

Westhill High School English Summer Reading 2024

Main Requirement: Select ONE summer reading book. The list below provides some suggestions. Click on an image in the bookshelf or scroll down in this document to learn more about the books.

Spend time reading a good book this summer. We have provided suggestions for inspiration, but feel free to choose a title that does not appear on the list. Chat with your friends, parents, teachers, and librarians about the books they recommend. Browse the shelves in the library and bookstores or read reviews online. Choose a fiction or nonfiction book that interests you and that challenges you. The possibilities are nearly endless. Our purpose is to encourage you to find an enjoyable summer read. Expect that your English teacher will assess your reading when you return to school. Have a great summer!

→ AP and ECE English students please scroll to the next page for your assignments.

WHS





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Westhill High School

AP and ECE English Summer Reading Assignments

- ★ Seniors taking [AP English Literature and Composition](#) should click [this link](#) to access their summer reading assignment and [this link to access the notes template](#).
- ★ Juniors taking [AP Language and Composition or ECE](#) should click [this link](#) to access their summer reading assignment and [this link to access the dialectical journal template](#).



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Book Suggestion Descriptions

***Bad Cree* by Jessica Johns**

When Mackenzie wakes up with a severed crow's head in her hands, she panics. Only moments earlier she had been fending off masses of birds in a snow-covered forest. In bed, when she blinks, the head disappears. Night after night, Mackenzie's dreams return her to a memory from before her sister Sabrina's untimely death: a weekend at the family's lakefront campsite, long obscured by a fog of guilt. But when the waking world starts closing in, too—a murder of crows stalks her every move around the city, she wakes up from a dream of drowning throwing up water, and gets threatening text messages from someone claiming to be Sabrina—Mackenzie knows this is more than she can handle alone. Traveling north to her rural hometown in Alberta, she finds her family still steeped in the same grief that she ran away to Vancouver to escape. They welcome her back, but their shaky reunion only seems to intensify her dreams—and make them more dangerous. What really happened that night at the lake, and what did it have to do with Sabrina's death? Only a bad Cree would put their family at risk, but what if whatever has been calling Mackenzie home was already inside? Alex Award Winner 2024

***Fourth Wing* by Rebecca Yarros**

Twenty-year-old Violet Sorrengail was supposed to enter the Scribe Quadrant, living a quiet life among books and history. Now, the commanding general - also known as her tough-as-talons mother - has ordered Violet to join the hundreds of candidates striving to become the elite of Navarre: dragon riders. But when you're smaller than everyone else and your body is brittle, death is only a heartbeat away . . . because dragons don't bond to 'fragile' humans. They incinerate them. With fewer dragons willing to bond than cadets, most would kill Violet to better their own chances of success. The rest would kill her just for being her mother's daughter - like Xaden Riorson, the most powerful and ruthless wingleader in the Riders Quadrant. She'll need every edge her wits can give her just to see the next sunrise. Yet, with every day that passes, the war outside grows more deadly, the kingdom's protective wards are failing, and the death toll continues to rise. Even worse, Violet begins to suspect leadership is hiding a terrible secret. Everyone at Basgiath has an agenda, and every night could be your last. So, sleep with one eye open because once you enter, there are only two ways out: graduate or die. Alex Award Winner 2024

***Starter Villain* by John Scalzi**

Charlie's life is going nowhere fast. A divorced substitute teacher living with his cat in a house his siblings want to sell, all he wants is to open a pub downtown, if only the bank will approve his loan. Then his long-lost uncle Jake dies and leaves his supervillain business (complete with island volcano lair) to Charlie. But becoming a supervillain isn't all giant laser death rays and lava pits. Jake had enemies, and now they're coming after Charlie. His uncle might have been a stand-up, old-fashioned kind of villain, but these are the real thing: rich, soulless predators backed by multinational corporations and venture capital. It's up to Charlie to win the war his uncle started against a league of supervillains. But with unionized dolphins, hyper-intelligent talking spy cats, and a terrifying henchperson at his side, going bad is starting to look pretty good. Alex Award Winner 2024



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***The Hard Parts: A Memoir of Courage and Triumph* by Oksana Masters**

Oksana Masters was born in Ukraine—in the shadow of Chernobyl—seemingly with the odds stacked against her. She came into the world with one kidney, a partial stomach, six toes on each foot, webbed fingers, no right bicep, and no thumbs. Her left leg was six inches shorter than her right, and she was missing both tibias. Relinquished to the orphanage system by birth parents daunted by the staggering cost of what would be their child's medical care, Oksana encountered numerous abuses, some horrifying. Salvation came at age seven when Gay Masters, an unmarried American professor who saw a photo of the little girl and became haunted by her eyes, waged a two-year war against stubborn adoption authorities to rescue Oksana from her circumstances. In America, Oksana endured years of operations that included a double leg amputation. Still, how could she hope to fit in when there were so many things making her different? As it turned out, she would do much more than fit in. Determined to prove herself and fueled by a drive to succeed that still smoldered from childhood, Oksana triumphed in not just one sport but four—winning against the world's best in elite rowing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, and road cycling competitions. Now considered one of the world's top athletes, she is the recipient of seventeen Paralympic medals, the most of any US athlete of the Winter Games, Paralympic or Olympic. Alex Award Winner 2024

***Whalefall: A Novel* by Daniel Kraus**

Jay Gardiner has given himself a fool's errand—to find the remains of his deceased father in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Monastery Beach. He knows it's a long shot, but Jay feels it's the only way for him to lift the weight of guilt he has carried since his dad's death by suicide the previous year. The dive begins well enough, but the sudden appearance of a giant squid puts Jay in very real jeopardy, made infinitely worse by the arrival of a sperm whale looking to feed. Suddenly, Jay is caught in the squid's tentacles and drawn into the whale's mouth where he is pulled into the first of its four stomachs. He quickly realizes he has only one hour before his oxygen tanks run out—one hour to defeat his demons and escape the belly of a whale. Alex Award Winner 2024

***The Collectors: Stories* edited by A.S. King**

From Michael L. Printz Award winner A.S. King and an all-star team of contributors including Anna-Marie McLemore and Jason Reynolds, an anthology of stories about remarkable people and their strange and surprising collections. Printz Award Winner 2024

***Gather* by Kenneth M. Cadow**

Ian Gray isn't supposed to have a dog, but a lot of things that shouldn't happen end up happening anyway. And Gather, Ian's adopted pup, is good company now that Ian has to quit the basketball team, find a job, and take care of his mom as she tries to overcome her opioid addiction. Despite the obstacles thrown their way, Ian is determined to keep his family afloat no matter what it takes. And for a little while, things are looking up: Ian makes friends, and his fondness for the outdoors and for fixing things lands him work helping neighbors. But an unforeseen tragedy results in Ian and his dog taking off on the run, trying to evade a future that would mean leaving their house and their land. Even if the community comes together to help him, would Ian and Gather have a home to return to? Printz Honor Book 2024



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***The Girl I Am, Was, and Never Will Be: A Speculative Memoir of Transracial Adoption* by Shannon Gibney**

Part memoir, part speculative fiction, this novel explores the often surreal experience of growing up as a mixed-Black transracial adoptee. *Dream Country* author Shannon Gibney returns with a new book woven from her true story of growing up as the adopted Black daughter of white parents and the fictional story of Erin Powers, the name Shannon was given at birth by the white woman who gave her up for adoption. At its core, the novel is a tale of two girls on two different timelines occasionally bridged by a mysterious portal and their shared search for a complete picture of their origins. Gibney surrounds that story with reproductions of her own adoption documents, letters, family photographs, interviews, medical records, and brief essays on the surreal absurdities of the adoptee experience. The end result is a remarkable portrait of an American experience rarely depicted in any form. Printz Honor Book 2024

***Family Style: Memories of an American from Vietnam* by Thien Pham**

Thien's first memory isn't a sight or a sound. It's the sweetness of watermelon and the saltiness of fish. It's the taste of the foods he ate while adrift at sea as his family fled Vietnam. After the Pham family arrives at a refugee camp in Thailand, they struggle to survive. Things don't get much easier once they resettle in California. And through each chapter of their lives, food takes on a new meaning. Strawberries come to signify struggle as Thien's mom and dad look for work. Potato chips are an indulgence that bring Thien so much joy that they become a necessity. Behind every cut of steak and inside every croissant lies a story. And for Thien Pham, that story is about a search-- for belonging, for happiness, for the American dream. YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction 2024

***Saints of the Household* by Ari Tison**

Max and Jay have always depended on one another for their survival. Growing up with a physically abusive father, the two Bribri American brothers have learned that the only way to protect themselves and their mother is to stick to a schedule and keep their heads down. But when they hear a classmate in trouble in the woods, instinct takes over and they intervene, breaking up a fight and beating their high school's star soccer player to a pulp. This act of violence threatens the brothers' dreams for the future and their beliefs about who they are. As the true details of that fateful afternoon unfold over the course of the novel, Max and Jay grapple with the weight of their actions, their shifting relationship as brothers, and the realization that they may be more like their father than they thought. They'll have to reach back to their Bribri roots to find their way forward. Told in alternating points of view using vignettes and poems, debut author Ari Tison crafts an emotional, slow-burning drama about brotherhood, abuse, recovery, and doing the right thing. Pura Belpré Award 2024

***The Prince & the Coyote* by David Bowles**

Mexico. 1418. Meet Prince Acolmiztli. Puma of the Acolhua People. Heir to his father's throne. Half Acolhuan, half Mexican. Singer. Warrior. Poet. Sixteen years old. And now, betrayed. A palace plot, placed by the deadly Tepaneca Empire, kills his mother and siblings, puts his father's army into retreat, and sends Prince Acolmiztli into a treacherous exile. Battling hunger, snow-swept mountains, and the machinations of the city-states all around him, Prince Acolmiztli vows revenge. It will take years, but he will return to seek justice. And he'll do it with a new name: Nezahualcoyotl. Fasting Coyote. One of the most legendary figures in history. Pura Belpré Honor Book 2024



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Nigeria Jones: A Novel by Ibi Zoboi

Warrior Princess. That's what Nigeria Jones's father calls her. He has raised her as part of the Movement, a Black separatist group based in Philadelphia. Nigeria is homeschooled and vegan and participates in traditional rituals to connect her and other kids from the group to their ancestors. But when her mother—the perfect matriarch of their Movement—disappears, Nigeria's world is upended. She finds herself taking care of her baby brother and stepping into a role she doesn't want. Nigeria's mother had secrets. She wished for a different life for her children, which includes sending her daughter to a private Quaker school outside of their strict group. Despite her father's disapproval, Nigeria attends the school with her cousin, Kamau, and Sage, who used to be a friend. There, she begins to flourish and expand her universe. As Nigeria searches for her mother, she starts to uncover a shocking truth. One that will lead her to question everything she thought she knew about her life and her family. Coretta Scott King Award 2024