



# 2008 Maine South Summer Reading

Every Maine South student must read the required book for his or her 2008-2009 First Semester English class as well as one book from the 2008 Summer Reading Choice Book List.

Below are brief summaries of each of the books from our 2008 Summer Reading Choice Book List along with a recommended reading level. To learn more about the books or purchase a title, consult websites such as Amazon.com or Barnesandnoble.com. All of these titles will be available for purchase at the Summer Reading Book Fair at Maine South on Thursday May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008.

An asterik ( \* ) after an author's name denotes that this book contains adult material which may include strong language, sexual content, graphic violence, and/or other mature subject matter.

## Choice Books



### *Hiroshima* by John Hersey \*

This book is a must read for anyone with questions about the impact of nuclear war. The book follows the lives of six people who survived the detonation of the first atomic bomb ever dropped upon a civilian population—Hiroshima. This non-fiction account takes the point of view of the civilian victims, a group not usually discussed in history books, and gives a stunning picture of the experience of a nuclear explosion from the ground level. It is an essential read anyone who lives in our modern nuclear era. Winner of New York Public Library Books for the Teen Age.

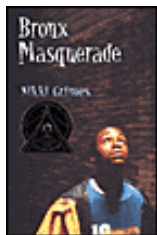
Recommended for Grades 9-12



### *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson

*Treasure Island* is the quintessential pirate story. If you want to read about a search for buried treasure, murdering pirates, mutiny, and Long John Silver, read *Treasure Island*. Jim Hawkins, a fourteen year old boy, tells the story of sailing to Treasure Island after he saves a map from a pirate-attack on his mother's sea-side pub. One of the first and most read pirate stories, *Treasure Island* has all the essentials of a true pirate adventure: a treasure map where X marks the spot, murder, betrayal, a talking parakeet, and of course Long John Silver—one of the most feared pirates to ever live.

Recommended for Grades 9-12



### *Bronx Masquerade* by Nikki Grimes

*Bronx Masquerade* by Nikki Grimes takes the personal poetry of 18 high school students to show their lives. Their English teacher, Mr. Ward, has students write their own poetry, and to make matters worse, he has them recite it...out loud...in front of the entire class! At first students are shy, even terrified, to recite their own poetry. After a few days, however, Mr. Ward's students enjoy sharing their own free verse with one another and find that they really aren't alone in this big world of ours.

Winner of the 2003 Coretta Scott King Author Award.

Recommended for Grade 9 only



### *Rash* by Pete Hautman

Imagine a United States where playing football, having a temper tantrum, running without a helmet, and being overweight are all illegal. Welcome to author Pete Hautman's futuristic setting: the United Safer States of America in the year 2070. In this society where 24% of adults are in jail and 75% of people over the age of ten are on the drug Levulor to help keep their tempers from flaring, sixteen-year-old Bo is unfairly blamed for a mysterious rash that spreads through his school. Bo is arrested and sentenced to three years of labor in a McDonalds' owned prison camp in the former Canadian tundra. Forced to work 18 hour days, Bo becomes the victim of a corrupt prison system that ironically is brutal and violent. With the help of an unlikely computerized ally and fellow inmates turned friends, Bo fights for survival. Winner of Best Fiction *New York Times* Notable Books.

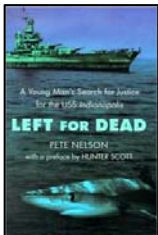
Recommended for Grades 9-10



**Silverwing by Kenneth Oppel**

Although Shade, the runt of a bat colony, is small for his age, he does not let his size nor his poor treatment prevent him from trying to solve many mysteries in this adventure book. While separated from his mother and the rest of his bat colony, Shade tries to figure out the mystery behind his dad's disappearance, the reasons for the age old curse against bats, and the truth about the silver bands attached to both his friends and enemies.

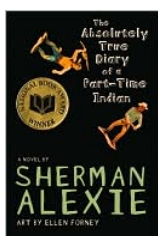
Recommended for Grades 9-10



**Left for Dead by Peter Nelson and Hunter Scott**

What do Steven Spielberg's *Jaws*, a boy named Hunter Scott, and the *USS Indianapolis* have to do with changing the course of history? They are all parts of the amazing story of one of the most tragic events in US naval history, the sinking of the *USS Indianapolis*. *Left For Dead* chronicles the five year story of a persevering eleven-year-old who would not give up on the men of the *USS Indianapolis* and who fought for the truth of their story to be heard. Winner of the ALA Best Books for Young Adults.

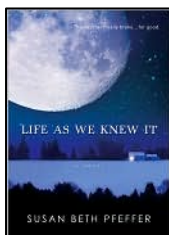
Recommended for Grades 9-10



**The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie \***

Arnold "Junior" Spirit, a goofy-looking dork with a decent jump shot, spends his time lamenting life on the Spokane Indian reservation, drawing cartoons, and hanging out with his aptly named best friend, Rowdy. When a teacher challenges Arnold to want more from his life, Arnold switches to a rich white school and immediately becomes as much an outcast in his own community as he is a curiosity in his new one. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* depicts Arnold's feelings through some incredibly trying times, but Alexie's humor and easygoing prose propel Arnold and the reader along. Already a renowned writer of fiction, Sherman Alexie's first young-adult novel has met with universal acclaim and numerous awards including the prestigious 2007 National Book Award for Young People's Literature along with 13 others.

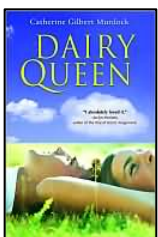
Recommended for Grades 9-10



**Life As We Knew It by Susan Beth Pfeffer**

When a meteor hits the moon causing drastic climate change, tsunamis, and a food shortage, life in America changes in an instant. *Life As We Knew It* centers on how this disaster affects the life of Miranda, a typical teenager who is most concerned with friends, boys, and sports. With the challenges and tragedies of the natural disaster, Miranda must change her priorities and is faced with decisions that help her to develop into a heroic young woman. Even though tragedy surrounds her, Miranda struggles to find hope and strength in her quest to survive.

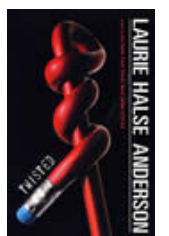
Recommended for Grades 9-10



**Dairy Queen by Catherine Gilbert Murdock**

This novel is a real treat but not the DQ kind. If you are looking for a fun book about teens, football, and friendship, this title will not disappoint. DJ, the sister of two brothers who are at college on football scholarships, agrees to train Brian, the rival high school's football quarterback. This unlikely combination leads to a teen-friendly story that will make you feel DJ or Brian could be a classmate of yours. Winner of the YALSA Best Books for Young Adults 2007.

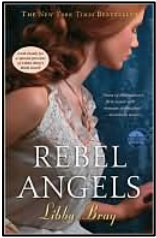
Recommended for Grades 9-10



**Twisted by Laurie Halse Anderson**

After finally getting noticed by someone other than school bullies and his ever-angry father, seventeen-year-old Tyler enjoys his tough new reputation and the attention of a popular girl, Bethany. To complicate matters, Bethany is the sister of Tyler's biggest rival at school and the daughter of his dad's demanding boss. When life starts to go bad again, he must choose between transforming himself or giving in to his destructive thoughts.

Recommended for Grades 9-10



### ***Rebel Angels* by Libba Bray**

When we first met Gemma in *A Great and Terrible Beauty*, she and her friends of Spence Academy had entered the realms and learned of the Order—a powerful group of women who have controlled the magic of the realms for centuries. As Gemma, Felicity, Pippa and Ann return in *Rebel Angels*, they face new threats, changing alliances, and raging conflicts. Will Gemma defeat Circe and blind the magic? Will she give her heart to Simon or Kartik? Read *Rebel Angels* and give way to the magic. Winner of the YALSA Best Books for Young Adults 2006.

Recommended for Grades 9-11



### ***Freaky Green Eyes* by Joyce Carol Oates**

While fifteen-year-old Franky Pierson hates her real name (Francesca), she begins to embrace a new name for herself—Freaky Green Eyes. This is who she becomes when she needs the personal strength to deal with confusing, scary situations, from a boy who tries to take advantage of her to her own family falling apart. Her usual compliance toward her famous sportscaster father's control turns to anger. Simultaneously, her mother distances herself from the family, both physically and emotionally. And when Mrs. Pierson suspiciously disappears, it is Franky who finds the courage to solve the mystery. In this novel, Joyce Carol Oates creates a page-turner in which the reader doesn't want to leave the main character's side—not until *Freaky Green Eyes* discovers the truth.

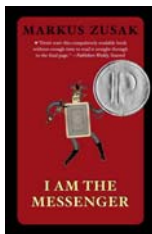
Recommended for grades 9-11



### ***Blue Bloods* by Melissa De La Cruz**

If you love *Gossip Girl* and *Twilight*, you will love *Blue Bloods*! Melissa De La Cruz's series takes place in Manhattan's ultra-exclusive Duchesne School, where teenagers and vampires intermingle. But after a number of mysterious and violent events, this precarious balance is thrown into turmoil. The heroine, Schuyler Van Alen, must navigate her way through the difficulties of high school and find the source of the vicious acts with the help of her close friends. A combination of high school drama and vampire escapades, this book will definitely keep you entertained. A Chicago Public Library Best of the Best Selection.

Recommended for Grades 9-11



### ***I Am The Messenger* by Markus Zusak \***

Nineteen-year-old cab driver Ed Kennedy is going nowhere. His life is, to put it bluntly, pointless. But after he stops a bank robbery, Ed begins receiving anonymous messages written on playing cards. The cards only have specific addresses and times written on them. Ed is supposed to deliver a message to these addresses, but no one is telling him what that message is. All he is told is that his life depends on it. Winner of ALA Best Books for Young Adults 2006.

Recommended for Grades 10-11



### ***Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin**

Separated from his climbing group after a failed attempt at scaling the world's second tallest mountain, climber Greg Mortenson stumbles into the remote village of Korphe. The hospitable residents not only save Mortenson's life, but they also inspire him towards a new vocation—building schools for children of this impoverished area. A true story, *Three Cups of Tea* chronicles Mortenson's challenging efforts to raise money, to win the trust of the Pakistani and Afghanistan people, and to physically construct schools in this perilous terrain. Along the way, he learns of the beauty and wisdom of these people and their way of life. If you never believed that one person could make a difference in the world, you need to read Mortenson's memoir. By advocating education, he finds a simple way to combat terrorism and promote peace. Winner of the Kiriya Prize Nonfiction Award.

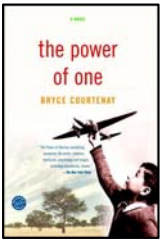
Recommended for Grades 11-12



### ***Run* by Ann Patchett**

Acclaimed author Ann Patchett introduces a unique family. Doyle, the former mayor of Boston, has three sons: Sullivan, his biological son, and Tip and Teddy, two African-American boys whom he adopted with his wife, Bernadette. The story begins during a Boston snow storm when Tip gets hit by a car, setting off a series of events that brings a young girl named Kenya and her mother into their lives. Family relationships develop and unravel as the events of the next 24 hours reveal secrets and fears. This novel addresses timeless concerns for any family – belonging, identity, class, and love.

Recommended for Grades 11-12



### ***The Power of One* by Bryce Courtenay \***

*The Power of One* takes readers on a journey with Peekay, a young British boy who struggles to fit in at his boarding school in South Africa. With WWII and apartheid as the backdrop, Peekay faces many challenges. He uses boxing, his intellect, and his heart to deal with South African culture, racism, and the many adversities that come his way. Join Peekay in this moving story of prejudice, war, activism, and the true meaning of friendship.

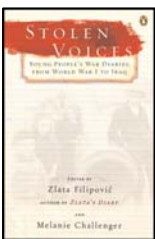
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### ***The 9/11 Report: A Graphic Adaptation* by Sid Jacobson and Ernie Colon \***

Created by two men with sixty years of experience in the comic book industry, *The 9/11 Report: A Graphic Adaptation* takes a seemingly inaccessible text and topic and through the use of visuals makes it accessible. This graphic novel depicts the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, as well as key events that occurred both before and after the tragic day. In endorsing this edition of the report, Thomas Kean, the Chair of the 9/11 Commission and Vice Chair Lee Hamilton said, "As we stated in our original preface to the commission report, we hope that this graphic version will encourage our fellow citizens to study, reflect—and act." Winner of *Publishers Weekly's* Best Books of 2006 and a *Library Journal* Editor's Pick.

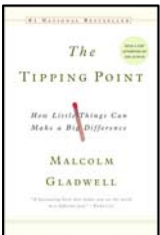
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### ***Stolen Voices: Young People's War Diaries, from World War I to Iraq* by Zlata Filipovic**

This collection of war diaries presents conflicts from World War I to Iraq through the writings of young people who are experiencing them first-hand. A brief historical introduction frames each entry. More importantly, these intimate writings relate the young people's fears for themselves and their families and the anguish of losses they suffer. They also write about their hopes for the future in a world without war.

Recommended for Grades 11-12

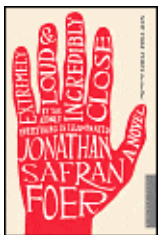


### ***Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell**

Do you ever wonder how trends and fads become wildly popular? Author Malcolm Gladwell argues that "ideas and products and messages and behaviors spread just like viruses do." This text defends this statement by exploring trends that vary from a drop in violent crime in New York to the rebirth of Hush Puppies suede shoes to the popularity of *Sesame Street*. Gladwell attempts to pinpoint what the "Tipping Point" is where isolated ideas suddenly explode into societal trends.

This book was a Winner of the *New York Times* Bestseller in 2000.

Recommended for Grades 11-12



### ***Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer \***

Oskar Schell, a curious nine-year-old boy who is an amateur actor, physicist, and tambourine player, lost his father on "the worst day ever" – September 11, 2001. He turns to the support of his beloved grandmother and an eccentric cast of characters while trying to both deal with his grief and unravel the mystery about a key he finds in his father's closet. The novel intertwines the story of Oskar's quest with the recollections of his grandmother's complicated life. The novel is deeply moving yet occasionally humorous. Told through multiple perspectives, it is a book for those who appreciate a challenging read and those who are willing to explore the complex, poignant aftermath of that heartbreaking day. This book is recommended for advanced readers only.

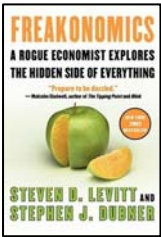
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### ***Wonderland: A Year in the Life of an American High School* by Michael Bamberger \***

Over 1,000 cameras flash as coiffed couples walk the red carpet. The Academy Awards? No, this is the Pennsbury High School prom where students make their grand entrances in race cars, by helicopter, and even on a moving mechanical rhino. For over thirty years, this southern Pennsylvania high school's tradition of creating an unrivaled celebration has caught the attention of local and national media. *Sports Illustrated* senior writer Michael Bamberger spends a year with the class of 2004 as they strive to uphold the tradition. Like an MTV reality series that follows the senior year experiences of several students, *Wonderland* pulls you into teenagers' lives and exposes their struggles and successes: planning for college, pursuing a dream date, mourning a death, raising a baby, overcoming a handicap, chasing a sports scholarship, and making their mark.

Recommended for Grades 11-12



***Freakonomics* by Steven Levitt & Stephen Dubner \***

Steven Levitt from the University of Chicago is not your typical economist, and this highly influential and controversial book shows why. Levitt asks questions such as: "What do schoolteachers and sumo wrestlers have in common?" "How is the Ku Klux Klan like a group of real-estate agents?" and "Why do drug dealers still live with their moms?" His conclusions might surprise you. For example, gangs are organized a lot like McDonald's including the pay structure. Also, students' standardized test scores are correlated with the number of books in their homes. Levitt hopes you'll find yourself asking such questions and perhaps finding interesting and even surprising answers. If you never thought you'd find yourself reading a book on economics, surprise yourself with this national bestseller.

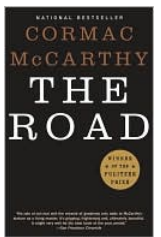
Recommended for Grades 11-12



***Bringing Down the House* by Ben Mezrich \***

Follow a few bored math students from M.I.T. as they turn their genius to blackjack and counting cards. This small town blackjack club from Boston turns out to be a little more skilled than one could imagine. Soon, you'll find this group taking Vegas for millions as well as falling into the underworld this city is famous for. Mezrich chronicles the M.I.T. counting team's exhilarating rise to blackjack supremacy and the nightmare of when Vegas takes it all back—and then some.

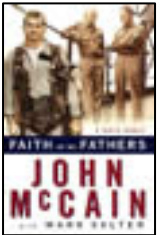
Recommended for Grades 11-12



***The Road* by Cormac McCarthy \***

This frightening apocalyptic vision is narrated by a nameless man, one of the few survivors of an unspecified civilization-ending catastrophe. He and his young son are trekking along a treacherous highway, starving and freezing, trying to avoid roving cannibal armies. Their lives are saved from teetering over the edge thanks to their strong relationship and the man's fierce belief that they are "the good guys" who are preserving the light of humanity. McCarthy provides a foreboding look into the future and a deeply emotional tale about human connectedness. Winner of the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

Recommended for Grades 11-12



***Faith of Our Fathers* by John Mc Cain**

***Living History* by Hillary Clinton**

***Audacity of Hope* by Barack Obama**

Did you know that according to the Census Bureau only 64% of Americans voted in the last presidential election? Did you also know that voter apathy is most rampant among young voters who claim they aren't knowledgeable about the candidates and the issues? Let's become a better informed generation of future voters. As the candidates are campaigning this summer and gearing up for Election Day 2008, you may wish to familiarize yourself with them and their beliefs. Consider reading one of the following books written by this year's presidential candidates.

Recommended for Grades 9-12

