Freshmen Recommended Reading

***The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.* Mark Twain** (1) ADVENTURE - The adventures of a boy growing up in a nineteenth-century Mississippi River town.

***Alive.* Scott Sigler** (1) HS MYSTERY

Waking up in a mysterious enclosed space with no memory of their identities, a group of young adults uncover evidence of a long-past war and the horrifying realities of their confinement.

***All these things I’ve Done.* Gabrielle Zevin** (1) ROMANCE

In a future where chocolate and caffeine are contraband, teenage cellphone use is illegal, and water and paper are carefully rationed, sixteen-year-old Anya Balanchine finds herself thrust unwillingly into the spotlight as heir apparent to an important New York City crime family.

***Amity.* Micol Ostow**(1) HS HORROR

Here is a house of ruin and rage, of death and deliverance. Amity isn’t just a house. She is a living force, bent on manipulating her inhabitants to her twisted will.

***Animal Farm.* George Orwell** (3) FANTASY - A group of barnyard animals revolt against their vicious human master, only to submit to a tyranny erected by their own kind.

***The Beginning of Everything.* Robyn Schneider** (1)

HS ROMANCE Star athlete and prom king Ezra Faulkner’s life is irreparably transformed by a tragic accident and the arrival of eccentric new girl Cassidy Thorpe.

 ***Believe.* Sarah Aronson** (1) GENERAL - Janine is the "Soul Survivor," the girl who, as a small child, was the only survivor of a Palestinian suicide bomb in Israel that killed her parents. Ten years on, she feels like she's public property more than her own person

***Blindsided.* Priscilla Cummings** (1) GENERAL - After years of failing eyesight, fourteen-year-old Natalie reluctantly enters a school for the blind, where in spite of her initial resistance she learns the skills that will help her survive in the sighted world.

***The Chocolate War.* Robert Cormier** (1) HS GENERAL

Jerry Renault challenges the power structure of his school when he refuses to sell chocolates for the annual fundraiser.

***Crazy Horse Electric Game.* Chris Crutcher** (1)

HS GENERAL - A high school athlete, frustrated at being handicapped after an accident, runs away from home and attempts to rebuild his life and body while trying to survive on his own.

***Chronicles of Narnia Series.* C.S. Lewis** FANTASY Begin the series when Digory and Polly are tricked into a strange other world, which becomes, even as they watch, the great Narnia. Return again and again with four other children--Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy--who are to play such a vital role in Narnia's history.

***The Magician’s Nephew***

***The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe***

***The Horse and His Boy***

***Prince Caspian***

***The Voyage of the Dawn Treader***

***The Silver Chair***

***The Last Battle***

***Dark Water Rising.* Marian Hale**(1) HISTORICAL - While salvaging and rebuilding in the aftermath of the Galveston flood of 1900, sixteen-year-old Seth proves himself in a way that his previous efforts never could, but he still must face his father man-to-man.

***The Day No Pigs Would Die.* Robert Peck** (3) ADVENTURE - To a thirteen-year-old Vermont farm boy whose father slaughters pigs for a living, maturity comes early as he learns "doing what's got to be done," especially regarding his pet pig who cannot produce a litter.

***Dear Killer.* Katherine Ewell** MYSTERY Kit, a 17-year-old serial killer, chooses who to kill based on anonymous letters left in a secret mailbox, while simultaneously maintaining a close relationship with the young detective in charge of the murder cases

***The Death of Bees.* Lisa O’Donnell** (1) HS GENERAL

Today I buried my parents in the backyard. Neither of them were beloved. Marnie and her little sister are on their own now. Only they know what happened to their parents and they aren’t telling. As one lie leads to another, dark secrets surface, threatening to tear the sisters apart.

***The Eye of Minds.* James Dashner** ADVENTURE Michael is a skilled internet gamer in a world of advanced technology. When a cyber-terrorist begins to threaten players, Michael is called upon to seek him and his secrets out.

***Gathering Blue.* Lois Lowry** (1) SCI-FI - Lame and suddenly orphaned, Kira is mysteriously removed from her squalid village to live in the palatial Council Edifice, where she is expected to use her gifts as a weaver to do the bidding of the all-powerful Guardians.

***A Girl Named Disaster.* Nance Farmer** (1) ADVENTURE - While fleeing from Mozambique to Zimbabwe to escape an unwanted marriage, Nhamo, an eleven-year-old Shona girl, struggles to escape drowning and starvation and in so doing comes close to the luminous world of the African spirits.

***The Girls of No Return.* Erin Saldin** (1) HS ADVENTURE

A troubled sixteen-year-old girl attending a wilderness school in the Idaho mountains must finally face the consequences of her complicated friendships with two of the other girls at the school.

***The Golden Compass.* Philip Pullman** (2) FANTASY - Accompanied by her daemon, Lyra Belacqua sets out to prevent her best friend and other kidnapped children from becoming the subject of gruesome experiments in the Far North.

***Half Bad.* Sally Green** HS Fantasy In modern day England, where witches live alongside humans, Nathan, son of a White witch and the most powerful Black witch, must escape

captivity before his 17th birthday and receive the gifts that will determine his future.

***Harry Potter & the Sorcerer’s Stone.* J.K. Rowling** (2) FANTASY Rescued from the outrageous neglect of his aunt and uncle, a young boy with a great destiny proves his worth while attending Hogwarts School for Wizards and Witches.

***Harry Potter & the Chamber of Secrets***

***Harry Potter & Prisoner of Azkaban***

***Harry Potter & the Goblet of Fire.***

***Harry Potter & the Order of the Phoenix***

***Harry Potter & the Half-Blood Prince***

***Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows***

***Heroes.* Robert Cormier** (1) HISTORICAL - After joining the army at fifteen and having his face blown away by a grenade in a battle in France, Francis returns home to Frenchtown hoping to find--and kill--the former childhood hero he feels betrayed him.

***The Hobbit.* J.R.R. Tolkien** (3) FANTASY - Bilbo Baggins, a respectable, well-to-do hobbit, lives comfortably in his hobbit-hole until the day the wandering wizard Gandalf chooses him to take part in an adventure from which he may never return.

***Holes.* Louis Sachar** (3) MYSTERY - As further evidence of his family's bad fortune, which they attribute to a curse on a distant relative, Stanley Yelnats is sent to a correctional camp in the Texas desert where he finds his first real friend, a treasure, and a new sense of himself.

***Homecoming.* Cynthia Voigt** (1) GENERAL - Abandoned by their mother, four children begin a search for a home and an identity.

***Hoops.* Walter Dean Myers** (1) GENERAL - A teenage basketball player from Harlem is befriended by a former professional player who, after being forced to quit because of a point shaving scandal, hopes to prevent other young athletes from repeating his mistake.

***House of the Scorpion.* Nancy Farmer** (1) SCI-FI - In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as the young clone of El Patrn̤, the 142-year-old leader of a corrupt drug empire nestled between Mexico and the United States.

***How I Live Now.* Meg Rosoff**(1) GENERAL - To get away from her pregnant stepmother in New York City, fifteen-year-old Daisy goes to England to stay with her aunt and cousins, with whom she instantly bonds, but soon war breaks out and rips apart the family while devastating the land. "Every war has turning points and every person too."

***Hunger Games.* Suzanne Collins**(3) SCI-FI - In a future North America, where the rulers of Panem maintain control through an annual televised survival competition pitting young people from each of the twelve districts against one another, sixteen-year-old Katniss's skills are put to the test when she voluntarily takes her younger sister's place.

***Is it Night or Day?* Fern Chapman** (1) HISTORICAL

Twelve-year-old Edith is sent from her home in Germany in 1938 to live with her aunt and uncle in Chicago, Illinois, and escape Nazi persecution, but as she struggles to assimilate into American society, Edith worries about her parents and mourns the loss of everything she has known.

***I Was Here.* Gayle Forman** (1) HS MYSTERY

In an attempt to understand why her best friend committed suicide, eighteen-year-old Cody Reynolds retraces her dead friend's footsteps and makes some startling discoveries.

***If You Come Softly.* Jacqueline Woodson** (1) ROMANCE - After meeting at their private school in New York, fifteen-year-old Jeremiah, who is black and whose parents are separated, and Ellie, who is white and whose mother has twice abandoned her, fall in love and then try to cope with people's reactions.

***The Land.* Mildred Taylor** (1) ADVENTURE - After the Civil War Paul, the son of a white father and a black mother, finds himself caught between the two worlds of colored folks and white folks as he pursues his dream of owning land of his own.

***Little Blue Lies.* Chris Lynch** (1) HS General

Oliver, known as "O," and his suddenly ex-girlfriend Junie are known for telling little lies, but one of Junie's lies about not winning the lottery could get her into trouble with a local mob boss.

***Lord of the Flies.* William Golding** (3) ADVENTURE - Stranded on an island while an atomic war destroys the rest of the world, a group of young boys revert to savagery as they struggle to survive.

***Love Letters to the Dead.* Ava Dellaira** (1) HS GENERAL

When Laurel starts writing letters to dead people for a school assignment, she begins to spill about her sister's mysterious death, her new friends, her first love, and prior sexual abuse.

***The Ocean at the End of the Lane.* Neil Gaiman** (1)

HS GENERAL - It began for our narrator forty years ago when the family lodger stole their car and committed suicide in it, stirring up ancient powers best left undisturbed. The only defense is three women, on a farm at the end of the lane. The youngest of them claims that her duckpond is an ocean.

***One Fat Summer.* Robert Lipsyte** (1) GENERAL - An overweight fourteen-year-old boy experiences a turning point summer in which he learns to stand up for himself.

***The Outsiders.* S.E. Hinton** (2) GENERAL - The struggle of three brothers to stay together after their parents' death and their quest for identity among the conflicting values of their adolescent society.

***The Pearl.* John Steinbeck** (5) GENERAL - A beautiful story about the disaster which a giant pearl brings to a simple man and his family.

***The Rag and Bone Shop.* Robert Cormier** (1) MYSTERY

12-year-old Jason Dorrant, suspected of murdering his neighbor, seven-year-old Alicia Bartlett. The killing attracts much publicity plus the attention of a senator. The local police, anxious to solve the case quickly, call on the expertise of Trent to get Jason, the last person seen with the victim, to confess to the crime.

***Saint Anything.* Sarah Dessen** (1) HS GENERAL Sydney's charismatic older brother, Peyton, has always been the center of attention in the family but when he is sent to jail, Sydney struggles to find her place at home and the world until she meets the Chathams, including gentle, protective Mac, who makes her feel seen for the first time.

***Schooled.* Gordon Korman** (1) GENERAL Cap lives in isolation with his grandmother, a former hippie; but when she falls from a tree and breaks her hip, Cap is sent to a foster home where he has his first experience in a public school.

***Slam.* Walter Dean Myers** (2) GENERAL - Sixteen-year-old "Slam" Harris is counting on his noteworthy basketball talents to get him out of the inner city and give him a chance to succeed in life, but his coach sees things differently.

***Shooter.* Walter Dean Myers** (2) HS GENERAL Written in the form of interviews, reports, and journal entries, the story of three troubled teenagers ends in a tragic school shooting.

***A Step from Heaven.* An Na** (1) GENERAL

A young Korean girl and her family find it difficult to learn English and adjust to life in America.

***Sure Signs of Crazy.* Karen Harrington**(1) GENERAL - Twelve-year-old Sarah writes letters to her hero, To Kill a Mockingbird's Atticus Finch, for help understanding her mentally ill mother, her first real crush, and life in her small Texas town, all in the course of one momentous summer.

***Ten.* Gretchen McNeil** (1) HS HORROR - It was supposed to be the weekend of their lives—an exclusive house party on Henry Island. Best friends Meg and Minnie are looking forward to two days of boys and fun-filled luxury. But what starts out as fun turns twisted after the discovery of a DVD with a sinister message: *Vengeance is mine.* And things only get worse from there.

***The Testing.* Joelle Charbonneau** SCIENCE FICTION Sixteen-year-old Malencia (Cia) Vale is chosen to participate in The Testing to attend the University; however, Cia is fearful when she figures out her friends who do not pass The Testing are disappearing.

***That was Then, This is Now.* S.E. Hinton** (1) GENERAL - Sixteen-year-old Mark and Bryon have been like brothers since childhood, but now, as their involvement with girls, gangs, and drugs increases, their relationship seems to gradually disintegrate.

***The Time Machine.* H.G. Wells** (3) SCI-FI - The Time Traveller has gone a million years into the future.

***The Tragedy Paper. Elizabeth Laban*** (1) HS GENERAL - While preparing for the most dreaded assignment at the prestigious Irving School, the Tragedy Paper, Duncan gets wrapped up in the tragic tale of Tim Macbeth, a former student who had a clandestine relationship with the wrong girl, and his own ill-fated romance with Daisy.

***The True Tale of the Monster Billy Dean telt by hisself.* David Almond** (1) HS GENERAL All his life Billy Dean has known only the world of his bedroom and the sights, sounds, and scents of his father and mother. When his father disappears, his mother shows Billy the wider world outside--a broken world, which he has been brought up to save. He is the Angel Child, they tell him, and he must fix every mysterious thing that went wrong on the day of his birth.

***The Underdogs.* Mike Lupica**(1) GENERAL - Small but fast twelve-year-old Will Tyler, an avid football player in the down-and-out town of Forbes, Pennsylvania, takes matters into his own hands to try and finance the city's football team, giving the whole community hope in the process.

***Watership Down.*****Richard Adams** (1) FANTASY - Chronicles the adventures of a group of rabbits searching for a safe place to establish a new warren where they can live in peace.

***When Zachary Beaver Came to Town.* Kimberly Holt** (1) GENERAL - During the summer of 1971 in a small Texas town, thirteen-year-old Toby and his best friend Cal meet the star of a sideshow act, 600-pound Zachary, the fattest boy in the world.

***Whirligig.*  Paul Fleischman** (1) GENERAL - While traveling to each corner of the country to build a whirligig in memory of the girl whose death he causes, sixteen-year-old Brian finds forgiveness and atonement.