

June 1, 2008

Dear parents and guardians of rising Fieldston 7<sup>th</sup> graders:

Enclosed in this mailing is a suggested reading list for this summer. While there is no required summer reading, our hope is that students will stay active readers throughout the coming months, and we would love to see every student choose to read at least a couple of books from the list provided.

Our list was compiled entirely by a committee of current 7<sup>th</sup> graders, so we know that the books are beloved by other Fieldston middle school students. There are titles from an array of genres—including fiction and non-fiction—so it is likely that any student should be able to find something on the list that catches his or her interest.

Hope everyone has a wonderful summer, and we look forward to working with you in the Fall. Enjoy the books!

Sincerely,

Jeremy Rosenholtz      Lauren Porosoff      Jay Trevorrow  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade English teachers

## Seventh Grade Summer Reading

**Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451***

Science Fiction

In the future, firemen don't put out fires—they start them in order to burn books. Guy Montag has always enjoyed his job as a fireman. Like everyone in his society, Guy Montag never questions anything until he meets a girl who tells him of the past, when people were not afraid to think for themselves.

**Agatha Christie, *And Then There Were None***

Mystery

Ten strangers are invited to an island by a mysterious host. Once his guests have arrived, the host accuses each person of murder. Unable to leave the island, the guests begin to share their darkest secrets—until they begin to die.

**Paulo Coelho, *The Alchemist***

Contemporary Fiction

Santiago begins a journey from Spain to Morocco in search of riches, but a series of fateful encounters lead him much farther and bring him much more. Santiago's story is about becoming self-empowered, overcoming depression, and believing in dreams.

**Daniel Keyes, *Flowers For Algernon***

Classic Fiction

Algernon is a lab mouse who gets an experimental brain operation that raises his IQ. Charlie, a mentally disabled man, undergoes the same operation, and his intelligence expands. But then Algernon suddenly and unexpectedly begins to deteriorate. Will the same happen to Charlie?

**Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird***

Classic Fiction

In a small Alabama town, young Scout Finch and her brother, Jem, grow to understand that prejudice is a very real aspect of their world no matter how subtle it seems. Through their neighborhood wanderings, and by watching their father defend a black man in court, they learn that the world isn't always fair.

**Joseph Lekuton, *Facing the Lion***

Autobiography

Lekuton grew up in Kenya's poorest tribe, herding cows and playing in hyena holes before he was accepted into a fancy Nairobi high school and went to college in the U.S. Now he teaches in Virginia, but he has never lost his Maasai roots.

**Michael Lewis, *Moneyball***

Nonfiction

In 2002, the Oakland Athletics achieved a spectacular winning record while having the smallest player payroll of any major league baseball team. Though people assume that big-name hitters and pitchers are the key to success, Billy Beane, the general manager, examined the statistical data on baseball and figured out more affordable ways to build a winning team.

**George Orwell, *Animal Farm***

Classic Fiction

In this satire of Soviet Communism, the oppressed animals of Manor Farm oust their human master and take over management of the land. Everyone willingly works overtime, and for one glorious season, they are happy. But when the pigs, who have declared themselves leaders, are corrupted by power, the common animals are left hungry and exhausted, no better off than when humans ran the farm.

**Salman Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories***

Contemporary Fiction

When Rashid's storytelling ability dries up, his son Haroun travels on a quest to find mysterious forces that block the Sea of Stories, from which all stories come. The book contains humor, wordplay, fantasy, and epic battle, and it is ultimately a metaphor for the forces in the world that limit free speech and those who fight to keep telling stories.

**Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation***

Nonfiction

Fast food has widened the gap between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and changed the American landscape. Journalist Eric Schlosser finds out why the fries taste so good, what's in the burgers, and how the industry has seeped into every part of culture, here and abroad.

**Gene Yang, *American Born Chinese***

Graphic Novel

Three stories intertwine: the efforts of the Chinese folk hero Monkey King to shed his humble roots; the struggles of Jin Wang, a lonely Asian American student who wants to fit in with his white classmates; and the plight of Danny, an teen shamed by his Chinese cousin Chin-Kee (a purposefully painful ethnic stereotype). Yang weaves these stories together to create a commentary about race, identity, and self-acceptance.

**Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief***

Contemporary Fiction

Death himself narrates the World War II-era story of Liesel Meminger, who collects stolen books and a peculiar set of friends: the Jewish refugee Max, the mayor's wife who has a library from which she allows Liesel to steal, and especially her foster parents. Death, like Liesel, has a way with words, and he recognizes them for the good and evil they can do.