nhamo lives in a traditional village in Mozambique, where she doesn't quite fit in. When her family tries to force her into marrying a cruel man, she runs away to Zimbabwe, hoping to find the father she's never met. But what should have been a short boat trip across the border turns into a dangerous year-long adventure, and Nhamo must summon her innermost courage to ensure her survival.”

- [The First Part Last](#) by Angelina Johnson (ISBN-10:1442403438 )

From Amazon.com: “Bobby is your classic urban teenaged boy -- impulsive, eager, restless. On his sixteenth birthday he gets some news from his girlfriend, Nia, that changes his life forever. She's pregnant. Bobby's going to be a father. Suddenly things like school and house parties and hanging with friends no longer seem important as they're replaced by visits to Nia's obstetrician and a social worker who says that the only way for Nia and Bobby to lead a normal life is to put their baby up for adoption. With powerful language and keen insight, Johnson looks at the male side of teen pregnancy as she delves into one young man's struggle to figure out what "the right thing" is and then to do it. No matter what the cost.”

- [This One Summer](#) by Mariko and Jillian Tamaki (ISBN-10:159643774X )

From Barnes and Noble: “Every summer, Rose goes with her mom and dad to a lake house in Awago Beach. It's their getaway, their refuge. Rosie's friend Windy is always there, too, like the little sister she never had. But this summer is different. Rose's mom and dad won't stop fighting, and when Rose and Windy seek a distraction from the drama, they find themselves with a whole new set of problems. One of the local teens - just a couple of years older than Rose and Windy - is caught up in something bad... Something life threatening. It's a summer of secrets, and sorrow, and growing up, and it's a good thing Rose and Windy have each other.”

## Cultural Conflicts

- [The Book of Jonas](#) by Stephen Dau (ISBN-10:0399158456 )

From Books-A-Million: “Jonas is fifteen when his family is killed during an errant U.S. military operation in an unnamed Muslim country. With the help of an international relief organization, he is sent to America, where he struggles to assimilate-foster family, school, a first love. Eventually, he tells a court-mandated counselor and therapist about a U.S. soldier, Christopher Henderson, responsible for saving his life on the tragic night in question. Christopher's mother, Rose, has dedicated her life to finding out what really happened to her son, who disappeared after the raid in which Jonas' village was destroyed. When Jonas meets Rose, a shocking and painful secret gradually surfaces from the past, and builds to a shattering conclusion that haunts long after the final page. Told in spare, evocative prose, *The Book of Jonas* is about memory, about the terrible choices made during war, and about what happens when foreign disaster appears at our own doorstep. It is a rare and virtuosic novel from an exciting new writer to watch”

- [March: Book One](#) by John Lewis (ISBN-10:1603093001 )

From Barnes & Noble: [March](#) is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, meditating in the modern age on the distance traveled since the days of Jim Crow and segregation. Rooted in Lewis' personal story, it also reflects on the highs and lows of the broader civil rights movement. Book One spans John Lewis' youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with Martin Luther King, Jr., the birth of the Nashville Student Movement, and their battle to tear down segregation through nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins, building to a stunning climax on the steps of City Hall.

Many years ago, John Lewis and other student activists drew inspiration from the 1958 comic book "Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story." Now, his own comics bring those days to life for a new audience, testifying to a movement whose echoes will be heard for generations.

- [Out of Darkness](#) by Ashley Hope Perez (ISBN-10:1467742023)

From Amazon.com: "This is East Texas, and there's lines. Lines you cross, lines you don't cross. That clear?" New London, Texas. 1937. Naomi Vargas and Wash Fuller know about the lines in East Texas as well as anyone. They know the signs that mark them. They know the people who enforce them. But sometimes the attraction between two people is so powerful it breaks through even the most entrenched color lines. And the consequences can be explosive. Ashley Hope Pérez takes the facts of the 1937 New London school explosion the worst school disaster in American history as a backdrop for a riveting novel about segregation, love, family, and the forces that destroy people.

- [Brown Girl Dreaming](#) by Jacqueline Woodson (ISBN-10:0399252517 )

From Barnes & Noble: “Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child’s soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson’s eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become.”

## Drama

- [Looking for Alaska](#) by John Green (ISBN-10:0142402516)

From Barnes & Noble: “Before. Miles “Pudge” Halter is done with his safe life at home. His whole life has been one big non-event, and his obsession with famous last words has only made him crave “the Great Perhaps” even more (Francois Rabelais, poet). He heads off to the sometimes crazy and anything-but-boring world of Culver Creek Boarding School, and his life becomes the opposite of safe. Because down the hall is Alaska Young. The gorgeous, clever, funny, sexy, self-destructive, screwed up, and utterly fascinating Alaska Young. She is an event unto herself.

She pulls Pudge into her world, launches him into the Great Perhaps, and steals his heart. Then. . . .After. Nothing is ever the same.”

- [Boy 21](#) by Matthew Quick (ISBN-10: 0375871691)

From Amazon.com: “Basketball has always been an escape for Finley. He lives in broken-down Belmont, a town ruled by the Irish mob, drugs, violence, and racially charged rivalries. At home, his dad works nights, and Finley is left to take care of his disabled grandfather alone. He's always dreamed of getting out someday, but until he can, putting on that number 21 jersey makes everything seem okay. Russ has just moved to the neighborhood, and the life of this teen basketball phenom has been turned upside down by tragedy. Cut off from everyone he knows, he won't pick up a basketball, but answers only to the name Boy21--taken from his former jersey number.”

- [A Prayer for Owen Meany](#) by John Irving. (ISBN-10: 0316127965)

From Books-A-Million: “In the summer of 1953, two eleven-year-old boys best friends are playing in a Little League baseball game in Gravesend, New Hampshire. One of the boys hits a foul ball that kills the other boy's mother. The boy who hits the ball doesn't believe in accidents; Owen Meany believes he is God's instrument. What happens to Owen, after that 1953 foul ball, is extraordinary.”

- [Where'd You Go, Bernadette: A Novel](#) by Maria Semple (ISBN-10:0316204269)

From Amazon.com: “Bernadette Fox is notorious. To her Microsoft-guru husband, she's a fearlessly opinionated partner; to fellow private-school mothers in Seattle, she's a disgrace; to design mavens, she's a revolutionary architect, and to 15-year-old Bee, she is a best friend and, simply, Mom. Then Bernadette disappears. It began when Bee aced her report card and claimed her promised reward: a family trip to Antarctica. But Bernadette's intensifying allergy to Seattle--and people in general--has made her so agoraphobic that a virtual assistant in India now runs her most basic errands. A trip to the end of the earth is problematic.”

## **Dystopia**

- [Feed](#) by M.T. Anderson (ISBN-10:0763662623)

From Barnes & Noble: “For Titus and his friends, it started out like any ordinary trip to the moon - a chance to party during spring break and play with some stupid low-grav at the Ricochet Lounge. But that was before the crazy hacker caused all their feeds to malfunction, sending them to the hospital to lie around with nothing inside their heads for days. And it was before Titus met Violet, a beautiful, brainy teenage girl who has decided to fight the feed and its omnipresent ability to categorize human thoughts and desires. Following in the footsteps of George Orwell, Anthony Burgess, and Kurt Vonnegut Jr., M. T. Anderson has created a not-so-brave new world — and a smart, savage satire that has captivated readers with its view of an imagined future that veers unnervingly close to the here and now.”

- [Little Brother](#) by Cory Doctorow (ISBN-10:0765323117)

From Books-A-Million: “Marcus, a.k.a ‘w1n5t0n,’ is only seventeen years old, but he figures he already knows how the system works—and how to work the system. Smart, fast, and wise to the ways of the networked world, he has no trouble outwitting his high school's intrusive but clumsy surveillance systems. But his whole world changes when he and his friends find themselves caught in the aftermath of a major terrorist attack on San Francisco. In the wrong place at the wrong time, Marcus and his crew are apprehended by the Department of Homeland Security and whisked away to a secret prison where they're mercilessly interrogated for days. When the DHS finally releases them, Marcus discovers that his city has become a police state where every citizen is treated like a potential terrorist. He knows that no one will believe his story, which leaves him only one option: to take down the DHS himself.”

- [Legend](#) by Marie Lu (ISBN-10:014242207X)

From Amazon: “What was once the western United States is now home to the Republic, a nation perpetually at war with its neighbors. Born into an elite family in one of the Republic's wealthiest districts, fifteen-year-old June is a prodigy being groomed for success in the Republic's highest military circles. Born into the slums, fifteen-year-old Day is the country's most wanted criminal. But his motives may not be as malicious as they seem. From very

different worlds, June and Day have no reason to cross paths - until the day June's brother, Metias, is murdered and Day becomes the prime suspect. Caught in the ultimate game of cat and mouse, Day is in a race for his family's survival, while June seeks to avenge Metias's death. But in a shocking turn of events, the two uncover the truth of what has really brought them together, and the sinister lengths their country will go to keep its secrets. Full of nonstop action, suspense, and romance, this novel is sure to move readers as much as it thrills."

- [Rot and Ruin](#) by Jonathan Maberry (ISBN-10:1442402334)

From Books-A-Million: "In the zombie-infested, post-apocalyptic America where Benny Imura lives, every teenager must find a job by the time they turn fifteen or get their rations cut in half. Benny doesn't want to apprentice as a zombie hunter with his boring older brother Tom, but he has no choice. He expects a tedious job whacking zoms for cash, but what he gets is a vocation that will teach him what it means to be human."

## **Fantasy**

- [Shadow and Bone](#) by Leigh Bardugo (ISBN-10:1250027438)

From Barnes & Noble: "Surrounded by enemies, the once-great nation of Ravka has been torn in two by the Shadow Fold, a swath of near impenetrable darkness crawling with monsters who feast on human flesh. Now its fate may rest on the shoulders of one lonely refugee. Alina Starkov has never been good at anything. But when her regiment is attacked on the Fold and her best friend is brutally injured, Alina reveals a dormant power that saves his life—a power that could be the key to setting her war-ravaged country free. Wrenched from everything she knows, Alina is whisked away to the royal court to be trained as a member of the Grisha, the magical elite led by the mysterious Darkling. Yet nothing in this lavish world is what it seems. With darkness looming and an entire kingdom depending on her untamed power, Alina will have to confront the secrets of the Grisha . . . and the secrets of her heart."

- [Abarat](#) by Clive Barker (ISBN-10:0062094106)

From Barnes & Noble: "In *Abarat*, accomplished novelist and artist Clive Barker turns his considerable talents to creating a rich fantasy world for young adults. Candy Quackenbush is growing up in Chickentown, Minnesota, yearning for more--which she finds, quite unexpectedly, when a man with eight heads appears from nowhere in the middle of the prairie, being chased by something *really* monstrous. And so begins Candy's epic adventure to the islands of the Abarat. Peopled by all manner of creatures, cultures, and customs, the islands should prove a fertile setting for the series that Barker is calling *The Books of Abarat*. Candy is an intelligent and likable heroine, and the many supporting characters are deftly drawn, both in words and in the full-color interior art that Barker has produced to give the story an extra dimension. *Abarat* delivers the rich and imaginative storytelling that Barker is known for, with less overt horror or violence than one of his adult novels might include. However, Candy's path isn't an easy one, and young adult readers should appreciate the hard choices she must make along the way."

- [Graceling](#) by Kristin Cashore (ISBN-10:0547258305)

From Books-A-Million: "In this debut fantasy novel, Cashore treats readers to compelling and eminently likable characters and a story that draws them in from the first paragraph. In Katsa's world, the "Graced," those gifted in a particular way, are marked by eyes that are different colors. Katsa's Grace is that she is a gifted fighter, and, as such, she is virtually invincible. She is in the service of her tyrannical uncle, king of one of the seven kingdoms, and she is forced to torture people for infractions against him. She has secretly formed the Council, which acts in the service of justice and fairness for those who have been accused and abused. Readers meet her as she is rescuing the father of the Lienid king, who has been abducted. The reasons for his capture are part of a tightening plot that Katsa unravels and resolves, with the help of Prince Po, the captive's grandson. He has his own particular Grace, and he becomes Katsa's lover and partner in what becomes a mortally dangerous mission. Cashore's style is exemplary: while each detail helps to paint a picture, the description is always in the service of the story, always helping readers to a greater understanding of what is happening and why. This is gorgeous storytelling: exciting, stirring, and accessible. Fantasy and romance readers will be thrilled."

- [Seraphina](#) by Rachel Harman (ISBN-10:0375866221)

From Amazon.com: “In the kingdom of Goredd, dragons and humans live and work side by side – while below the surface, tensions and hostility simmer. The newest member of the royal court, a uniquely gifted musician named Seraphina, holds a deep secret of her own. One that she guards with all of her being. When a member of the royal family is brutally murdered, Seraphina is drawn into the investigation alongside the dangerously perceptive—and dashing—Prince Lucien. But as the two uncover a sinister plot to destroy the wavering peace of the kingdom, Seraphina’s struggle to protect her secret becomes increasingly difficult... while its discovery could mean her very life.”

- [The Crystal Cave](#) by Mary Stewart (ISBN-10:0060548258)

From Amazon.com: “Initially published nearly thirty years ago, Mary Stewart's *The Crystal Cave* has been spellbinding readers and converting them into serious Arthurian buffs ever since. The first in a series of four books, this novel focuses on the early life of Merlin the magician, and the political developments of fifth-century Britain. Not for the fainthearted, this verbose text pays careful attention to historical details and methodical plot development. Merlin's childhood is formed by the absence of his reticent, convent-bound mother and his unnamed and unknown father. As the bastard grandson of a local king, Merlin is the object of both envy and ridicule. His strange powers and predictions earn him greater status as a pariah, and he leaves home as a preadolescent. Returning years later as a young man--empowered by self-knowledge and magic--Merlin finds himself caught in the currents of the shifting kingdoms. As an established classic in this genre, and the first in a popular series, *The Crystal Cave* introduces this familiar character with fresh sensitivity. While readers looking for the romance of *First Knight* will be disappointed, those happy with tight writing and a complex story line will be satisfied.”

## History

- [Chains](#) by Laurie Halse Anderson (ISBN-10:1416905863)

From Books-A-Million: “As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom.”

- [Forbidden City](#) by William Bell (ISBN-10:0440226791)

From Barnes & Noble: “Seventeen-year-old Alex Jackson comes home from school to find that his father, a CBC news cameraman, wants to take him to China's capital, Beijing. Once there, Alex finds himself on his own in Tian An Men Square as desperate students fight the Chinese army for their freedom. Separated from his father and carrying illegal videotapes, Alex must trust the students to help him escape. Closely based on eyewitness accounts of the massacre in Beijing, *Forbidden City* is a powerful and frightening story.”

- [Lost Boy, Lost Girl](#) by John Bul Dau (ISBN-10:142630708X)

From School Library Journal: “The tragic story of Sudan's Lost Boys and Lost Girls is told in simple language by two survivors. The authors explain that a civil war between Muslim Arabs in the north and Christian Africans in the south led to thousands of Sudanese being displaced from their homes. In 1987, when Dau was 13 and Akech was 6, war came to their village. Both traveled hundreds of miles to a UN refugee camp in Ethiopia. After a few years of safety, the refugees were forced to move again, back into Sudan and eventually to a new camp in Kenya. Through all those years, starvation, thirst, and disease plagued the Sudanese. Both Dau and Akech kept hope for the future by going to school and learning. Their story has a happy ending, with immigration to the United States and marriage. Teens who know little about Sudan and its problems will be drawn into this moving, inspirational story. More than just a memoir, it is a reflection on a lost lifestyle, with plenty of details about the beliefs and culture of the Dinka, the southern Sudanese people to which both Dau and Akech belong to.”

- [Chasing Lincoln's Killer](#) by James L. Swanson (ISBN-10:0545204704)

From Amazon.com: "The YA version of Swanson's bestselling *Manhunt*, this account of Lincoln's assassination and the 12-day search for his killer reads like a historical thriller, no matter that the narrative jumps among its locations and characters. As President Lincoln delivers victory speeches in April 1865, an enraged John Wilkes Booth vows death: 'Now, by God, I'll put him through.' Every bit of dialogue is said to come from original sources, adding a chill to the already disturbing conspiracy that Swanson unfolds in detail as Booth persuades friends and sympathizers to join his plot and later, to give him shelter. The author gives even the well-known murder scene at Ford's Theatre enough dramatic flourish to make the subject seem fresh. While Lincoln lays dying, Booth's accomplices clumsily attempt to kill Secretary of State William H. Seward, and Booth talks his way past a guard meant to bar him from crossing a bridge into Maryland. In focusing on Booth, the author reveals the depth of divisions in the nation just after the war, the disorder within the government and the challenges ahead."

- [A Young People's History of the United States](#) by Howard Zinn (ISBN-10:1583228691)

From Books-A-Million: A Young People's History of the United States brings to US history the viewpoints of workers, slaves, immigrants, women, Native Americans, and others whose stories, and their impact, are rarely included in books for young people. A Young People's History of the United States is also a companion volume to The People Speak, the film adapted from A People's History of the United States and Voices of a People's History of the United States. Beginning with a look at Christopher Columbus's arrival through the eyes of the Arawak Indians, then leading the reader through the struggles for workers' rights, women's rights, and civil rights during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and ending with the current protests against continued American imperialism, Zinn in the volumes of A Young People's History of the United States presents a radical new way of understanding America's history. In so doing, he reminds readers that America's true greatness is shaped by our dissident voices, not our military generals.

## Romance

- [This Lullaby](#) by Sarah Dessen (ISBN-10: 0142501557)

From Barnes & Noble: "She's got it all figured out. Or does she? When it comes to relationships, Remy's got a whole set of rules. Never get too serious. Never let him break your heart. And never, ever date a musician. But then Remy meets Dexter, and the rules don't seem to apply anymore. Could it be that she's starting to understand what all those love songs are about?"

- [Boy Meets Boy](#) by David Levithan (ISBN-10:0375832998)

From Amazon.com: This is the story of Paul, a sophomore at a high school like no other: The cheerleaders ride Harleys, the homecoming queen used to be a guy named Daryl (she now prefers Infinite Darlene and is also the star quarterback), and the gay-straight alliance was formed to help the straight kids learn how to dance. When Paul meets Noah, he thinks he's found the one his heart is made for. Until he blows it. The school bookie says the odds are 12-to-1 against him getting Noah back, but Paul's not giving up without playing his love really loud. His best friend Joni might be drifting away, his other best friend Tony might be dealing with ultra-religious parents, and his ex-boyfriend Kyle might not be going away anytime soon, but sometimes everything needs to fall apart before it can really fit together right. This is a happy-meaningful romantic comedy about finding love, losing love, and doing what it takes to get love back in a crazy-wonderful world.

- [Eleanor & Park](#) by Rainbow Rowell (ISBN-10:1250012570)

From Publisher's Weekly: "Half-Korean sophomore Park Sheridan is getting through high school by lying low, listening to the Smiths (it's 1986), reading Alan Moore's Watchmen comics, never raising his hand in class, and avoiding the kids he grew up with. Then new girl Eleanor gets on the bus. Tall, with bright red hair and a dress code all her own, she's an instant target. Too nice not to let her sit next to him, Park is alternately resentful and guilty for not being kinder to her. When he realizes she's reading his comics over his shoulder, a silent friendship is born. And slowly, tantalizingly, something more. Adult author Rowell, making her YA debut, has a gift for showing what Eleanor and Park, who tell the story in alternating segments, like and admire about each other. Their love is

believable and thrilling, but it isn't simple: Eleanor's family is broke, and her stepfather abuses her mother. When the situation turns dangerous, Rowell keeps things surprising, and the solution—imperfect but believable—maintains the novel's delicate balance of light and dark.”

- [Tisha](#) by Robert Spect & Ann Purdy (ISBN-10:0553265962)

From Amazon.com: “Anne Hobbs is a prim and proper 19-year-old schoolteacher who yearns for adventure. She finds this and much more in a town with the unlikely name of Chicken, located deep in the Alaskan interior. It is 1927 and Chicken is a wild mining community flaming with gold fever. Anne quickly makes friends with many of the townspeople, but is soon ostracized when she not only befriends the local Indians but also falls in love with one. A heartwarming story in the tradition of Benedict Freedman's classic, *Mrs. Mike*, *Tisha* is one of those rare books that stays with the reader for years, beckoning to be read again and again.”

## **Science Fiction**

- [Cinder](#) by Melissa Meyer (ISBN-10:1250007208)

From Amazon.com: Humans and androids crowd the raucous streets of New Beijing. A deadly plague ravages the population. From space, a ruthless lunar people watch, waiting to make their move. No one knows that Earth's fate hinges on one girl. . . .Cinder, a gifted mechanic, is a cyborg. She's a second-class citizen with a mysterious past, reviled by her stepmother and blamed for her stepsister's illness. But when her life becomes intertwined with the handsome Prince Kai's, she suddenly finds herself at the center of an intergalactic struggle, and a forbidden attraction. Caught between duty and freedom, loyalty and betrayal, she must uncover secrets about her past in order to protect her world's future.

- [Life As We Knew It](#) by Susan Beth Pfeffer (ISBN-10:0152061541)

From Barnes & Noble: Pfeffer tones down the terror, but otherwise crafts a frighteningly plausible account of the local effects of a near-future worldwide catastrophe. The prospect of an asteroid hitting the Moon is just a mildly interesting news item to Pennsylvania teenager Miranda, for whom a date for the prom and the personality changes in her born-again friend, Megan, are more immediate concerns. Her priorities undergo a radical change, however, when that collision shifts the Moon into a closer orbit, causing violent earthquakes, massive tsunamis, millions of deaths, and an upsurge in volcanism. Thanks to frantic preparations by her quick-thinking mother, Miranda's family is in better shape than many as utilities and public services break down in stages, wild storms bring extremes of temperature, and outbreaks of disease turn the hospital into a dead zone. In Miranda's day-by-day journal entries, however, Pfeffer keeps nearly all of the death and explicit violence offstage, focusing instead on the stresses of spending months huddled in increasingly confined quarters, watching supplies dwindle, and wondering whether there will be any future to make the effort worthwhile. The author provides a glimmer of hope at the end, but readers will still be left stunned and thoughtful.

- [The Age of Miracles](#) by Karen Thompson Walker (ISBN-10:0812982940)

From Books-A-Million: Spellbinding, haunting, *The Age of Miracles* is a beautiful novel of catastrophe and survival, growth and change, the story of Julia and her family as they struggle to live in an extraordinary time. On an ordinary Saturday, Julia awakes to discover that something has happened to the rotation of the earth. The days and nights are growing longer and longer, gravity is affected, the birds, the tides, human behavior and cosmic rhythms are thrown into disarray. In a world of danger and loss, Julia faces surprising developments in herself, and her personal world—divisions widening between her parents, strange behavior by Hannah and other friends, the vulnerability of first love, a sense of isolation, and a rebellious new strength. With crystalline prose and the indelible magic of a born storyteller, Karen Thompson Walker gives us a breathtaking story of people finding ways to go on, in an ever-evolving world.

- [Peeps](#) by Scott Westerfeld (ISBN-10:1595140832)

From Amazon.com: A year ago, Cal Thompson was a college freshman more interested in meeting girls and partying than in attending biology class. Now, after a fateful encounter with a mysterious woman named Morgan, biology has become, literally, Cal's life. Cal was infected by a parasite that has a truly horrifying effect on its host. Cal himself is a carrier, unchanged by the parasite, but he's infected the girlfriends he's had since Morgan. All three have turned into the ravening ghouls Cal calls Peeps. The rest of us know them as vampires. It's Cal's job to hunt them down before they can create more of their kind. . . .Bursting with the sharp intelligence and sly humor that are fast becoming his trademark, Scott Westerfeld's novel is an utterly original take on an archetype of horror.

## Sports

- [Ball Don't Lie](#) by Matt de la Pena (ISBN-10:0385734255)

From Amazon.com: "Sticky is a beat-around-the-head foster kid with nowhere to call home but the street, and an outer shell so tough that no one will take him in. He started out life so far behind the pack that the finish line seems nearly unreachable. He's a white boy living and playing in a world where he doesn't seem to belong. But Sticky can ball. And basketball might just be his ticket out . . . if he can only realize that he doesn't have to be the person everyone else expects him to be. Matt de la Peña's breakout urban masterpiece, *Ball Don't Lie* takes place where the street and the court meet and where a boy can be anything if he puts his mind to it."

- [Gym Candy](#) by Carl Deuker (ISBN-10:0547076312)

From Barnes and Noble: "Mick Johnson is determined not to make the same mistakes his father, a failed football hero, made. But after being tackled just short of the end zone in a big game, Mick begins using "gym candy," or steroids. His performances become record-breaking, but the side effects are terrible: Mick suffers 'roid rage, depression, and body acne. Gym Candy's subject matter is just as hard-hitting as its football scenes. You'll find yourself unable to look away as Mick goes down a road that even he knows is the wrong one to travel."

- [Foul Trouble](#) by John Feinstein (ISBN-10: 0375871691)

From Books-A-Million: "Bestselling sportswriter John Feinstein exposes the big money and back-room deals that pervade college-basketball recruiting in this fast-break young adult novel. Terrell Jamerson is the #1 high school basketball player in the country. His team is poised to win State, top colleges are lining up to give him scholarships, and everyone says he could play in the NBA tomorrow. But it only takes one false step to lose everything. Danny Wilcox is Terrell's best friend and teammate, and a top prospect himself, but these days it seems like 'everyone' wants to get close to Terrell: the sneaker guys, the money managers, the college boosters. They show up offering fast cars, hot girls, and cold, hard cash. They say they just want to help, but their kind of help could get Terrell disqualified. Danny and Terrell better keep their eyes on the ball if they hope to last the season."

- [The Only Way I Know](#) by Cal Ripken, Jr. (ISBN-10: 0140266267)

From Amazon.com: "There aren't many Americans who didn't feel a lump in their throat watching Cal Ripken, Jr. take a historic jog around the bases on the evening of September 6, 1995--the night he smashed Lou Gehrig's record number of 2,130 consecutively played games. But, as "the hardest working man in baseball" will tell you, he was just doing his job. And now he tells you just how he does it, why he does it, and how it makes him feel. With the candor and grace that have endeared him to fans everywhere, Cal Ripken, Jr. tells the story of his journey to the major leagues: of his early childhood and life with a baseball manager for a father; his stint in the minors, working his way up from the Rookie Leagues to Triple-A; and finally to the permanent call from Baltimore where he began the drive to an All-Star career. Cal talks with warmth of his mentors and teammates, and with honesty of the Orioles' roller-coaster ride from the pennant to a lamentable 0-21 start in the eighties. He reveals his innermost thoughts on the game, and leads us through his strategies at the plate and on the field. Best of all, Cal reveals what makes him tick: his commitment to the game, to his family, to his career, and to the team. In this rich and rewarding memoir, we find out why he's credited with putting the "great" back into America's greatest game: it's the only way he knows."

## War

- [With Every Drop of Blood](#) by James Collier (ISBN-10:0440219833)

From Amazon.com: “Johnny promised his father, wounded while fighting for the South, that he would take care of the family and not run off to fight. When there's a request to take his mules and wagon on a bold mission to supply the Rebel troops, Johnny can't resist. Then he's captured by Cush, a runaway slave. Johnny doesn't like taking orders from a black, but he has no choice. He's heading for prison camp wondering what will become of his family and himself.”

- [Sunrise Over Fallujah](#) by Walter Dean Myers (ISBN-10:0439916259)

From Amazon.com: Robin "Birdy" Perry, a new army recruit from Harlem, isn't quite sure why he joined the army, but he's sure where he's headed: Iraq. Birdy and the others in the Civilian Affairs Battalion are supposed to help secure and stabilize the country and successfully interact with the Iraqi people. Officially, the code name for their maneuvers is Operation Iraqi Freedom. But the young men and women in the CA unit have a simpler name for it: WAR

- [The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism, & Treachery](#) by Steve Sheinkin (ISBN-10:1250024609)

From Barnes & Noble: Most people know that Benedict Arnold was America's first, most notorious traitor. Few know that he was also one of its greatest Revolutionary War heroes. Steve Sheinkin's accessible biography, *The Notorious Benedict Arnold*, introduces young readers to the real Arnold: reckless, heroic, and driven. Packed with first-person accounts, astonishing American Revolution battle scenes, and surprising twists, this is a gripping and true adventure tale from history.”

- [Code Name Verity](#) by Elizabeth Wein (ISBN-10:1423152883)

From Books-A-Million: “Oct. 11th, 1943-A British spy plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France. Its pilot and passenger are best friends. One of the girls has a chance at survival. The other has lost the game before it's barely begun. When ‘Verity’ is arrested by the Gestapo, she's sure she doesn't stand a chance. As a secret agent captured in enemy territory, she's living a spy's worst nightmare. Her Nazi interrogators give her a simple choice: reveal her mission or face a grisly execution. As she intricately weaves her confession, Verity uncovers her past, how she became friends with the pilot Maddie, and why she left Maddie in the wrecked fuselage of their plane. On each new scrap of paper, Verity battles for her life, confronting her views on courage, failure and her desperate hope to make it home. But will trading her secrets be enough to save her from the enemy?”

## Short Story Choices

- [“The Machine that Won the War”](#) by Issac Asimov
- [“The Use of Force”](#) by William Carlos Williams
- [“The King of the Elves”](#) by Phillip K. Dick
- [“Brownies”](#) by Z.Z. Packer
- [“The Birds”](#) by Daphne Du Maurier
- [“The Secret Life of Walter Mitty”](#) by James Thurber
- [“Rules of the Game”](#) by Amy Tan
- [“Leiningen Versus the Ants”](#) by Carl Stephenson
- [“If I Forget Thee, Oh Earth”](#) by Arther C. Clarke
- [“The Golden Kite, the Silver Wind”](#) by Ray Bradbury