

GW Community School

Summer Reading List

2011

ENGLISH

Incoming Freshmen (Suggested)

World Literature I (3000B.C.E-1300A.D)

One Thousand and One Arabian Nights (Oxford Story Collections) Geraldine McCaughrean

This book contains some of the coolest stories ever committed to paper. An appreciation of the humor and moral lessons of these stories will be useful when you read Arabic and Indian stories in the first half of the year.

Rising Sophomores (Suggested)

World Literature II (1500-1960)

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time by Mark Haddon

An all-time favorite among GW students, this book is written from the perspective of Christopher John Francis Boone, a gifted autistic 15 year old who lives outside of London with his father. When his neighbor's dog is murdered, Christopher decides to use his powers of deduction to solve the crime, and along with way, uncovers deeper secrets than he ever bargained for.

Rising Juniors (Suggested)

American Literature

Middle Passage by Charles Johnson

This comic-satirical novel of piracy and the slave trade mixes a skewed and occasionally gross sense humor with profound meditations on the nature of race and power in America. Plus, Captain Falcon is the roughest, craftiest sailor this side of Long John Silver. Read it at the beach.

Rising Seniors (Suggested)

Senior Seminar in English

On Monsters: An Unnatural History of Our Worst Fears by Stephen T. Asma

A fantastic example of accessible, interesting scholarly writing, Asma traces how humans have thought about the concept of monsters from ancient magical beasts like the Chimera and Dragon to more modern monsters such as serial killers. Packed full of fascinating facts and strange theories, this book will make you about 20 times smarter than you were when you started reading it.



HISTORY

Incoming Freshmen (Required)

World Civ/World Geog I

A History of the World in Six Glasses by Tom Standage

“This is a good example of why history is fun. Tom Standage has investigated the origins of six beverages: beer, wine, spirits, coffee, tea, and Coca-Cola and has found innumerable connections, interconnections, and insights into not only the histories of the drinks themselves but also their impacts on the larger human story. The links Standage finds, for example between coffee and the Enlightenment or tea and the Opium Wars or wine and beer and their effect on class and cultural tensions in Greece and Rome, just a few of the many insights you'll find in the book) are fascinating. Standage also provides one of the most succinct but thorough dissections of the globalization debate I have ever seen in his coverage of "Coca-Colonization." There will be a test during the first week of school. Your test score will help determine how much homework you will have in the first quarter.

A History of the World in Six Glasses is much more than just a history of six beverages. It is history as it should be written (and taught).” John D. Cofield (Amazon.com Reviewer)

Rising Sophomores (Required)

World Civ/World Geog II

A Short History of Nearly Everything by Bill Bryson

From primordial nothingness to this very moment, *A Short History of Nearly Everything* reports what happened and how humans figured it out. To accomplish this daunting literary task, Bill Bryson uses hundreds of sources, from popular science books to interviews with luminaries in various fields. His aim is to help people like him, who rejected stale school textbooks and dry explanations, to appreciate how we have used science to understand the smallest particles and the unimaginably vast expanses of space. With his distinctive prose style and wit, Bryson succeeds admirably. Though *A Short History* clocks in at daunting 500-plus pages and covers the same material as every science book before it, it reads something like a particularly detailed novel (albeit without a plot). Each longish chapter is devoted to a topic like the age of our planet or how cells work, and these chapters are grouped into larger sections such as "The Size of the Earth" and "Life Itself." (Review by Amazon) There will be a test during the first week of school. Your test score will help determine how much homework you will have in the first quarter.

Rising Juniors (Required)

US History

Don't Know Much About History by Kenneth C. Davis

Finally, someone who tells history like it was, without the old textbook gloss that's put so many students into premature naptime and misinformed the few who stayed awake. Davis corrects the myths and misconceptions from Columbus up through the Clinton administration, and shows that truth is more entertaining than propaganda. This book is a great overview of American History and is a must read for any AP Student.

BOOK CLUB

All Who Are Interested

Summer SF Book Club

Do you like science fiction? Dr. Cox, Ms. Bowen, Mr. Hartman and Mr. Pereira will be hosting the summer science fiction book club. The book this summer will be: *Cryptonomicon* by Neal Stephenson. If you are interested in WWII or cryptography, read the book and come join us for our discussion. *Cryptonomicon* was nominated for a Hugo and won the Locus Award for Best Science Fiction novel of 2000. Join the discussion on Wednesday, July 13th from 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm at GWCS. Join the Facebook Group: GW Community School SF Book Club: What If...? Science Fiction Book Club discussion will be on Wednesday, July 13th from 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm. Meet at GW!