

Recommended Books

(adapted from the Wellesley High School, Scarsdale High School and the Massachusetts Department of Education)

Key: The number of * indicates level of difficulty

*least difficult

** more difficult

*** most difficult

+ indicates any work by this author is recommended

Overcoming Obstacles

+Buffalo Soldier by Chris Bohjalian**

Eleven Seconds by Travis Roy *

The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls**

+A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius
by Dave Eggers**

Hole in My Life by Jack Gantos*

A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest J. Gaines*

+My Sister's Keeper by Jody Picoult**

The Perks of Being a Wallflower

by Stephen Chbosky*

+Speak by Laurie Anderson*

+This Boy's Life by Tobias Wolff**

Historical Fiction

The Astonishing Life of Octavia Nothing: Vol. 1

The Pox Party by M.T. Anderson**

Clan of the Cave Bear by Jean Auel**

Cold Mountain by Charles Fraser**

Going After Cacciato by Tim O'Brien*

Gone With the Wind by Margaret Mitchell **

Jubilee by Margaret Walker **

The Killer Angels by Michael Shaara**

+The King Must Die by Mary Renault**

+Master and Commander by Patrick O'Brian**

+The Source by James Michener**

Sports

The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game by Michael Lewis*

+Only a Game by Bill Littlefield**

The Education of a Coach by David Halberstam*

Faithful by Stewart O'Nan and Stephen King *

Lance Armstrong's War by Daniel Boyle*

+My Losing Season by Pat Conroy**

+The Natural by Bernard Malamud**
Shoeless Joe by W.P. Kinsella*
Values of the Game by Bill Bradley**
Women Who Win: Female Athletes on Being the Best
ed. by Lisa Taggart*

Mysteries, Suspense, and Adventure

+The Crocodile Bird by Ruth Rendell**
+Devices and Desires by P.D. James**
The Daughter of Time by Josephine Tey**
Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage
by Alfred Lansing*
+Gaudy Night by Dorothy Sayers**
+A Great Deliverance by Elizabeth George**
+Little Drummer Girl by John LeCarre**
+People of Darkness by Tony Hillerman*
+The Scold's Bridle by Minette Walters**
+The Widening Gyre by Robert Parker*

Science Fiction and Fantasy

+Childhood's End by Arthur C. Clark**
Dune by Frank Herbert *
+Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card*
+The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood**
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy
by Douglas Adams*
Mists of Avalon by Miriam Zimmer Bradley**
The Once and Future King by T.H. White**
+Sphere by Michael Crichton*
+Stranger in a Strange Land by Robert Heinlein**
+The Wizard of Earthsea by Ursula LeGuin**

Nonfiction

Alive by Piers Paul Read**
Common Ground by J. Anthony Lucas**
+The Guns of August by Barbara Tuchman**
Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser**
In Cold Blood by Truman Capote**
In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the
Whaleship Essex by Nathaniel Philbrick***
+Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) getting By in America
by Barbara Ehrenreich**
The Orchid Thief by Susan Orlean**
Seabiscuit by Laura Hillenbrand**
Silent Spring by Rachel Carson**

Biographies, autobiographies, and Memoirs
Black Ice by Lorene Cary*
Girl, Interrupted by Susanna Kaysen**
Growing Up by Russell Baker**
A Hope in the Unseen by Ron Susskind *
Hunger of Memory by Richard Rodriguez**
Letters from Nuremberg by Christopher J. Dodd**
Of Beatles and Angels-A Boy's Remarkable Journey
from a Refugee Camp to Harvard
by Masar Asgedom*
A River Runs Through It by Norman MacLean**
The Road from Coorain by Jill Ker Conway*
Travels with Charley by John Steinbeck*

Politics

Advise and Consent by Allen Drury**
Dreams from My Father by Barack Obama**
Faith of my Fathers by John McCain**
+From Beirut to Jerusalem by Thomas Friedman***
The Gospel According to Larry by Janet Tashjian*
Living History by Hillary Rodham Clinton**
+Master of the Senate by Robert Caro***
No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt
by Doris Kearns Goodwin***
Parting of the Waters: America in the King Years-1954-1963 by Taylor
Branch**
+The Race by Richard North Patterson**

Humor

The Bear Went Over the Mountain
by William Kotzwinkle*
Bird by Bird by Anne Lamott**
Confederacy of Dunces by John Kennedy Toole***
+Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim
by David Sedaris*
+Flashman: A Novel by George MacDonald Fraser**
+Going Postal by Terry Pratchett**
The Inimitable Jeeves by P.G. Wodehouse**
Little Big Man by Thomas Berger**
+Native Tongue by Carl Hiaasen**
+A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson*

Cultural Contexts

Almost a Woman by Esmeralda Santiago**

Annie John by Jamaica Kincaid*
Flight by Sherman Alexie*
The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy**
+The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan**
Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha by Roddy Doyle*
A Pale View of the Hills by Kazuo Ishiguro***
The Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiayama***
The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down
by Anne Fadiman**
The Women of Brewster Place by Gloria Naylor *

Award Winners

American Pastoral (Pulitzer) by Philip Roth***
+Angle of Repose (Pulitzer) by Wallace Stegner***
+Bel Canto (PENFaulkner Award) by Ann Patchett**
+The Caine Mutiny (Pulitzer) by Herman Wouk**
How I Live Now (Guardian Prize) by Meg Rosoff*
Independence Day (Pulitzer) by Richard Ford**
+John Adams (Pulitzer) by David McCullough**
Life of Pi (Booker) by Yann Martel**
Snow Falling on Cedars (PEN-Faulkner Award)
by David Guterson**
A Thousand Acres (Pulitzer) by Jane Smiley**

Classics

Ballad of the Sad Café and Other Stories
by Carson McCullers**
The Brothers Karamazov by Fyodor Dostoevsky***
+Jude the Obscure by Thomas Hardy***
+Mill on the Floss by George Eliot***
+Moby Dick by Herman Melville***
On the Road by Jack Kerouac**
Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man
by James Joyce***
Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen**
War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy***
Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte**

Other good Reads

+The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay
by Michael Chabon**
+Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant by Anne Tyler**
Exodus by Leon Uris*
+Family Pictures by Sue Miller**
The Five People You Meet in Heaven
by Mitch Albom*

Fugitive Pieces by Anne Michaels***
+The House of the Spirits by Isabel Allende**
+How to be Good by Nick Hornby**
The Known World by Edward P. Jones***
+The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver**
Rebecca by Daphne DuMaurier**
Rule of the Bone by Russell Banks **
Sophie's Choice by William Styron**
+We Were the Mulvaney by Joyce Carol Oates**
+The World According to Garp by John Irving**