

Dear Class of 2012,

This summer you will be responsible for reading **three** books from the attached list of books. I would like the books you choose to be ones that you have never read before.

I strongly suggest you keep a journal to keep track of the characters, setting, important events, and your opinion of the selected books you read.

During the first few weeks of eighth grade, you will be asked to share your knowledge of the books you have read.

All reading is to be completed by August 25, 2011.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Happy Reading,

Mrs. Whitman

Crash by Jerry Spinelli

Seventh-grader jock Crash Coogan has been tormenting his skinny Quaker neighbor for years, but when a stroke leaves Crash's beloved grandfather severely disabled, he begins to realize that there are more important things in life than being a sports star. "Spinelli packs a powerful moral wallop, leaving it to the pitch-perfect narration to drive home his point," wrote PW.

Guinea Pig Scientists by Leslie A. Dendy

The authors provide fascinating and often gruesome accounts of eight men and two women who knowingly exposed themselves (and sometimes others) to risks such as deadly diseases, gas inhalation, and radiation. The profiles tend to overemphasize the scientists' selflessness as well as the benefits of their research. Sketches and historical photos illustrate the exploits, and ample documentation is included. Timeline. Ind.

Millions by Frank Cottrell-Boyce

The Cunningham brothers literally have money drop in their laps when a bag of cash falls from the sky; however, the crooks who initially stole the loot are hot on the trail to retrieve it.

The Juvie Three by Gordon Korman

When three boys are hand-selected for Doug Healy's alternative detention program, they aren't sure what to expect. Homework, housework, and therapy are manageable; hiding the fact that Healy has been hospitalized with amnesia may not be. A shifting viewpoint allows readers to sympathize with all characters. The story's details are creative, but the arc is more generic, with a predictable happy ending.

One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams-Garcia

Eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sisters spend the summer of 1968 in Oakland visiting the mother who deserted them and getting an unexpected education in revolution from the Black Panthers. Williams-Garcia writes vividly about that turbulent summer through the intelligent, funny, blunt voice of Delphine, who observes outsiders and her own family with shrewdness and a keen perception.

Ways to Live Forever by Sally Nicholls

Sam, eleven, is dying of leukemia. This journal record of his final four months describes eight goals, which include being a teenager (smoking, having a girlfriend) and seeing the earth from space. Nicholls creates a character and a world that are authentic, buoyant, honest, and stripped of sentimentality. The energy and joy of this novel is a remarkable feat.

Notes from a Midnight Driver by Jordan Sonnenblick

Sentenced to community service at a nursing home for an uncharacteristic drunk driving episode, sixteen-year-old angst-ridden Alex befriends a difficult resident while struggling with romantic feelings for his best friend, Laurie. Brimming with hapless confusion, mulish equivocation, and deadpan humor, Sonnenblick's second novel will have readers nodding with recognition, sighing in sympathy, and gasping with laughter--often on the same page.

Chasing Lincoln's Killer by James L. Swanson

This recounts the twelve-day pursuit and capture of John Wilkes Booth, covering the chase through Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, with a discussion of Abraham Lincoln as a father, husband, and friend that examines the impact of his death on those close to him.

Elephant Run by Roland Smith

Nick is sent to live with his father in Burma to escape the 1941 London bombings. Instead of safety, Nick finds himself separated from his father in the midst of the Japanese invasion. Accompanied by new friend Mya and her beloved elephants, he plots a rescue. Appealing characters and fascinating historical context drive this adventure to a disappointingly tidy conclusion.

Olive's Ocean by Kevin Henkes

On a summer visit to her grandmother's cottage by the ocean, twelve-year-old Martha gains perspective on the death of a classmate, on her relationship with her grandmother, on her feelings for an older boy, and on her plans to be a writer.

Hitler Youth by Susan Campbell Bartoletti

A photo-illustrated look at the youth organizations Adolf Hitler founded and used to meet his sociopolitical and military ends; includes profiles of individual Hitler Youth members as well as young people who opposed the Nazis, such as Hans and Sophie Scholl.

Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

Katniss is a 16-year-old girl living with her mother and younger sister in the poorest district of Panem, the remains of what used to be the United States. Long ago the districts waged war on the Capitol and were defeated. As part of the surrender terms, each district agreed to send one boy and one girl to appear in an annual televised event called, "The Hunger Games." The terrain, rules, and level of audience participation may change but one thing is constant: kill or be killed. When her sister is chosen by lottery, Katniss steps up to go in her place.

Catching Fire by Suzanne Collins

Much to her shock, Katniss has fueled an unrest she's afraid she cannot stop. And what scares her more is that she's not entirely convinced she should try. As time draws near for Katniss and Peeta to visit the districts on the Capitol's cruel Victory Tour, the stakes are higher than ever. If they can't prove, without a shadow of a doubt, that they are lost in their love for each other, the consequences will be horrifying.

Mockingjay by Suzanne Collins

Katniss Everdeen, having survived the Hunger Games twice, learns she and her family and friends are in danger because the Capitol holds her responsible for the unrest and races against time to protect those she cares about and the people of District 12.

Stotan by Chris Crutcher

The final swimming season at Frost High School had been meticulously planned. The four boys were almost guaranteed to win the gold medal in the 400 freestyle relay at the States. But not everything always turns out exactly right and sometimes it can't be stopped. In *Stotan!*, by Chris Crutcher, four high school seniors learn about friendship, perseverance, love, life and even death.

***The Red Kayak* by Priscilla Cummings**

Set on the eastern shoreline of Chesapeake Bay, *The Red Kayak* is about three boys and a tragic accident on the Corsica River. It involves a practical joke that turns deadly, and one of the boys, the son of a waterman, has to decide whether to tell on his friends.

***Mockingbird : (Mok'ing-burd)* by Kathryn Erskine**

Ten-year-old Caitlin, who has Asperger's Syndrome, struggles to understand emotions, show empathy, and make friends at school, while at home she seeks closure by working on a project with her father.

***Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse**

Out of the Dust is a sad story of hope and pride. This book is a gathering of journal entries from the point of view of a 14-year-old girl named Billie Jo while growing up during the Dust Bowl in Oklahoma. Throughout the course of this book, Billie Jo faces many heartbreaking tragedies and at times it looks as though she can't go on.

***Things Not Seen* by Andrew Clements**

Bobby is frustrated by his parents, like most teens, and feels invisible in school. But when he wakes up one morning he discovers he really is invisible. Unlike most kids, the first thing Bobby does is tell his parents, and he quickly discovers being invisible isn't as much fun as you might think.

***Bloomability* by Sharon Creech**

Thirteen-year-old Domenica Santolina Doone (better known as Dinnie) is whisked away from her family ("kidnapped," as she refers to it) and taken to a boarding school in Switzerland by her Uncle Max and Aunt Sandy. Although she does not want to be in Switzerland and does not want to be away from her family, she gradually comes to love this new place with its people who've come from all over the world.

***Sunrise Over Fallujah* by Walter Dean Myers**

If you want to know the life of a modern soldier, then read *Sunrise Over Fallujah*. In *Sunrise Over Fallujah*, you get to see what Robin Perry goes through in Iraq. Robin, like his uncle, joins the army as a part of the 422nd Civil Affairs unit. Upon arriving in Iraq, Robin meets new friends. When some of his squad mates get killed, he suddenly realizes he's fighting for his life.

***Summer Ball* by Mike Lupica**

Dreaming of leading his team to the national basketball championship in spite of his shorter stature, Danny Walker heads off to basketball camp during the summer but fears that his fellow campers possess skills that significantly outmatch his own.