

MPH English Department Upper School Summer Reading List 2020

This year the English Department is taking a different approach to summer reading than we have in the past. Rather than assigning reading and writing for each class, we're giving you choices. In the list below, we've recommended a number of mostly contemporary books that we think you'll enjoy, but feel free to choose whatever books you'd like to read, even if they do not appear on our list. Search your family's book shelves, your public library's online offerings (until the physical libraries reopen), online (www.bookshop.org and www.betterworldsbooks.com benefit independent bookshops), or at a bookstore. **Plan to read at least one or two books, or challenge yourself to read five or more!**

Some Variations:

AP students will have specific reading and writing assignments but are encouraged to partake of books on this list, as well.

9th graders, in addition to reading books from the list, will read a small collection of articles and essays assigned by the 9th grade team of teachers, who will refer to these readings throughout the school year.

In September, we'll share our thoughts and reactions about the books we've read in class. It might aid your memory to keep a reading log as you go: record your thoughts, impressions, favorite passages, and whatever else you like. Reading logs are not required and will not be collected or graded.

Have a relaxing summer, and enjoy your reading!

Fiction

- [*Middlesex*](#) - Jeffrey Eugenides
- [*The Hours*](#) - Michael Cunningham
- [*House of Sand and Fog*](#) - Andre Dubus III
- [*Nickel Boys*](#) or [*Underground Railroad*](#) - Colson Whitehead
- [*All American Boys*](#) - Jason Reynolds
- [*Watchmen*](#) - Alan Moore
- [*There There*](#) - Tommy Orange
- [*The Family Fang*](#) - Kevin Wilson
- [*White Teeth*](#) - Zadie Smith
- [*Purple Hibiscus*](#) - Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie
- [*The Kite Runner*](#) - Khaled Hosseini
- [*The Good Girl's Guide to Getting Lost*](#) - Rachel Friedman
- [*Ishmael*](#) - Daniel Quinn
- [*Life of Pi*](#) - Yann Martel
- [*The Known World*](#) - Edward P. Jones
- [*The Fifth Season*](#) - N K Jemisin
- [*Year of Wonders*](#) - Geraldine Brooks
- [*Oryx and Crake*](#) - Margaret Atwood
- [*The Dead Zone*](#) - Stephen King

- [*Orphan # 8*](#) - Kim Van Alkemade
- [*Arcadia*](#) - Lauren Groff
- [*Eleanor and Park*](#) - Rainbow Rowell
- [*The Moor's Account*](#) - Laila Lalima
- [*The Good Lord Bird*](#) or [*Deacon King Kong*](#) - James McBride
- [*Black Friday*](#) - Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah
- [*Cold Storage*](#) - David Koepp
- [*The Saturday Night Ghost Club*](#) - Craig Davidson
- [*Uprooted*](#) or [*Spinning Silver*](#) - Naomi Novik
- [*The Changeling*](#) - Victor LaValle
- [*The Witch Elm*](#) - Tana French
- [*Number One Chinese Restaurant*](#) - Lillian Li
- [*Youngblood*](#) - Matt Gallagher
- [*The Song of Achilles*](#) - Madeline Miller
- [*Ninth House*](#) - Leigh Bardugo
- [*The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*](#) - Michael Chabon

Non-Fiction

- [*Hillbilly Elegy*](#) - JD Vance
- [*White Fragility: Why it is so Hard for White People to Talk about Racism*](#) - Robin DiAngelo
- [*How to Be an Antiracist*](#) - Ibram X. Kendi
- [*Just Mercy*](#) - Bryan Stevenson
- [*I Am Malala*](#) - Malala Yousefzai
- [*Born a Crime*](#) - Trevor Noah
- [*The Tao of Wu*](#) - the RZA
- [*Mo' Meta Blues: The World According to Questlove*](#) - Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson and Ben Greenman
- [*In Cold Blood*](#) - Truman Capote
- [*Between the World and Me*](#) - Ta-Nehisi Coates
- [*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*](#) - Malcolm X (with Alex Haley)
- [*Into the Wild*](#) - Jon Krakauer
- [*The Things They Carried*](#) - Tim O'Brien
- [*When Breath Becomes Air*](#) - Paul Kalanith
- [*Better: a Surgeon's Notes on Performance*](#) - Atul Gawande
- [*I Miss You When I Blink*](#) - Mary Laura Philpott
- [*Braiding Sweetgrass*](#) - Robin Wall Kimmerer
- [*The Color of Water*](#) - James McBride

Want to do some writing this summer?

You might try keeping a notebook (instead of a journal or diary). That means you're free to just write without feeling you must record significant moments in your life. Write fresh descriptions,

bits of overheard conversation you found interesting, a great phrase, a scene, realizations, whatever you like.

If you're looking for a more definite prompt for your writing, check out these resources:

[Screencraft's "What if..." Writing Prompts](#)

[NY Times Learning Network's Writing Prompts](#)