

Dear Students and Parents,

The English Department at Sturgis has created a new summer reading list that we hope will get our students excited about reading and will provide a starting point for the curriculum in the fall. Works were chosen for their global perspectives, their literary merit, their thematic relevance, their interest level, and their fit with our I.B. curriculum.

Our primary goals are for students to read and enjoy good literature and to begin the school year with a common experience and the background for discussion. Therefore, it is important that students in grades 9-11 complete the required book from the list provided. Students entering grade 12 do not have a summer reading requirement due to the expectation that they will be working on extended essays and CAS requirements over the summer.

During the first two weeks of school in the fall, students will be assessed on the books read. Each required book may be assessed through a test, an in-class essay, or an oral presentation. Additionally, it is recommended that students keep up a reading journal. Students might record quotations of interest or significance and personal response to them or make notes on plot, characterization, technique, structure, and meaning.

**Students must read the one required book for their grade level.** In the spirit of intellectual and academic pursuit, it is expected that students will NOT use reading aids such as *Spark Notes* and that any outside sources, including movies, which are consulted will be acknowledged in reading journals.

Enjoy the summer and enjoy your reading!

**Sturgis Charter Public School**  
**2015 Summer Reading for grades 9-11**

Each grade level has **ONE** required reading and many options for more enjoyable summer reading. While you are only required to read the required book, we encourage you to explore the other suggestions. Enjoy!

**9<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**REQUIRED READING:**

***The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope***

by William Kamkwamba

Description:

Young teen William, who taught himself enough physics and engineering to build a windmill and bring electricity to his drought-stricken village, discovered the magic of his Malawi homeland in the miracles of science.

**Recommended Reading :**

***True Grit*** by Charles Portis

In this novel, Mattie Ross recounts the time she went to hunt down and bring to justice the man who had killed her father. A western, told in the unique, bright, brilliant first-person voice of Mattie.

***Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*** by Ransom Riggs

This book is kind of for lovers of Harry Potter who have now a little more grown up. Ransom Riggs has created a book partly around his collection of odd and eerie antique photographs. When 16-year-old tries to learn the truth about his murdered grandfather's past, he ends up in Wales, where strange things begin to happen, involving Miss Peregrine and her peculiar students in an unusual orphanage. If you enjoy the book, it's the first in a series; the second volume has now been published.

***Let's Kill Uncle*** by Rohan O'Grady

A forgotten gem of a novel, it is kind of a book for kids and kind of a book for adults. When recently orphaned Barnaby Gaunt is sent to stay with his uncle on a beautiful remote island off the coast of Canada, he is all set to have the perfect summer holiday. Except there is one small problem: His uncle is trying to kill him.

***Chinese Cinderella*** by Adeline Yen Mah

Adeline Yen Mah returns to her roots to tell the story of her painful childhood and her ultimate triumph and courage in the face of despair. Adeline's affluent, powerful family considers her bad luck after her mother dies giving birth to her. Life does not get any easier when her father remarries. She and her siblings are subjected to the disdain of her stepmother, while her stepbrother and stepsister are spoiled. Although Adeline wins prizes at school, they are not enough to compensate for what she really yearns for -- the love and understanding of her family.

***The Scorpio Races*** By Massie Stiefvater (Audiobook)

Every November the water horses climb out of the ocean and the locals capture, train, then race them. However, water horses are carnivorous and will eat whatever is at hand, most often the rider on their back. 19 yr. old Sean Kendrick is the undisputed champion. Although he knows first-hand what the horses are capable of, he loves and respects them anyway. To save her house Puck Connelly becomes the first woman to enter the race. Although competitors they form a friendship with the knowledge that only one can win.

***I'll Give You the Sun*** by Jandy Nelson

Jude and her twin brother, Noah, are incredibly close. At thirteen, isolated Noah draws constantly and is falling in love with the charismatic boy next door, while daredevil Jude cliff-dives and wears red-red lipstick and does the talking for both of them. But three years later, Jude and Noah are barely speaking. Something has happened to wreck the twins in different and dramatic ways . . . until Jude meets a cocky, broken, beautiful boy, as well as someone else. The early years are Noah's story to tell. The later years are Jude's. What they don't realize is that they each have only half the story, and if they could just find their way back to one another, they'd have a chance to remake their world.

***The Secret Side of Empty*** by Maria Andreu

M.T. is an excellent student, has a wonderful group of friends and has just met a cute boy. But she must keep secret that she and her family are undocumented immigrants. M.T., who has dreams of going to college, begins to feel overwhelmed by her hopeless situation. She slowly withdraws from all that has been important to her and contemplates suicide.

This book challenges assumptions of immigrants as ignorant and "bleeding" the system. It brings up serious issues like immigration, suicide, and child abuse.

## **10<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

### **REQUIRED READING:**

#### **I am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban** by Malala Yousafzai

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education.

### **Recommended Reading:**

***The Spenser series of novels*** by Robert B. Parker

This is a Boston-based series featuring the detective Spenser. They are written with humor, quick plotting, and an overriding sense of the little guy against the big guys in this world. Certain plot points do arc across some novels, but really you can start anywhere in the series.

***The Rosie Project*** by Graeme Simsion

Don Tillman, a professor of genetics, has a fool-proof and logical plan to find a wife, the Wife Project. For fans who might wonder what Christopher from *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* might have turned out like as an adult. This book is funny and charming.

***Where'd You Go Bernadette*** by Maria Semple

The main character of this book is Bee, a 15-year-old girl whose mother has disappeared. But this is not a book for kids. It's a generous-hearted novel about family and art and following your heart to become the person you really should be.

***Room*** By Emma Donoghue

A suspenseful, eerie, at times strangely comic tale narrated by Jack, who is five years old, and lived with his mother in the same single room for his entire life.

***Ready Player One*** By Ernest Cline

In the near future, a virtual world holds a treasure hunt for the masses. A poor boy from the slums races against other enthusiasts, virtual clans, and a nefarious mega-corporation to uncover the treasure of this virtual reality which has very meaningful implications in the real world.

***The Book of Unknown Americans*** By Christina Henriquez

"When an accident causes brain damage to their very beautiful teenage daughter, the Rivera family leaves their comfortable life in Mexico to come to the U.S. Soon Maribel befriends a neighbor who sees her as separate from her injury and not defined by it. Their relationship, as well as prejudices in the community, will have tragic consequences for the Rivera family. A novel full of hope, tempered with guilt and reality, but escapes being depressing. Told in different perspectives with testimonials by neighbors."

***We Were Liars*** By E. Lockhart

Cadence's family comes from old-money. They're good-looking, distinguished, confident and own a private island. One summer, Cadence suffers a mysterious accident that leaves her with amnesia. Alternating between the past and present, uncovering the truth and the lies, this twisted novel leads to a shocking ending.

**11<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

**REQUIRED READING:**

***A Long Way Gone*** By Ishmael Beah

This is a riveting memoir about a young man who survives fighting in the civil war in Sierra Leone.

**Recommended Reading:**

***Breakfast of the Champions*** By Kurt Vonnegut

This is the story of "two lonesome, skinny, fairly old white men on a planet which was dying fast," and a novel that demonstrates that even ordinary life are part of something larger, and funnier, than you ever thought.

***The Circle*** By Dave Eggers

This is a "1984" for the modern era, in which a massive Google/Facebook-type corporation easily insinuates itself into people's lives. Told from the point of view of an idealistic employee of the company, called The Circle.

***Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*** By Ben Fountain

At a Dallas Cowboys halftime show on Thanksgiving Day, the eight surviving members of Bravo Squad, heroes from the war in Iraq, will be honored in a show featuring Destiny's Child. A sometimes funny, sometimes absurd, sometimes brutal, meditation on war, and a critique of the kind of society that keeps war going through a passive lip-service to patriotism.

***The Sisters Brothers*** By Patrick DeWitt

A western with a sneaky moral about the goodness in human nature vs. a hostile and violent world, featuring the Eli and Charlie Sisters, hired guns who go on a quest to murder a man named Hermann Kermit Warm.

***Swamplandia!*** By Karen Russell

This is the unusual story of the Bigtree family of Florida, a family of alligator wrestlers. It becomes a story about discovering the truth about your mature self, and about following your dreams, and about little hidden places everyone can carry inside. It gets weird and interesting and heartbreaking and hopeful.

***The Lacuna*** By Barbara Kingsolver

"The story of Harrison William Shepherd, beginning with his childhood in Mexico during the 1930s. His parents are separated, so he lives back and forth between the United States with his father and Mexico with his mother. During his time in Mexico he works as a plaster mixer for the artist Diego Rivera then as a cook for both him and his artist wife Frida Kahlo, with whom Shepherd develops a lifelong friendship. While living with and working for them, he also begins working as a secretary for Leon Trotsky who is hiding there, exiled by Stalin. And that's just Part One. The novel mixes real and fictional people to explore art, politics, and complicated human relationships."

***Angela's Ashes*** By Frank McCourt

Frank's mother, Angela, has no money to feed the children since Frank's father, Malachy, rarely works, and when he does he drinks his wages. Yet Malachy—exasperating, irresponsible, and beguiling—does nurture in Frank an appetite for the one thing he can provide: a story. Frank lives for his father's tales of Cuchulain, who saved Ireland, and of the Angel on the Seventh Step, who brings his mother babies. Perhaps it is story that accounts for Frank's survival. Wearing rags for diapers, begging a pig's head for Christmas dinner and gathering coal from the roadside to light a fire, Frank endures poverty, near-

starvation and the casual cruelty of relatives and neighbors—yet lives to tell his tale with eloquence, exuberance, and remarkable forgiveness.

***Bingo's Run*** By James Levine

"Bingo spends his days as a successful drug runner in Kibera, Nairobi. After witnessing a murder he gets sent to an absurdly corrupt orphanage where he decides to trust only himself. This decision leads to an interesting relationship with a potential adopter. Bingo has very questionable morals, no surprise considering his life. Everyone is a hustler in this book and being cunning is perhaps the most necessary survival skill. "

***Last Night I Sang to the Monster*** By Benjamin Alire Saenz

"Zach is a senior in high school but instead of being at school he's in rehab as a recovering alcoholic. He doesn't remember how he got there. He knows something really bad must have happened to make him block it from his memory. Through sessions with his counselor, Zach recalls the traumatic event that he has tried to forget. This is a poetic novel about addiction and demons. Hopeful because it shows how leaning on others can bring out the strength within yourself."