Shaker Heights Schools

9th-12th Grade Reading List

Recommended by your Shaker Schools Librarians
Alexander, Robert  *The Kitchen Boy*

Narrated by 94-year-old Mikhail Semyanov, a Russian immigrant now living outside Chicago, this novel recalls the bloody days of the Russian Revolution, when the royal family is imprisoned in Siberia, in a building known as the House of Special Purpose.  *Fiction*

Anderson, M. T.  *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation: The Pox Party (Vol I) and Kingdom on the Waves (Vol 2)*

Diaries, letters, and manuscripts chronicle the life of Octavian, an African American raised as part of a science experiment during the American Revolution. In Vol 2 Octavian joins Lord Dunmore’s Ethiopian Regiment to gain his freedom.  *Fiction*

Aronson, Sarah  *Head Case*

Seventeen-year-old Frank Marder struggles to deal with the aftermath of an accident he had while driving drunk that killed two people, including his girlfriend, and left him paralyzed from the neck down.  *Fiction*

Austen, Jane  *Pride and Prejudice*

In early 19th century England, a spirited young woman copes with the suit of a snobbish gentleman as well as the romantic entanglements of her four sisters.  *Fiction*

Baligalupi, Paolo  *The Doubt Factory*

When a radical band of teen activists [claims] that Alix’s powerful father covers up wrongdoing by corporations that knowingly allow innocent victims to die in order to make enormous profits from unsafe products, she must decide if she will blow the whistle on his misdeeds.  *Fiction*

Beechard, Margaret  *Hanging on to Max*

When his girlfriend decides to give their baby away, seventeen-year-old Sam is determined to keep him and raise him alone.  *Fiction*

Bortz, Alfred  *Meltdown! The Nuclear Disaster in Japan and our Energy Future*

Meltdown! is the story of the Tohoku earthquake, the subsequent tsunami, and the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster.  *Nonfiction*

Brande, Robin  *Fat Cat*

Catherine, an overweight teen, embarks on a high school science project, accepting the challenge to live like early human ancestors by eating an all-natural diet and foregoing technology. She faces surprising results as the pounds begin to drop and the boys begin to flock!  *Fiction*

Burgess, Melvin  *The Hit*

There is a new drug on the mean streets of Manchester which promises the most intense week of your life, and then you are dead--and after he watches a pop star die on stage, Adam thinks that his own life is so miserable that he might just as well try it.  *Fiction*
**Caletti, Deb**  *The Story of Us*

Cricket's mother is finally marrying the right man. As wedding attendees arrive for a week of festivities, Cricket faces complications: her own love life, her beloved dog Jupiter, and her mother's reluctance to marry.  *Fiction*

**Cameron, Sharon**  *The Forgetting*

Canaan is a quiet city on an idyllic world, hemmed in by high walls, but every twelve years the town breaks out in chaos of bloody violence, after which all the people undergo the Forgetting, in which they are left without any trace of memory of themselves, their families, or their lives—but somehow seventeen-year-old Nadia has never forgotten, and she is determined to find out what causes it and how to put a stop to the Forgetting forever.  *Fiction*

**Cooper, Alex**  *Saving Alex: when I was fifteen I told my Mormon parents I was gay, and that's when my nightmare began*

A memoir from Alex Cooper, who knew “she was holding a secret that could shatter her family, her church community, and her life. Yet when this secret couldn't be hidden any longer, she told her parents that she was gay, and the nightmare began. She was driven from her home in Southern California to Utah, where, against her will, her parents handed her over to fellow Mormons who promised to save Alex from her homosexuality.”  *Fiction*

**Crowe, Chris**  *Death Coming up the Hill: a novel*

Douglas Ashe keeps a weekly record of historical and personal events in 1968, the year he turns seventeen, including the escalating war in Vietnam, assassinations, rampant racism, and rioting; his first girlfriend, his parents’ separation, and a longed-for sister.  *Fiction*

**Dessen, Sarah**  *What Happened to Goodbye*

Following her parents' bitter divorce, as she and her father move from town to town, 17-year-old Mclean reinvents herself at each school she attends until she is no longer sure she knows who she is or where she belongs.  *Fiction*

**Diffenbaugh, Vanessa**  *The Language of Flowers*

Victoria’s gift for flowers helps her change the lives of others even as she struggles to overcome her own past.  *Fiction*

**Doerr, Anthony**  *All the Light We Cannot See*

A blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.  *Fiction*

**DuMaurier, Daphne**  *Rebecca*

Rebecca is Max's second wife, and arrives at the Manderley estate to find that the shadow of the first Mrs. de Winter still reigns: her rooms never touched, her servant still loyal. Rebecca is determined to discover the real fate of her predecessor.  *Fiction*
Fiske, E.  
**Fiske Guide to Colleges 2017**
Continues as an expanded and updated version of: Selective guide to colleges.

Giovanni, Nikki  
**100 Best African American Poems**
This vibrant collection reflects the rich roots and visionary future of African-American verse and includes such poets as Robert Hayden, Mari Evans, Kevin Young, and Rita Dove. *Poetry*

Green, John  
**The Fault in Our Stars**
Hazel, a stage IV thyroid cancer patient, has accepted her terminal diagnosis until a chance meeting with a boy at cancer support group forces her to reexamine her perspective on love, loss, and life. *Fiction*

Hakakian, Roya  
**Journey from the Land of No: A Girlhood Caught in Revolutionary Iran**
Hakakian, an Iranian Jew and daughter of an esteemed poet, speaks poignantly about what life was like for women under Islamic fundamentalism following the 1979 revolution that swept through Iran. *Biography*

Hautman, Pete  
**What Boys Really Want**
The crumbling friendship between Lita, a writer, and Adam, an entrepreneur, is compromised by jealousies over each other's romantic entanglements, stolen blog posts, and a premature offer to sell a new self-help book. *Fiction*

Hemingway, Ernest  
**For Whom the Bell Tolls**
Robert Jordan volunteers to help the anti-fascist freedom fighters of Spain during the Spanish Civil War. He is helped by the strong-willed Pilar, the dangerously undependable Pablo, and the lovely, innocent Maria. Danger mounts and so does the romance between Robert and Maria. *Fiction*

Hoose, Phillip  
**Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice**
In her own words, Claudette gives a detailed look at segregated life in 1950s Memphis and the start of the civil rights movement. *Biography*

Hyde, Catherine  
**Jumpstart the World**
Sixteen-year-old Elle falls in love with Frank, the neighbor who helps her adjust to being on her own in a big city, but learning that he is transgendered turns her world upside-down. *Fiction*

Jocelyn, Marthe  
**Scribbling Women: True Tales from Astonishing Lives**
Jocelyn profiles women authors, such as Nellie Bly, Daisy Ashford, and Dang Thuy Tram, who have defied societal convention and the threat of oppression. *Biography*

Katz, Mark  
**Groove Music: The Art and Culture of the Hip Hop DJ**
Hip-hop is a global phenomenon born in the streets of New York in the 1970s when a handful of teenagers started experimenting with spinning vinyl records on turntables in new ways. Rapping has become the face of hip-hop, and the DJ has proven the backbone for both. *Nonfiction*
Kern, Peggy       *Little Peach*

Hospitalized in Brooklyn, New York, fourteen-year-old Michelle recalls being raised in Philadelphia by a loving grandfather and drug-addicted mother before running away and getting lured into prostitution. *Fiction*

Kuderick, Madeleine       *Kiss of Broken Glass*

When fifteen-year-old Kenna is found cutting herself in the school bathroom, she is sent to a facility for a mandatory psychiatric watch. There Kenna meets other kids like her—her roommate, Donya, who's there for her fifth time; the birdlike Skylar; and Jag, a boy cute enough to make her forget her problems . . . for a moment. *Fiction*

Laskas, Jeanne Marie       *Concussion*

Dr. Bennet Omalu discovered something he could not ignore. The NFL tried to silence him. His courage would change everything. *Nonfiction*

Laurie, Victoria       *When*

Sixteen-year-old Maddie Flynn cannot help but see the death date of everyone she meets or sees in a photograph or on-screen, and her alcoholic mother exploits this by having her do readings for money, but when Maddie predicts the death of a young boy, she becomes the center of an FBI investigation. *Fiction*

Lederer, William and Eugene Burdick       *The Ugly American*

This exposé of American arrogance, incompetence, and corruption in 1950s Southeast Asia draws a devastating picture of the United States losing the struggle with Communism in Asia. Influenced by this book, President Eisenhower launched a study of our military aid program that led to much-needed reform. *Fiction*

Levithan, David       *Every Day*

Every morning A wakes in a different person's body, in a different person's life, learning over the years to never get too attached. One day he wakes up in the body of Justin and falls in love with Justin's girlfriend, Rhiannon. *Fiction*

Lynch, Chris       *Little Blue Lies*

Oliver, known as "O", and his suddenly ex-girlfriend Junie are 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. *Fiction*

Maia, Love       *DJ Rising*

Marley Diego-Dylan's career as "DJ Ice" is skyrocketing, but his mother's heroin addiction keeps dragging him back to earth. *Fiction*

Maugham, W. Somerset       *The Razor's Edge*

Leaving wealth and loved ones behind, Larry Darrell journeys to the mountains of India in search of spiritual wisdom. *Fiction*
McKay, Sharon  **War Brothers: the graphic novel**

A graphic novel adaptation of the author's novel about a group of boys in Uganda who are kidnapped and forced to join the Lord's Resistance Army, or LRA, and their desperate escape, only to return home to discover that their friends and family are afraid of them.  *Graphic Novel*

McKay, Sinclair  **Secret Lives of Codebreakers: The Men and Women Who Cracked the Enigma Code at Bletchley Park**

People from vastly different walks of life worked alongside each other at Britain's Government Code and Cypher School, working on projects vital to saving the world – chiefly breaking the German Enigma Code.  *Nonfiction*

McMann, Lisa  **Cryer's Cross**

Seventeen-year-old Kendall, who suffers from obsessive-compulsive disorder, lives with her parents on a potato farm in a tiny community in Montana, where two teenagers go missing within months of each other, with no explanation.  *Fiction*

Millard, Candice  **Destiny of the Republic: A Tale of Madness, Medicine, and the Murder of a President**

This narrative account of James A. Garfield's political career offers insight into his background as a scholar and Civil War hero, his battles against the corrupt establishment, and Alexander Graham Bell's failed attempt to save our 20th president from an assassin's bullet.  *Nonfiction*

Moore, Wes  **This Way Home**

Elijah, seventeen, has always been sure of just one thing--basketball--and believes it will be his way out of West Baltimore, but when gang violence knocks him down, helping a veteran repair his rickety home helps Elijah see what really matters.  *Fiction*

Morrison, Toni  **Home**

Frank is an angry, broken veteran of the Korean War. After traumatic experiences on the front lines, he finds himself back in racist America with more than just physical scars. He is shocked out of his apathy by the need to rescue his medically abused younger sister.  *Fiction*

Murray, Liz  **Breaking Night: A Memoir of Forgiveness, Survival, and My Journey from Homeless to Harvard**

The author offers an account of her journey from a 15-year-old living on the streets and eating garbage to her acceptance into Harvard.  *Biography*

Murray, Victoria Christopher  **Stand Your Ground: a novel**

After a seventeen-year-old African American boy is shot dead by a white man, the boy’s mother and the shooter's wife face difficulties.  *Fiction*

Mycoskie, Blake  **Start Something that Matters**

Known as the founder of TOMS Shoes and as a contestant on The Amazing Race, Mycoskie uses his experiences, as well as interviews with leaders of non-profits and corporations, to share lessons about entrepreneurship, transparency of leadership, and living by one's values.  *Nonfiction*
Myers, Walter Dean  
*Just Write : Here's How!*

An award-winning author guides readers through the writing process, and includes examples from his own works, outlines for writing fiction and nonfiction, and excerpted pages from the author's writing notebooks.  
*Nonfiction*

Nelson, Yaunda Micheaux  
*No Crystal Stair : A Documentary Novel of the Life and Work of Lewis Michaux, Harlem Bookseller*

Told by a banker that he should sell fried chicken rather than books, since "Negroes don't read", Lewis Michaux defies the odds to build Harlem's National Memorial African Bookstore, an intellectual center and gathering place from 1939 to 1975.  
*Fiction*

Niven, Jennifer  
*Holding up the Universe*

A boy with face blindness and a girl who struggles with weight fall in love.  
*Fiction*

Oliver, Lauren  
*Before I fall*

After she dies in a car crash, teenage Samantha relives the day of her death over and over again until, on the seventh day, she finally discovers a way to save herself.  
*Fiction*

Omololu, Cynthia Jaynes  
*Dirty Little Secrets*

When her unstable mother dies unexpectedly, sixteen-year-old Lucy must take control and find a way to keep the long-held secret of her mother's compulsive hoarding from being revealed to friends, neighbors, and especially the media.  

Orringer, Julie  
*The Invisible Bridge*

Set in Paris and Budapest in the 1930s, Orringer's story presents a sweeping yet intimate portrait of a Hungarian Jewish family as two lovers are caught up in the turmoil of the Holocaust.  
*Fiction*

Osborne, Linda  
*This Land is Our Land: the History of American Immigration*

This book explores the way government policy and popular responses to immigrant groups evolved throughout U.S. history, particularly between 1800 and 1965. The book concludes with a summary of events up to contemporary times, as immigration again becomes a hot-button issue.  
*Nonfiction*

Patchett, Ann  
*State of Wonder*

Marina Singh, a researcher at a pharmaceutical company, journeys into the heart of the Amazonian delta to check on a field team that has been silent for two years--a dangerous assignment that forces Marina to confront the ghosts of her past.  
*Fiction*

Peete, Holly  
*Same but Different: Teen Life on the Autism Express*

Through alternating narratives based on their own lives and the similar experiences of other teens, Ryan Elizabeth Peete and her twin brother, RJ, who has autism, bravely and honestly reveal what it means to be a teen living with the disorder.  
*Nonfiction*
Petrikowski, Nicki  
*Working For Tolerance and Change Through Service Learning*

Describes the concept of service learning and how it applies to teens. *Nonfiction*

Philip, Aaron  
*This Kid Can Fly: it’s about ability (not disability)*

Aaron Philip's memoir chronicles his extraordinary journey from happy baby in Antigua to confident teen artist in New York City. His honest, often funny stories of triumph-- despite physical difficulties, poverty, and other challenges-- are as inspiring as they are eye-opening. *Biography*

Prendergast, John and Michael Mattocks  
*Unlikely Brothers : Our Story of Adventure, Loss, and Redemption*

At a Washington, D.C. shelter, John met Michael Mattocks, and became his Big Brother. Told from alternating points of view, both men chronicle their individual and combined journeys, from global humanitarian efforts to crack-dealing gangbanger to committed father and responsible breadwinner. *Nonfiction*

Purcell, Kim  
*Trafficked*

A 17-year-old Moldovan girl whose parents have been killed is brought to the United States to work as a slave for a family in Los Angeles. *Fiction*

Quintero, Isabel  
*Gabi: A Girl in Pieces*

Sixteen-year-old Gabi Hernandez chronicles her senior year in high school as she copes with her friend Cindy's pregnancy, friend Sebastian's coming out, her father's meth habit, her own cravings for food and cute boys, and especially, the poetry that helps forge her identity. *Fiction*

Reynolds, Jason  
*The Boy in the Black Suit*

Soon after his mother's death, Matt takes a job at a funeral home in his tough Brooklyn neighborhood and, while attending and assisting with funerals, begins to accept her death and his responsibilities as a man. *Fiction*

Saenz, Benjamin Alire  
*Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*

Ari Mendoza is an angry loner with a brother in prison. When he meets Dante they become friends, and Ari starts to ask questions about himself, his parents, and his family that he has never asked before. *Fiction*

Sepetys, Ruta  
*Salt to the Sea: a novel*

Winter, 1945. Four teenagers. Four secrets. Each one born of a different homeland; each one hunted, and haunted, by tragedy, lies... and war. As thousands of desperate refugees flock to the coast in the midst of a Soviet advance, four paths converge, vying for passage aboard the Wilhelm Gustloff, a ship that promises safety and freedom. Yet not all promises can be kept. *Fiction*
Sheinkin, Steve  
*Bomb: The Race to Build–And Steal–the World’s Most Dangerous Weapon*

Sheinkin’s account of the scientific discoveries that enabled atom splitting, the military intelligence operations that occurred in rival countries, and the work of brilliant scientists hidden at Los Alamos earned 2013 Newbery, Sibert, and YALSA awards. *Nonfiction*

Shusterman, Neal  
*Bruiser*

Inexplicable events start to occur when sixteen-year-old twins Tennyson and Bront befriend a troubled and misunderstood outcast, aptly nicknamed Bruiser, and his little brother, Cody. *Fiction*

Sloan, Robin  
*Mr. Penumbra’s 24-hour Bookstore*

After a layoff during the Great Recession sidelines his tech career, Clay Jannon takes a job at the titular bookstore in San Francisco, and soon realizes that the establishment is a facade for a strange secret. *Fiction*

Smelcer, John  
*Edge of Nowhere*

Seth is a teenage deckhand on his father’s boat when he and his dog are washed overboard and swept to one of Alaska’s small islands where they struggle for months to survive off land and sea, while his desperate father endures his own emotional journey and never gives up hope. *Fiction*

Spiegelman, Art  
*Maus I; Maus II*

These classic graphic novels tell the story of a son and his father, a Holocaust survivor. Spiegelman transcends the traditional boundaries of visual art, narrative, and biography. *Nonfiction*

Strasser, Todd  
*Kill You Last*

Three clients of her dad’s modeling agency are missing, and Shelby’s near-perfect life crumbles when her dad is named prime suspect in the girls’ disappearance. *Fiction*

Talley, Robin  
*What We Left Behind*

Toni and Gretchen are the couple everyone envied in high school. They’ve been together forever. They never fight. They’re deeply, hopelessly in love. When they separate for their first year at college—Toni to Harvard and Gretchen to NYU—they’re sure they’ll be fine. The reality of being apart, though, is very different than they expected. *Fiction*

Tolkien, J.R.R.  
*The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy*

Tolkien creates a unique other world, evoked from deep in the well of Time, massively detailed, entertaining, profound in meaning. *Fiction*

Vaught, Susan  
*Freaks Life Us*

When his best friend abruptly disappears, Jason finds that his schizophrenia hampers his ability to participate in the community search. He becomes a target of suspicion when his medications wear off and adversely affect his behavior.  *Fiction*
Vernick, Shirley Reva  
**The Blood Lie**

In Massena, New York in 1928, Jack Pool, a Jewish boy who is in love with his Christian neighbor, is accused of killing her little sister for a blood sacrifice.  *Fiction*

Volponi, Paul  
**Top Prospect**

Travis, a pre-teen quarterback with big potential, gets the opportunity of a lifetime when the coach of Gainesville University football program offers him a scholarship before Travis even gets to high school.  *Fiction*

Wein, Elizabeth  
**Code Name Verity**

In 1943, a British fighter plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France. The survivor tells a tale of friendship, war, espionage, and great courage as she relates what she must do to survive while keeping secret all that she can.  *Fiction*

White, T.H.  
**The Once and Future King**

White retells the Arthurian legend, from Arthur's birth to the end of his reign as King of Camelot. The story is based largely on Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D' Arthur*.  *Fiction*

Williams, Michael  
**Now is the Time for Running**

When soldiers attack a small village in Zimbabwe, Deo runs with Innocent, his older, mentally disabled brother, carrying little but a leather soccer ball filled with money. After facing prejudice, poverty, and tragedy, it is in soccer that Deo finds renewed hope.  *Fiction*

Wolf, Jennifer Shaw  
**Breaking Beautiful**

Allie is overwhelmed when her boyfriend, Trip, dies in a car accident that also leaves her scarred and unable to recall what happened that night. She feels she must uncover the truth, even if it could hurt the people who tried to save her from Trip's abuse.  *Fiction*

Wolitzer, Meg  
**Belzhar**

Jam Gallahue, fifteen, unable to cope with the loss of her boyfriend Reeve, is sent to a therapeutic boarding school in Vermont, where a journal-writing assignment for an exclusive, mysterious English class transports her to the magical realm of Belzhar, where she and Reeve can be together.  *Fiction*

Wright, Richard  
**Native Son**

Trapped in the poverty-stricken ghetto of Chicago's South Side, a young black man finds release only in acts of violence. Written in 1940, this book captures the brutal result of inequality and legalized segregation.  *Fiction*

X, Malcolm  
**Autobiography of Malcolm X**

If any one man articulated the anger, struggle, and beliefs of African Americans in the 1960s, that man was Malcolm X.  *Biography*
Yang, Gene Luen  **American Born Chinese**

This graphic novel explores different aspects of Chinese-American life through 3 characters: Jin, who tries to fit in with his white classmates; the Monkey King, who chafes under his lowly status among gods; and Danny, who tries to escape his embarrassing cousin Chin Yee.  *Graphic Novel*

Yoon, Nicola  **Everything, Everything**

The story of a teenage girl who's literally allergic to the outside world. When a new family moves in next door, she begins a complicated romance that challenges everything she's ever known. The narrative unfolds via vignettes, diary entries, texts, charts, lists, illustrations, and more.  *Fiction*

Young, Suzanne  **The Program**

When suicide becomes a worldwide epidemic, the only known cure is The Program, a treatment in which painful memories are erased, a fate worse than death to seventeen-year-old Sloane who knows that The Program will steal memories of her dead brother and boyfriend.  *Fiction*

Zusak, Markus  **The Book Thief**

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death tells the story of Liesel--a young German orphan whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family, the Jewish man they are hiding, and their neighbors.  *Fiction*
The mission of the Shaker City Schools Library Media Program is to ensure that all students and staff are effective users of information and ideas.

Strong reading skills are the key to student achievement and lifelong learning. This reading list is intended as an aid in choosing books to provide rich reading experiences for students.

Professional school librarians work with their students—your children—to build strong skills in locating, accessing and analyzing information. This begins with the retelling of stories in the earliest grades, through the teaching of sophisticated web evaluation strategies for older students. These critical thinking skills will serve students well throughout their school career and beyond. Our goal is to help all children make good selections and learn to judge the quality and intent of information in all formats.

Our libraries also provide online resources for students and families to use, accessible from any Internet connection. You can find them on http://www.shaker.org/library.aspx, or by going to your school building and clicking the library link there. Use the “Information /Databases” link to see the online materials we have for school and home use. You can get the access codes needed from your school library staff.

We encourage you to use the Shaker Heights Public Library to bring a multitude of good books and reading experiences to your children. They can suggest other great books for you to enjoy, as well as provide events like story hours and their summer reading program. Their kids’ page can be found at http://shakerlibrary.org/kids/.

**Reading Links**

Looking for more good reading? Here are some websites that will help.

**New York Public Library's Teen Links**
A variety of booklists and resources are linked, along with their Facebook and Twitter feeds.
http://www.nypl.org/help/getting-oriented/resources-teen

**Reading Rants: Out of the Ordinary Teen Book Lists**
Librarian Jennifer Hubert Swan offers a “thinking teen’s” set of book suggestions and organizes them by topic.
http://www.readingrants.org/

For more information about the Shaker Heights Schools Library Media Program, call (216) 295-4181.