Incoming 9th Grade Summer Reading List

Emmaus High School 2010-2011

All ninth grade English/Reading students must read two books from the list, one fiction, one non-fiction. The list is divided into two themes—both books should come from the same theme group.

Please Note: In the English Department's attempt to provide rich and varied reading experiences for our students, we have selected titles for the summer reading lists written mostly by contemporary authors. Some selections are focused toward mature readers. Please consult your English teacher or the library staff if you have questions about the titles on the reading list. Titles marked with an asterisk in parentheses (*) contain adult language and/or situations.

School Fiction

Oates, Joyce Carol. Big Mouth & Ugly Girl. (Grade Level: 7-12)
Matt Donaghy has always been a Big Mouth. But it’s never gotten him in trouble—until the day Matt is accused of threatening to blow up Rocky River High School. Ursula Riggs has always been an Ugly Girl. A loner with fierce, staring eyes, Ursula has no time for petty high school stuff like friends and dating—or at least that’s what she tells herself. Ursula is content with minding her own business. She doesn’t even really know Matt Donaghy, but Ursula is the only person who knows what Matt really said that day…and she is the only one who can help him. ALA Best Book for Young Adults, ALA Booklist for Editor’s Choice, New York Public Library Best Books for the Teen Age, Book Sense Pick

(*)Sittenfield, Curtis. Prep. (Grade Level: 8-12)
Lee Fiora is an intelligent, observant fourteen-year-old when her father drops her off in front of her dorm at the prestigious Ault School in Massachusetts. She leaves her animated, affectionate family in South Bend, Indiana, at least in part because of the boarding school’s glossy brochure, in which boys in sweaters chat in front of old brick buildings, girls in kilts hold lacrosse sticks on pristinely mown athletic fields, and everyone sings hymns in chapel.

(*)Anderson, Laurie Halse. Speak. (Grade Level: 9-12)
Melinda Sordino begins her ninth grade year as the total outcast of the school. Melinda called 911 at the end-of-the-summer party, resulting in the arrival of the police. As the novel continues, the reader is given more hints about that night in which she attended the party. The isolation at school is continued at home, because her parents are so engrossed in work and life. They hardly notice the signs of depression from Melinda. She refuses to speak, her grades are plummeting, and her reputation as a “weirdo” is growing. When Andy attempts to attack Melinda again, she fights back and the truth is finally revealed to the school. 1999 National Book Award Finalist, 2000 ALA Quick Pick, 2000 Printz Honor Book, SCBWI Golden Kite Award

(*)Anderson, Laurie Halse. Twisted. (Grade Level: 8-12)
High school senior Tyler Miller used to be the kind of guy that faded into the background-average student, average guy, and average dysfunctional family. But since he got busted doing graffiti on the school, and spent the summer doing outdoor work to pay for it, he stands out like you wouldn’t believe. His new physique attracts the attention of Bethany Milbury, who just happens to be the daughter of his father's best friend.

School Non-Fiction

Gruwell, Erin. Freedom Writers. (Grade Level: 9-12)
The amazing true story of strength, courage, and achievement in the face of adversity. In the fall of 19994, in Room 203 at Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, California, an idealistic teacher named Erin Gruwell faced her first group of students, dubbed by the administration as “unteachable, at risk” teenagers. The class was a diverse mix of African-American, Latino, Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Caucasian students many of whom had grown up in rough neighborhoods in Long Beach. A pivotal moment changed their lives forever, and Erin encouraged them to rethink rigid beliefs about themselves and others.

Strasser, Todd. The Wave. (Grade Level: 6-12)
This is a story based upon an event that took place as the result of a History class experiment in a California high school in 1969. Ben Ross, a high school history teacher, begins his usual unit on World War II with a film about the horrors that occurred in Nazi concentration camps. His students have mixed reactions to the topic. Laurie, a popular student, raises questions that the teacher cannot answer and states that this could never happen again. The teacher concocts an experiment to illustrate to his students that blind following can easily happen, even in their own school. 1992 Best Books for Young Adults, 1983 Great Britain Federation of Children’s Book Award

Sports Fiction

De la Pena, Matt. Ball Don’t Lie. (Grade Level: 9-12)
Sticky finds a break from his tough life in the Los Angeles foster care system by playing basketball at Lincoln Rec Center. De la Pena writes with the words and rhythms of hip-hop and the street. ALA Best Books for Young Adults, ALA Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers
Rottman, S.L. *Head Above Water.* (Grade level: 8-12)
Skye Johnson, a junior, is training to hard to qualify for state championships. She needs a swimming scholarship to go to college. Between her swimming, and keeping up her grades, Skye doesn't have time for much else. But because her mother works two jobs to support the family, Skye must spend the rest of her time caring for her older brother, Sunny who has Down Syndrome. To find time for her new boyfriend, Skye chooses to break a trust, never dreaming of the complications that will follow. 2000 ALA Best Book for Young Adults, 2000 Finalist Oklahoma and Colorado Book Award

Peet, Mal. *Keeper.* (Grade level: 7-12)
When acclaimed South American journalist Paul Faustino begins his interview with World Cup soccer star El Gato, he expects to be recording the thoughts of a goalkeeper at the height of his career. He never envisioned hearing about a young, lonely boy growing up in the middle of a rain forest, who wandered upon a mysterious soccer field and an apparition that appeared to him daily and trained him to become the greatest goalkeeper ever known. Is El Gato mad? Is he suffering from hallucinations due to the stress of the game? Is there some truth to be discovered in his fantastic tale?

Koertge, Ron. *Shakespeare Bats Cleanup.* (Grade level: 7-12)
Kevin is a great baseball player—until he's sidelined with mono. Forced to spend weeks in bed, out of boredom he picks up a journal his father gives him and starts experimenting with writing poetry, first free verse, then various forms that he picks up from a book on poetry he finds on his father's shelves. He writes about his life, his illness, and his mother's death.

Wallace, Rich. *Wrestling Sturbridge.* (Grade level 8-12)
Set in the small northern Pennsylvania town of Sturbridge, this is the story of a high school senior Ben, the second-best 135-pound wrestler in the state. Unfortunately the state's best 135-pound wrestler, Al, goes to the same school as Ben, so Ben spends a lot of time sitting on the bench and serving as Al's workout partner. Frustrated by the limitations of small town life, Ben becomes determined to win a wrestling scholarship to college. Only two things stand in his way—Al, and his own lack of self-confidence. To further complicate matters, Ben considers Al not only a worthy opponent, but also his best friend.

**Sports Non-fiction**

Hamilton, Bethany. *Soul Surfer: A True Story of Faith, Family, and Fighting to Get Back on the Board.* (Grade level: 6-9)
A moving account of Bethany’s life as a young surfer, her recovery in the wake of the shark attack, the adjustments she’s made to her unique surfing style, her unprecedented bid for a top showing in the World Surfing Championships, and, most fundamentally, her belief in God. It is a story of girl power and spiritual grit that shows that the body is no more essential to surfing—perhaps even less so—than the soul.

**Resources**

Below are some ways to acquire free or inexpensive copies of the required summer reading, provided for your reference:

1 – Students with demonstrated financial need should see their guidance counselor, as the books can be generously provided by the Emmaus High School Angel Network

2 – The Emmaus High School Library has purchased copies of all books on the list and they are available to borrow free of charge. Your local public library also has copies of most of them. Note: If you wait until the last minute, your selection will likely be limited.

3 - There are a number of websites where new or used copies of books can be purchased at up to a 90% discount. Hundreds such sites are available on the web. A few sites we have used and can recommend are listed below:

- Ebay ([www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com))
  *Type in the title of your book and bid on copies available from individual sellers around the country.*

  *Type in the title of your book and directly purchase new or used copies directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required*

- Amazon.com marketplace ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com))
  *Select ‘books’ in the menu and type in the title of your book. You can purchase the book new from amazon.com or click on ‘buy used and new’ and purchase a copy directly from individual sellers at up to 90% savings. No bidding required.*

- Book Closeouts.com ([www.bookcloseouts.com](http://www.bookcloseouts.com))
  *This site sells books at bargain prices. They have a limited selection of titles but those they do carry are very inexpensive*