

# OAKWOOD SCHOOL

## 2015 SEVENTH GRADE SUMMER READING LIST

### REQUIRED SUMMER READING:

*The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis ISBN: 9780888994165

Set in the early years of the Taliban regime, this novel explores the harsh realities of life for girls and women in modern-day Afghanistan. When the Taliban arrests her father, Parvana realizes that it's up to her to become the "breadwinner" and disguise herself as a boy to support her mother, two sisters, and baby brother.

As you read, pay attention to the various outlooks presented from different characters. Also, please keep a journal of your readings by responding to the questions in the Summer Reading Letter (<http://www.oakwoodschoo.org/file/2015--7th-summer-letter.pdf>).

If you have any questions, please contact your teachers Justin and Claire: [jsweitzer@oakwoodschoo.org](mailto:jsweitzer@oakwoodschoo.org) and [crissman-sherr@oakwoodschoo.org](mailto:crissman-sherr@oakwoodschoo.org).

### STUDENT CHOICE SUMMER READING (please select one book from this list)

\* indicates a book that complements the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Global Studies curriculum

**1984** by George Orwell

Orwell imagines a future London as a grim city where Big Brother is always watching you and the Thought Police can practically read your mind.

**ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND and THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS** by Lewis Carroll

Wonderland says it all. This pair of absolutely enchanting tales will leave you with a smile broader than the Cheshire Cat's.

**ANNE OF GREEN GABLES** by Lucy Maude Montgomery *and the rest of the Anne series*

Set at the turn of the century on a small island in Canada, Anne is a vivacious, imaginative orphan adopted by an aging couple. Anne causes trouble where ever she goes but also brightens everyone's lives.

**BALZAC AND THE LITTLE CHINESE SEAMSTRESS** by Dai Sijie

The story of two young men ordered to the countryside for reeducation during China's Cultural Revolution whose gifts for storytelling lead them to discover more about themselves and the village.

**BAMBOO PEOPLE** by Mitali Perkins

When 15-year-old Chiko, forced into military service in Burma, is wounded in battle, he finds himself at the mercy of Tu Reh. Will these two teens, who should be natural enemies, find a way to friendship?

\***BINDI BABES** by Narinder Dhama

Three sisters enjoy a life of no adult supervision and everything they want from their widowed father, but then face adjusting to their Auntie's arrival from India.

\***THE BREADWINNER** by Deborah Ellis

Part of a trilogy (with *Parvana's Journey* and *Mud City*) set

in the early years of the Taliban regime, these novels explore the harsh realities of life for girls and women in modern-day Afghanistan.

\***BROKEN MEMORY** by Élisabeth Combres

Emma witnesses the brutal murder of her mother during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and tries to build a life while haunted by the experience.

**THE CALL OF THE WILD** by Jack London

The dog hero, Buck, is stolen from his comfortable home and pressed into service as a sled dog in the Klondike during the Alaskan gold rush. He is abused until rescued by a master whom he can love.

**CLIMBING THE STAIRS** by Padma Venkatraman

Growing up in India during Gandhi's non-violent revolution, 15-year-old Vidya navigates the conflict between the traditional ways of her conservative family and the social changes that are underway all around her.

**DESTINATION UNEXPECTED: SHORT STORIES** edited by Donald R. Gallo

Ten stories by well known young adult authors about "journeys of discovery" to places both near and far: Cape Cod, summer camp, the racetrack, the local diner.

**THE DEVIL'S ARITHMETIC** by Jane Yolen

During a Passover Seder, 12-year-old Hannah finds herself transported to Poland in 1942, where the Nazis send her to a concentration camp. Also by Yolen, **JASON AND THE GORGON'S BLOOD** and **DRAGON'S BLOOD**

**DICEY'S SONG** by Cynthia Voight

After her mother abandons the family, the oldest daughter brings her siblings to live with the grandmother they have never met. Also by Voight, *Homecoming*.

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**FINNIKIN OF THE ROCK** by Melina Marcheta  
Finnikin and his fellow exiles from Lumaieere embark on an epic journey to return to their cursed homeland in this first book of a series.

**FINDING NOUF** by Zoe Ferraris  
After a 16-year-old girl from a wealthy Saudi family is found dead in the middle of the desert, a devout Muslim guide and a young medical examiner seek to unravel the mystery while facing the sanctions of Middle Eastern society.

**FLUTIE** by Diane Glancy  
Flutie is a young Native American whose life is transformed after she reads the myth of Philomela.

**FORGE** by Laurie Halse Anderson  
All that stands between Curzon and his freedom is George Washington's army and a winter at Valley Forge. Historical fiction by the author of *Speak*.

**THE GARDEN** by Aidinoff  
What really happened in the Garden of Eden? What lies outside its borders? An imaginative and gripping retelling of the Genesis story from Eve's point of view.

**GIFTS** by Ursula K. LeGuin  
This coming of age allegory, set in a community where long-standing rivalries are driven by clans' inherited, extrasensory gifts, combines earth magic with universal themes of young people testing boundaries and questioning tradition. (2004 Winner, Best Books for Young Adults, ALA's *Booklist*)

**HALF BROTHER** by Kenneth Oppel  
Ben was an only child for thirteen years—but all that changed when his mother brought home an eight-day old chimpanzee.

**HATCHET** by Gary Paulsen  
After a plane crashes, 13-year-old Brian spends 54 days in the wilderness, learning to survive with only the hatchet his mother had given him. Don't miss the sequel: *Brian's Hunt*

**THE HEN WHO DREAMED SHE COULD FLY**  
by Sun-Mi Hwang  
Translated from Korean, this story explores ideals of compassion, individuality, sacrifice, and motherhood—all through a crew of barnyard animals.

**THE HERO AND THE CROWN** by Robin McKinley  
An adventure/romance in which Aerin, daughter of a Damarian king and his witch wife, leaves home to become first a dragon killer and eventually the savior of her kingdom.

**THE HOBBIT** by J.R.R. Tolkien  
One of the greatest of all fantasies, the hobbit Bilbo Baggins is plunged into a conflict between good and evil in the fascinating world of Middle Earth. *The Lord Of The Rings* is the three-volume sequel.

**HOOPS** by Walter Dean Myers  
Growing up in the streets of Harlem, talented athlete Lonnie Jackson sees basketball as a way out of the ghetto.

**HOOT** by Carl Hiaason  
Roy Eberhardt has just moved and becomes the target of a bully. Meanwhile, plans to build a pancake house on a vacant lot are derailed when someone vandalizes the construction site. The two story lines come together with several improbable scenes and lots of silliness.

**HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES** by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle *or any in the Sherlock Holmes Series*  
Detective Holmes and Dr. Watson solve the most blood-curdling case of their careers, which involves a family curse, strange killings and a terrifying beast. Also by Doyle, *The Lost World*.

**I AM THE CHEESE** by Robert Cormier  
Told through a series of therapy sessions and memories of a long-distance bicycle trip, this suspense story focuses on a boy and his family living under the witness protection program of a government agency.

**THE INVISIBLE MAN** by H. G. Wells  
In this classic work of science fiction, a mysterious man enters a motel in England, wrapped head to toe in bandages. As the story unfolds, the reader learns of his journey and eventually his identity.

**JACOB HAVE I LOVED** by Katherine Patterson  
On a small Chesapeake Bay island, Louise is denied the opportunity to fulfill her hopes while everyone caters to her twin sister. The advent of the war gives Louise a chance to work along with her father and to prove herself.

**JENNY OF THE TETONS** by Kristiana Gregory  
In this easy-to-read historical novel, Carrie hates the Shoshoni Indians for killing her parents and stealing her brothers. But when she is taken in by an Englishman, Carrie learns the gentle ways of his Shoshoni wife.

**KIRA-KIRA** by Cynthia Kadohata  
This book chronicles the close friendship between two Japanese-American sisters growing up in rural Georgia during the late '50s, and the despair they feel when one sister becomes terminally ill.

**FAHRENHEIT 451** by Ray Bradbury  
This science fiction classic is set in a society where books are forbidden. Also *Something Wicked This Way Comes*.

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### **LEVIATHAN** by Scott Westerfield

An alternate history of World War I pitting the “Clankers” steam-driven war machines against the Darwinists' fabricated animal weapons. Alek, the son of a prince, and Deryn, a girl disguised as a boy, join forces to survive in this adventure.

**THE LIONS OF LITTLE ROCK** by Karen Levine  
During the school desegregation battles of 1958, 13-year-olds Marlee and Lizzie become friends, leading to standoffs with classmates, family, and officials.

**\*NO TIGERS IN AFRICA** by Norman Silver  
Teenager Selwyn Lewis emigrates from South Africa to England with his family. He hopes to escape his guilty past, but is unable to settle or make friends because of his rigid, white South African attitudes.

**MATCHED** by Ally Condie  
In a perfect society, Cassia has never had a choice. The Society dictates everything, including, as she turns 17, who to marry. When she is Matched with her best friend Xander, things couldn't be more perfect. But why did her neighbor Ky's face show up on her match disk as well?

**THE MAZE RUNNER** by James Dashner  
Sixteen-year-old Thomas wakes up with no memory in the middle of a maze and realizes he must work with the community in which he finds himself if he is to escape.

**NUMBERS** by Rachel Ward  
15-year old Jem is on the run with her sometime-boyfriend Spider after complications arise from Jem's ability to predict when people will die. YIKES!

**THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA** by Ernest Hemingway  
This short novel is a simple but powerful tale of an old Cuban fisherman named Santiago who sets out to hook a giant Marlin in the Gulf Stream.

**ONE CRAZY SUMMER** by Rita Williams-Garcia  
Set during the summer of 1968 and the growth of the Black Power movement, this novel about three girls meeting the mother they never knew shows the subtle ways that political movements affect personal lives.

**PERFECT** by Natasha Friend  
Eighth-grader Isabelle Lee describes her not-so-perfect life, dealing with her father's death and her grieving mother by developing an eating disorder.

**A PLACE APART** by Paula Fox  
Shortly after her father's death, Victoria and her mother move to a small village outside of Boston where she meets a wealthy teenage boy who teaches her a valuable but painful lesson about life.

**REDWALL** by Brian Jacques  
As the inhabitants of Redwall Abbey bask in the glorious Summer of the Late Rose, all is quiet and peaceful. But Cluny the Scourge, the evil one-eyed rat warlord, is bent on destroying the calm as he prepares to fight a bloody battle for the ownership of Redwall.

**THE RETURN** by Sonia Leviton  
A fictional account of a true event: the secret rescue of 8000 Ethiopian Jews from their mountain homes. Two sisters endure hardship and danger to reach a new land.

**A RING OF ENDLESS LIGHT** by Madeleine L'Engle  
Vicky Austin must face her grandfather's terminal cancer and a friend's death. With the help of a young biologist, she discovers she has telepathic powers and can communicate with dolphins.

**\*THE ROLLER BIRDS OF RAMPUR** by Indi Rana  
The story of Sheila's return from England to her family home in India to find herself, the book offers a tantalizing glimpse into the culture of India, its foods, caste system, politics, and even language.

**THE RIDDLE OF THE PENNCROFT FARM** by Dorthea Jensen  
Lars Olafson moves with his parents to the old family farm near Valley Forge, PA, where he meets a ghost who tells exciting stories of the Revolutionary War.

**SHANE** by Jack Schaeffer  
In Wyoming in 1889, Shane works as a hired hand for the Starrett family, who grow to love him, unaware that he is a gunfighter escaping his past.

**SHIP BREAKER** by Paolo Bacigalupi  
On an environmentally ravaged coast, Nailor makes a meager living as a scavenger tearing up old hulls of ships—until a wealthy girl and her gleaming ship run aground during a storm...

**SILVER** by Norma Fox Mazer  
Four 13-year-old girls become good friends sharing painful secrets and joyful triumphs despite differing social and economic backgrounds.

**SONGS OF THE KINGS** by Barry Unsworth  
A vivid retelling of the origins of the Trojan War set in the mythic world of Achilles, Odysseus, Agamemnon and Iphigenia.

**SOUNDER** by William Armstrong  
Set in the era of sharecropping and segregation in the rural south, this book describes the determination of a boy searching for his father, imprisoned for stealing a ham, and the devotion of his dog Sounder.

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### **SPINDLE'S END** by Robin McKinley

All the creatures of the forest knew the infant was special. She was the princess, spirited away from the evil fairy Pernicia on her name-day. But the curse was cast...!

### **STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND** by Robert Heinlein

Valentine Michael Smith, a man from Mars, teaches humankind "grokking" and water sharing and love.

### **A SUMMER TO DIE** by Lois Lowry

Meg envies her older sister's popularity and prettiness until Molly is stricken with a fatal illness. Also, **THE GIVER** and other titles by Lowry.

### **AND THEN THERE WERE NONE** by Agatha

Christie (or any of the Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple mysteries by Christie)

The author's most famous mystery tale, in which strangers find themselves on a desert island where they are being killed off, one by one.

### **TASTING THE SKY** by Ibtisam Barakat

When the 1967 Six-Day War begins, Ibtisam flees Ramallah with her family. This memoir recalls her childhood experiences as Palestinian refugee.

### **UNDER THE MESQUITE** by Guadalupe McCall

Lupita's world is shifting, bringing big changes for her tight-knit Mexican-American family in this verse novel.

### **WALKABOUT** by James Vance Marshall

13-year-old Mary and her 8-year-old brother are stranded in the Australian outback after a plane crash when they are rescued by a young Aborigine.

### **WATERSHIP DOWN** by Richard Adams

Faced with annihilation, a small group of rabbits set out in search of a new home. Internal struggles for power and enemy attacks from without make this an exciting, realistic adventure.

### **WHEN THE EMPEROR WAS DIVINE** by

Julie Otsuka

Inspired by her own family's history during World War II, Otsuka illuminates a woman and her children's experiences in a Japanese-American internment camp.

### **WONDERSTRUCK** by Brian Selznick

Alternating between dramatic story and stunning pictures, *Wonderstruck* chronicles the journeys of Ben and Rose, fifty years apart, searching for the missing pieces to their surprisingly connected lives.

### **YEAR OF WONDERS** by Geraldine Brooks

A year after the plague strikes her village, Anna reflects on how the townsfolk handled their minister's request to remain in town to prevent the illness from spreading.

## **NON-FICTION:**

### **ALEX & ME** by Irene M. Pepperberg

The remarkable story of the emotional bond between the author and her African Grey parrot, Alex. Alex could add, he understood concepts, and each day he said to Irene, "I love you."

### **THE BOY WHO HARNESSSED THE WIND**

by William Kamkwamba

The story of a young boy in Malawi, his dream of building a windmill, and his success.. An inspiring story of imagination and determination.

### **A DREAM OF FREEDOM: THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT FROM 1954 TO 1968** by Diane

McWhorter

Based on the author's Pulitzer-prize winning history, *Carry Me Home*, this is a history of the movement for younger readers.

### **ESCAPE! THE STORY OF THE GREAT HOUDINI** by Sid Fleishman

Drawing on his own experiences as a magician, the author examines the man behind the myth.

### **FORENSIC SCIENCE AT WORK** by Jay Siegel

Citing real-life cases, forensics expert Jay Siegel reveals the complexities behind forensics, especially in the areas of drugs, trace evidence, and crime scene investigation.

### **THE IMPOSSIBLE RESCUE: THE TRUE STORY OF AN AMAZING ARCTIC ADVENTURE** by

Martin Sandler

Sandler offers another dramatic tale of Arctic disaster and near superhuman endurance set near the locale of his previous *Trapped in Ice! An Amazing True Whaling Adventure* (2006).

### **ROCKET BOYS** by Homer Hickam

This memoir by a NASA scientist was the basis for the movie *October Sky*: an inspiring story of hard work and a dream come true.

### **THE VOICE THAT CHALLENGED A NATION** by Russell Freedman.

A photo biography of Marian Anderson that begins with the legendary moment when Eleanor Roosevelt invites her to sing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

### **WHEELS OF CHANGE: HOW WOMEN RODE THE BICYCLE TO FREEDOM** by Sue Macy

An engaging look at the emancipating impact that bikes had on late-nineteenth-century U.S. women which includes archival images and quotes of the era.

So if you have options for summer reading, it can help to be flexible when it comes to genre or title. If you can't change the book, again, you can change the experience. As opposed to saying, "Go in your room, do it, and get it done," you want to make it a different experience," says Frumkin. "Talk about it. Why do you like it? Why do you not like it? Let's lounge out. Let's make a reading tent in the living room, or another cozy spot to read. If they don't love the book, make the experience as fun as it can be. Bribing is okay. Think about it. What do most library summer reading programs do? I'll keep you going all summer. Don Quixote is a Big Book, with most editions coming in at just under 800 pages (excluding the notes and introductions that usually accompany the text) — certainly enough to supply you for reading material throughout the summer. Yet despite the work's length, it never feels like a thankless slog: the chapters are mostly short and Don Quixote's disastrous "adventures" often read like self-contained short stories, meaning you can pick up from where you left off without having to re-read the preceding chapter(s). Why or why not? Pros of reading lists? Cons? Rebuttals? Counter-arguments? Feel free to add/respond to each other's posts. Let me get you started. Pro: - reading helps childhood brain development Con: -unfair to assign schoolwork out of school year feel free to elaborate/give examples

Should schools require summer reading lists? Why or why not? Pros of reading lists? Cons? Rebuttals?