

MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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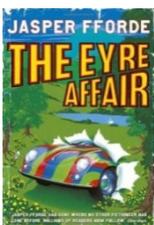
Parents and Senior Students, Class of 2017:

We are pleased to continue with the district summer reading expectations for students entering grades nine through twelve which was introduced two years ago. This year, the list of recommended reading selections was greatly expanded to account for a broader range of student choices that are representative of multiple genres and cover topics of current interest to high school students. Additionally, the related summer reading assignments were restructured. Students will be expected to present a “book talk” to a group of their peers some time during the first several weeks of the school year. Upon their return, all students will complete an in-class timed writing assignment based on the book that they did not select for their book talk. While all students must read at least two books, we are hopeful that the expanded lists will encourage students to read more and look forward to the *luxury of time* that summer will provide and allow them to experience the joy of reading books they will love.

Current research on summer reading largely exposes the extent to which a several month gap in literacy activities can hinder reading growth. Our efforts in this revision process were focused upon seeking out titles and activities that are motivating to current high school students and offer them a greater incentive to pick up a few good books to help pass the summer months. The intention of the summer reading expectation is to foster continued application of the valuable reading strategies and skills that students have learned during the school year. We invite students to fall in love with marvelous characters, open the door to new worlds, and embark on wild adventures.

We encourage parents and guardians of students entering 12<sup>th</sup> grade to be actively involved in the book selection process to approve the genre, topic and age-level appropriateness of selected books. Please take some time to review the grade level recommendations together with your child in an effort to support reading choices that best meet his/her interests and reading ability. We have collaborated with both the Middletown Township Public Library and the Holmdel location of Barnes & Noble to ensure that ample copies of titles on the recommended reading lists are available.

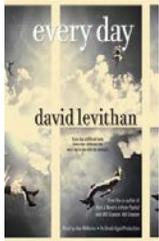
**Students entering 12<sup>th</sup> Grade may select from the following list of books:**



***The Eyre Affair* by Jasper Fforde**

**Genre: Science Fiction, Mystery, Fantasy**

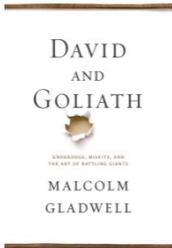
Fans of Douglas Adams and P. G. Wodehouse will love visiting Jasper Fforde's Great Britain, circa 1985, when time travel is routine, cloning is a reality (dodos are the resurrected pet of choice), and literature is taken very, very seriously: it's a bibliophile's dream. England is a virtual police state where an aunt can get lost (literally) in a Wordsworth poem and forging Byronic verse is a punishable offense. All this is business as usual for Thursday Next, renowned Special Operative in literary detection. But when someone begins kidnapping characters from works of literature and plucks Jane Eyre from the pages of Brontë's novel, Thursday is faced with the challenge of her career. Fforde's ingenious fantasy—enhanced by a Web site that re-creates the world of the novel—unites intrigue with English literature in a delightfully witty mix.



***Every Day* by David Levithan**

**Genre: Romance**

Every day a different body. Every day a different life. Every day in love with the same girl. There's never any warning about where it will be or who it will be. A has made peace with that, even established guidelines by which to live: Never get too attached. Avoid being noticed. Do not interfere. It's all fine until the morning that A wakes up in the body of Justin and meets Justin's girlfriend, Rhiannon. From that moment, the rules by which A has been living no longer apply. Because finally A has found someone he wants to be with—day in, day out, day after day.



***David and Goliath* by Malcolm Gladwell**

**Genre: Non-Fiction**

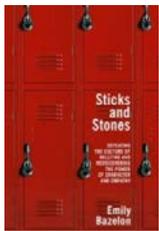
Three thousand years ago on a battlefield in ancient Palestine, a shepherd boy felled a mighty warrior with nothing more than a stone and a sling, and ever since then the names of David and Goliath have stood for battles between underdogs and giants. David's victory was improbable and miraculous. He *shouldn't* have won. Or should he have? In *David and Goliath*, Malcolm Gladwell challenges how we think about obstacles and disadvantages, offering a new interpretation of what it means to be discriminated against, or cope with a disability, or lose a parent, or attend a mediocre school, or suffer from any number of other apparent setbacks.



***Fan Girl* by Rainbow Rowell**

**Genre: Coming of Age, Contemporary Fiction**

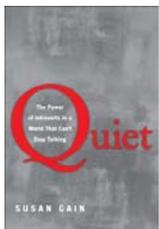
In Rainbow Rowell's *Fangirl*, Cath is a Simon Snow fan. Okay, the whole world is a Simon Snow fan, but for Cath, being a fan is her life--and she's really good at it. She and her twin sister, Wren, ensconced themselves in the Simon Snow series when they were just kids; it's what got them through their mother leaving. Reading. Rereading. Hanging out in Simon Snow forums, writing Simon Snow fan fiction, dressing up like the characters for every movie premiere. Cath's sister has mostly grown away from fandom, but Cath can't let go. She doesn't want to. Now that they're going to college; Wren has told Cath she doesn't want to be roommates. Cath is on her own, completely outside of her comfort zone. She's got a surly roommate with a charming, always-around boyfriend, a fiction-writing professor who thinks fan fiction is the end of the civilized world, a handsome classmate who only wants to talk about words . . . And she can't stop worrying about her dad, who's loving and fragile and has never really been alone.



***Sticks and Stones: Defeating the Culture of Bullying and Rediscovering the Power of Character and Empathy* by Emily Bazelon**

**Genre: Non-Fiction**

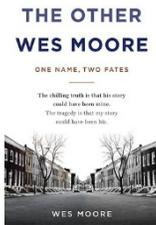
Being a teenager has never been easy, but in recent years, with the rise of the Internet and social media, it has become exponentially more challenging. Bullying once thought of as the province of queen bees and goons, has taken on new, complex, and insidious forms, as parents and educators know all too well. No writer is better poised to explore this territory than Emily Bazelon, who has established herself as a leading voice on the social and legal aspects of teenage drama. In *Sticks and Stones*, she brings readers on a deeply researched, clear-eyed journey into the ever-shifting landscape of teenage meanness and its sometimes devastating consequences. The result is an indispensable book that takes us from school cafeterias to courtrooms to the offices of Facebook, the website where so much teenage life, good bad now unfolds.



***Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* by Susan Cain**

**Genre: Non-Fiction**

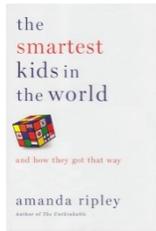
At least one-third of the people we know are introverts. They are the ones who prefer listening to speaking; who innovate and create but dislike self-promotion; who favor working on their own over working in teams. It is to introverts—Rosa Parks, Chopin, Dr. Seuss, Steve Wozniak—that we owe many of the great contributions to society. In *Quiet*, Susan Cain argues that we dramatically undervalue introverts and shows how much we lose in doing so. She charts the rise of the Extrovert Ideal throughout the twentieth century and explores how deeply it has come to permeate our culture. She also introduces us to successful introverts—from a witty, high-octane public speaker who recharges in solitude after his talks, to a record-breaking salesman who quietly taps into the power of questions. Passionately argued, superbly researched, and filled with indelible stories of real people, *Quiet* has the power to permanently change how we see introverts and, equally important, how they see themselves.



***The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates* by Wes Moore**

**Genre: Memoir**

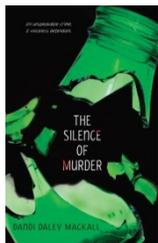
Two kids named Wes Moore were born blocks apart within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police. How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence? Wes Moore, the author of this fascinating book, sets out to answer this profound question. In alternating narratives that take readers from heart-wrenching losses to moments of surprising redemption, *The Other Wes Moore* tells the story of a generation of boys trying to find their way in a hostile world.



***The Smartest Kids in the World: And How They Got that Way* by Amanda Ripley**

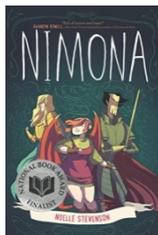
**Genre: Non-Fiction**

How Do Other Countries Create “Smarter” Kids? In a handful of nations, virtually all children are learning to make complex arguments and solve problems they’ve never seen before. They are learning to think, in other words, and to thrive in the modern economy. What is it like to be a child in the world’s new education superpowers? In a global quest to find answers for our own children, author and Time magazine journalist Amanda Ripley follows three Americans embedded in these countries for one year.



***The Silence of Murder* - Dandi Daley Mackall**

The story of a teen's struggle to prove her brother innocent of murder. The Crime: The murder of John Johnson, beloved baseball coach. The Accused: 18-year-old Jeremy Long, who hasn't spoken a single word in 12 years. Witness for the Defense: 16-year-old Hope Long, the only person who believes her brother is innocent. Other Suspects: The police have



***Nimona* by Noelle Stevenson**

**Genre: Graphic Novel/Fantasy**

“Nemeses! Dragons! Science! Symbolism! All these and more await in this brilliantly subversive, sharply irreverent epic from Noelle Stevenson. Featuring an exclusive epilogue not seen in the web comic, along with bonus conceptual sketches and revised pages throughout, this gorgeous full-color graphic novel has been hailed by critics and fans alike as the arrival of a “superstar” talent (NPR.org). Nimona is an impulsive young shapeshifter with a knack for villainy. Lord Ballister Blackheart is a villain with a vendetta. As sidekick and supervillain, Nimona and Lord Blackheart are about to wreak some serious havoc. Their mission: prove to the kingdom that Sir Ambrosius Goldenloin and his buddies at the Institution of Law Enforcement and Heroics aren't the heroes everyone thinks they are. But as small acts of mischief escalate into a vicious battle, Lord Blackheart realizes that Nimona's powers are as murky and mysterious as her past. And her unpredictable wild side might be more dangerous than he is willing to admit.”-Amazon



***Losers Take All* by David Klass**

**Genre: Sports Fiction/Comedy**

“In this table-turning novel about the thrill of defeat and the agony of victory, the new rule at Jack Logan's sports-crazy New Jersey high school is that all kids must play on a team. So Jack and a ragtag group of anti-athletic friends decide to get even. They are going to start a rebel JV soccer team whose mission is to avoid victory at any cost, setting out to secretly undermine the jock culture of the school. But as the team's losing formula becomes increasingly successful at attracting fans and attention, Jack and his teammates are winning in ways they never expected-and don't know how to handle. “-Amazon

*Books may be borrowed from the Middletown Public Library, purchased at Barnes and Noble in Holmdel.*

# SUMMER SUMMER SUMMER

## Summer Reading Assignment for Students Entering Grades 9-12

- Students will be required to read a minimum of 2 books from the above list, however, more are encouraged.
- Students will conduct a book talk on one of the books they have read when they return to school in September.
- **Students are required to provide a written list of the books they read including the name of each author.**
- When they return to school in September the student and teacher will collaborate to decide which book they will use for their book talk.
- Students may want to review some web-based examples of book talks. The website below is one source that may be useful:  
<http://nancykeane.com/booktalks/student.htm>
- Students will be required to complete an in-class timed writing on the book they did not select for their book talk.

*Students should follow the guidelines listed below as they prepare for their book talks.*

### **Giving a Good Book Talk:**

- Plan to speak for about 3-5 minutes
- Briefly summarize the plot of the book and identify the genre, but **do not** give away the ending. Think about what you would and would not have wanted to know before reading.
- Prepare what you are going to say about the book. You don't need to memorize, but you need to know the points you are going to make. Practice until you are comfortable with your material.
- Optional topics to focus on:
  - The theme of the book
  - The major conflict
  - A brief description of the main characters and their relationships
  - Setting and how it relates to the plot and characters
  - Mention if the book reminds you of another book you have read or a movie you have seen
  - Identify what you think the author would have wanted readers to take from the experience of reading the book
  - Tell the audience if you recommend the book and why or why not. Remember, even if the book was not one of your favorites, does not mean that someone else may not enjoy reading the book.
  - If you come across a significant or powerful passage, you may read it aloud. This should be short and leave the listener wanting more.