

## Summer Reading Mission Statement

The intent of the Valley Regional High School summer reading program is to challenge students to become life-long readers and learners by encouraging them to read during non-instructional time. Through this reading program, the school promotes intellectual stimulation, social awareness, diversity of viewpoints, and independent thinking.

**Successful (passing standard) Summer Reading completion all four years is a graduation requirement.**

### VRHS Academic Expectations:

Students will comprehend written language  
Students will speak effectively

Books are available at VRHS, local libraries and bookstores or from online sellers.  
Many are available in paperback or in audio or e-book form.

### 2017 Faculty and Student Committee

Ashley Allen	Maddy Evans	Cindy Maiolo
Chance Barclay	Hannah Frazier	Sarah McKinney
Kim Berardis	Nate Johnson	Cooper Robbins
Izzy Bowden	Jacob Katelely	Allie Ruel
Addie Byars	Juliette Linares	Kristie Schmidt
Teresa Cobb	Erin LoMonaco	Ashley Vogt
Carolyn Crehan	Jenna LoMonaco	

The faculty would like to thank students on the summer reading committee for their time, insight, and reviews. We appreciate your commitment to VRHS's summer reading program.

The Essex Public Library summer discussion book will be *Mosquitoland* on **Monday July 24 from 4-5 pm**. Pre-registration is required by calling the library. This discussion *will* count towards your summer reading requirement but you must also complete a visual aid project to turn into your CORE teacher on the second day of school.

Dear Parent or Guardian:

From suggestions of over 75 books from teachers and students, the committee selects those encompassing multiple points of view, different cultures, time periods, and a myriad of experiences with a wide range of appeal.

This booklet explains in detail the summer reading process. Summer reading projects are presented the second and third days of the first week of school in CORE. **New: Students who do not complete the requirements on the second and third day of school will be assigned to summer reading flex block locations until completion.**

Books are available for previewing in the VRHS library and at local libraries. The second book, also a required part of summer reading, may be of your student's choice. This choice book should challenge your student and provide insight for meaningful conversation.

**New this year:** Students may also make appointments with local public libraries throughout the summer to discuss a required list book in groups of four or more: at Chester, Ann Nord 860-526-0018. At Essex, Jessica Branciforte or [jbranciforte@essexlib.org](mailto:jbranciforte@essexlib.org). At Ivoryton, Elizabeth Alvord [staff@ivoryton.com](mailto:staff@ivoryton.com). Students attending must complete a visual aid project for this book to turn into their CORE teacher in September.

Our recommended parent read is *Glow Kids: How Screen Addiction is Hijacking Our Kids--And How to Break the Trance* by Nicholas Kardaras, Ph.D, a good follow up to the May 8 screening of *Screenagers*: “ Like a virtual scourge, the illuminated glowing faces—the Glow Kids—are multiplying. But at what cost? Is this just a harmless indulgence or fad like some sort of digital hula-hoop? Dr. Kardaras examines how technology—more specifically, age-inappropriate screen tech, with all of its glowing ubiquity—has profoundly affected the brains of an entire generation...a growing mountain of clinical research correlates screen tech with disorders like ADHD, addiction, anxiety, depression, increased aggression, and even psychosis. Most shocking of all, recent brain imaging studies conclusively show that excessive screen exposure can neurologically damage a young person's developing brain in the same way that cocaine addiction can.”

Please call the school if you have any questions. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Michael Barile  
Principal

Kristie Schmidt  
Library Media Specialist  
Coordinator, Summer Reading Committee 2017

## Summer Reading Instructions for First Book

**Required first book- Choose from the approved list - Oral presentation with visual aid**

1. Preview your book at the VRHS library. Read the online summer reading booklet, including the reviews of each book, before making your decision.
2. Choose one book for your level from the Summer Reading list. Your level is the English class you will be in for the 2017-2018 school year. For example, if you will be in a level 2 English class, you should choose a level 2 book or one labeled both. If you would like to read up and choose a level 1 book, you may do so. If, however, you will be in a level 1 English class, you may NOT read a level 2 book for your required first book but you may read one labeled both.
3. Read the Schoolwide Oral Presentation Rubric to understand how you will be assessed.
4. Review the list of ideas for projects and select one lending itself to your particular book.
5. Your choices should reflect knowledge of the following:
  - Plot
  - Characters
  - Setting
  - Theme (What message is the author trying to convey?)
  - Significance (How does this connect to your own life and personal experiences?)

## Summer Reading Instructions for Second Book (book of choice)

**Required Second Book- Any appropriate high school level book- Book Talk**

*Direct any questions about appropriate choices to a summer reading committee member*

1. Read the summer reading **second book** section of the rubric.
2. Be prepared to participate in a “Book Talk”. Imagine you are selling or recommending the book to someone. Provide a rehearsed, well thought-out description of the plot, characters, setting, theme and significance without giving away spoilers or including everything but the kitchen sink. State your opinion of the book, how you would rate it, what kind of reader you would recommend it to, and any other works it reminded you of. Hint: If you wouldn’t recommend it, it shouldn’t be your choice book.

## Summer Reading Visual Aid Project Options

Prove your knowledge of the following:

- Plot
- Characters
- Setting
- Theme
- Significance

**Addition** Add an introduction, a chapter in the middle, a chapter at the end of the book or epilogue in the voice of the author. Your addition should be at least two pages, double-spaced, 12-pt font. Give a one-paragraph explanation of why you made the change.

**Children's Picture Book OR Comic Strip OR Graphic Novel** reflecting the setting, characters, theme, plot and significance. Original artwork only (not printed from your computer).

**Discussion Questions** Create a thorough list of discussion questions about your book. Hold a small (4 or more) discussion group at Chester, Essex, or Ivoryton library by appointment. Each person in group turns in a copy of the questions/any notes taken to their CORE teacher.

**Film/TV Screenplay** Write a scene in screenplay format including stage directions, camera angles, costuming, cues **OR** create a **Movie Trailer**. Include a soundtrack and/or credits. Save on a DVD or file to play during CORE. Mac users will need a converter.

**"If this object could talk..."** Choose an inanimate object, animal, or character that is consistently in scenes but has no speaking parts. Write a short story, journal entry, or letter from its point of view, the things it has seen/heard/felt. For example, the lipstick in *Mosquitoland*, the elevator in *Hotel Ruby* or the water tower in *All the Bright Places*.

**Newspaper** Create a newspaper of 1-2 pages. Include articles, cartoons, and advertisements that correspond with the theme, setting, characters, and significance of the book.

**Parody** Choose a person who speaks or writes distinctively and rewrite a scene from the book in the voice of that person. For example: Oprah, William Shatner, a hippie, Holden Caulfield, Donald Trump, Shakespeare, Morgan Freeman, Snape, Virginia Woolf, a surfer, Batman, Ron Swanson, etc.

**Photo Essay** Create a series of *original* photos with titles or captions reflecting the themes, setting, characters, plot and significance. Be ready to prove your photos are original.

**Poetry** Create a *variety* of poems (no acrostics!, not all the same format, at least 3) for the theme, setting, characters, plot, chapters or significance **OR** \* For *Stuff I've Been Feeling Lately*, follow the author's format and create found poems with song recommendations.

**Song** Write and perform (live or on video) a song as if you were the character. Provide written lyrics to your CORE teacher **OR Soundtrack/Playlist** Think about the main character(s) in your book, the situations they have been through, and the changes that occur in their lives. What songs would be on their iPods/Spotify/Pandora playlists? Choose at least five songs and print out

the lyrics. Explain how the song directly relates to the main character(s) in writing.

**Subtext** Write the subtext (the implicit or metaphorical meaning) for a significant scene.

**Letter to an Unknown Reader** Write a letter that explains why people should read the book. Explain why the book is valuable, what readers can learn from it, why it is a page-turner, etc. Your letter should be at least two full pages, double-spaced, 12-pt font, with 1” margins.

**Guide to *(insert name of book here)* for the Uninformed-** Create a guide to your book intended for those who have not read it. You must have the following five entries as a minimum: **Here’s What Happened** (plot), **Here’s Where It Happened** (setting, setting map), **Here’s Who It Happened To** (character profiles), **Here’s What It’s All About** (theme), and lastly **Here’s What I Think** (significance, advice, and/or personal connection). Design the booklet to look like a real guide, with illustrations, color, font, and text designed to grab the reader’s interest and highlight information clearly.

**T. V. Guide-** Turn your book into a five or six-part miniseries. Prepare the TV guide entry for each night’s episode. Episode entries must cover events from your entire book, beginning to end. Each synopsis must contain at least five exciting sentences designed to entice viewers without giving away spoilers. You must design a cover for your T.V. Guide. This should depict the characters, plot, setting, theme and significance of the book and should look like a real T.V. Guide cover.

**\*All the Bright Places additional option (this option only applies to this book)**

Travel CT or where you go on vacation and learn a little bit about the history of the sites/ historic monuments, and or attractions you visit. Connect each place to a place visited in the book. Take a picture of yourself with the book and yourself at the places (like they do in the book) and write a blurb about the sights around you

### VRHS Required Book for Visual Project

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Genre</b>	<b>Level</b>
The 15:17 Train to Paris: the true story of a terrorist, a train, and three American tourists	Anthony Sadler, Alek Skarlatos, Spencer Stone and Jeffrey E. Stern	NF	both
All the Bright Places	Jennifer Niven	F	both
All the Rage	Courtney Summers	F	both
Ask the Dark	Henry Turner	F	2
Belichick and Brady: two men, the Patriots, and how they revolutionized football	Michael Holley	NF	both
Born to Run: a hidden tribe, superathletes, and the greatest race the world has never seen	Christopher McDougall	NF	both
A Court of Thorns and Roses	Sarah J. Maas	F	2
The Cellar	Natasha Preston	F	2
The Darkest Part of the Forest	Holly Black	F	1
Dreamers Often Lie	Jacqueline West	F	both
Eating Animals	Jonathan Safran Foer	NF	both
Forgive Me Leonard Peacock	Matthew Quick	F	both
The Girl Who Escaped Isis: this is my story	Farida Khalaf and Andrea Hoffman	NF	both
Girls Like Us	Gail Giles	F	2
The Girls of Atomic City: the untold story of the women who helped win World War II	Denise Kiernan	NF	1
Grunt: the curious science of humans at war	Mary Roach	NF	both
The Hate U Give	Angie Thomas	F	both
Heartless	Marissa Meyer	F	both
Holding Up the Universe	Jennifer Niven	F	both
Hostage Three	Nick Lake	F	both
Hotel Ruby	Suzanne Young	F	2

The Hunger of the Wolf: a novel	Stephen Marche	F	both
The Job: true tales from the life of a New York City cop	Steve Osborne	NF	both
King Dork	Frank Portman	F	2
Mosquitoland	David Arnold	F	both
The Night Circus	Erin Morgenstern	F	both
One Second After	William R. Fortschen	F	both
Outcasts United: the story of a refugee soccer team that changed a town	Warren St. John	NF	both
The Porcupine of Truth	Bill Konisberg	F	2
The Psychopath Test	Jon Ronson	NF	both
Radioactive Boy Scout: the true story of a whiz kid and his homemade nuclear reactor	Ken Silverstein	NF	both
Rebel Queen: a novel	Michelle Moran	F	both
Red Rising	Pierce Brown	F	both
The Scar Boys	Len Vlahos	F	both
Steelheart	Brandon Sanderson	F	both
Stuff I've Been Feeling Lately	Alicia Cook	F	2
Symptoms of Being Human	Jeff Garvin	F	both
There Will Be Lies	Nick Lake	F	2
These Broken Stars	Amie Kaufman and Megan Spooner	F	1
They Cage the Animals at Night	Jennings Michael Burch	NF	2
The Underground Railroad	Colson Whitehead	F	1
Uprising	Margaret Peterson Haddix	F	both
The Weight of Zero	Karen Fortunati	F	both

## 2017 VRHS Summer Reading List Reviews

### ***The 15:17 to Paris* by Anthony Sadler, Alek Skarlatos, Spencer Stone, and Jeffrey E. Stern**

Here is the scenario: you are on a train in a different country and an armed terrorist enters your train car. What would you do?

For Anthony Sadler, Alek Skarlatos, and Spencer Stone, this was real life. Terrorist Ayoub El-Khazzani boarded train 9364 to Paris on August 21, 2015 armed with enough ammunition to take down every person on the train. Airman Stone, National Guard specialist Skarlatos, and civilian Sadler were on board enjoying time together before each would return to work and reality. Neither party expected to encounter the other, but luckily, Alek, Spencer, and Anthony were prepared to defend themselves, each other, and everyone on the train.

### ***All the Bright Places* by Jennifer Niven**

Teenagers Theodore and Violet's lives collide when they both stand teetering off their high school's bell tower, each contemplating their value. These two unlikely partners for a school project embark on a trip to discover the natural beauty of life in their Indiana town while simultaneously trying to heal the wounds that dictate their lives. Gradually, Finch shows Violet how to enjoy life again and finally release the burden of her guilt. However, as Violet begins to heal, Finch struggles to find meaning in his own darkening world. Niven's honest, vivid, and beautifully written novel illustrates what it means to appreciate life after all hope seems to be lost.

Be sure to read the author's note at the end of the book including the helpline sources.

### ***All the Rage* by Courtney Summers**

What happens when no one listens to you?

As Romy Grey begins her senior year of high school, she learns that the town of Grebe does not take kindly to girls who accuse the sheriff's son of rape. Months later, she lives her life in the shadows, desperately trying to avoid the ongoing brutal torments from her neighbors and fellow students. When Romy wakes up on the side of the road with her clothes undone and no memories of the previous night, she refuses to speak out again. However, this time another girl goes missing, Penny, Romy's ex-best friend. Now, Romy must decide whether or not to fight back against the town that silenced her the first time. A suspenseful story that examines the brutal and devastating reality of a society that refuses to listen to victims of sexual assault.

### ***Ask the Dark* by Henry Turner**

"Ask the Dark will keep you up all night...I wish I'd written it." —Michael Grant, New York Times best-selling author of *Gone* and *BZRK*.

Billy Zeets has a story to tell. He's a known troublemaker in his town, but when a dead kid turns up by the stream, and then another boy disappears, Billy takes it upon himself to figure out who is responsible, and how to stop him. What happens if a boy who breaks all the rules is the only person who can piece together the truth? Be forewarned--some serial killer gore.

### ***Belichick and Brady* by Michael Holley**

For anyone interested in sports, especially football, this is a must read!!!

On February 5, 2017 the New England Patriots overcame a 28-3 deficit to defeat the Atlanta Falcons in Super Bowl LI, the 5th in their franchise's storied history. Have you ever wondered how they got there? How they overcame all odds to defy the standard of mediocrity established in the NFL where dynasties like this are not supposed to happen? Well, you're in luck! *New York Times* best-selling author Michael Holley takes the reader on an incredible tale of how a head coach fired by the Cleveland Browns and a quarterback taken with the 199th pick in the draft were able to become one of the greatest quarterback-coaching duos in NFL history.

### ***Born to Run* by Christopher MacDougall**

This epic adventure begins with one simple question: Why does my foot hurt? Isolated by Mexico's deadly Copper Canyons, the Tarahumara Indians have honed the ability to run hundreds of miles without rest or injury. The often-injured runner MacDougall sets out to discover their secrets. In the process, he takes his readers from science labs at Harvard to the sun-baked valleys and freezing peaks across North America, where ultra-runners are pushing their bodies to the limit, and, finally, to a climactic race in the Copper Canyons that pits America's best ultra-runners against the tribe. MacDougall's story will not only engage your mind but inspire your body when you realize that you, indeed all of us, were born to run. Every runner HAS to read this book!

### ***A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sarah J. Maas**

Humans, mystical faeries, flaming romance, and a common enemy who threatens it all. When added together with the enchanting storytelling of Sarah J. Maas, these ingredients together form a story that will keep you guessing until the very end.

Feyre comes from a family of three poor sisters, all of whom are struggling to recover from the loss of their fortune. Hunting daily to provide for her family, Feyre has found home in the woods. However, this all changes when she kills a faerie wolf and her life is turned upside down. As a consequence, she is brought to the faerie land of Prythian alongside her faerie captor. But, her stay is nothing like she first thought it to be. A blight threatens the faerie realm and in turn, her own. Together with her new friends, Feyre must search within the depth of herself to save the faerie lands and someone she may just love.

### ***The Cellar* by Natasha Preston**

If you enjoyed the movie *Split*, then *The Cellar* is the right book for you.

Nothing ever happens in the small town of Long Thorpe. That's what Summer thought until one night when a man kidnaps her and locks her in a cellar. There are three other girls there, Rose, Violet, and Poppy. They tell her that her name is Lily, and that she must forget her life outside of the cellar for there is no escape. Summer fights to hold on to who she is and the belief that her family will find her, but after months of being in the cellar and bearing witness to her captor's rage, she is ready to give up fighting. Follow Summer as she struggles to find a way out.

### ***The Darkest Part of the Forest* by Holly Black**

Like homicidal and kidnapping fairies? Hazel and her brother Ben live in the town of Fairfold, a town unlike any other. In this town faeries roam the woods, kill tourists ruthlessly, and steal children from the townspeople. Hazel does everything she can to protect the town, but there's only so much she can do when an evil different from all others emerges. Her only hope to save her town and everyone she loves is a horned boy in a glass box, the boy she's dreamed about forever. Can Hazel save everyone from this new evil?

### ***Dreamers Often Lie* by Jacqueline West**

Jaye's life revolves around the theatre and anything Shakespeare and that's the reason she starts to lie. She lies to get out of the hospital, she lies to go back to school, she lies to get back in the play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in the role of Titania, the fairy queen. Soon she cannot seem to tell reality from her daydreams as Shakespearean characters emerge into her daily life. Romeo makes it into her anatomy class, or is he a real boy? How can Jaye tell the difference between love and hate, pain and bliss, reality and hallucinations, or even lies and the truth? The title is a quote from *Romeo and Juliet*. This intriguing novel will certainly spark the interest of genuine literature lovers by portraying a tragic modern day Shakespearean love story.

### ***Eating Animals* by Jonathan Safran Foer**

Why do we eat such smart and affectionate animals as pigs but not dogs?

An account of one man's struggle with vegetarianism which comes to a head when he is about to become a father. Foer examines his Holocaust surviving grandmother's complex relationship with meat-and-potatoes comfort food and asks grappling philosophical questions as he looks at everything from factory farm methods, mass confinement, and assembly-line slaughter to the role of animal agriculture in climate change.

### ***Forgive Me Leonard Peacock* by Matthew Quick**

Leonard Peacock has big plans for his 18th birthday. After school he plans to kill Asher Beal, and then himself. Leonard and Asher used to be best friends, but something happened when they were twelve, something very bad. First though, he has to deliver small gifts to the four people who make his life a little better: a noir film-loving neighbor, a violin prodigy classmate, a superhot teen evangelist, and his favorite teacher, the only one who picks up on Leonard's suicidal signs and offers the listening ear Leonard so desperately needs. A difficult, often funny, brave and powerful book that makes use of flashbacks, internal dialogue and tons of suspense.

### ***The Girls of Atomic City* by Denise Kiernan**

Imagine you are recruited to work in a secret place with thousands of other people but not allowed to know what part of the process you are doing or the goal you are working towards. All you know is that you are working for your country.

At the height of World War II, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, was home to 75,000 residents, and consumed more electricity than New York City, yet it was shrouded in such secrecy that it did

not appear on any map. Thousands of civilians, many of them young women from small towns across the U.S., were recruited to this secret city, enticed by the promise of solid wages and war-ending work. What were they actually *doing* there? Some wondered why, despite the constant work and round-the-clock activity in this makeshift town, did no tangible product of any kind ever seem to leave its guarded gates. The women who kept this town running would find out at the end of the war, when Oak Ridge's secret was revealed and changed the world forever.

If you liked the movie *Hidden Figures* you will also like this book.

### ***The Girl Who Escaped Isis* by Farida Khalaf and Andrea Hoffman**

Farida was nineteen, living at home in Northern Iraq with her brothers and parents, finishing her schooling and looking forward to becoming a math teacher when her village was attacked by ISIS. All of the men in her town were killed. But Farida and the other women were held in a slave market in Syria and sold into the homes of several ISIS soldiers. Though she resists at every turn, Farida is ultimately brought to an ISIS training camp in the middle of the desert, where she plots an against-all-odds escape for herself and five other girls.

### ***Girls Like Us* by Gail Giles**

Quincy and Bidy are graduates of their school's special-education program but they couldn't be more different. Suspicious Quincy faces the world with her fists up, while gentle Bidy is frightened to step outside her front door. When they're thrown together as roommates in their first "real world" apartment post high school graduation, it initially seems to be an uneasy fit. As you learn more about their lives and their struggle against discrimination, you realize that there is less separating Quincy and Bidy from anyone else than you may have thought.

### ***Grunt* by Mary Roach**

Author Mary Roach returns to the VRHS Summer Reading list with her latest, *Grunt: The Curious Science of Humans at War*. With her expertise in science research, readers learn facts about soldiers they never would have thought of: How do they handle panic, heat exhaustion, and diarrhea--especially Navy SEALs? Did you ever wonder how fabric and zippers are chosen for snipers? Or, how the military uses a chicken gun to test for birds flying into planes? And then, Roach comes right here to the submarine base in Groton, CT where she learns the reasons why sailors swear so much.

Roach is entertaining and humorous as she uncovers the science of many different aspects of what soldiers eat, wear, and endure.

### ***Heartless* by Marissa Meyer**

Catherine Pinkerton wanted nothing more than to open up a bakery with her best friend. Her parents however, have different plans. The king has favored her, and she could become queen. Then one day, a boy named Jest comes along, and everything changes. She starts to imagine a future that includes him. A fantastic story full of humor, tragedy, and love. Don't forget your tissues because it will make you cry.

### ***Holding Up the Universe by Jennifer Niven***

Libby Strout was once deemed America's fattest teen. Jack Maselin is your basic popular high school boy, except he has prosopagnosia or face blindness. Jack can't even recognize his own face. When Libby finally comes to high school after losing close to 200 lbs, she is met by its harsh reality. People can't seem to see past the old Libby Strout, the one who had to be rescued from her own house. They can only see the Libby who weighs around 200 lbs. When Jack plays a "harmless" game with Libby, the two end up in counseling and having to perform community service. They are angry, and then surprised. The longer the two spend time together, the less alone they feel. Sometimes when you meet someone, it changes the world, theirs and yours.

### ***Hostage Three by Nick Lake***

Amy wants to be anywhere but on a yacht with her father and stepmother sailing around the world. All she wants is for her 18th birthday to arrive so she can take control of her life. However, Amy finds herself on the *Daisy May* sunbathing and dolphin watching. Soon, her reluctant attitude begins to change and everything is serene until the *Daisy May* is taken hostage by Somali pirates demanding a high ransom..

### ***Hotel Ruby by Suzanne Young***

Audrey and her brother are on their way to live with their grandparents months after the death of their mother. Their dad has been devastated ever since. On their way, they stop at a glamorous hotel, the Hotel Ruby. Even though the hotel is beautiful, strange things happen every night. Audrey doesn't know if she wants to stay or go. As things begin to get stranger and stranger, Audrey realizes she might never have the chance to leave. For fans of the supernatural.

### ***The Hunger of the Wolf by Stephen Marche***

Do you love mysteries and crime? Do you want to read a genre-bending book unlike any other? Then *The Hunger of the Wolf* is the perfect book for you!

One snowy night, the body of Ben Wylie is found in the snow by hunters. However, this is no ordinary death. Ben was the heir to the second wealthiest business in America. Up to the task of finding how and why he died is Jamie Cabot, whose family used to be housekeepers for the Wylies. Cabot embarks on a thrilling journey to uncover the truth found in the mysterious past of the Wylie family history. In this thriller, shocking and unpredictable secrets are revealed as you progress through the lives of the Wylie men. It is highly engaging and the writing style of author Stephen Marche makes it so you simply cannot put it down.

### ***The Job: True Tales from the life of a New York City Cop by Steve Osborne***

Ever wanted to be a cop? Go on a ride along?

Experience first hand what it was like being a cop in New York City in the 80s and 90s. Osborne shares experiences from his rookie years to his time in the Manhattan Gang Squad with humor, compassion and empathy. His stories are funny but also poignant reminders of the human condition and the ever present danger that accompanies cops at all times.

### ***King Dork* by Frank Portman**

When Tom Henderson finds his dead father's copy of J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, his world is turned upside down. Suddenly high school gets more complicated: Tom (aka King Dork) finds himself in the middle of mysteries involving dead people, naked people, fake people, a secret code, girls, and rock and roll. As he goes through sophomore year, he finds clues that may very well solve the puzzle of his father's death and—oddly—reveal the secret to attracting girls. The secret might be being in a band, if he can find a drummer who can count to four.

This cult classic features song lyrics throughout and now includes a glossary and a bandography.

### ***Mosquitoland* by David Arnold (Essex public library discussion book)**

Convinced that her father and stepmother are hiding secrets about her mother's health, and also frustrated by her father's insistence that she take antipsychotic medication, Mary Iris Malone or Mim, steals an emergency cash fund to travel 1,000 miles to her mother. Aboard a Greyhound bus, Mim's inner monologues about other passengers reveal her snarky sense of superiority. But her isolation quickly dissolves in the aftermath of a harrowing accident and completing her journey suddenly necessitates interacting with fellow travelers. Mim attempts to evaluate which conclusions about her fellow characters—both the seemingly charming and seemingly menacing—can be trusted. A little boy with Down Syndrome and an addiction to shiny things, a 16 year old girl with a complicated family, and a college boy who is pretty reckless and immature can make a strange team. Follow Mim on her trip to be reconnected with her mother and finding the true meaning of family all the while dealing with her psychosis.

### ***The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern**

The circus arrives without warning. No announcements precede it. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not. Within the black-and-white striped canvas tents is a unique experience full of amazements. It is *Le Cirque des Rêves* (the Circus of Dreams), and it is only open at night. Behind the scenes, a fierce competition is underway: a duel between two young magicians, Celia and Marco, who have been trained since childhood to make settings and exhibits to dazzle their audience. However, unbeknownst to them, this is a game in which only the best magician can be left standing. When Celia and Marco soon tumble headfirst into love, they set off a domino effect of dangerous consequences, leaving the lives of everyone, from the performers to the patrons, hanging in the balance.

### ***Outcasts United* by Warren St. John**

Love soccer? This one's for you.

Clarkston, Georgia, was a typical southern town until it became a refugee resettlement center. With an influx of diverse refugees from around the world, one woman sees an opportunity to form a youth soccer team. The Fugees and their formidable female coach, Luma Mufleh inspire an entire community. Even though some players don't have much skill, they definitely have love for the game. Their bond as a team, how they play, and what they overcome

together makes for an amazing story, one you will never forget. Based on the adult bestseller, *Outcasts United: An American Town, a Refugee Team, and One Woman's Quest to Make a Difference*

***One Second After* by William R. Fortschen**

In North Carolina, where residents rarely lock their homes, retired army colonel John Matherson teaches college, raises two daughters, and grieves the loss of his wife to cancer. After cars inexplicably die on the highway and airplanes fall from the sky, Matherson and others realize that a deadly electromagnetic pulse has instantly disabled almost every electrical device in the U.S. and elsewhere in the world. The country plunges into literal and metaphoric darkness. The next morning, the townspeople set survival priorities. John's list includes insulin for his type-one diabetic 12-year-old, candy bars, and sacks of ice. The deaths start with heart attacks and eventually escalate alarmingly into mass starvation, disease and roving gangs of barbarians.

***The Porcupine of Truth* by Bill Konisberg**

Resigned to help his mother, 17 year old Carson Smith is forced to spend his summer in Montana caring for the dying alcoholic father he doesn't know. On the first day in Montana he meets a mysterious girl named Aisha with problems of her own. Each provides a lifeline for the other as the two embark on a journey across the United States to uncover a secret about Carson's grandfather who had disappeared thirty years before. The only clues are unintentionally provided by a foreboding minister living next door. At the end of their journey they discover that some truths impact people's lives in very different ways. With a twisty ending.

***The Psychopath Test* by Jon Ronson**

Embark on "a journey through the madness industry" alongside bestselling journalist Jon Ronson, who delves into the minds of psychopaths as well as the doctors and scientists who study them. Ronson is first drawn to investigating an elaborate hoax played on the world's top scientists. Unexpectedly, the case leads him to psychopaths. Learn how to recognize the signs of a psychopath as Ronson meets with various psychologists, a jailed mass murderer, and a patient inside an asylum for the criminally insane who insists that he is sane. A true and fascinating study of the unexpected, and at times disturbing, discoveries of Ronson, a riveting read which will leave you both anxious and fervent to learn more of the world of madness.

***The Radioactive Boy Scout* by Ken Silverstein**

You'd think that they would leave the dangerous jobs to the trained professionals. And for the most part they do. Except for this guy, or should we say kid? David Hanh is a Boy Scout from Michigan who after learning about radioactivity for a merit badge tries to build a nuclear reactor in his backyard shed. And he succeeds! Soon radioactivity levels soar in his neighborhood and everyone has to evacuate. Then what?

***Rebel Queen* by Michelle Moran**

Imagine being the only hope for your family. Imagine having the rest of your life determined by a single trial. For Sita, her placement in Rani Lakshmi's Durga Dal (her all-female army) is the only way to support her family, create a dowry for her sister, and free herself from society's oppressing restrictions. Upon accepting her position in the Queen's army, Sita learns of the British plans to take over India. She must prepare herself to fight, and possibly give up her life for her queen, her family, and her country when Rani Lakshmi refuses to back down and convinces her army, her husband's (the Raja) army, as well as the people of India, to rise up against the colonial British and fight for their country.

### ***Red Rising* by Pierce Brown**

Are you tired of dystopias? Been there. Read that. Wait for it. *Red Rising* is different.

As protagonist, Darrow, a boy living as a member of the lowest class of society, fights to break the chains that hold his people down while avoiding death in the world's most murderous school, the typical dysfunctional dystopia of young adult novels fades away. In its place is a complex society with flaws and a struggle for both the ruling and underlying classes different from traditional dystopias. The characters are far from two dimensional, just as complex, confused, and captivating as actual people. The book is powerful, and enticing. The first installment in a trilogy, those who choose to read it are in for a wild ride.

### ***The Scar Boys* by Len Vlahos**

When Harry Jones was eight, he was tied to a tree by bullies and then struck by lightning. The strike left him scarred, emotionally and physically. After countless therapy sessions and years of social isolation, Harry goes back to the one thing a teen dreads the most, high school. He makes friends with a boy named Johnny, who comes up with the idea to form a band. The only problem... they can't play any instruments. When the band surprisingly rises up the charts, a new bassist joins, a girl who brings trouble everywhere she goes. Will the band rise into the spotlight or fade into the shadows where Harry once was?

### ***SteelHeart* by Brandon Sanderson**

Ever wondered what would happen if the impossible became possible?

When a giant red star appears above earth, the world is turned upside down as people begin gaining superpowers. These new people, dubbed "epics", are no gift, as the star fundamentally corrupts epics causing them to go on murderous rampages. In Calamity's first great display of epic power, he murders David Charleston's father and claims Detroit as his own. Ten years later, David is on a path for retribution, trying to find ways to avenge his father's death. And with the arrival of a rebel group called the reckoners, he might just get his chance. But how does man fight against the power of gods?

Winner of the 2016 Young Readers Choice Award, *Steelheart* is a Superhero/Villain thriller. Filled with action, thrills, and a little bit of romance, the book will grab you and keep you turning pages.

### ***The Stuff I've Been Feeling Lately* by Alicia Cook**

Are you a fan of poetry? Music? This book is for you!

The book is set up like a mixed tape, with a side A containing the original poem and a side B containing the blacked out “found poem” version that gives the poem a whole new twist. Each poem has its own suggested accompanying song, a suggested “to listen to” while reading that particular piece. *Stuff* covers an expanse of topics such as life, death, love, trauma, and growth. All funds from purchase of this book are donated towards the Willow Tree Foundation which helps those with addictions recover. Nominated for the Goodreads Choice Awards Best Poetry.

### ***Symptoms of Being Human* by Jeff Garvin**

Between starting at a new school and having a congressman father running for reelection in an extremely conservative county, Riley Cavanaugh just can't seem to catch a break from all the pressure. You see, in addition to the already overwhelming situation, closeted Riley feels neither male nor female but gender non-binary or gender fluid. To deal with the weight of her secret, Riley's therapist suggests starting an anonymous blog to vent feelings. Just when things start to be going well- settling in at school, making friends (and more than friends)- the blog goes viral and hosts an anonymous follower threatening to expose Riley's true identity. A decision has to be made. Drop the blog and its positive effects or come out and risk everything for Riley's family and social status.

### ***There Will Be Lies* by Nick Lake**

In four hours, Shelby Jane Cooper will be struck by a car. Shortly after, she and her mother will leave the hospital and set out on a winding journey toward the Grand Canyon. All Shelby knows is that they're running from dangers only her mother understands. And the further they travel, the more Shelby questions everything about her past--and her current reality. Forced to take advantage of the kindness of unsuspecting travelers, Shelby grapples with what's real, what isn't, and who she can trust . . . if anybody.

### ***These Broken Stars* by Amie Kaufman and Meagan Spooner**

Travel to the stars in this first installment of the Starbound Trilogy Series. Join Tarver Merendsen, a poor-boy-turned-military-hero, and Lilac LaRoux, the daughter of the richest man of the galaxy, on board the starliner *Icarus*. With a lavishly decorated first class, champagne served by waiters, and a dazzling view of the stars, it seems that nothing can go wrong until the unthinkable happens. The *Icarus* is jerked out of hyperspace. Tarver and Lilac manage to get into an escape pod before the whole ship is dragged down to the surface of an unfamiliar planet. Together, they must trek across this strange new terrain, and wait and hope for rescuers while they struggle to survive. But as Tarver and Lilac learn more about this planet, it becomes clear that nothing is how they think.

### ***They Cage the Animals at Night* by Jennings Michael Burch**

Imagine you are six years old and walking down the street with your mom. You stop at an unfamiliar building and your mom says, "I'll be right back." By later in the evening, you realize she's not coming back and you are then placed in a foster home with your beloved stuffed animal and only friend, Doggy. *They Cage* is a hard book to put down because you long to know how his life turns out. Some of his experiences are hard to read while others are heartwarming but this is an unforgettable story that will touch your heart.

### ***The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead**

What if the Underground Railroad had been a literal railroad--complete with cars, conductors, and stations along the journey from the southern slave states to the free north? This is the brilliant and thought-provoking question Colson Whitehead explores in his mesmerizing fictional account of Cora, an escaped slave, and her journey northward.

Cora is without family, struggling to even find a sense of belonging among her fellow slave community. When she learns of the Underground Railroad, she begins a journey complete with murder and a desperate attempt to escape the villainous slave catcher Ridgeway who is hot on her trail. As she navigates Whitehead's imagined railway through South Carolina to Indiana, Cora is exposed to many challenges and obstacles, keeping the reader in suspense.

Winner of the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, Colson provides a blistering social commentary on the flawed history of race relations in America, "confirm[ing]...Whitehead's reputation as one of our most daring and inventive writers. A suspenseful tale of escape and pursuit, it combines elements of fantasy and the counterfactual with an unflinching, painfully truthful depiction of American slavery. Whitehead revisits the grotesque barbarities of our nation's history in the interest of our common stake in freedom and dignity...an electrifying narrative of the past, profoundly resonant with the present (**Citation for the National Book Award**)

### ***Uprising* by Margaret Peterson Haddix**

Based on a true and tragic event, *Uprising* brings the tragedy of the 1911 fire at the Triangle Waist Company in New York City to life. Told from alternating points of view, this historical novel follows the story of three young girls from very different backgrounds: Bella, an immigrant from Italy, Yetta, a Russian immigrant and a crusader for labor rights, and Jane, the daughter of a wealthy businessman. By a chance of fate, the girls become fast friends, and all three are together at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory on March 25, 1911 - the day of the infamous fire. *Uprising* is a tragic and thrilling tale which brings light to the calamitous disaster that brought attention to the labor movement in America.