

Deerfield Academy

Summer Reading 2021

Reading remains one of life's great pleasures and an important means of broadening our horizons of knowledge and experience. This list includes books of diverse cultural perspectives for readers with varying interests and abilities. Enjoy your reading discoveries.

All students must read **FOUR** books, **one** of which is designated. **Three** other choices from the list are left to you to make when and as you wish.

We recommend you choose and enjoy one book in June, choose and enjoy a second and third in July, and **then complete the required read for your grade level or senior elective in August. You must bring the required book with you to campus at the start of the Fall Term.**

Electronic texts are permissible. If, for any reason, you cannot obtain the required book online or from your local bookstore or library, please call Deerfield's Campus Store (Hitchcock House) at 413-774-1513 to arrange a shipment. You can also email caustin@deerfield.edu. He will help you resolve the difficulty.

June

Abdurraqib, Hanif. **They Can't Kill Us Until They Kill Us**—The music critic and poet explores issues of personal and collective identity, all through the lens of music.

Bradley, David. **The Chaneyville Incident**—An African-American historian learns about his father and himself in uncovering the mystery of a shocking incident.

Edugyan, Esi. **Washington Black**—Science and a hot-air balloon carry a young slave from Barbados to the realm of discovery.

Erdrich, Louise. **Plague of Doves**—An act by vigilantes haunts a family and tribe for years on an Ojibwe reservation.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. **This Side of Paradise**—We follow Amory Blaine through prep school, Princeton, love, and loss, and leave him peering into adulthood and trying to figure out what he believes.

Graham, Jorie. **From the New World**—These poems contend with consciousness, memory, imperialism, and art.

Greer, Andrew Sean. **Less**—A struggling novelist attends an array of literary events around the world, all to avoid his ex-boyfriend's wedding.

Hass, Robert. **The Apple Trees at Olema: New and Selected Poems**—Hass focuses this selection on the Northern California landscape and on human experience.

Ko, Lisa. **The Leavers**—An undocumented Chinese immigrant goes missing, leaving her eleven-year-old son behind. Discover the story from both perspectives.

Lalami, Laila. **The Moor's Account**—Might there be other perspectives on the exploration and exploitation of New World? This imagined memoir of the first black explorer, a once-enslaved Moor, in North America offers a new possibility.

Maclean, Norman. **A River Runs Through It and Collected Stories**—Maclean tells the story of his family and fly-fishing, of bar fights and bait fishermen, of a Montana "with the dew still on it."

Malcolm X. **The Autobiography of Malcolm X**—Follows the turbulent life of this famous man, from his rough youth through prison and conversion to Islam and into his leadership period.

McPhee, John. **Levels of the Game**—Arthur Ashe struggles to overcome prejudice against black tennis players.

Otsuka, Julie. **The Buddha in the Attic**—Japanese "picture brides" struggle to adapt in an unwelcoming America.

Poe, Edgar Allan. **Selected Stories**—Poe penetrates his haunted and obsessed characters' secrets.

Powers, Richard. **The Overstory**—Interlocking stories over a 100-year span reveal the power of trees and the human bonds with them.

Sharma, Akhil. **Family Life**—Grief, dislocation, and discrimination threaten immigrants in Queens, but a young man's resilience helps to restore the family.

Ward, Jesmyn. **Sing, Unburied, Sing**—This family road trip through a ravaged southern landscape will haunt you.

Watson, Bruce. **Freedom Summer**—White and black college students risk their lives to advance civil rights in Mississippi.

Whitehead, Colson. **The Nickel Boys**—In the 1960s during Jim Crow, Nickel Academy is the kind of institution that purports to rebrand bad boys into good young men, but what happens inside does not match the public image.

July

Ashbery, John. **Selected Poems**—The Heritage Award-winning Deerfield graduate's selection of his own best poems.

Cole, K.C. **The Universe and The Teacup: The Mathematics of Truth and Beauty**—Explore links between mathematics and a variety of social, political, and scientific issues. (Recommended for FST)

Egan, Timothy. **Short Nights of the Shadow Catcher**—Explore the life and photographic work of Edward S. Curtis, who preserved Native American culture on film.

Ferrara, America. **American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures**—Prominent citizens, including actors, politicians, and more, discuss growing up in America as immigrants or children of immigrants.

Ginsberg, Allen. **Howl and Other Poems**—Meet the Beat poet who helped define a movement.

Grann, David. **Killers of the Flower Moon**—Who was killing Osage Indians and drilling oil wells on their land?

Haigh, Jennifer. **Heat and Light**—A small Pennsylvania town wrestles with the various costs of fracking for natural gas.

Horwitz, Tony. **Spying on the South**—Travel the modern American South with an observer following a route another writer took and described in dispatches 150 years earlier.

Hudes, Quiara Alegría. **Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue**—Follow Elliot's return to peacetime after serving in Iraq, as Hudes, who will visit campus in January 2021, begins her trilogy of award-winning plays focused on the Puerto Rican veteran and his family.

Kolbert, Elizabeth. **Field Notes from a Catastrophe**—Reading these dispatches may alter your sense of climate change.

Mbue, Imbolo. **Behold the Dreamers**—A Cameroonian couple hopes to succeed in New York City as the economy falls apart.

Plath, Sylvia. **The Bell Jar**—After graduating from college, Esther Greenwood works in New York as an editor. As her life becomes more complex, her grasp on reality diminishes.

Potok, Chaim. **My Name is Asher Lev**—A Jewish artist struggles with the demands of faith and art.

Rankine, Claudia. **Citizen**—Using the lyric essay form, Rankine engages with contemporary American racial politics from Trayvon Martin to Michael Brown.

Smith, Tracy K. **Life on Mars**—A poetry collection that explores life, loss, interplanetary travel, and pop culture, all whilst paying homage to Smith's father, one of the engineers who worked on the Hubble Space Telescope, and David Bowie.

Steinbeck, John. **The Grapes of Wrath**—Follow the Joad family from the Oklahoma Dust Bowl to California—the paradise that supposedly would end their problems.

Vonnegut, Kurt. **Slaughterhouse-Five**—Journey through time in telegraphic, schizophrenic style with Billy Pilgrim, who can never escape the horrors of the Dresden firebombing.

Washington, Bryan. **Memorial**—Mike and Benson's relationship is tested when Mike's mother comes to visit, only for her to be left with Benson when Mike has to fly to Osaka to take care of his estranged father.

Watson, James. **The Double Helix**—Relive the race to discover the structure of DNA.

Wilkerson, Isabel. **Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents**—Learn about the ways in which the caste system has shaped America, resulting in a complex hierarchy that continues today.

August

English 500: American Literature Courses
English 500: American Studies

Hurston, Zora Neale. **Their Eyes Were Watching God**
Orange, Tommy. **There There**