

Summer Reading List – Incoming 11th Graders (Class of 2026)

Theme: Responding to Adversity Bishop Hendricken High School

Directions: All students are expected to read during the summer in preparation for their English class. All CP and CP1 students are to read one book from the list of 6 choices below, and all honors students are to read two books from the list. Students can expect a summer reading test during the first week of classes.

NOTE FOR AP LANGUAGE & COMPOSITION STUDENTS: You will be completing a separate assignment that was distributed before the end of the 2023-2024 school year. Contact Ms. Andrews at MAndrews@Hendricken.com with any questions about this assignment.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Ms. Melissa Andrews, English department chairperson, at MAndrews@Hendricken.com.

1) The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon (Fiction)

“Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow. This improbable story of Christopher's quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years.”

2) First they Killed my Father by Loung Ung (Nonfiction)

“From a childhood survivor of the Cambodian genocide under the regime of Pol Pot, this is a riveting narrative of war crimes and desperate actions, the unnerving strength of a small girl and her family, and their triumph of spirit. One of seven children of a high-ranking government official, Loung Ung lived a privileged life in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh until the age of five. Then, in April 1975, Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge army stormed into the city, forcing Ung's family to flee and, eventually, to disperse. Loung was trained as a child soldier in a work camp for orphans, her siblings were sent to labor camps, and those who survived the horrors would not be reunited until the Khmer Rouge was destroyed. Harrowing yet hopeful, Loung's powerful story is an unforgettable account of a family shaken and shattered, yet miraculously sustained by courage and love in the face of unspeakable brutality.”

CW: Depictions of Violence

3) Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe (Fiction)

“*Things Fall Apart* is the first of three novels in Chinua Achebe's critically acclaimed African Trilogy. It is a classic narrative about Africa's cataclysmic encounter with Europe as it establishes a colonial presence on the continent. Told through the fictional experiences of Okonkwo, a wealthy and fearless Igbo warrior of

Umuofia in the late 1800s, *Things Fall Apart* explores one man's futile resistance to the devaluing of his Igbo traditions by British political and religious forces and his despair as his community capitulates to the powerful new order. With more than 20 million copies sold and translated into fifty-seven languages, *Things Fall Apart* provides one of the most illuminating and permanent monuments to African experience. Achebe does not only capture life in a pre-colonial African village, he conveys the tragedy of the loss of that world while broadening our understanding of our contemporary realities."

4) Strange the Dreamer by Laini Taylor (Dystopian Fiction)

"The dream chooses the dreamer, not the other way around--and Lazlo Strange, war orphan and junior librarian, has always feared his dream chose poorly. Since he was just five years old, he's been obsessed with the mythic lost city of Weep, but it would take someone bolder than he to cross half the world in search of it. Then a stunning opportunity presents itself, in the form of a hero called the Godslayer and a band of legendary warriors, and he has to seize his chance or lose his dream forever. What happened in Weep two hundred years ago to cut it off from the rest of the world? And who is the blue-skinned goddess who appears in Lazlo's dreams? In this sweeping and breathtaking novel by National Book Award finalist Laini Taylor, author of the *New York Times* bestselling *Daughter of Smoke & Bone* trilogy, the shadow of the past is as real as the ghosts who haunt the citadel of murdered gods. Fall into a mythical world of dread and wonder, moths and nightmares, love and carnage."

5) Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro (Dystopian Fiction)

"As children, Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy were students at Hailsham, an exclusive boarding school secluded in the English countryside. It was a place of mercurial cliques and mysterious rules where teachers were constantly reminding their charges of how special they were. Now, years later, Kathy is a young woman. Ruth and Tommy have reentered her life. And for the first time she is beginning to look back at their shared past and understand just what it is that makes them special—and how that gift will shape the rest of their time together."

6) Squire by Nadia Shammas and Sarah Alfageeh (Graphic Novel)

"Aiza has always dreamt of becoming a Knight. It's the highest military honor in the once-great Bayt-Sajji Empire, and as a member of the subjugated Ornu people, Knighthood is her only path to full citizenship. Ravaged by famine and mounting tensions, Bayt-Sajji finds itself on the brink of war once again, so Aiza can finally enlist in the competitive Squire training program. It's not how she imagined it, though. Aiza must navigate new friendships, rivalries, and rigorous training under the unyielding General Hende, all while hiding her Ornu background. As the pressure mounts, Aiza realizes that the "greater good" that Bayt-Sajji's military promises might not include her, and that the recruits might be in greater danger than she ever imagined. In this breathtaking and timely story, Aiza will have to choose, once and for all: loyalty to her heart and heritage, or loyalty to the Empire."