

KITTATINNY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Grade 12 Annotated Summer Reading List – June 2010

B - Biography/Autobiography /
Memoir

C - Classic
CF - Contemporary Fiction

GN - Graphic Novel
HF - Historical Fiction

M – Mystery
NF - Non Fiction

SCI/Fi - Science Fiction
SF – Sports Fiction

CF *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini

This novel focuses on relationships between women and how these relationships develop, grow and change against a backdrop of civil war and Taliban tyranny.

GN *Blankets* by Craig Thompson

Realism reigns supreme in both the story arc and in the humanity of its characters. This is Thompson's tale of growing up, falling in love, discovering the texture and limits of his faith, and arriving at a point from which he can look back at those experiences. Much of the story occurs when Craig and his brother Phil are young boys and includes images of boyish pranks.

(NOTE: Contains illustrated, mature scenes.)

HF *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown

Based largely on primary source materials, this work details how white settlers forced Indian tribes off the plains, often by killing them. Though Hollywood and "penny dreadfuls" portrayed Indians as red devils who launched attacks on homesteaders, this research shows that the opposite is closer to the truth.

NF *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America*

by Erik Larson

This book is the tale of Daniel Burnham and H.H. Holmes. Burnham is an architect who inadvertently creates a perfect setting for Holmes, a serial killer.

Sci/Fi *Einstein's Dreams* by Alan Lightman

In 1905 while working as an examiner at the Swiss Patent Office in Bern, Albert Einstein published three important papers in *Annals of Physics*. It recreates the dreams that culminated in a famous essay including one vision of a world without time. This is a provocative and elegant speculation on the nature of time.

B *Glass Castle: A Memoir* by Jeannette Walls

Walls opens her memoir by looking out the window of her taxi, wondering if she is "overdressed for the evening" and spotting her mother on the sidewalk, "rooting through a dumpster." She describes her parents and three siblings who learned to support themselves, eating out of trashcans at school or painting their skin so the holes in their pants didn't show. As each child escaped to NYC, their parents soon appeared on their doorsteps. "Why not?" Mom said. "Being homeless is an adventure."

C *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck

A poor farmer, Wang Lung, rises from humble origins to become a rich landowner with a large family. It contains a wealth of detail about daily life in rural China at the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century; it shows what people ate, their clothes, work habits, religions, and family customs.

HF *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett

Set in the rural South of the 1960's, this is a portrait of the intertwined lives of women on opposite sides of the racial divide. It evokes a time and place when black women were expected to help raise white babies, yet could not use the same bathroom as their employers. Characters, both white and black, are so fully fleshed, they practically breathe – no stock villains or pious heroines here.

SF *Hoops* by Walter Dean Meyers

A sports novel about a boy named Lonnie, who lives in Harlem with little hope for the future. He has one asset, his basketball game. His only chance for a scholarship depends on Cal, a failed pro who has hit bottom. Cal improves Lonnie's game, but disappears just when Lonnie needs him most.

M *The Hound of Baskervilles* by Sir Robert Conan Doyle

This novel tells the story of an attempted murder inspired by the legend of the Hound of Baskervilles. Sherlock Holmes solves the murder in this intriguing novel.

CF *Imperial Life in the Emerald City* by Chandrasekaran

This book looks at the civilian leadership of the American reconstruction project in Baghdad's Green Zone, a walled-off enclave of towering plants and posh villas that was the headquarters for the American occupation of Iraq. It details events from the end of the invasion of the war until the official transfer of power to the Iraqis and the growing insurgency.

NF *Long Emergency* by James Howard Kunstler

The book describes a shocking vision of a post-oil future; how the depletion of non-renewable fossil fuels could change our lives; what to expect after passing peak oil production, and the possible economic, political, and social effects.

CF *Looking for Alaska* by John Green

This is the story about a high school boy, Miles, and his school year broken into two parts, before a tragedy involving a friend, and afterwards. He learns lessons about loyalty, friendship, and life.

M *Lost Symbol* by Dan Brown

Detective Langdon has been called to Washington D.C. by his friend Peter Solomon, but instead of meeting him, finds his friend's severed hand, placed beneath a portrait of George Washington. Langdon and Katherine Solomon, Peter's sister, must decipher a series of clues hidden in the architecture of America's capital to solve the mystery.

CF *Nineteen Minutes* by Jodi Picoult

Set in a small town high school in New Hampshire, a community must deal with a shooting when a teenager kills nine students and one teacher in the span of nineteen minutes.

C *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey

This novel takes place in a mental hospital during the late 1950s. The story shows how an individualistic, near-superman named McMurphy overturns the senseless and dehumanizing routines of a mental ward. A closer look shows a commentary on U. S. society at that time.

NF *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson

In 1960, a woman noticed the birds had stopped singing and their population had decreased in her neighborhood. She summoned a friend, biologist Rachel Carson, to investigate. Her discoveries revealed the atrocities of pesticide poisoning. Carson's work left chemical companies trying to discredit her findings, and prompted the environmental movement.

CF *Sunrise Over Fallujah* by Walter Dean Myers

After enlisting in the War in Iraq, Robin Perry (Birdy), writes to his uncle about his impressions, experiences, and friendships as a soldier in Iraq. Assigned to a Civil Affairs Unit, Birdy provides a realistic glimpse of the war in Iraq.

M *Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* by Alan Bradley

Flavia de Luce passes her time in the laboratory of her deceased mother and an eccentric great uncle. When she discovers a dead body outside her bedroom window, she tries to solve the mystery herself, despite the objections of local authorities.