

AMHS Recommended Summer Reading 2020

Hey Wildcats! While you're winding down from school work and still spending lots of time at home, what better way to spend your summer than in reading good books! And if you could earn some rewards by reading, that's even better. The English teachers, librarian, and some parents have put together a list of recommended reads for you to check out. You may select any of these books **or** any book from Ms. Zellner's AP Language and Composition Summer reading list.

For every book you read and write a brief review (on turnitin.com), your name will be entered in a drawing to win one of several great prizes, including a **\$50 gift card**, a **Kindle**, or a **mystery bonus** from your English teacher. Read & review ten books to receive an extra entry for the drawing!

Drawings and winners will be announced during the first week of school. Reviews are due on turnitin.com on August 21, 2020.

Questions? Ask Mr. Wright—mwright@am-hs.org

1. ***A River Runs Through It*** by Norman Maclean

The finely distilled product of a long life of often surprising rapture—for fly-fishing, for the woods, for the interlocked beauty of life and art—*A River Runs through It* has established itself as a classic of the American West.

2. ***A Thousand Splendid Suns*** by Khaled Hosseini

A Thousand Splendid Suns is at once an incredible chronicle of thirty years of Afghan history and a deeply moving story of family, friendship, faith, and the salvation to be found in love.

3. ***And The Mountains Echoed*** by Khaled Hosseini

Hosseini explores the many ways in which families nurture, wound, betray, honor, and sacrifice for one another; and how often we are surprised by the actions of those closest to us, at the times that matter most. Following its characters and the ramifications of their lives and choices and loves around the globe—from Kabul to Paris to San Francisco to the Greek island of Tinos

4. ***Anna and the Swallow Man*** by Gavriel Savit

Kraków, 1939. A million marching soldiers and a thousand barking dogs. This is no place to grow up. Anna Łania is just seven years old when the Germans take her father, a linguistics professor, during their purge of intellectuals in Poland.

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She's alone. And then Anna meets the Swallow Man. He is a mystery, strange and tall, a skilled deceiver with more than a little magic up his sleeve. And when the soldiers in the streets look at him, they see what he wants them to see.

5. ***Beartown*** by Fredrik Backman

People say Beartown is finished. A tiny community nestled deep in the forest, it is slowly losing ground to the ever-encroaching trees. But down by the lake stands an old ice rink, built generations ago by the working men who founded this town. And in that ice rink is the reason people in Beartown believe tomorrow will be better than today. Their junior ice hockey team is about to compete in the national semi-finals, and they actually have a shot at winning. All the hopes and dreams of this place now rest on the shoulders of a handful of teenage boys.

6. ***Blink*** by Malcolm Gladwell

Blink is a book about how we think without thinking, about choices that seem to be made in an instant-in the blink of an eye-that actually aren't as simple as they seem.

7. ***Born a Crime*** by Trevor Noah

Trevor Noah's unlikely path from apartheid South Africa to the desk of The Daily Show began with a criminal act: his birth. Trevor was born to a white Swiss father and a black Xhosa mother at a time when such a union was punishable by five years in prison. Living proof of his parents' indiscretion, Trevor was kept mostly indoors for the earliest years of his life, bound by the extreme and often absurd measures his mother took to hide him from a government that could, at any moment, steal him away. Finally liberated by the end of South Africa's tyrannical white rule, Trevor and his mother set forth on a grand adventure, living openly and freely and embracing the opportunities won by a centuries-long struggle.

8. ***Circe*** by Madeline Miller

In the house of Helios, god of the sun and mightiest of the Titans, a daughter is born. But Circe is a strange child -- not powerful, like her father, nor viciously alluring like her mother. Turning to the world of mortals for companionship, she discovers that she does possess power -- the power of witchcraft, which can transform rivals into monsters and menace the gods themselves.

9. ***David and Goliath*** by Malcolm Gladwell

Three thousand years ago, on a battlefield in ancient Palestine, a shepherd boy felled a mighty warrior with nothing more than a stone and a sling, and ever since then the names of David and Goliath have stood for battles between underdogs and giants. David's victory was improbable and miraculous. He shouldn't have won. Or should he have? In *David and Goliath*, Malcolm Gladwell challenges how we think about obstacles and disadvantages, offering a new interpretation of what it means to be discriminated against, or cope with a disability, or lose a parent, or attend a mediocre school, or suffer from any number of other apparent setbacks.

10. ***Eleanor and Park*** by Rainbow Rowell

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Set over the course of one school year in 1986, this is the story of two star-crossed misfits-smart enough to know that first love almost never lasts, but brave and desperate enough to try. When Eleanor meets Park, you'll remember your own first love-and just how hard it pulled you under.

11. ***Everyday*** by David Levithin

There's never any warning about where it will be or who it will be. A has made peace with that, even established guidelines by which to live: Never get too attached. Avoid being noticed. Do not interfere. It's all fine until the morning that A wakes up in the body of Justin and meets Justin's girlfriend, Rhiannon. From that moment, the rules by which A has been living no longer apply. Because finally A has found someone he wants to be with—day in, day out, day after day.

12. ***Fire Shut Up in My Bones*** by Charles M. Blow

Charles M. Blow's mother was a fiercely driven woman with five sons, brass knuckles in her glove box, and a job plucking poultry at a factory near their segregated Louisiana town, where slavery's legacy felt close. When her philandering husband finally pushed her over the edge, she fired a pistol at his fleeing back, missing every shot, thanks to "love that blurred her vision and bent the barrel." Charles was the baby of the family, fiercely attached to his "do-right" mother. Until one day that divided his life into Before and After—the day an older cousin took advantage of the young boy. The story of how Charles escaped that world to become one of America's most innovative and respected public figures is a stirring, redemptive journey that works its way into the deepest chambers of the heart.

13. ***House Rules*** by Jodi Picoult

Jacob Hunt is a teen with Asperger's syndrome. He's hopeless at reading social cues or expressing himself well to others, though he is brilliant in many ways. He has a special focus on one subject—forensic analysis. A police scanner in his room clues him in to crime scenes, and he's always showing up and telling the cops what to do. And he's usually right. But when Jacob's small hometown is rocked by a terrible murder, law enforcement comes to him. Jacob's behaviors are hallmark Asperger's, but they look a lot like guilt to the local police. Suddenly the Hunt family, who only want to fit in, are thrust directly in the spotlight. For Jacob's mother, it's a brutal reminder of the intolerance and misunderstanding that always threaten her family. For his brother, it's another indication why nothing is normal because of Jacob. And for the frightened small town, the soul-searing question looms: Did Jacob commit murder?

14. ***Jubilee*** by Margaret Walker

Jubilee tells the true story of Vyry, the child of a white plantation owner and his black mistress. Vyry bears witness to the South's antebellum opulence and to its brutality, its wartime ruin, and the promises of Reconstruction. Weaving her own family's oral history with thirty years of research, Margaret Walker's novel brings the everyday experiences of slaves to light. Jubilee churns with the hunger, the hymns, the struggles, and the very breath of American history.

15. ***Kite Runner*** by Khaled Hosseini

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The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, caught in the tragic sweep of history, *The Kite Runner* transports readers to Afghanistan at a tense and crucial moment of change and destruction. A powerful story of friendship, it is also about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies.

16. *Lucy and Linh* by Alice Pung

Lucy is a bit of a pushover, but she's ambitious and smart, and she has just received the opportunity of a lifetime: a scholarship to a prestigious school, and a ticket out of her broken-down suburb. Though she's worried she will stick out like badly cut bangs among the razor-straight students, she is soon welcomed into the Cabinet, the supremely popular trio who wield influence over classmates and teachers alike.

Linh is blunt, strong-willed, and fearless—everything Lucy once loved about herself. She is also Lucy's last solid link to her life before private school, but she is growing tired of being eclipsed by the glamour of the Cabinet. As Lucy floats further away from the world she once knew, her connection to Linh—and to her old life—threatens to snap. Sharp and honest, Alice Pung's novel examines what it means to grow into the person you want to be without leaving yourself behind.

17. *Nineteen Minutes* by Jodi Picoult

Sterling is an ordinary New Hampshire town where nothing ever happens--until the day its complacency is shattered by a school shooting. Josie Cormier, the daughter of the judge sitting on the case, should be the state's best witness, but she can't remember what happened before her very own eyes--or can she? As the trial progresses, fault lines between the high school and the adult community begin to show--destroying the closest of friendships and families. *Nineteen Minutes* asks what it means to be different in our society, who has the right to judge someone else, and whether anyone is ever really who they seem to be.

18. *March* by Geraldine Brooks

From Louisa May Alcott's beloved classic *Little Women*, Geraldine Brooks has animated the character of the absent father, March, and crafted a story "filled with the ache of love and marriage and with the power of war upon the mind and heart of one unforgettable man" (Sue Monk Kidd). With "pitch-perfect writing" (*USA Today*), Brooks follows March as he leaves behind his family to aid the Union cause in the Civil War. His experiences will utterly change his marriage and challenge his most ardently held beliefs.

19. *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell

In this stunning new book, Malcolm Gladwell takes us on an intellectual journey through the world of "outliers"--the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? His answer is that we pay too much attention to what successful people are like, and too little attention to

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where they are from: that is, their culture, their family, their generation, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing.

20. ***People of the Book*** by Geraldine Brooks

Inspired by a true story, *People of the Book* is a novel of sweeping historical grandeur and intimate emotional intensity by an acclaimed and beloved author. Called "a tour de force" by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, this ambitious, electrifying work traces the harrowing journey of the famed Sarajevo Haggadah, a beautifully illuminated Hebrew manuscript created in fifteenth-century Spain. When it falls to Hanna Heath, an Australian rare-book expert, to conserve this priceless work, the series of tiny artifacts she discovers in its ancient binding—an insect wing fragment, wine stains, salt crystals, a white hair—only begin to unlock its deep mysteries and unexpectedly plunges Hanna into the intrigues of fine art forgers and ultra-nationalist fanatics.

21. ***Ready Player One*** by Ernest Cline

In the year 2045, reality is an ugly place. The only time teenage Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the virtual utopia known as the OASIS. Wade's devoted his life to studying the puzzles hidden within this world's digital confines—puzzles that are based on their creator's obsession with the pop culture of decades past and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them.

But when Wade stumbles upon the first clue, he finds himself beset by players willing to kill to take this ultimate prize. The race is on, and if Wade's going to survive, he'll have to win—and confront the real world he's always been so desperate to escape.

22. ***Salt to the Sea*** by Ruta Sepetys

Winter 1945. WWII. Four refugees. Four stories. Each one born of a different homeland; each one hunted, and haunted, by tragedy, lies, war. As thousands desperately flock to the coast in the midst of a Soviet advance, four paths converge, vying for passage aboard the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, a ship that promises safety and freedom. But not all promises can be kept . . .

23. ***Small Great Things*** by Jodi Picoult

Ruth Jefferson is a labor and delivery nurse at a Connecticut hospital with more than twenty years' experience. During her shift, Ruth begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The hospital complies with their request, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders or does she intervene?

24. ***Stolen*** by Lucy Christopher

A girl: Gemma, 16, at the airport, on her way to a family vacation. A guy: Ty, rugged, tan, too old, oddly familiar, eyes blue as ice. She steps away. For just a second. He pays for her drink. And drugs it. They talk. Their hands touch. And

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before Gemma knows what's happening, Ty takes her. Steals her away. To sand and heat. To emptiness and isolation. To nowhere. And expects her to love him.

25. ***The Book of Unknown Americans*** by Christine Hernandez

When fifteen-year-old Maribel Rivera sustains a terrible injury, the Riveras leave behind a comfortable life in Mexico and risk everything to come to the United States so that Maribel can have the care she needs. Once they arrive, it's not long before Maribel attracts the attention of Mayor Toro, the son of one of their new neighbors, who sees a kindred spirit in this beautiful, damaged outsider. Their love story sets in motion events that will have profound repercussions for everyone involved. Here Henríquez seamlessly interweaves the story of these star-crossed lovers, and of the Rivera and Toro families, with the testimonials of men and women who have come to the United States from all over Latin America. *The Book of Unknown Americans* is a stunning novel of hopes and dreams, guilt and love—a book that offers a resonant new definition of what it means to be American.

26. ***The Color Purple*** by Alice Walker

The Color Purple depicts the lives of African American women in early twentieth-century rural Georgia. Separated as girls, sisters Celie and Nettie sustain their loyalty to and hope in each other across time, distance and silence. Through a series of letters spanning twenty years, first from Celie to God, then the sisters to each other despite the unknown, the novel draws readers into its rich and memorable portrayals of Celie, Nettie, Shug Avery and Sofia and their experience. *The Color Purple* broke the silence around domestic and sexual abuse, narrating the lives of women through their pain and struggle, companionship and growth, resilience and bravery. Deeply compassionate and beautifully imagined, Alice Walker's epic carries readers on a spirit-affirming journey towards redemption and love.

27. ***The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*** by Rebecca Skloot

Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors, yet her cells—taken without her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in medicine: The first “immortal” human cells grown in culture, which are still alive today, though she has been dead for more than sixty years. HeLa cells were vital for developing the polio vaccine; uncovered secrets of cancer, viruses, and the atom bomb's effects; helped lead to important advances like in vitro fertilization, cloning, and gene mapping; and have been bought and sold by the billions.

28. ***The Poet X*** by Elizabeth Acevedo

Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking. But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook, reciting the words to herself like prayers—especially after she catches feelings for a boy in her bio class named Aman, who her family can never know about. With Mami's determination to force her daughter to obey the laws of the church, Xiomara understands that her thoughts are

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best kept to herself. So when she is invited to join her school's slam poetry club, she doesn't know how she could ever attend without her mami finding out. But she still can't stop thinking about performing her poems.

29. *The Storyteller* by Jodi Picoult

Sage Singer is a baker. She works through the night, preparing the day's breads and pastries, trying to escape a reality of loneliness, bad memories, and the shadow of her mother's death. When Josef Weber, an elderly man in Sage's grief support group, begins stopping by the bakery, they strike up an unlikely friendship. Despite their differences, they see in each other the hidden scars that others can't. Everything changes on the day that Josef confesses a long-buried and shame-ful secret and asks Sage for an extraordinary favor. If she says yes, she faces not only moral repercussions, but potentially legal ones as well. With the integrity of the closest friend she's ever had clouded, Sage begins to question the assumptions and expectations she's made about her life and her family. In this searingly honest novel, Jodi Picoult gracefully explores the lengths to which we will go in order to keep the past from dictating the future.

30. *The Street* by Ann Petry

THE STREET tells the poignant, often heartbreaking story of Lutie Johnson, a young black woman, and her spirited struggle to raise her son amid the violence, poverty, and racial dissonance of Harlem in the late 1940s. Originally published in 1946 and hailed by critics as a masterwork, *The Street* was Ann Petry's first novel, a beloved bestseller with more than a million copies in print. Its haunting tale still resonates today.

31. *The Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell

The tipping point is that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire. Just as a single sick person can start an epidemic of the flu, so too can a small but precisely targeted push cause a fashion trend, the popularity of a new product, or a drop in the crime rate. This widely acclaimed bestseller, in which Malcolm Gladwell explores and brilliantly illuminates the tipping point phenomenon, is already changing the way people throughout the world think about selling products and disseminating ideas.

32. *The Turner House* by Angela Flournoy

For over fifty years the Turners have lived on Yarrow Street. Their house has seen thirteen children get grown and gone—and some return; it has seen the arrival of grandchildren, the fall of Detroit's East Side, and the loss of a father. But when their powerful mother falls ill, the Turners are called home to decide their house's fate and to reckon with how their past haunts—and shapes—their future. *The Turner House* is a striking examination of the price we pay for our dreams, and the ways in which our families bring us home.

33. *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

A gripping, heart-wrenching, and wholly remarkable tale of coming-of-age in a South poisoned by virulent prejudice, it views a world of great beauty and savage inequities through the eyes of a young girl, as her father—a crusading local lawyer—risks everything to defend a black man unjustly accused of a terrible crime.

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34. *Us Against You* by Fredrik Backman

A small community tucked deep in the forest, Beartown is home to tough, hardworking people who don't expect life to be easy or fair. No matter how difficult times get, they've always been able to take pride in their local ice hockey team. So it's a cruel blow when they hear that Beartown ice hockey might soon be disbanded. What makes it worse is the obvious satisfaction that all the former Beartown players, who now play for a rival team in the neighboring town of Hed, take in that fact. As the tension mounts between the two adversaries, a newcomer arrives who gives Beartown hockey a surprising new coach and a chance at a comeback.

35. *Year of Wonders* by Geraldine Brooks

When an infected bolt of cloth carries plague from London to an isolated village, a housemaid named Anna Frith emerges as an unlikely heroine and healer. Through Anna's eyes we follow the story of the fateful year of 1666, as she and her fellow villagers confront the spread of disease and superstition. As death reaches into every household and villagers turn from prayers to murderous witch-hunting, Anna must find the strength to confront the disintegration of her community and the lure of illicit love. As she struggles to survive and grow, a year of catastrophe becomes instead annus mirabilis, a "year of wonders. Inspired by the true story of Eyam, a village in the rugged hill country of England.