

## The MacDuffie School Summer Reading 2017

The English Department is pleased to present its summer reading program for the 2017-2018 academic year.

Each Middle School student (6-8) must read one mandatory summer reading book and one selected summer reading book before the school year begins.

Each Upper School student (9-12) must read two mandatory summer reading books and one selected summer reading book before the school year begins. The exceptions are the two AP courses; both have larger reading lists.

Summer reading thought questions for the mandatory books are available through the school's website.

Students should annotate their selected books as they read. Students should be prepared to write about their selections once they return in the fall; they will also be asked to discuss these books in class.

So that students might have a clearer sense of each choice, teachers have included short descriptions of the books for their respective classes.

We look forward to seeing you in the fall!

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### ENGLISH 6

**Mandatory:** *The Giver*, Lois Lowry

**Choose one from the following:**

***Turtle in Paradise***, Jennifer L. Holm

Set in the Florida Keys during the Great Depression, an eleven-year old girl named Turtle is sent to live with distant relatives when her mother is forced to take a housekeeping job for an employer who doesn't like children. While adjusting to new people and surroundings, Turtle experiences adventures particular to Key West involving lost pirate treasure, a hurricane, and a meeting with a famous literary figure. Combining rich description, humor, and historical detail, this selection also explores the importance of family and what that means to different people.

***A Single Shard***, Linda Sue Park

When Tree-ear, a thirteen-year old boy living in 12<sup>th</sup> century Korea, is apprenticed to the artisan Master Min, he learns how to create the highly prized and exquisite celadon

pottery. Hoping to be awarded a commission from the royal court, Tree-ear encounters unanticipated challenges and dangers as he journeys from his village to the palace, eventually arriving with no more than a small broken fragment of the original celadon creations to show the king's emissary.

***A Long Way From Chicago*, Richard Peck**

Set in the 1930s, Joey and his younger sister Mary Anne travel from their home in Chicago each summer to stay with their eccentric Grandmother Dowdel “down state” in rural Illinois. More a series of short stories than a novel, each chapter of the book recounts a humorous episode revolving around a most interesting and highly opinionated grandmother and a cast of characters from the small community in which she lives. Interesting situations and plenty of humor characterize this reading selection.

***When You Reach Me*, Rebecca Stead**

In 1979, Miranda is a middle school student living with her mother in New York City. One day, she receives a strange note from an unknown person. The notes continue to come, leaving Miranda confused and intrigued. Who is sending the notes? Why? Around the same time, other strange events start to occur in Miranda's life. Full of mysteries, this novel also has themes of identity, friendship, and even a bit of time travel.

***Powerless*, Matthew Cody**

Daniel Corrigan is a twelve-year-old boy who moves to a new town with his family to take care of his sick grandmother. Being the new kid is hard, but Daniel quickly makes friends with some kids in school. He soon learns that his new friends have a secret: they all have super powers. In fact, many of the kids in the town have super powers and, even stranger, they all lose their powers on their thirteenth birthday. A mysterious villain from the past appears to be the one stealing the children's powers, and Daniel, a normal kid with no powers, might be the only one who can help his superfriends.

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**ENGLISH 7**

**Mandatory:**            ***The Secret Life of Bees*, Sue Monk Kidd**

**Choose *one* from the following:**

***Witness*, Karen Hesse**

This novel, told entirely in verse from the perspective of twelve different people, recounts events in a small Vermont village in 1924 as the Ku Klux Klan begins to organize townspeople. At first, many not only underestimate the Klan's danger but also misunderstand the sense of perverted 'community' the organization offers. Eventually, all are forced to confront their prejudices, large and small, and take a stand.

***Farewell to Manzanar***, Jeanne Watkatsuki Houston

Within months of the bombing of the Pearl Harbor naval base in December, 1941, the government of the United States undertook the forced relocation of all Japanese citizens living on the West Coast because they were seen as a threat to American security. It did not matter that most of those forced to give up their homes, education, and jobs were full-fledged American citizens. Upon arrival at Manzanar, one of several hastily constructed internment camps, Jeanne begins a new life, one filled with bewildering contradictions and deprivation. In this memoir, Ms. Houston revisits the site and shares her thoughts as she tries to understand the experience she and her family were forced to endure.

***Shackleton's Stowaway***, Victoria McKernan

Ernest Shackleton's doomed 1914 Antarctic expedition includes an unwanted and uninvited guest: eighteen-year-old stowaway, Perce Blackborow. When given the opportunity to return home, Blackborow convinces the explorer to hire him as a ship's steward. Shackleton's voyage captivated the world's imagination, and this fictional account of the experience gives life to the exploits endured by the crew of the *Endurance* in their brave, and disastrous, attempt to reach the South Pole.

***Lyddie***, Katherine Paterson

Set in the early days of America's Industrial Revolution, eleven-year-old Lyddie is forced by circumstances to work in a New England textile factory, where conditions are not only inhumane but actually life threatening to those operating the machines. Lyddie's is but one of several stories of the hard-working young women who seek a better life through one of the very few opportunities life in 19<sup>th</sup> century New England provides.

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## ENGLISH 8

**Mandatory:** *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury

**Choose one from the following:**

***The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy***, Douglas Adams

Early in this very funny science fiction satire, aliens destroy the earth to make room for a space highway. (*Don't Panic!* I haven't given anything away!) A mild-mannered Englishman named Arthur Dent is rescued just moments before the disaster. Soon, Arthur finds himself on an amazing and perplexing adventure with his alien friend Ford Prefect, a two-headed galactic president named Zaphod Beeblebrox, Zaphod's human girlfriend Trillian, and a very depressed robot named Marvin. Oh, and the *Guide* itself is basically the best Google App ever. Beneath the humor, Adams offers some real social commentary about human flaws.

***Stones for My Father***, Trilby Kent

This gripping tale is set during South Africa's Boer War, over a hundred years ago. The British have attacked the homeland of 12-year-old Corlie Roux. When she and her family are forced to flee their home, Corlie must battle both the invaders and her own difficult mother as she struggles to survive. Corlie is a girl whose fierce love for her country and whose bravery under pressure make her a very compelling heroine.

***A Monster Calls***, Patrick Ness

This is a moving and beautifully told story. Conor O'Malley is a 13 year old boy who is haunted by the same nightmare every night at the same time. One night, he hears a voice outside his window. A monster seems to have come to life, and it wants to tell stories to Conor. Once it is done telling stories, Conor will have to finally tell his own. This novel deals with dark, serious issues in a remarkable way; the novel includes terrific pen-and-ink illustrations.

***The Adoration of Jenna Fox***, Mary E. Pearson

This is a fascinating novel about a 17-year-old girl, Jenna Fox, who's just woken up from a year-long coma. As Jenna tries to recall just what caused her accident, she can't shake the feeling that something's wrong with her memories. She also becomes suspicious that her parents and grandmother are keeping terrible secrets from her. As Jenna meets new friends and recalls old ones, she makes profound discoveries about herself and her world. This novel is not only a gripping read, but it asks great questions about the theme of personal identity.

***Nation***, Terry Pratchett

This is a great adventure story set in a parallel world to ours. The time is the mid-1800s. A boy named Mau, who lives on an island in the South Pacific, is in the middle of an initiation rite when a major tsunami hits. At the same time, a British girl named Ermintrude (who calls herself Daphne) is shipwrecked. Mau and Daphne find

themselves alone on Mau's deserted island home. Soon, Mau and Daphne make a discovery that could influence not only the future of the island, but the rest of human history. The story is told with humor, intelligence, and curiosity; it also delves into varied themes like social order, loneliness, science, race, and storytelling.

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## ENGLISH 9

**Mandatory:** (1st) *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe

\*\* Students are required to read *Things Fall Apart* first, as it establishes the foundation for *Purple Hibiscus*.

(2nd) *Purple Hibiscus*, by Ngozi Adichie

**Choose one from the following:**

***Ordinary People***, Judith Guest

A son's death in a freak boating accident leaves an "ordinary" family struggling to cope with devastating loss. Conrad Jarrett, the high school-aged protagonist, had grown up in the shadow of his more personable and athletic older brother, for whose death he feels responsible. Depression and a sense of isolation have led Conrad to attempting suicide, and as the novel begins, Conrad, recently released from hospitalization, and his parents must confront what each must do for genuine healing to occur.

***A Prayer for Owen Meany***, John Irving

In the summer of 1953, two eleven-year-old boys—best friends—are playing in a Little League baseball game in Gravesend, New Hampshire. One of the boys hits a foul ball that kills the other boy's mother. The boy who hits the ball doesn't believe in accidents; Owen Meany believes he is God's instrument. What happens to Owen, after that 1953 foul ball, is extraordinary.

***Persepolis***, Marjane Satrapi

This coming-of-age memoir portrays what it was like to grow up in Iran during a time of extraordinary political and religious turbulence. Urged by her grandmother to remember that there is "nothing worse than bitterness and vengeance," Satrapi recounts in comic-book illustrations the seismic events of the Islamic Revolution that shaped her youth, threatened the safety of her family, and changed her destiny in unforeseen ways.

***Snow Flower and the Secret Fan***, Lisa See

As young girls in 19<sup>th</sup> century China, Snow Flower and Lily begin a life-long friendship, one that must be maintained through a form of secret written communication, the only kind of communication possible in the rigid patriarchal society in which they live. Over time, their exchange of letters chronicles both historical and personal events,

as one woman escapes from class limitations by marrying a man of higher social status while the other finds her prospects dramatically and unexpectedly curtailed. Honoring long-held cultural traditions of family and clan impose sacrifice and even personal suffering on Lily and Snow Flower, whose secluded lives are enriched and sustained over the years by the bond of friendship.

***The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, Rebecca Skloot**

Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor black tobacco farmer whose cells—taken without her knowledge in 1951—became one of the most important tools in medicine, vital for developing the polio vaccine, cloning, gene mapping, in vitro fertilization, and more. Henrietta’s cells have been bought and sold by the billions, yet she remains virtually unknown, and her family can’t afford health insurance. From the “colored” ward of Johns Hopkins Hospital in the 1950s to stark white laboratories with freezers filled with HeLa cells, it’s a story inextricably connected to the dark history of experimentation on African Americans, the birth of bioethics, and the legal battles that have ensued.

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**ENGLISH 10**

**Mandatory:** *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Bronte  
*Lord of the Flies*, William Golding

**Choose one from the following:**

***Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen**

This beloved novel takes place in a world where a female’s livelihood is dependant on the man she marries. Strict social rules are in effect, but our heroine, Elizabeth Bennet, doesn’t want to settle for a marriage of convenience. She lives with her sisters, her overbearing mother, and her kind but weak-willed father. When a new family moves to the area, Elizabeth meets Mr. Darcy, a wealthy, handsome, but seemingly arrogant landowner. It’s dislike at first sight for Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy, but when their friends and family members threaten to elope or otherwise fall into scandal, something slowly begins to spark between them.

***The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, Neil Gaiman**

In this acclaimed fantasy novel, a middle-aged narrator returns to the English village where he grew up. There, he relives a time in his youth when a strange, supernatural woman invades his life and threatens his world. The only hope for the boy’s survival—and, perhaps, for his adult self—resides with a mysterious farm girl named Lettie, who may have magic powers of her own. This wonderful story examines themes of friendship, love, aging, family, regret, and the possibility that other worlds exist just beyond this one.

**1984**, George Orwell

This science fiction classic imagines a totalitarian London where every citizen is watched on TV screens by “Big Brother,” the government’s unseen leader, at all times. The hero, Winston Smith, is a low-level bureaucrat in the Ministry of Truth who hates what his country has become. His life is upended when he falls in love with Julia, a beautiful and mysterious young woman who inspires him to rebel. *1984* follows Winston’s quest to break free of a society where any word, any action, or even any thought against the government is a crime.

***Frankenstein***, Mary Shelley

Should you choose this novel, the first thing you’ll have to do is forget what you think you know from the movies. Mary Shelley’s Creature is not an unthinking, clanking hulk, but rather an intelligent, pained monster locked in a fateful spiral with his creator, the young Dr. Victor Frankenstein. The book is a wonderfully chilling story, written when its author was just 19. At its undead heart, the novel questions the power of science to control nature, and of man’s ability to control the results. In our current technological age, the issues this book raises have never felt more relevant.

***The Once and Future King***, T.H. White

While it did inspire *Camelot*, this four-books-in-one novel is a classic in its own right. Based on the medieval tales gathered by Sir Thomas Malory, *The Once and Future King* tells the story of King Arthur from childhood to death. It’s filled with humor (the first of the four books was adapted by Disney as *The Sword in the Stone*); it’s also filled with pageantry, adventure, doomed romance, meditations on aging, and a celebration of this most cherished of British legends. It’s a big, dense, old-fashioned read filled with lively prose, memorable characters, and a decidedly modern sensibility. Highly recommended.

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## ENGLISH 11

**Mandatory:** *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald  
*Bread Givers*, Anzia Yezierska

**Choose one from the following:**

***How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents***, Julia Alvarez

The novel centers on four sisters: Carla, Sandra, Yolanda, and Sofia, who immigrate to NYC (in 1960) from the Dominican Republic. Although they try to become Americanized, they are caught between the old and the new, belonging eventually to two distinct cultures. In addition to being a story of immigrant struggle and American culture, it is also a coming of age story, in which each girl works to become a fully-realized individual.

***Nickel and Dimed***, Barbara Ehrenreich

Motivated by welfare reform in the late 1990s, journalist Barbara Ehrenreich embarks on an undercover assignment to investigate the realities for low wage workers in America. Living in trailer parks and motels and working in a variety of minimum wage jobs like waitressing, she travels around the States to examine America's promise of the better life from the bottom.

***The Crucible***, Arthur Miller

The play is set during the Salem Witchcraft Trials and examines the hypocrisy and injustice of the early Puritan community, which brought about mass hysteria and murder. It is also about one man's courage (John Proctor's) to admit his own wrongs in order to protect the innocent and take a stand against false accusations. On yet another level, the play is a political pamphlet against Senator McCarthy and the Red Scare, which launched its own witch hunt against alleged communists in the 1950s.

***The Things They Carried***, Tim O'Brien

The novel is set during the Vietnam War and tells the story of several American soldiers who must face the burdens of war: the fear, the shame, the guilt, the brutality, the futility. It brings into question not only the nature of the Vietnam War but the nature of all wars and the individual responses of those involved.

***The Jungle***, Upton Sinclair

The novel is about Jurgis Rudkis, a young Lithuanian immigrant who arrives in America filled with dreams of freedom, opportunity, and wealth. The reality, however, is life in Packingtown, the Chicago stockyards where he and his family struggle to make a living, maintain their dignity and even their very lives. It focuses on the injustices of slave wages, back-breaking labor, and urban chaos.

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**ENGLISH 11: AP LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION**

**Mandatory:** *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell

*A Visit from the Goon Squad*, Jennifer Egan

*The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien

**Choose ONE from the following:**

***The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay***, Michael Chabon

The 2001 Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction, this book is about friendship, love, loss, magic, sexuality, heroism, fantasy, ethnicity, and the birth of American comic books. Joe Kavalier is a Czech-born teenaged Jew who undergoes a harrowing escape from Prague in the lead-up to WWII; Sammy Clay is the Brooklyn cousin with whom Joe lives upon his arrival in America. With the odds stacked against them, the boys find a shared vision in comics and pursue their respective versions of the American Dream.

***State of Wonder*, Ann Patchett**

This beautifully written novel crosses easy boundaries of genre as it follows the journey of Marina Singh, a scientist from Minnesota who travels deep into the Amazon on the trail of a research colleague who has suddenly died. Along the way, Marina encounters a famous doctor from her past and learns that a remarkable discovery may lie at the heart of the mystery. Patchett delves into issues of culture, loneliness, passion, motherhood, friendship, fear, courage, and modern science. The one is moving, thrilling, and thought-provoking, and asks the reader to reflect on how a good life may be defined.

***On Writing*, Stephen King**

You do not have to be a King fan to enjoy this work of nonfiction! Here, the famed horror author digs deep into what it means to be a writer. He describes his own upbringing, his struggles to become published, and the impact of fame on his life; he also describes the demons he faced in drug and alcohol abuse. The book also provides reams of terrific, practical advice on the craft of writing. Think of it as a wild ride and a great learning tool, all in one.

***The Brief, Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Junot Diaz**

The 2008 Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction, Diaz's novel focuses on a geeky, overweight Dominican outsider named Oscar de Leon. Oscar is a dreamer whose mother has a tragic history and whose sister is a runaway. The novel is set in New Jersey and the Dominican Republic; it shifts narrators and points of view; it jumps back and forth in time; it's filled with wild footnotes that delve deep into history, love, comics, and science fiction. Oh, and it sometimes slips into Spanish. A rollicking, heartfelt ride with a unique voice.

***The World According to Garp*, John Irving**

One of Irving's most treasured books, this novel follows the life of T.S. Garp, a fatherless boy who grows up to become a writer and wrestling coach at a New England private school. This novel is sometimes laugh-out-loud funny; it's also moody, sad, angry, and hopeful. Memorable characters in Garp's life include his mother, Jenny Fields, who becomes a feminist icon, and Garp's best friend, Roberta Muldoon, a trans person and former tight end for the Philadelphia Eagles. As Garp becomes a husband and father, he becomes ever more determined to protect the people he loves. A wonderful and challenging novel, *Garp* asks us to consider how much control we can and should have over our worlds, both real and imagined.

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**ENGLISH 12: WORLD LITERATURE (READING AND COMPOSITION)**

**Mandatory:** *Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan

***The Hemingway Book Club of Kosovo*, Paula Huntley**

**Choose one from the following:**

***Daughter of Fortune***, Isabel Allende

The novel tells the story of Eliza Sommers, a young woman, raised in a traditional Chilean house, who learns to embrace independence and her true self when she journeys to California during the Gold Rush in 1849.

***The Kite Runner***, Khaled Hosseini

The novel tells the story of Afghanistan in the 1970s and the coming of age of Amir (the privileged narrator) and Hassan (the son of his father's servant). It also chronicles the country's revolution, invasion by Russian forces, and rule by the Taliban.

***Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood***, Richard Kim

Set at the height of the Japanese occupation, 1935-1945, the novel follows one Korean family (and one young boy) forced to renounce their heritage (even their names) to adopt the Japanese culture and language.

***Sold***, Patricia McCormick

In a series of vignettes, the novel tells the story of Lakshmi, a 13 year-old girl from a village in Nepal. She is sold by her stepfather into prostitution in India, which she survives through her courage, perseverance, and hope.

***Angela's Ashes***, Frank McCourt

The memoir tells the story of a young boy growing up poor in catholic Ireland. It is a tribute to his mother Angela who overcame abandonment, sickness, prejudice, and deprivation to remain steadfastly devoted to her faith and her family. Humor combines with tragedy in this coming of age story that traces the struggles and the hopes of a family and a country growing beyond the taboos and superstitions of its past.

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**ENGLISH 12: WORLD LITERATURE (COLLEGE PLACEMENT)**

**Mandatory:** *Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan

*Letters to a Young Poet*, Rainer Maria Rilke

**Choose one from the following:**

***Daughter of Fortune***, Isabel Allende

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**ENGLISH 12: WORLD LITERATURE (HONORS)**

**Mandatory:** *Station Eleven*, Emily St. John Mandel  
*The Poisonwood Bible*, Barbara Kingsolver

**Choose one from the following:**

***Cloud Atlas***, David Mitchell

This rewarding and challenging novel roams across time and place, showing six varied and dramatic stories set in the past, the present, and the future. The book moves from character to character and genre to genre; for example, we zoom from the adventures aboard a 19th-century sailing vessel to a futuristic Korea in which cloning is common. Gradually, the links between the protagonists become clear, and the novel's themes of love, identity, and storytelling leap from the page.

***The Namesake***, Jhumpa Lahiri

The Ganguli family makes its way from Bengali to Cambridge, Massachusetts in this story of the inter-generational and trans-cultural challenges faced by an Indian immigrant family. While earning an advanced degree at M.I.T., Ashoke Ganguli and his pregnant wife try to establish a new life while continuing to honor old traditions. The

story focuses equally on their son who grows up considerably more accepting of American culture than his parents will ever be.

***Life After Life*, Kate Atkinson**

This beautifully told British novel follows the many lives and deaths of Ursula Todd, who is born during a snowstorm in 1910. Every time she perishes, Ursula is reborn on the same night, and from there makes slightly different choices that spin her life in a new direction. This is a fascinating blend of drama and fantasy; much of the story takes place in and around the lead-up to World War II. Ultimately, Ursula finds that her decisions might not only alter the lives of her loved ones, but could also have global implications. A rich, mesmerizing read.

***To Live*, Yu Hua**

Spanning decades of profound political and social upheaval in 20<sup>th</sup> century China, this award-winning novel tells the story of Fugui, whose misadventures have impoverished his wealthy landowning family. Fugui's attempts to redeem himself take unexpected turns, as he and millions of Chinese find themselves buffeted by the winds of Fate, most immediately represented by Civil War, famine, and China's Cultural Revolution. Through it all, Fugui is energized by the most basic human instinct, and finds meaning in life in spite of any obstacle he confronts.

***Song of Solomon*, Toni Morrison**

This thrumming, challenging novel tells the story of Macon "Milkman" Dead, a young African-American male who tries to make his way through life in mid-20th century Michigan while coming to grips with his complicated parents, his protective friend Guitar, and his racial and cultural heritage. The novel's daring structure, beautiful writing, and powerful themes helped earn Morrison the Nobel Prize for Literature.

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**ENGLISH 12: AP LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION**

**Mandatory:** *Picnic Lightning*, Billy Collins

*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Khaled Hosseini

*A Good Man is Hard to Find*, Flannery O'Connor

*The Kitchen God's Wife*, by Amy Tan