

Woodhouse College Summer Reading List

Read three or more titles from anywhere in this list over the summer.

Classics

Heart of Darkness, Joseph Conrad

It shows both an understanding of the moral bankruptcy of colonial administrations and explores the frail veneer of European 'civilisation'. It is complex, dense, highly structured – a bit like a rainforest.

Crime and Punishment, Fyodor Dostoevsky

What are you prepared to do to achieve greatness? Can murder ever be justified? Enter the dark, warped and paranoid world of Raskolnikov, the protagonist of this tense, gripping psychological thriller from one of the Russian masters.

The Great Gatsby, F Scott Fitzgerald

A classic love story.... or is it? Set in the roaring 1920s, this book is full of parties, glamour and corruption, yet at the heart of the story is a young man with a dream of being with a beautiful girl. You will find yourself following Gatsby's quest to be with Daisy Fay and questioning whether or not he really is 'great'. Fitzgerald's writing is beautifully nuanced, one of the best pieces of writing you could read!

Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that anyone wanting to read a good book will not be disappointed by 'Pride and Prejudice'. This classic love story features a heroine that Jane Austen herself described as "as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print" and introduced Mr Darcy, Mr Collins and Lady Catherine de Bourgh to the world. So sit back and enjoy the excitement of the militia regiment coming to Meryton and the shame of an elopement, and take pity on Mr Bennet whose wife's nerves have been his 'old friends' for the past twenty years.

1984, George Orwell

Orwell's masterpiece. This book will have you sobbing with grief and laughing out loud. A must-read.

The Remains of the Day, Kazuo Ishiguru

Booker prize-winning novel is a story of unspoken love for anyone who's ever held their true feelings back. A subtle masterpiece about the private agonies of an ageing butler, which is so well written, so moving and so perceptive, you will want to tell all your friends to read it.

Anna Karenina, Leo Tolstoy

Tolstoy's classic story of doomed love is one of the most admired novels in world literature.

The Colour Purple, Alice Walker

The classic tale of Celie, a young black girl born into poverty and segregation in the American deep South. One of the most haunting books you could ever wish to read. It is stunning, moving, exciting, and wonderful.

Brave New World, Aldous Huxley

Huxley's profoundly important classic of world literature, *Brave New World* is a searching vision of an unequal, technologically-advanced future where humans are genetically bred, socially indoctrinated, and pharmaceutically anesthetized to passively uphold an authoritarian ruling order--all at the cost of our freedom, full humanity, and perhaps also our souls.

Things fall Apart, Chinua Achebe

One of the most widely read novels from Nigeria's most famous novelist, *Things Fall Apart* is a gripping study of the problem of European colonialism in Africa.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou's seven volumes of autobiography are a testament to the talents and resilience of this extraordinary writer. Loving the world, she also knows its cruelty. As a Black woman she has known discrimination and extreme poverty, but also hope, joy, achievement and celebration. In this first volume of her six books of autobiography, Maya Angelou beautifully evokes her childhood with her grandmother in the American south of the 1930s.

The Handmaid's Tale, Margaret Atwood

The Republic of Gilead offers Offred only one function: to breed. If she deviates, she will, like dissenters, be hanged at the wall or sent out to die slowly of radiation sickness. But even a repressive state cannot obliterate desire – neither Offred's nor that of the two men on which her future hangs. Brilliantly conceived and executed, this powerful vision of the future gives full rein to Margaret Atwood's irony, wit and astute perception.

Lord of the Flies, William Golding

A plane crashes on an uninhabited island and the only survivors, a group of schoolboys, assemble on the beach and wait to be rescued. William Golding gives the traditional adventure story an ironic, devastating twist. The boys' delicate sense of order fades, and their childish fears are transformed into something deeper and more primitive. Their games take on a horrible significance, and before long the well-behaved party of schoolboys has turned into a tribe of faceless, murderous savages.

In Search of Lost Time, Marcel Proust

Written over a period of almost 20 years, Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* is a masterpiece of unprecedented style and significance. Defying novelistic definitions of plot, character, and form, *In Search of Lost Time* focuses instead on depicting the formation of experience and memory through a multiplicity of evolving and interweaving perspectives. Thus, rather than being portrayed as a linear, cohesive narrative, life becomes a quiet, contemplative act which is constantly tied up with the past through the evocative power of memory, an idea beautifully rendered in Proust's thoughtful, expressive prose.

Indiana, George Sand

Written by George Sand, the pseudonym of female writer Amantine Aurore Dupin, *Indiana* acts out many of the 19th century's novelistic conventions, including its themes of love and adultery, yet through the framework of a female perspective. The protagonist Indiana is frustrated and unsatisfied in her loveless marriage, and longs for romantic fulfillment; her struggles between her desires and the strict social rules which govern her life form the basis of the drama. Through her protagonist, Sand critiques women's unequal social position and their dependence on male support at the price of personal happiness.

Madame Bovary, Gustave Flaubert

The eponymous character of Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1856) is one of modern literature's most complex and tragic female protagonists. Beautiful and charming, Emma Bovary sees the world through a veil of romantic novels and fanciful sensibilities, which is constantly at odds with her dull, provincial life and her marriage to the gauche yet well-meaning Charles Bovary. Emma's constant search for beauty and luxury leads her into debt, adultery, and ruin, and her struggles to separate her romanticised ideals with the reality of country life are masterfully depicted in detailed, sympathetic prose.

The Stranger by Albert Camus

The opening lines—"Mother died today. Or, maybe, yesterday. I can't be sure"—epitomize Camus's celebrated notions of "the absurd." His narrator, Meursault, a wretched little Algerian clerk sentenced to death for the murder, feels nothing: no remorse, love, guilt, grief, or hope. But he's not a sociopath; he's just honest. An embodiment of existential philosophy, he believes in no higher power and accepts that we are born only to die. Our only choice is to act "as if" life has meaning and thereby gain some freedom.

One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

One of the 20th century's enduring works, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is a widely beloved and acclaimed novel known throughout the world, and the ultimate achievement in a Nobel Prize-winning career. It is a rich and brilliant chronicle of life and death, and the tragicomedy of humankind. In the noble, ridiculous, beautiful, and tawdry story of the Buendía family, one sees all of humanity, just as in the history, myths, growth, and decay of Macondo, one sees all of Latin America. Love and lust, war and revolution, riches and poverty, youth and senility — the variety of life, the endlessness of death, the search for peace and truth — these universal themes dominate the novel.

Don Quixote, Miguel de Cervantes

Don Quixote is regarded as the greatest work of literature in the Spanish language. Alonso Quixano, a retired country gentleman in his fifties, lives in an unnamed section of La Mancha with his niece and a housekeeper. He has become obsessed with books of chivalry, and believes their every word to be true, despite the fact that many of the events in them are clearly impossible. Quixano eventually appears to other people to have lost his mind from little sleep and food and because of so much reading.

General Science Books

Longitude, Dava Sobel

The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time. As exciting as a thriller. Full of heroism and chicanery, brilliance and the absurd, *Longitude* is also a fascinating brief history of astronomy, navigation and clockmaking.

Almost a whale, Steve Jones

A modern introduction to Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*. reargued using the twentieth century's astonishing advances. From AIDS to dinosaurs, from conservation to cloned sheep, bursting with anecdotes, jokes and irresistible facts, *Almost Like a Whale* is a popular account of the science that makes biology make sense.

Fermat's last theorem, Simon Singh

The best popular maths book ever written, Singh has crafted a remarkable tale of intellectual endeavour spanning three centuries, and a moving testament to the obsession, sacrifice and extraordinary determination of Andrew Wiles: one man against all the odds.

A short history of nearly everything, Bill Bryson

The ultimate eye-opening journey through time and space, *A Short History of Nearly Everything* is the biggest-selling popular science book of the 21st century.

The selfish gene, Richard Dawkins

The million copy international bestseller, critically acclaimed and translated into over 25 languages. As influential today as when it was first published, *The Selfish Gene* has become a classic exposition of evolutionary thought.

History

The Plantagenets, Dan Jones

Dan Jones brings you a new vision of this battle-scarred history. From the Crusades, to King John's humbling over Magna Carta and the tragic reign of the last Plantagenet, Richard II — this is a blow-by-blow account of England's most thrilling age.

If This Is a Man, Primo Levi

This book describes Levi's arrest as a member of the Italian anti-fascist resistance during the Second World War, and his incarceration in the Auschwitz concentration camp from February 1944 until the camp was liberated on January 27, 1945. *If This Is a Man* is miraculous, finding the human in every individual who traverses its pages. Levi's voice is especially affecting, so clear, firm and gentle, yet humane and apparently untouched by anger, bitterness or self-pity.

Restoration, Rose Tremain

The bestselling and much-loved classic from Orange Prize-winning Rose Tremain, *Restoration* introduces us to the young Robert Merivel and his rise and fall through glittering seventeenth-century society.

And Quiet Flows the Don, Mikhail Sholokhov

The epic novel of love, war and revolution from Mikhail Sholokhov, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. An extraordinary Russian masterpiece, *And Quiet Flows the Don* follows the turbulent fortunes of the Cossack people through peace, war and revolution - among them the proud and rebellious Gregor Melekhov, who struggles to be with the woman he loves as his country is torn apart. A searing portrait of a nation swept up in conflict, with all the tragic choices it brings.

Young Adult Fiction

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Mark Haddon

This is a wonderful book, a real (and surprising) page turner. It is a diary or chronicle of the life of 15 year old Christopher John Francis Boone, who loves animals, puzzles, is amazingly good at maths... and has ASD

The Perks of Being a Wallflower, Stephen Chbosky

The critically acclaimed debut novel from Stephen Chbosky follows observant "wallflower" Charlie as he charts a course through the strange world between adolescence and adulthood. First dates, family drama, and new friends. Sex, drugs, and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Devastating loss, young love, and life on the fringes.

The Wall, William Sutcliffe

A powerful, searing story of a divided city - where one boy strays on to the wrong side of the wall, and finds his life changed forever . . . A disturbing and thought-provoking book which simmers with heat, anger and fear.

Economics

23 Things They Don't Tell You About Capitalism, Ha-Joon Chang

In this revelatory book, Ha-Joon Chang destroys the biggest myths of our times and shows us an alternative view of the world. "A masterful debunking of some of the myths of capitalism ... Witty, iconoclastic and uncommonly commonsensical" – *The Observer*.

The Undercover Economist, Tim Harford

Ever wondered why the gap between rich and poor nations is so great, or why it's so difficult to get a foot on the property ladder, or where the banks went wrong? This book offers the hidden story behind these and other forces that shape our day-to-day lives, often without our knowing it.

Sociology

Watching the English, Kate Fox

Kate Fox takes a revealing look at the quirks, habits and foibles of the English people. She puts the English national character under her anthropological microscope, and finds a strange and fascinating culture, governed by complex sets of unspoken rules and byzantine codes of behaviour.

Gang Leader for a Day, Sudhir Venkatesh

Sudhir Venkatesh describes his time living with the gangs on the Southside of Chicago and answers the question: what's it like to live in hell?

Classical Civilisation

Homer: The Odyssey

Ovid: Metamorphoses (students can read as many chapters as they wish and here is a link to an online version: <http://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/trans/Ovhome.htm>)

The Roman Republic: A Very Short Introduction by David M. Gywnn

Classics: A Very Short Introduction by Mary Beard

Sociology

Chavs The Demonisation of the Working Class, Owen Jones

Bestselling investigation into the myth and reality of working-class life in contemporary Britain.

Angry White People: Coming Face-to-Face with the British Far Right, Hsiao-Hung Pai

Hsiao-Hung skilfully draws out the sense of abandonment by mainstream politicians that has led some people to support the EDL and others to favour the UK Independence Party

Philosophy

The Pig who didn't want to be eaten, Julian Baggini

100 thought experiments - short scenarios which pose a problem in a vivid and concrete way - and invites the reader to think about possible answers for him/herself. Experiments cover identity, religion, art, ethics, language, knowledge and many more.

A Little History of Philosophy, Nigel Warburton

Philosophy begins with questions about the nature of reality and how we should live. These were the concerns of Socrates, who spent his days in the ancient Athenian marketplace asking awkward questions, disconcerting the people he met by showing them how little they genuinely understood. This engaging book introduces the great thinkers in Western philosophy and explores their most compelling ideas about the world and how best to live in it.

The Cloud Atlas, David Mitchell

Winner of the Richard & Judy Best Read of the Year ...Six interlocking lives - one amazing adventure. In a narrative that circles the globe and reaches from the 19th century to a post-apocalyptic future, Cloud Atlas erases the boundaries of time, genre and language to offer an enthralling vision of humanity's will to power, and where it will lead us.

Law

Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do, Michael Sandel

This spellbinding book invites readers of all ages and political persuasions on a journey of moral reflection, and shows how reasoned debate can illuminate our lives.

Computing

The Code Book, Simon Singh

From the best-selling author of Fermat's Last Theorem, The Code Book is a history of humanity's urge to uncover the secrets of codes, from Egyptian puzzles to modern day computer encryptions.

Free download:

<https://archive.org/details/SimonSinghTheCodeBookTeenageVersion>

Psychology

Boys Don't Cry: why I hid my depression and why men need to talk about mental health, Tim Grayburn