

SJA's Savory Summer Selections

Reading List 2008

suggested grade

book

Grades 9-12

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel--a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.

Good Brother; Bad Brother by James Griblin

Most people know the name John Wilkes Booth, but few likely have heard of his elder brother Edwin. Find out about the brothers through first-hand accounts. Learn how alike and how different they were, and how each made a lasting impression on American history.

A Great and Terrible Beauty. The Sweet Far Thing. Rebel Angels by Libba Bray

After the suspicious death of her mother in 1895, sixteen-year-old Gemma returns to England, after many years in India, to attend a finishing school where she becomes aware of her magical powers and ability to see into the spirit world.

A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest Gaines

A young man who returns to 1940s Cajun country to teach visits a black youth on death row for a crime he didn't commit. Together they come to understand the heroism of resisting.

Little Family, Big Values by the Roloff Family

"From the stars of TLC's critically acclaimed reality show Little People, Big World comes heartfelt advice to help today's families overcome life's obstacles together and grow closer in the process."
--From the inside flap of the book jacket.

A Northern Light by Jennifer Donnelly

In 1906, sixteen-year-old Mattie, determined to attend college and be a writer against the wishes of her father and fiance, takes a job at a summer inn where she discovers the truth about the death of a guest.

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

Fourteen-year-old Lily and her companion, Rosaleen, an African-American woman who has cared for Lily since her mother's death ten years earlier, flee their home after Rosaleen is victimized by racist police officers, and find a safe haven in Tiburon, South Carolina at the home of three beekeeping sisters, May, June, and August.

Sold by Patricia McCormick

Thirteen-year-old Lakshmi leaves her poor mountain home in Nepal thinking that she is to work in the city as a maid only to find that she has been sold into the sex slave trade in India and that there is no hope of escape.

Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

Mortenson's one-man mission is to counteract extremism by building schools, especially for girls, throughout the breeding ground of the Taliban. In a region where Americans are often feared and hated, he has survived kidnapping, death threats, and wrenching separations from his wife and children. But his success speaks for itself--at last count, his Central Asia Institute had built fifty-five

Grades 9-12

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

The beloved American classic about a young girl's coming-of-age at the turn of the century, Betty Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* is a poignant and moving tale filled with compassion and cruelty, laughter and heartache, crowded with life and people and incident. The story of young, sensitive, and idealistic Francie Nolan and her bittersweet formative years in the slums of Williamsburg has enchanted and inspired millions of readers for more than sixty years.

Twilight, New Moon, Eclipse by Stephenie Meyer

When seventeen-year-old Bella leaves Phoenix to live with her father in Forks, Washington, she meets an exquisitely handsome boy at school for whom she feels an overwhelming attraction and who she comes to realize is not wholly human.

Grades 9-10

Cuba 15 by Nancy Osa

Violet Paz, a Chicago high school student, reluctantly prepares for her upcoming "quince," a Spanish nickname for the celebration of a Hispanic girl's fifteenth birthday.

Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy by Gary Schmidt

In 1911, Turner Buckminster hates his new home of Phippsburg, Maine, but things improve when he meets Lizzie Bright Griffin, a girl from a poor, nearby island community founded by former slaves that the town father's--and Turner's--want to change into a tourist spot.

Out of the Dust by Karen Hesse

In a series of poems, fifteen-year-old Billie Jo relates the hardships of living on her family's wheat farm in Oklahoma during the dust bowl years of the Depression.

Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson

Melinda Sordino busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops. Now her old friends won't talk to her, and people she doesn't even know hate her from a distance. But there's something she's trying not to think about, something about the night of the party that, if she let it in, would blow her carefully constructed disguise to smithereens.

Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes by Chris Crutcher

Eric and Sarah have been friends since junior high, when his weight and her scars made them outcasts. In high school, Eric has slimmed and Sarah doesn't let being an outsider hurt her. Now she sits silent in a hospital. Can Eric uncover her secret before it puts them both in danger?

Tears of a Tiger, Forged by Fire, Darkness before Dawn by Sharon Draper

The death of high school basketball star Rob Washington in an automobile accident affects the lives of his close friend Andy, who was driving the car, and many others in the school.

Grades 11-12

Crow Lake by Mary Lawson

Kate Morrison, orphaned at the age of seven, grows up seeing her brilliant older brother Matt's failure to further his education as a tragedy, and feeling somewhat guilty about her own accomplishments, and it is not until years later that she finally sees the damage her faulty thinking has caused.

Handmaids Tale by Margaret Atwood

Offred is a Handmaid in the Republic of Gilead. She may leave the home of the Commander and his wife once a day to walk to food markets whose signs are now pictures instead of words because women are no longer allowed to read. Offred can remember the years before, when she lived with her husband, Luke; when she played with and protected her daughter; when she had a job, money of her own, and access to knowledge. But all that is gone now.

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The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan

In 1949 four Chinese women began meeting in San Francisco to play mah jong. They called their gathering the Joy Luck Club. Forty years later they look back and remember.

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

Taking us from Afghanistan in the final days of the monarchy to the present, The Kite Runner is the unforgettable, beautifully told story of the friendship between two boys growing up in Kabul. Raised in the same household and sharing the same wet nurse, Amir and Hassan nonetheless grow up in different worlds; Amir is the son of a prominent and wealthy man, while Hassan, the son of Amir's father's servant, is a Hazara, member of a shunned ethnic minority. Their intertwined lives, and their fates, reflect the eventual tragedy of the world around them.

The Lovely Bones by Alice Sebold

This is the tale of family, memory, love, and living told by 14-year-old Susie Salmon, who is already in heaven. Through the voice of a precocious teenage girl, Susie relates the awful events of her death and builds out of her family's grief a hopeful and joyful story.

Like Water for Chocolate by Laura Esquivel

Tita and Pedro are in love, but cannot marry because of a family tradition. To be near Tita, Pedro marries her sister and Tita, as the family cook, expresses her passion through preparing delectable dishes. A romantic and poignant tale of love and family life in turn-of-the-century Mexico.

People of the Book by Geraldine Brooks

In 1996, Hanna Heath, a young Australian book conservator is called to analyze the famed Sarajevo Haggadah, a priceless six-hundred-year-old Jewish prayer book that has been salvaged from a destroyed Bosnian library. When Hanna discovers a series of artifacts in the centuries' old, she unwittingly exposes an international cover up.

The World Without Us by Alan Weisman

Journalist Weisman offers an original approach to questions of humanity's impact on the planet. Drawing on the expertise of engineers, atmospheric scientists, art conservators, zoologists, oil refiners, marine biologists, astrophysicists, religious leaders, and paleontologists, he illustrates what the planet might be like today if humans disappeared.

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Cleveland Public Library: <http://www.cpl.org>

Cuyahoga County Public Library: <http://www.cuyahogalibrary.org>

Lakewood Public Library: <http://www.lkwdpl.org>

Rocky River Public Library: <http://www.rrpl.org>

Westlake Porter Public Library: <http://www.westlakelibrary.org>

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