

## The MacDuffie School Summer Reading 2024

The English Department is pleased to present its summer reading program for the 2024-25 academic year.

Each Middle School student (6-8) and Upper School student (9-12) must read one summer reading selection before the school year begins. The exceptions are AP courses, which have three required readings. **New International students are NOT required to do any summer reading.**

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.

Any questions should be directed to department chairperson Carol Tomkiel at: [ctomkiel@macduffie.org](mailto:ctomkiel@macduffie.org). We wish you an enjoyable summer of reading, and we look forward to seeing you in September!

**Students are required to buy their own books.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** If you are studying online and live outside of the United States, Amazon.com may not ship some or possibly any of your books internationally. You will find out when you go to check out whether the items will ship or not. If they do not, you have some options:

1. Search for the textbooks on **Bookdepository.com**. They offer free shipping worldwide. Use the ISBN numbers listed beneath each book to do your search.
2. Search for the books locally or within your country. For example, in the People's Republic of China, you might try Amazon.cn, Taobao, Dangdang, Jingdong, or other retailers that sell books.
3. Use a U.S. Shipping Forwarder. This option tends to be a little more expensive but it enables you to buy any product that Amazon.com won't ship directly to your country. Our recommendation is **MyUS.com** because it has the lowest rates, ships worldwide, is tax-free, and is the most popular U.S. shipping forwarder by far. Create an account on MyUS.com first to get a U.S. based mailing address that you can use on Amazon.com to send your order to and then MyUS.com will ship the order to your home address.
4. If you exhausted all of the above options and are unable to obtain the books for a class please contact the instructor and see what alternatives they can provide.

### A Note on Sensitive Topics

Our summer reading program is designed, in part, to help students understand the world in which they live. Some selections, as a result, deal with sensitive topics like abuse, violence, discrimination, and mental/emotional health.

Although the selections are designed to be instructionally and developmentally appropriate, we understand that some content could be triggering for students who have experienced trauma. If you/your child finds a particular text to be challenging (triggering, emotionally/psychologically), please email English Department Chair Carol Tomkiel at [ctomkiel@macduffie.org](mailto:ctomkiel@macduffie.org). She will be happy to help you navigate the text in question or to suggest an appropriate alternative.

*(Please note that summaries are intended as “teasers,” not as trigger warnings.)*

**Selections: Choose one that corresponds to your grade level.  
Scroll Down to Your Grade Level  
(AP listings at the end)**

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**Grades 6 and 7: Choose one of the following.**

***Return to Sender* by Julia Alvarez:**

After his father is injured in a tractor accident, Tyler's family hires migrant Mexican workers to help with the farm labor. When Tyler develops a close friendship with Mari, the daughter of one of the workers, he begins to understand the immigrant experience in a way he never knew was possible.

***Millionaires for the Month* by Stacy McNulty:**

When Felix and Benji find a wallet and “borrow” \$20 before returning it, they are challenged by billionaire Laura Friendly: With a penny doubled exponentially each day for an entire month, the boys must spend the entire amount of \$5,368,709.12 without telling anyone or risk losing the real reward. Readers will find themselves entertained by the unbelievable challenges and hard lessons brought on by spending under strict rules. Offering opportunities for deeper discussion on privilege and integrity, this title is also guaranteed to prompt the ever popular “What would you do?” conversation.

***The Captive* by Joyce Hansen:**

In a novel based on a true story of an African-born slave in the early nineteenth century, Kofi Kwame Paul's extraordinary life extends from his native village, to a New England town, and back to Africa.

***Free Lunch* by Rex Ogle:**

Ogle's memoir recalls the beginning of his middle school experience and his struggle in an unstable and sometimes violent home environment. From the lunch lady who consistently publicizes his status in the free lunch program to the overwhelming responsibilities he faces as he cares for his younger sibling, Rex shares an intimate portrait of poverty and the complexity of a family struggling to stay afloat.

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**Grade 8: Choose one of the following.**

***Santiago's Road Home* by Alexandra Diaz:**

The coins in Santiago's hand are meant for the bus fare back to his abusive *abuela's* house. Except he refuses to return; he won't be missed. His future is uncertain until he meets the kind, maternal María Dolores and her young daughter, Alegría, who help Santiago decide what comes next: He will accompany them to *el otro lado*, the United States of America. They embark with little, just backpacks with water and a bit of food. To travel together will require trust from all parties, and Santiago is used to going it alone. None of the three travelers realizes that the journey through Mexico to the border is just the beginning of their story.

### ***Rick* by Alex Gino:**

Rick's never questioned much. He's gone along with his best friend Jeff even when Jeff's acted like a bully and a jerk. He lets his father joke with him about which hot girls he might want to date even though that kind of talk always makes him uncomfortable. And he hasn't given his own identity much thought, because everyone else around him seemed to have figured it out. But now Rick's gotten to middle school, and new doors are opening. One of them leads to the school's Rainbow Spectrum club, where kids of many genders and identities congregate, including Melissa, the girl who sits in front of Rick in class and seems to have her life together. Rick wants his own life to be that . . . understood, even if it means breaking some old friendships and making some new ones.

### ***Hey, Kiddo* by Jarrett Krosoczka:**

In kindergarten, Jarrett Krosoczka's teacher asks him to draw his family, with a mommy and a daddy. But Jarrett's family is much more complicated than that. His mom is an addict, in and out of rehab, and in and out of Jarrett's life. His father is a mystery -- Jarrett doesn't know where to find him, or even what his name is. Jarrett lives with his grandparents -- two very loud, very loving, very opinionated people who had thought they were through with raising children until Jarrett came along. Jarrett goes through his childhood trying to make his non-normal life as normal as possible, finding a way to express himself through drawing even as so little is being said to him about what's going on. Only as a teenager can Jarrett begin to piece together the truth of his family, reckoning with his mother and tracking down his father. *Hey, Kiddo* is a profoundly important memoir about growing up in a family grappling with addiction, and finding the art that helps you survive.

***Show Me a Sign* by Ann Clare Lezotte:**

Mary Lambert has always felt safe and protected on her beloved island of Martha's Vineyard. Her great-great-grandfather was an early English settler and the first deaf islander. Now, in 1805, over a hundred years later, many people there -- including Mary -- are deaf, and nearly everyone can communicate in sign language. But recent events have delivered winds of change.

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**Grade 9: Choose one of the following.**

***Feed* by M.T. Anderson:**

Think about your phone - social media, games, shopping, news - ceaseless communication and information. Then imagine taking your phone and putting it inside your brain. This dystopian novel is set in a future where humans are connected to the internet through a chip in their brains that receives a constant stream of information - where they should go, what they should eat, who they should hang out with. The novel tells the story of Titus and his friends, who go to the moon to have fun, but get more than they bargained for when their feeds malfunction and they meet a girl who makes them begin to question the purpose and usefulness of the feeds that they have come to take for granted.

***The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba:**

William Kamkwamba was born in Malawi, a country where magic ruled and modern science was a mystery. It was also a land withered by drought and hunger. But William had read about windmills, and he dreamed of building one that would bring to his small village a set of luxuries that only 2 percent of Malawians could enjoy: electricity and running water. His neighbors called him

misala—crazy—but William refused to let go of his dreams. With a small pile of once-forgotten science textbooks; some scrap metal, tractor parts, and bicycle halves; and an armory of curiosity and determination, he embarked on a daring plan to forge an unlikely contraption and small miracle that would change the lives around him.

***I'll Give You the Sun* by Jandy Nelson:**

This novel follows the story of two fraternal twins - artistic Noah and daredevil Jude - as they grow up, grow apart, and ultimately grow back together. Chapters narrated by Noah tell about the twins at 13, best friends coping with their grandmother's death and dreaming of a future at a competitive art school. Jude takes over to narrate their story at age 16, three years later, when a family tragedy and competition over boys and school have driven the brother and sister apart. The novel is set in the foggy, ethereal northern California coast, and uses elements of magical realism and vivid imagery to help build a world and a story that will stay with readers after the book is over.

***All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Bendan Kiely:**

Rashad Butler and Quinn Collins are two young men, one black and one white, whose lives are forever changed by an act of extreme police brutality. Rashad wakes up in a hospital. Quinn saw how he got there. And so did the video camera that taped the cop beating Rashad senseless into the pavement. Thus begins *All American Boys*, written in tandem by two of our great literary talents, Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely. The story is told in Rashad and Quinn's alternating perspectives, as they grapple with the complications that spin out of this violent moment and reverberate in their families, school, and town.

***Brown Girl Dreaming*, Jacqueline Woodson:**

This memoir, written as a series of poems, shares Woodson's story of growing up as an African American in the US in the 1960s and 70s. Her poems share her love for telling stories even through her struggles in learning to read and her strong connection with her family despite geographic distances. Woodson's poems make her thoughts and experiences come alive on the page. Her story explores how people are crafted by where they live and what they see happening around them.

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**Grade 10: Choose one of the following.**

***Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernadine Evaristo:**

Bernadine Evaristo is the winner of the 2019 Booker Prize and the first black woman to receive this highest literary honor in the English language. *Girl, Woman, Other* is a magnificent portrayal of the intersections of identity and a moving and hopeful story of an interconnected group of Black British women that paints a vivid portrait of the state of contemporary Britain and looks back to the legacy of Britain's colonial history in Africa and the Caribbean.

***The Ocean at the End of the Lane* by 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.

### ***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.

### ***Never Let Me Go, by Kazuo Ishiguro:***

As children, Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy were students at Hailsham, an exclusive boarding school secluded in the English countryside. It was a place of mercurial cliques and mysterious rules where teachers were constantly reminding their charges of how special they were. Now, years later, Kathy is a young woman. Ruth and Tommy have reentered her life. And for the first time she is beginning to look back at their shared past and understand just what it is that makes them special—and how that gift will shape the rest of their time together.

### ***Homefire by Kamila Shamsie:***

Isma is free. After years of watching out for her younger siblings in the wake of their mother's death, she's accepted an invitation from a mentor in America that allows her to resume a dream long deferred. But she can't stop worrying about Aneeka, her beautiful, headstrong sister back in London, or their brother, Parvaiz, who's disappeared in pursuit of his own dream, to prove himself to the dark legacy of the jihadist father he never knew. When he resurfaces half a globe away, Isma's worst fears are confirmed. Then Eamonn enters the sisters' lives. Son of a powerful political figure, he has his own birthright to live up to—or defy. Is he to have a chance at love? The means of Parvaiz's salvation? Suddenly, two families' fates are inextricably,



devastatingly entwined, in this searing novel that asks: What sacrifices will we make in the name of love?

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**Grade 11: Choose one of 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.

***The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao by 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.

***House of Sand and Fog* by Andre Dubus:**

A former colonel in the Iranian Air Force yearns to restore his dignity in America. To do this, he and his family struggle to embrace a new culture. A small house in the California hills becomes their dream, and tragically, their demise. It is owned by a troubled young woman who refuses to let it go because to her, it is all she has left. This is a story of cultural collision and a yearning for stability and justice. This is a poignant story of courage and hope in the face of fragility and loss.

***Nickel and Dimed* by 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 a better life from the bottom.

***Summer of Bitter and Sweet* by Jen Ferguson:**

Lou has enough confusion in front of her this summer. She'll be working in her family's ice-cream shack with her newly ex-boyfriend—whose kisses never made her feel desire, only discomfort—and her former best friend, King, who is back in their Canadian prairie town after disappearing three years ago without a word. But when she gets a letter from her biological father—a man she hoped would stay behind bars for the rest of his life—Lou immediately knows that she cannot meet him, no matter how much he insists. While King's friendship makes Lou feel safer and warmer than she would have thought possible, when her family's business comes under threat, she soon realizes that she can't ignore her father forever.

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**Grade 12: Choose one of the following.**

***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.

***Lost Names* by Richard Kim:**

In this autobiography, Richard E. Kim paints seven vivid scenes from a boyhood and early adolescence in Korea at the height of the Japanese occupation during WWII, 1932 to 1945. Taking its title from the grim fact that the occupiers forced the Koreans to renounce their own names and adopt Japanese names instead, the book follows one Korean family through the Japanese occupation to the surrender of Japan and dissolution of the Japanese empire. Examining the intersections of Japanese and Korean history that influenced Korea-Japan relations at the time, *Lost Names* is at once a loving memory of family, an ethnography of Zainichi Koreans in 1930s Japan, and a vivid portrayal of human spirit in a time of suffering and survival.

***Angela's Ashes* by 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.

***The Girl Who Smiled Beads, Clemantine Wamariya***

In this candid, emotional memoir, Wamariya recounts a childhood spent in transit between refugee camps and the houses of family and friends after she and her sister were forced to leave their family and home behind during the Rwandan massacre in 1994. Years later, the sisters are granted asylum in the United States and move to Chicago, where Clemantine attempts to live a normal teenage life: attending private school, becoming a cheerleader, and eventually graduating from Yale. However, she finds it impossible to erase years of living in fear and uncertainty—feelings that are conveyed with incredible clarity in this book’s expressive prose.

***Patron Saints of Nothing by Randy Ribay:***

Jay Reguero plans to spend the last semester of his senior year playing video games before heading to the University of Michigan in the fall. But when he discovers that his Filipino cousin Jun was murdered as part of President Duterte's war on drugs, and no one in the family wants to talk about what happened, Jay travels to the Philippines to find out the real story. Hoping to uncover more about Jun and the events that led to his death, Jay is forced to reckon with the many sides of his cousin before he can face the whole horrible truth— and the part he played in it.

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**Advanced Placement Language and Composition must read the following three books:**

***The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald**

***Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer**

***The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore**

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**Advanced Placement Literature and Composition must read the following three books:**

***Picnic Lightning* by Billy Collins**

***A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini**

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