

KILLARNEY SUMMER READING 2011

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Killarney Secondary School Summer Reading List - Grade 12

Reading is an essential skill for success in any student's education. Here is a list that offers books for leisure reading as well as for expanded learning. Enjoy!

FICTION

***Animal Dreams* - Kingsolver, Barbara**

This suspenseful love story blends flashbacks, dreams and Native American legends to create an exploration of life's big responsibilities. Codi Noline returns to her hometown of Grace, Arizona, a community threatened by a silent environmental catastrophe. She falls in love, faces her ailing father, and tries to find a way to live a sweet life.

***The Scarlet Letter* - Hawthorne, Nathaniel**

Hester Prynne bears the scarlet letter "A" for adultery in this 17th century novel about sin and redemption. How will Hester and her child bear the ostracism from a Puritan society that demands conformity?

***One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* - Kesey, Ken**

Randle Patrick McMurphy is a boisterous, brawling, fun-loving rebel who swaggers into the world of a mental hospital and takes over. A lusty, life-affirming fighter, McMurphy rallies the other patients around him by challenging the dictatorship of Big Nurse. But this defiance, which starts as a sport, soon develops into a grim struggle, an all-out war between two relentless opponents.

***Brave New World* - Huxley, Aldous**

Far in the future, the World Controllers have created the ideal society. Through clever use of genetic engineering, brainwashing and recreational sex and drugs, all its members are happy consumers. Bernard Marx seems alone in feeling discontent. Harboring an unnatural desire for solitude, and a perverse distaste for the pleasure of compulsory promiscuity, Bernard has an ill-defined longing to break free.

***The Grapes of Wrath* - Steinbeck, John**

This is an account of the struggles of a bereft but enduring family caught in the Great Depression as they leave their life and land behind to migrate to the west, the land of promise. What they find in California is not what they envisioned.

***For Whom the Bell Tolls* - Hemingway, Ernest**

Set in 1937 during the Spanish Civil War, this book tells the story of both war and love and personal honour. It is considered one of the best war stories of the twentieth century.

***Hard Times* - Dickens, Charles**

This critique of Victorian industrial society revolves around Thomas Gradgrind, headmaster and member of Parliament. Although he drills his students and family with facts and discredits emotions, he eventually comes to recognize the value of the human heart in an age of materialism and machinery. As one of his characters expresses, people must be amused; they are not made to be always working or learning.

***The Stone Carvers* - Urquart, Jane**

At the center of the story is Klara Becker, the granddaughter of a master woodcarver, who spends her childhood in southwestern Ontario in the years leading up to WWI. It is a childhood punctuated by tremendous losses: her mother dies of cancer when she is a teenager; her older brother disappears; and her brief but passionate love affair with Eamon O'Sullivan is cut short when he is killed in action. But Klara's inherited gift for carving will reunite her with her brother and bring her unexpected happiness.

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***Medicine River* - King, Thomas**

After his mother passes away, Will decides to return home to Medicine River, Alberta. Once there he meets up again with Harlen Bigbear and his life is never the same.

***Pride and Prejudice* - Austen, Jane**

The wonderfully charming and intelligent heroine, Elizabeth Bennet finds herself trying to navigate the social landscape of England in the 18th century. She meets her match in the sophisticated yet proud Mr. Darcy who is confined by notions of class and manners. Austen's story is both the perfect love story as well as a social critique.

***Stanley Park* - Taylor, Timothy**

A young chef who revels in local bounty, a long-ago murder that remains unsolved, the homeless of Stanley Park, a smooth-talking businessman named Dante - these are the ingredients of Timothy Taylor's stunning debut novel.

***The Eyre Affair* - Fforde, Jasper**

In this world there are no jet-liners or computers, but there are policemen who can travel across time, a Welsh republic, a great interest in all things literary - and a woman called Thursday Next. The essence of Thursday's quest is the capture of Acheron Hades, a wily cad whose dastardly crime is murder of characters from the classics.

***Jane Eyre* - Bronte, Charlotte**

Born into a poor family and raised by an oppressive aunt, young Jane Eyre becomes the governess at Thornfield Manor to escape the confines of her life. There her fiery independence clashes with the brooding and mysterious nature of her employer, Mr. Rochester. But what begins as outright loathing slowly evolves into a passionate romance.

***Things Fall Apart* - Achebe, Chinua**

Two overlapping, intertwining stories center around Okonkwo, a "strong man" of an Ibo village in Nigeria. The parable depicts the clash of cultures and the destruction of Okonkwo's world through the arrival of aggressive, proselytizing European missionaries.

***Fahrenheit 451* - Bradbury, Ray**

Guy Montag has been a fireman for ten years, and he has never questioned the pleasure of the midnight runs nor the joy of watching pages consumed by flames... never questioned anything until he meets a seventeen-year-old girl who tells him of a past when people were not afraid. Then he meets a professor who tells him of a future in which people can think... and Guy Montag suddenly realizes what he has to do. Bradbury's novel about censorship and defiance is a classic.

***Secret Daughter* - Gowda, Shilpi**

In a tiny hut in rural India, Kavita gives birth to Asha. Unable to afford the luxury of raising a daughter, her husband forces Kavita to give the baby up--a decision that will haunt them both for the rest of their lives.

***My Sister's Keeper* - Picoult, Jodi**

Is it morally correct to do whatever it takes to save a child's life, even if that means infringing upon the rights of another? The product of preimplantation genetic diagnosis, Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for Kate -- a life and a role that she has never challenged...until now.

***The Reluctant Fundamentalist* - Hamid, Mohsin**

At a café table in Lahore, a bearded Pakistani man converses with a suspicious, and possibly armed, American stranger. As dusk deepens to night, he begins the tale that has brought them to this fateful meeting. . .

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***Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* - Satrapi, Marjane**

In powerful black-and-white comic strip images, Satrapi tells the story of her life in Tehran from ages six to fourteen, years that saw the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, and the devastating effects of war with Iraq.

***The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* - Bradley, Alan**

A delightfully dark English mystery, featuring precocious young sleuth Flavia de Luce and her eccentric family. For Flavia, the summer begins in earnest when murder comes to Buckshaw: "*I wish I could say I was afraid, but I wasn't. Quite the contrary. This was by far the most interesting thing that had ever happened to me in my entire life.*"

NON-FICTION

***Outliers: The Story of Success* - Gladwell, Malcolm**

A fascinating, reader-friendly book that challenges familiar notions that success is simply due to hard work. Whether you are interested in great hockey players or computer whizzes, in successful lawyers or musicians, Gladwell's book will give you food for thought and conversation.

***Reading Lolita in Tehran* - Nafisi, Azar**

In this extraordinary memoir, an inspired university teacher in Iran gathers in secret with seven of her most committed female students once a week, to read forbidden Western classics. In the face of tyranny, censorship and oppression, the stories of these women become intertwined with the ones they are reading.

***Eat, Pray, Love* - Gilbert, Elizabeth**

The author presents an account of her pursuit of worldly pleasure, spiritual devotion, and what she really wants out of life. Her personal journey takes her to Italy (land of gelato), India (land of yoga and meditation) and finally Bali (the land of love).

***The Shock Doctrine: the Rise of Industrial Capitalism* - Klein, Naomi**

The shock doctrine is the unofficial story of how the "free market" came to dominate the world, from Chile to Russia, China to Iraq, South Africa to Canada. But it is a story radically different from the one usually told. It is a story about violence and shock perpetrated on people, on countries, on economies. About a program of social and economic engineering that is driving our world, that Naomi Klein calls "disaster capitalism."

***In The Realm of Hungry Ghosts* - Mate, Gabor**

Local bestselling writer and physician Gabor Maté looks at the epidemic of addictions in our society, tells us why we are so prone to them and what is needed to liberate ourselves from their hold on our emotions and behaviours. His real stories come from his experiences as a doctor on the downtown east side of Vancouver.

***Red China Blues* - Wong, Jan**

Red China Blues begins as Wong's startling -- and ironic -- memoir of her rocky six-year romance with Maoism that began to sour as she became aware of the harsh realities of Chinese communism and led to her eventual repatriation to the West. Returning to China in the late eighties as a journalist, she covered both the brutal Tiananmen Square crackdown and the tumultuous era of capitalist reforms under Deng Xiaoping

***Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* - Diamond, Jared**

In this artful, informative, and delightful book, Diamond offers a convincing explanation of the way the modern world came to be and stunningly dismantles racially based theories of human history. For anyone interested in anthropology, human geography and/or the evolution of human societies.

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***Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster* - Krakauer, Jon**

When Jon Krakauer reached the summit of Mt. Everest in the early afternoon of May 10, 1996, he hadn't slept in fifty-seven hours and was reeling from the brain-altering effects of oxygen depletion. Find out what happens as he descends the mountain. This real life account is hard to put down.

***The Golden Spruce: A Story of Myth, Madness and Greed* - Vaillant, John**

A tree with luminous glowing needles, the golden spruce was unique, a mystery that biologically speaking should never have reached maturity; Grant Hadwin, the man who cut it down, was passionate, extraordinarily well-suited to wilderness survival, and to some degree unbalanced. But as John Vaillant shows in this gripping and perceptive book, the extraordinary tree stood at the intersection of contradictory ways of looking at the world; the conflict between them is one reason it was destroyed.

***Decoded* - Jay Z**

From the hip-hop artist, Jay Z, this is a collection of lyrics and their meanings that together tell the story of a culture, an art form, a moment in history, and one of the most provocative and successful artists of our time.