

OAKWOOD SCHOOL 2020 EIGHTH GRADE SUMMER READING LIST

REQUIRED READING

INTERMENT by Samira Ahmed (2019)

Please purchase the paperback published by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers (**ISBN-13: 978-0316522700**)

Set in a horrifying near-future United States, seventeen-year-old Layla Amin and her parents are forced into an internment camp for Muslim American citizens.

With the help of newly made friends also trapped within the internment camp, her boyfriend on the outside, and an unexpected alliance, Layla begins a journey to fight for freedom, leading a revolution against the camp's Director and his guards. Heart-racing and emotional, *Internment* challenges readers to fight complicit silence that exists in our society today.

JUST MERCY: A TRUE STORY OF THE FIGHT FOR JUSTICE (ADAPTED FOR YOUNG READERS) by Bryan Stevenson (2018)

Please purchase the Ember paperback edition (**ISBN-13: 978-0593177044**).

In this very personal work--adapted from the original #1 bestseller, which the *New York Times* calls "as compelling as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and in some ways more so"--acclaimed lawyer and social justice advocate Bryan Stevenson offers a glimpse into the lives of the wrongfully imprisoned and his efforts to fight for their freedom.

Stevenson's story is one of working to protect basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society--the poor, the wrongly convicted, and those whose lives have been marked by discrimination and marginalization. Through this adaptation, young people of today will find themselves called to action and compassion in the pursuit of justice.

Since there will be discussion and a quiz on these two books the first week of school, please read or review the required books at the end of the summer. In addition, we recommend that you read other books from the list. If you have any questions, contact Nechelle Wong-Littman, Middle School Humanities Department Chair at nwong@oakwoodschoool.org.

RECOMMENDED READING

* indicates a book that complements the 8th grade American studies curriculum

CLASSICS FOR ALL AGES

***1984** by George Orwell (1948)

Written in 1948, this cautionary tale of totalitarian society watched over by Big Brother who controls the daily lives of these citizens of the future.

***THE CALL OF THE WILD** by Jack London (1903)

The dog hero, Buck, is stolen from his comfortable home and pressed into service as a sled dog in the Klondike. He is abused by both men and dogs then rescued for further adventures.

THE INVISIBLE MAN by H. G. Wells (1897)

A mysterious man enters a small motel in England, wrapped head to toe in bandages, as if he had appeared out of nowhere. More classic science fiction.

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD by Harper Lee (1960)

The Pulitzer Prize novel about the honor and injustice in the deep South, through the eyes of a young girl, as her father, a crusading local lawyer, risks everything to defend a black man unjustly accused of a terrible crime.

OF MICE AND MEN by John Steinbeck (1937)

A powerful story of tragic friendship between two migrant workers during the Great Depression.

LORD OF THE FLIES by William Golding (1954)

British boys land on a deserted island and are forced to take care of each other and survive. Ralph believes "the rules are the only thing we've got" and wants to adhere to a rescue plan, while Jack wants to hunt and have fun. A fascinating, post World War II exploration of human nature

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MULTICULTURAL AMERICA

***BLESS ME, ULTIMA** by Rudolfo Anaya (1972)

Antonio Marez is six years old when Ultima comes to stay with his family in New Mexico. She is a *curandera*, one who cures with herbs and magic. Under her guidance, Tony will probe the family ties that bind him.

***BITTER MELON** by Cara Chow.

Destined for an outstanding university and medical career, Frances rebels against her Chinese “tiger mom” by taking speech instead of calculus and finds her voice.

***BREAD GIVERS** by Anzia Yezierska (1925)

This masterwork of American immigrant literature is set in the 1920s on the Lower East Side of Manhattan and tells the story of Sara Smolinsky, the youngest daughter of an Orthodox rabb. Sarah's struggle towards independence and self-fulfillment resonates with a passion all can share.

***HOW THE GARCIA GIRLS LOST THEIR ACCENTS** by Julia Alvarez (1991)

Three girls move from luxury in the Dominican Republic to the United States. Their funny and touching stories of adjustment connect well to many American studies themes.

***INSIDE OUT AND BACK AGAIN** by Thanhha Lai (2012)

Written in short free-verse poems, Hà's narrative describes her journey as a refugee who settles in Alabama after the Vietnam War.

***THE JOY LUCK CLUB** by Amy Tan (1990)

Four mothers “talk story” to their daughters about their immigrant experiences from World War II China and their assimilation to American culture.

***THE LIONS OF LITTLE ROCK** by Karen Levine

During the school desegregation battles of 1958, 13-year-olds Marlee and Lizzie become friends, leading to standoffs with classmates, family, and officials.

***ONE CRAZY SUMMER** by Rita Williams-Garcia

Set during a pivotal moment in African American history -- the summer of 1968 and the growth of the Black Power movement -- this novel about three girls meeting the mother they never knew shows the subtle ways that political movements affect personal lives.

***PLUM BUN** by Jessie Redmon Fauset (1929)

A young black girl from Philadelphia discovers she can “pass” for white. Living as a white woman, she becomes successful, and falls in love—with a racist who does not know her real identity.

***SEVENTEEN SYLLABLES AND OTHER STORIES**

by Hisaye Yamamoto (2001)

How is tradition transmitted from one generation to another? These lovely and sad stories dramatize the experiences of Japanese Americans.

***A STEP FROM HEAVEN** by An Na (2001)

A Korean family immigrates to California in search of a better life, only to find that the American Dream is harder to achieve than they thought.

***UNDER THE MESQUITE** by Guadalupe McCall

Lupita's world is shifting, bringing big changes for her tight-knit Mexican-American family.

***IF I EVER GET OUT OF HERE** by Eric Gansworth (2013)

Lewis, the only Native American boy in his classes, struggles to fit in while remaining loyal to his family and his culture. His love of popular music leads to a friendship with a new student over their shared musical taste, but that bond is tested when Lewis faces bullying.

WHEN THE EMPEROR WAS DIVINE by Julie Otsuka (2003)

The experiences of a single family during the Second World War symbolically evoke the deracination—both physical and emotional—of a generation of Japanese Americans.

OUT OF DARKNESS by Ashley Hope Perez (2015)

In 1937 East Texas, Mexican American Naomi and African American Wash begin a bittersweet romance. Perez's beautifully crafted novel is a moving portrayal of both powerful love and a period marked by oppressive, destructive racism.

***DEAR MARTIN** by Nic Stone (2017)

Justyce McAllister is an honor student and looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? Then comes the day Justyce sparks the fury of a white off-duty cop. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce is caught in the middle of it. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

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***PIECING ME TOGETHER** by Renee Watson (2017)

Jade believes she must get out of her poor neighborhood if she's ever going to succeed. She's tired of being singled out as someone people want to fix. Jade wants to speak, to create, to express her joys and sorrows, her pain and her hope. Maybe there are some things she could show other women about understanding the world and finding ways to be real, to make a difference.

***LONG WAY DOWN** by Jason Reynolds (2017)

This electrifying novel that takes place in sixty potent seconds—the time it takes a kid to decide whether or not he's going to murder the guy who killed his brother. Told in short, fierce staccato narrative verse, *Long Way Down* is a fast and furious, dazzlingly brilliant look at teenage gun violence.

FRIENDSHIP, FAMILIES, and RELATIONSHIPS

THE BEAN TREES by Barbara Kingsolver (1989)

Taylor Greer leaves Kentucky and heads west to find a new life. But motherhood—in the form of a three-year-old girl named Turtle—is unexpectedly thrust upon her.

CODE NAME VERITY by Elizabeth Wein (2013)

In this multifaceted tale of intrigue and loyalties, two young women find their friendship tested while fighting to save themselves and their secrets when caught behind enemy lines in occupied France during World War II.

NAVIGATING EARLY by Clare Vanderpool (2014)

Jack Baker, uprooted suddenly after his mother's death, and Early Auden, the strangest of boys, meet at a Maine boarding school. Their friendship culminates in a treacherous quest and unexpected self-discovery. Vanderpool delivers an emotionally powerful novel in an untamed setting as the boys head up river in search of the Great Appalachian Bear.

ELEANOR AND PARK by Rainbow Rowell (2013)

Unlikely love blossoms on the bus when two unique, exceptional souls find strength in each other's differences in Rowell's emotionally charged and hopeful novel.

AND WE STAY by Jenny Hubbard (2015)

Reeling from her boyfriend's dramatic suicide, Emily hides her anguish at a new boarding school, where she finds healing through poetry. Hubbard's gem-like prose beautifully balances Emily's poetry.

A MEMBER OF THE WEDDING by Carson McCullers (1951)

Twelve-year-old Frankie is utterly, hopelessly bored with life until she hears about her older brother's wedding...

THE FRIENDS by Rosa Guy (1973)

Having just arrived in Harlem from the West Indies, Phyllisia finds life difficult due to the hostility of her classmates and the strict discipline of her father. Only Edith befriends her, despite her own problems taking care of her parentless family.

***GHETTO COWBOY** by G. Neri (2011)

Twelve-year-old Cole grows from near-delinquent to responsible teen and passionate horseman as he helps his father and the cowboys save their endangered stables in inner-city Philadelphia. Neri's captivating tale is inspired by real-life black urban cowboys.

THE GRASS HARP by Truman Capote (1951)

A short and lyrical novel about a young boy and two old ladies who form a magical bond when they move into a tree house.

***KIRA-KIRA** by Cynthia Kadohata (2004)

This book chronicles the close friendship between two Japanese-American sisters growing up in rural Georgia during the late '50s, and the despair they feel when one sister becomes terminally ill.

LOCAL GIRLS by Alice Hoffman (1999)

"Dear Diary," the book begins: "One thing I've learned is that strange things do happen. They happen all the time. Today, for instance, my best friend Jill's cat spoke. We were making brownies in the kitchen when we heard it say, *Let me out.*"

OPERATION YES by Sara Lewis Holmes (2011)

None of the sixth graders on the Air Force base know what to think of their theatrical new teacher Miss Loupe, but when her brother goes missing in Afghanistan, the whole school finds a way to help.

POSTCARDS FROM NO MAN'S LAND by Aidan Chambers (2002)

Seventeen-year-old Jacob comes to Amsterdam to find the grave of his grandfather who died there during World War II and meets Geertrui, the Dutch woman who cared for his wounded grandfather.

SILVER by Norma Fox Mazer (1988)

Four thirteen-year-old girls become good friends, sharing painful secrets and joyful triumphs despite differing social and economic backgrounds.

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TENDER by Valerie Hobbs (2001)

After her beloved grandmother dies, fifteen-year-old Liv goes to California to live with the father she has never known and a world very different from New York City.

THE THIEF LORD by Cornelia Funke (2002)

After their mother dies, Prosper and his five-year-old brother, Bo, flee from Hamburg to Venice. They live in an abandoned movie theater with several other street children under the care of the Thief Lord, a cocky youth who claims to rob the wealthiest families in the city.

PARABLE OF THE SOWER by Octavia Butler (1993)

Forced to flee an America where anarchy and violence have completely taken over in the year 2025, Lauren Olamina—who can feel the pain of others and is crippled by it—becomes a prophet carrying the hope of a new world and a new faith christened "Earthseed." Both a coming of age novel and a road novel.

THE SUN IS ALSO A STAR by Nicola Yoon (2016)

When Daniel and Natasha finally meet, he falls in love immediately and convinces her to join him for the day. They tell their stories in alternating chapters. This is a thought-provoking story of possibility, fate, and the illogical beauty of love.

HISTORICAL FICTION

***COLD MOUNTAIN** by Charles Frazier (1998)

This novel of the Civil War follows the journey of a wounded Confederate soldier as he tries to find his way home to North Carolina.

***RAGTIME** by E. L. Doctorow (1975)

This novel mingles historical figures (like Henry Ford and Sigmund Freud) and fictional lives to create a portrait of America in the years before World War One.

THE RETURN by Sonia Levitin (1987)

A fictional account of a true event: the secret rescue of 8000 Ethiopian Jews from their mountain homes. Two sisters endure hardship and danger to reach a new land where everything is new to them.

***CROSSING EBENEZER CREEK** by Tonya Bolden (2017)

When Mariah and her young brother Zeke are suddenly freed from slavery, they join Sherman's march through Georgia and meet a free black, Caleb. Mariah wants to believe that the brutalities of slavery are behind them, but even as hope glimmers, there are many hardships yet to come.

MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1902)

Sherlock Holmes—the extraordinarily clever amateur detective and his side-kick Dr. Watson solve one of the most bloodcurdling case of their careers. A classic.

***SHADOW DIVERS** by Robert Kurson (2004)

A journalist recounts the adventures of the two deep-sea divers who discover a WWII German U-boat off the coast of New Jersey.

THE LOST WORLD by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1912)

Jurassic Park without the silly science; follow the adventures of Professor Challenger and his companions as they explore a South American plateau where dinosaurs and cavemen co-exist in a strange land that time forgot.

REBECCA by Daphne DuMaurier (1938)

In this suspenseful, romantic novel, the shy, new wife of Maxim deWinter is haunted by reminders of his deceased first wife and by growing suspicions about her husband's role in her death.

***THE RIDDLE OF PENNCROFT FARM** by Dorteja Jensen (1989)

Lars Olafson moves with his parents to the old family farm near Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Lars is miserable—until he meets Geordie, a ghost whose exciting stories of the Revolutionary War become the key to a mystery Lars must solve.

AND THEN THERE WERE NONE by Agatha Christie (1940)

Ten strangers are invited to a deserted island by a mysterious host; one by one they disappear.

SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY

BONE GAP by Laura Ruby (2016)

Told from alternating viewpoints, *Bone Gap* perfectly melds elements of fairy tales, myths, gothic romance, and magic realism into the story of Finn, who lives in a town with gaps in the very fabric of time and place.

EVA by Peter Dickinson (2001)

Eva wakes up from a deep coma to find that doctors have transplanted her brain and memory into the body of a research chimpanzee. This is not your ordinary tonsillectomy...

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THE GOLDEN COMPASS by Philip Pullman (2001)

Lyra and her daimon, armed with a miraculous golden compass, journey to the top of the world to find a kidnapped playmate.

THE HOBBIT by J.R.R. Tolkien (1937)

Follow the gnome-like hobbits as they battle good and evil in the shadowy realm of Middle Earth. Now you're ready to read Tolkien's *Lord Of The Rings*.

ILL MET BY MOONLIGHT by Sarah Hoyt (2001)

A book full of elves, fairies, romance, and a character named Will Shakespeare. (Haven't I heard of him?)

LEGEND by Marie Lu (2012)

June is searching for Day, the outlaw she believes is responsible for her brother's death. What will happen when the two meet and discover the government is corrupt? The story continues in *Prodigy* and *Champion*.

THE NUMBER DEVIL by Hans Magnus Enzensburger (1997)

Twelve-year old Robert hates his math teacher, who annoys him with stupid word problems and won't let him

use his calculator. Then, in his dreams, he meets the number devil...

THE ROPEMAKER by Peter Dickinson. (2003)

Tilja has grown up in the peaceful Valley, which is protected from the fearsome Empire by an enchanted forest. But the forest's power has begun to fade, and ...*what can Tilja do?*

STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND by Robert Heinlein (1963)

A young man brought up on Mars teaches humans on earth about social compassion. A sci-fi classic.

WATERSHIP DOWN by Richard Adams (1972)

Faced with annihilation, a small group of rabbits set out in search of a new home.

ART & ARTISTS

GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING by Tracy

Chevalier (2000)

Sixteen-year-old Griet is hired as a maid in the household of Delft painter Johannes Vermeer, where she becomes model and muse to the famous painter.

LYDIA CASSATT READING THE MORNING

PAPER by Harriet Scott Chessman (2002) The narrator of the story is the sister of the impressionist painter Mary Cassatt. Ill with a fatal disease, she reflects on mortality, art, and her famous sister's paintings.

SPORTS

GAME TIME: A BASEBALL COMPANION by

Roger Angell (2003)

This collection of essays takes the reader from spring training 1962 to the explosive World Series of 2002 when Barry Bonds broke the single season homerun record.

HOOPS by Walter Dean Myers (1981)

Growing up in the streets of Harlem, talented athlete Lonnie Jackson understands basketball as a way out of the ghetto.

***HOOP ROOTS: BASKETBALL, RACE, AND LOVE** by John Edgar Wideman (2001)

The author recalls his childhood on the gritty streets of Pittsburgh and reflects on basketball, black culture, and America.

***JACKIE ROBINSON AND THE INTEGRATION OF BASEBALL** by Scott Simon (2002)

The story of Robinson, the first black player in the major leagues (he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947), told as an episode in American social history.

SHOELESS JOE by W.P. Kinsella (1982)

The source for *A Field of Dreams*, this is the story of an Iowa farmer and his relationship to Shoeless Joe Jackson, one of the greatest hitters of all time, and a member of the notorious 1919 Chicago "Black Sox."

SUMMERLAND by Michael Chabon (2002)

Ethan Field, the worst baseball player in the history of the game, finds himself recruited by a one-hundred-yearold scout to help a band of fairies triumph over an ancient enemy.

POETRY ANTHOLOGIES

19 VARIETIES OF GAZELLE: POEMS OF THE MIDDLE EAST by Naomi Shihab Nye (2002)

Another world, another culture; these poems personalize the conflicts and people, deepening our understanding of the Islamic world.

***HEART TO HEART: NEW POEMS INSPIRED BY TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN ART**

Ed. by Jan Greenberg (2001)

Forty-three American poets selected a twentieth-century American work of art and responded to it by writing a poem.

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HEARTBEAT by Sharon Creech (2004)

Twelve-year-old Annie's memorable story of coping with her grandfather's dementia and her mother's pregnancy is told in free verse.

***ON THE BUS WITH ROSA PARKS** by Rita Dove (1999)

A former Poet Laureate, Dove writes about ordinary lives and extraordinary emotions. The title poem celebrates civil rights hero Rosa Parks, who reluctantly entered public life "to serve the public good."

***PICTURE BRIDE** by Cathy Song (1982)

Song writes of the bittersweet experiences of her grandmother, who journeyed from Korea to Hawaii to be married—chosen by her future husband from a photograph.

REAL LIVES

***AMERICAN CHICA: TWO WORLDS, ONE CHILDHOOD** by Marie Arana (2001)

The portrait of a life "split in half" by a collision of cultures.

***BIRD BY BIRD: SOME INSTRUCTIONS ON WRITING AND LIFE** by Annie Lamott (1994)

A gently encouraging guide to writing that will strengthen your powers of observation.

***BLACK BOY** by Richard Wright (1945)

Richard Wright's wrenching autobiography of growing up in the South: a story about racism and the power of the written word.

REAL GIRLS TALK ABOUT SURVIVING MIDDLE SCHOOL -- BULLIES, BRANDS, BODY IMAGE, AND MORE – by Haley Kilpatrick; Whitney Joiner

A survival guide from *Girl Talk*.

***FAREWELL TO MANZANAR** by Jeanne Houston (1973)

Moving account of one Japanese-American family's efforts to survive forced internment during World War II.

***ENCHANTED AIR: TWO CULTURES, TWO WINGS: A MEMOIR** by Margarita Engle (2016)

The author's memories focus on the first 14 years of her life, beginning with idyllic summers spent in her mother's homeland of Cuba and ending during the aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Engle captures the heart of a quiet,

young girl torn between two cultures. This historical memoir/love poem to Cuba couldn't be more timely.

***HEART AND SOUL** by Kadir Nelson

An introduction to African-American history from colonial days through the civil rights movement by an award-winning author-illustrator.

***HIROSHIMA** by John Hersey (1946; 1989)

Hersey recounts the fate of six who survived the atomic bombing of this Japanese city on August 6, 1945.

***I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS** by

Maya

Angelou (1969)

Growing up black in the '30s and '40s in a small town in Arkansas.

IN THE HEART OF THE SEA: THE TRAGEDY OF THE WHALESHIP ESSEX by Nathaniel

Philbrick

(2001)

A nineteenth-century tragedy—the sinking of the 238ton Essex by an enraged sperm whale and how the twenty-man crew survived—that inspired *Moby Dick*.

***NIGHT** by Elie Wiesel (1960)

Wiesel was a young boy in 1944 when he and his family were transported to Auschwitz and then Buchenwald. Wiesel remembers the horror—and asks us not to forget.

TRUE NOTEBOOKS by Mark Salzman (2003)

While teaching writing to seventeen-year-olds detained in the Los Angeles Central Juvenile Hall, Salzman was surprised by the boys' talent. Their heartwarming and funny voices are included in this irresistible and provocative memoir.

***A WALKER IN THE CITY** by Alfred Kazin (1951)

Kazin was a sensitive Jewish child who longed to move "beyond" the Brownsville ghetto in Brooklyn to Manhattan, where the "Americans" live.

***WHEELS OF CHANGE: HOW WOMEN RODE THE BICYCLE TO FREEDOM (WITH A FEW FLAT TIRES ALONG THE WAY)** by Sue Macy (2011)

An engaging look at the emancipating impact that bikes had on late-nineteenth-century U.S. women which includes archival images and quotes of the era.

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***WHITE IS A STATE OF MIND: A MEMOIR** by

Melba Pattillo Beals (1999)

Beals grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas: one of the nine teenagers who integrated all-white Central High in 1957. A story of fear—and determination.

***THIS LAND IS OUR LAND: A HISTORY OF AMERICAN IMMIGRATION** by Linda Barrett

Osborne (2016)

The so-called American melting pot has a history of exclusion, discrimination, and strife that has resulted in anti-immigration laws, segregation, and, in the case of the Japanese during World War II, unjustified internment. The author combines comprehensive history with anecdotal case studies to present the human side of the issue.

***FREE LUNCH** by Rex Ogle (2019)

Rex, a sixth grader, and his baby brother often went hungry, wore secondhand clothes, and were short of school supplies, and Rex was on his school's free lunch program. Grounded in the immediacy of physical hunger and the humiliation of having to announce it every day in the school lunch line, Rex's is a compelling story of a more profound hunger—that of a child for his parents' love and care.