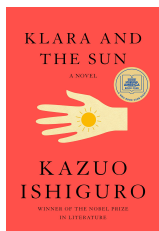


Recommended Summer Reading List - 2021

The recommended summer reading list is a compilation of titles, chosen annually by Solebury's English Department, intended to represent a variety of styles, eras, reading levels, and genres. The hope is that students will find something engaging and relevant. Some of the books deal with mature and challenging content. We suggest that students choose their books with help and discussion from parents and/or a trusted mentor or adult.

Fiction



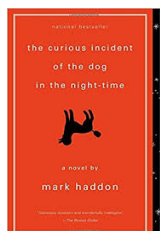
***Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro**

Tells the story of Klara, an Artificial Friend with outstanding observational qualities, who, from her place in the store, watches carefully the behavior of those who come in to browse, and of those who pass on the street outside. She remains hopeful that a customer will soon choose her.

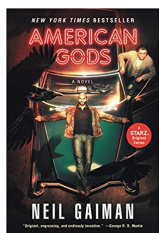


***All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr**

A blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France try to survive the devastation of World War II. An unputdownable book.

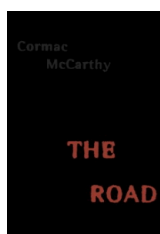


***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon** Narrated by a 15-year-old autistic savant obsessed with Sherlock Holmes, this dazzling novel weaves together an old-fashioned mystery, a contemporary coming-of-age story, and a fascinating excursion into a mind incapable of processing emotions.



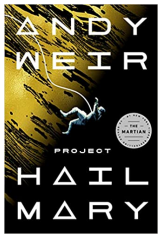
***American Gods* by Neil Gaiman**

The story of Shadow—released from prison just days after his wife and best friend are killed in an accident—who gets recruited to be bodyguard, driver, and errand boy for the enigmatic trickster, Mr. Wednesday.



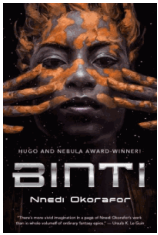
***The Road* by Cormac McCarthy**

Traces the journey of a father and his son as they walk alone after a great fire has consumed the nation and left everything in ashes.



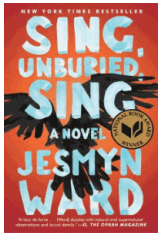
***Project Hail Mary* by Andy Weir**

Ryland Grace is the sole survivor on a desperate, last-chance mission—and if he fails, humanity and the earth itself will perish.



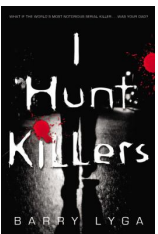
***Binti* by Okorafor Nnedi**

Her name is Binti, and she is the first of the Himba people ever to be offered a place at Oomza University, the finest institution of higher learning in the galaxy. But to accept the offer will mean giving up her place in her family to travel between the stars among strangers who do not share her ways or respect her customs. Knowledge comes at a cost, one that Binti is willing to pay, but her journey will not be easy.



***Sing Unburied Sing* by Jesmyn Ward**

Living with his grandparents and sister on a Gulf Coast farm, Jojo navigates the challenges of his mother's addictions and his grandmother's cancer before the release of his father from prison prompts a road trip of danger and hope.

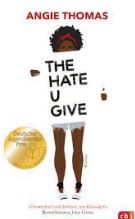


***I Hunt Killers* by Barry Lyga**

It was a beautiful day. It was a beautiful field. Except for the body. Jazz is a likable teenager. A charmer, some might say. But he's also the son of the world's most infamous serial killer, and for Dear Old Dad, "Take Your Son to Work Day" was year-round. Jazz has witnessed crime scenes the way cops wish they could—from the criminals' point of view.



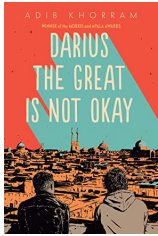
***Love, Hate & Other Filters* by Samira Ahmed** An Indian-American Muslim teen, and aspiring filmmaker, copes with Islamophobia, cultural divides among peers and parents, and a reality she can neither explain nor escape.



***The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas**

Starr has learned to adapt her personality to fit two worlds. "Garden Heights Starr" helps her ex-gangbanger father in his neighborhood grocery. "Williamson Starr" has a white boyfriend, and is one of the few black students at a tony prep school in an exclusive part of town. When gunshots ring out at a Garden Heights party, Starr and her friend Khalil leave.

Soon after, Khalil makes an innocent but unanticipated move at a traffic stop, and Starr witnesses his death by a white officer. In the ensuing weeks and months, Starr deals with reactions: her own, her family's, and those of her inner-city neighbors and upscale private school friends.



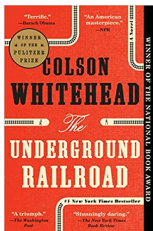
***Darius the Great is Not Okay* by Adib Khorram**

Darius has never really fit in at home, and he's sure things are going to be the same in Iran. His clinical depression doesn't exactly help matters, and trying to explain his medication to his grandparents only makes things harder. Then Darius meets Sohrab, the boy next door, and everything changes. Soon, they're spending their days together, playing soccer, eating faludeh, and talking for hours on a secret rooftop overlooking the city's skyline.



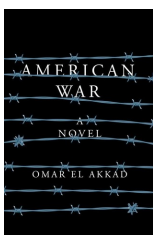
***Black Girl Unlimited* by Echo Brown**

Echo Brown is a wizard from the East Side, where apartments are small and parents suffer addictions to the white rocks. Yet there is magic . . . everywhere.



***The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead**

A work of speculative fiction that follows a runaway slave, Cora, on a grisly tour through the American South. Conveyed by the underground railroad, which the author has rendered as a literal mode of transportation.



***American War* by Omar El Akkad**

Sarat Chestnut, born in Louisiana, is only six when the Second American Civil War breaks out in 2074.



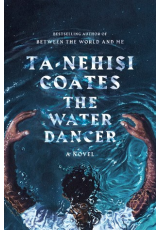
***Haunting of Hill House* by Shirley Jackson**

The Haunting of Hill House has been hailed as a perfect work of unnerving terror. It is the story of four seekers who arrive at a notoriously unfriendly pile called Hill House. At first, their stay seems destined to be merely a spooky encounter with inexplicable phenomena. But Hill House is gathering its powers - and soon it will choose one of them to make its own.



***The Only Good Indians* by Stephen Graham Jones**

Fans of Jordan Peele and Tommy Orange will love this story as it follows the lives of four American Indian men and their families, all haunted by a disturbing, deadly event that took place in their youth. Years later, they find themselves tracked by an entity bent on revenge, totally helpless as the culture and traditions they left behind catch up to them in a violent, vengeful way.



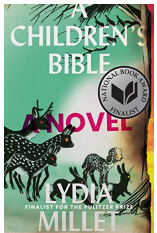
***The Water Dancer* by Ta-Nehisi Coates**

Young Hiram Walker was born into bondage. When his mother was sold away, Hiram was robbed of all memory of her — but was gifted with a mysterious power. Years later, when Hiram almost drowns in a river, that same power saves his life. This brush with death births an urgency in Hiram and a daring scheme: to escape from the only home he's ever known.



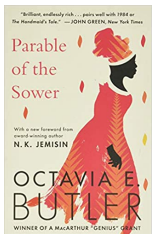
***The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett**

The Vignes twin sisters will always be identical. But after growing up together in a small, southern black community and running away at age sixteen, it's not just the shape of their daily lives that is different as adults, it's everything.



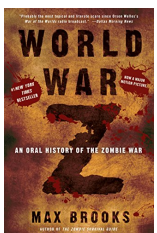
***A Children's Bible* by Lydia Millet**

Follows a group of twelve eerily mature children on a forced vacation with their families at a sprawling lakeside mansion. Contemptuous of their parents, the children decide to run away when a destructive storm descends on the summer estate, embarking on a dangerous foray into the apocalyptic chaos outside.



***Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler**

The odyssey of one woman who is twice as feeling in a world that has become doubly dehumanized. The time is 2025. The place is California, where small walled communities must protect themselves from hordes of desperate scavengers and those seeking to do harm.



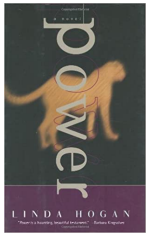
***World War Z* by Max Brooks**

We survived the zombie apocalypse, but how many of us are still haunted by that terrible time? We have (temporarily?) defeated the living dead, but at what cost? Told in the haunting and riveting voices of the men and women who witnessed the horror firsthand, *World War Z* is the only record of the pandemic.



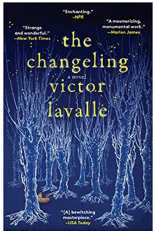
***Snow Crash* by Neal Stephenson**

In reality, Hiro Protagonist delivers pizza for Uncle Enzo's CosoNostra Pizza Inc., but in the Metaverse he's a warrior prince. Plunging headlong into the enigma of a new computer virus that's striking down hackers everywhere, he races along the neon-lit streets on a search-and-destroy mission for the shadowy virtual villain threatening to bring about infocalypse.



***Power* by Linda Hogan**

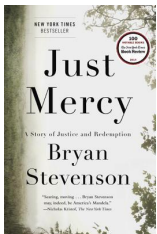
In this coming-of-age story, a 16-year-old Native American girl named Omishito (a Tiaga name meaning One Who Watches) inadvertently witnesses the hunting and killing of her clan's sacred animal, the Florida panther. What makes this especially troubling and complicated for Omishito is that her beloved spiritual mentor, Ama, is the panther's murderer.



***The Changeling* by Victor LaValle**

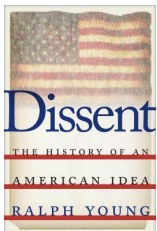
When Apollo Kagwa's father disappeared, he left his son a box of books and strange recurring dreams. Now Apollo is a father himself—and as he and his wife, Emma, settle into their new lives as parents, exhaustion and anxiety start to take their toll. Named one of the best horror books of the decade.

Non-Fiction



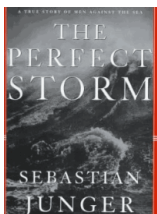
***Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson**

A powerful true story about the potential for mercy to redeem us, and a call to fix our broken system of justice—from one of the most brilliant and influential lawyers of our time.



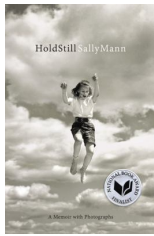
***Dissent: The History of an American Idea* by Ralph Young**

This book examines the key role dissent has played in shaping the United States. It focuses on those who, from colonial days to the present, dissented against the ruling paradigm of their time.



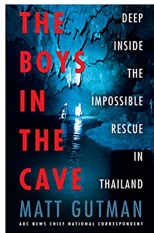
***A Perfect Storm* by Sebastian Junger**

Uses interviews, memoirs, radio conversations, and technical research to recreate the last days of the crew of the "Andrea Gail," a fishing boat that was lost in a storm off the coast of Nova Scotia in October 1991.



***Hold Still* by Sally Mann**

A revealing and beautifully written memoir and family history from acclaimed photographer Sally Mann.



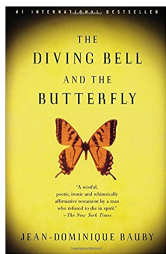
***The Boys in the Cave: Deep Inside the Impossible Rescue in Thailand* by Matt Gutman**

The definitive account of the dramatic story that gripped the world: the miracle rescue of twelve boys and their soccer coach trapped in a flooded cave miles underground for nearly three weeks.



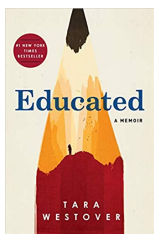
***Just Kids* by Patti Smith**

American singer-songwriter Patti Smith describes her relationship with photographer Robert Mapplethorpe, reflecting on how they first met, their pact to support one another, the challenges they faced, the people with whom they socialized and worked, and other related topics.



***The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* by Jean-Dominique Bauby**

In 1995, Jean-Dominique Bauby was the editor-in-chief of French **Elle**, the father of two young children, a 44-year-old man known and loved for his wit, his style, and his impassioned approach to life. By the end of the year he was also the victim of a rare kind of stroke to the brainstem. After 20 days in a coma, Bauby awoke into a body which had all but stopped working: only his left eye functioned, allowing him to see and, by blinking it, to make clear that his mind was unimpaired.



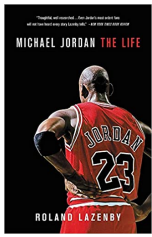
***Educated* by Tara Westover**

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent. Eventually, her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home.



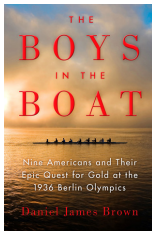
***Becoming* by Michelle Obama**

In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle Obama has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era.



***Michael Jordan: The Life* by Roland Lazenby**

Explores both sides of his personality to reveal the fullest, most compelling story of the man who is Michael Jordan. Lazenby draws on his personal relationships with Jordan's coaches; countless interviews with Jordan's friends, teammates, and family members; and interviews with Jordan himself to provide the first truly definitive study of Michael Jordan: the player, the icon, and the man.



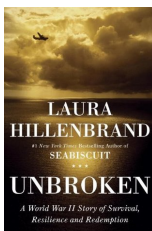
***The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Daniel James Brown**

Tells the story of the University of Washington's 1936 eight-oar crew and their epic quest for an Olympic gold medal, a team that transformed the sport and grabbed the attention of millions of Americans.



***The World is Blue* by Sylvia Earle**

This eloquent, urgent, fascinating book reveals how just 50 years of swift and dangerous oceanic change threatens the very existence of life on Earth.



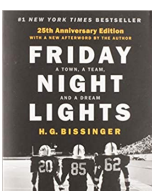
***Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand**

A biography of Olympic runner and World War II bombardier, Louis Zamperini, who had been rambunctious in childhood before succeeding in track and eventually serving in the military, which led to a trial in which he was forced to find a way to survive in the open ocean after being shot down.



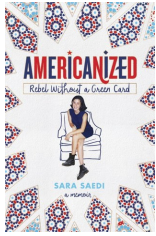
***A Little Devil in America: Notes in Praise of Black Performance* by Hanif Abdurraqib**

Abdurraqib writes prose brimming with jubilation and pain, infused with the lyricism and rhythm of the musicians he loves. With care and generosity, he explains the poignancy of performances big and small, each one feeling intensely familiar and vital, both timeless and desperately urgent. Filled with sharp insight, humor, and heart, *A Little Devil in America* exalts the Black performance that unfolds in specific moments in time and space—from midcentury Paris to the moon, and back down again to a cramped living room in Columbus, Ohio.



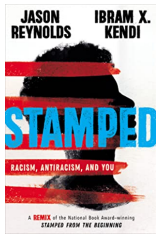
***Friday Night Lights* by H. G. Bissinger**

With frankness and compassion, unforgettably captures a season in the life of Odessa football and shows how single-minded devotion to the team shapes the community and inspires -- and sometimes shatters -- the teenagers who wear the Panthers' uniforms.



***Americanized: Rebel without a Green Card* by Sara Saedi**

At thirteen, bright-eyed, straight-A student Sara Saedi uncovered a terrible family secret: she was breaking the law simply by living in the United States. Only two years old when her parents fled Iran, she didn't learn of her undocumented status until her older sister wanted to apply for an after-school job, but couldn't because she didn't have a Social Security number.



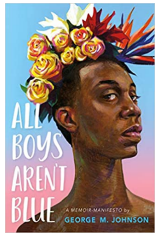
***Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi**

This is NOT a history book.

This is a book about the here and now.

A book to help us better understand why we are where we are.

A book about race.



***All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson**

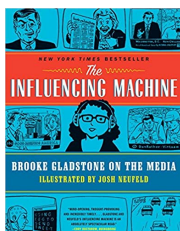
In a series of personal essays, prominent journalist and LGBTQIA+ activist Johnson explores his childhood, adolescence, and college years in New Jersey and Virginia. From the memories of getting his teeth kicked out by bullies at age five, to flea marketing with his loving grandmother, to his first sexual relationships, this young-adult memoir weaves together the trials and triumphs faced by Black queer boys.

Graphic Novels



***March* by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin**

A trilogy about the civil rights movement told through interviews with a Congressman who participated in them.



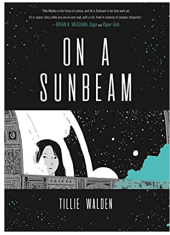
***The Influencing Machine* by Brooke Gladstone**

Bursting onto the page in vivid comics by acclaimed artist Josh Neufeld, this brilliant radio personality guides us through two millennia of media history, debunking the notion that "The Media" is an external force beyond our control and equipping us to be savvy consumers and shapers of the news.



***As the World Burns* by Derrick Jensen and Stephanie McMillan**

A cutting exploration of environmental activism.



***On a Sunbeam* by Tillie Walden**

Two timelines. Second chances. One love.

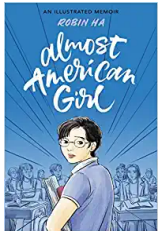
A ragtag crew travels to the deepest reaches of space, rebuilding beautiful, broken structures to piece the past together.

Two girls meet in boarding school and fall deeply in love—only to learn the pain of loss.



***Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel**

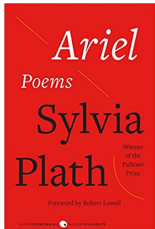
Meet Alison's father, a historic preservation expert and obsessive restorer of the family's Victorian home, a third-generation funeral home director, a high school English teacher, an icily distant parent, and a closeted homosexual.



***Almost American Girl* by Robin Ha**

A teenage memoir about feeling different in a new world, and finding yourself and new friends through comics and manga .

Poetry



***Ariel* by Sylvia Plath**

This collection showcases the beloved poet's brilliant, provoking, and always moving poems, including "Ariel," "The Applicant," "Lady Lazarus," and "Edge", and once again shows why readers have fallen in love with her work over generations.



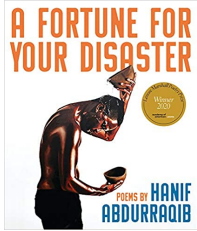
***This is Not a Frank Ocean Cover Album* by Alan Chazaro**

Structured like a rap mixtape, each poem on the “track list” is an ode to some vibration of memory, sound, or Chazaro's native Bay Area landscape. *This Is Not a Frank Ocean Cover Album*, just as we are not ever actually ourselves-but a collection of fragments from our component influences and cultures, a reflection of the choices we make in search of a more genuine self.



***Postcolonial Love Poem* by Natalie Diaz**

An anthem of desire against erasure. Natalie Diaz's collection demands that every body carried in its pages—bodies of language, land, rivers, suffering brothers, enemies, and lovers—be touched and held as beloveds.



***A Fortune for Your Disaster* by Hanif Abdurraqib**

Poet, essayist, biographer, and music critic Hanif Abdurraqib has written a book of poems about how one rebuilds oneself after a heartbreak, the kind that renders them a different version of themselves than the one they knew.