

Packer Collegiate Institute
Summer Reading List
2008
Incoming 8th Grade

8th Grade Required Book: Haddon, Mark, THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother.



Read the required reading plus two other selections from this list:

FICTION

Classics

Adams, Richard, WATERSHIP DOWN

This book describes the adventures of a group of rabbits searching for a safe place to establish a new warren where they can live in peace. Written twenty-four years later, Tales from Watership Down continues the story.

Buck, Pearl, THE GOOD EARTH

Wang Lung, a peasant in China in the 1920s, becomes a prosperous landowner with the help of his humble wife, O'Lan, with whom he shares a devotion to duty, land, and survival.

Collins, Wilkie, THE MOONSTONE

English police Sergeant Cuff tries to locate a fabulous diamond that may have been stolen by a group of Hindus who regard it as a sacred stone.

Crane, Stephen, THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE

During his service in the Civil War, a young Union soldier learns that war is not what he expected.

Doyle, Arthur Conan, THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLE

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's classic Sherlock Holmes mystery about a legendary monster that haunts the moor.

DuMaurier, Daphne, REBECCA

A timid young bride follows her handsome husband to his estate, Manderly, where she encounters mystery, romance, and terror.

Huxley, Aldous, BRAVE NEW WORLD

A satirical novel about the utopia of the future, a world in which babies are decanted from bottles and the great Ford is worshipped.

Mitchell, Margaret, GONE WITH THE WIND

The classic novel about the Civil War, with vivid portrayals of people and events and the unforgettable heroine, Scarlett O'Hara.

Orczy, Emmuska, THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL

Sir Percy Blakeney defies the French revolutionaries in order to save innocent men and women from being put to death at the guillotine.

Smith, Betty, A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN

Young Francie Nolan experiences the problems of growing up in the Williamsburg slums of early 20th-century Brooklyn.

Twain, Mark, HUCKLEBERRY FINN

Huck, escaping from his cruel father, meets Jim, a runaway slave, and together they embark on a grand adventure down the Mississippi River on a raft.

Verne, Jules, AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS

Eccentric Englishman Phileas Fogg accepts a bet made at his London club to complete a journey around the world in only eighty days.

Wells, H.G., THE INVISIBLE MAN

A mysterious young stranger, with his head completely bandaged, arrives at an Inn. As a result of a scientific experiment, he has become invisible.

Realistic Fiction

Anderson, Laurie, SPEAK

A traumatic event near the end of the summer has a devastating effect on Melinda's freshman year in high school.

Cormier, Robert, THE CHOCOLATE WAR

A high school freshman discovers the devastating consequences of refusing to join in the school's annual fund raising drive and arouses the wrath of the school bullies.

Dessen, Sarah, **JUST LISTEN**

Isolated from friends who believe the worst because she has kept the truth from them, sixteen-year-old Annabel finds an ally in classmate Owen. His honesty and passion for music help her to face and share what really happened at an end-of-the-year party that changed her life.

Deuker, Carl, **HIGH HEAT**

When sophomore Shane Hunter's father is arrested for money laundering at his Lexus dealership, the star pitcher's life of affluence and private school begins to fall apart.

Gallo, Donald, ed., **ON THE FRINGE**

A collection of stories by eleven young adult authors who write about the "outsider" experience for teenagers.

Houston, Julian, **NEW BOY**

As a new sophomore at an exclusive boarding school in the 1950s, Rob Garrett, a young black man, is witness to the persecution of other students and wonders about the growing civil rights movement back home in Virginia.

Korman, Gordon, **SON OF THE MOB**

Seventeen-year-old Vince's life is constantly complicated by the fact that he is the son of a powerful Mafia boss, a relationship that threatens to destroy his romance with the daughter of an FBI agent.

Howe, James, **TOTALLY JOE**

As a school assignment, a thirteen-year-old boy writes an alphabiography -life from A to Z - and explores issues of friendship, family, school, and the challenges of being a gay teenager.

Kidd, Sue Monk, **SECRET LIFE OF BEES**

Fourteen-year-old Lily and her companion, Rosaleen, an African-American woman who has cared for Lily since her mother's death ten years earlier, flee their home after Rosaleen is victimized by racist police officers. They find a safe haven in Tiburon, South Carolina at the home of three beekeeping sisters, May, June, and August.

Kincaid, Jamaica, **ANNIE JOHN**

A fictional account of a young girl's coming of age in Antigua, from a doted upon childhood to an adolescence fraught with tension between Annie John and her mother.

Levenkron, Steven, **BEST LITTLE GIRL IN THE WORLD**

This sensitive novel about anorexia nervosa was written by a physician. A young doctor understands Stella's complex problems; together they battle the disease.

Lynch, Chris, EXTREME ELVIN

As he enters high school, fourteen-year-old Elvin continues to deal with his weight problem and tries to find his place among his peers.

Maynard, Joyce, THE USUAL RULES

A thirteen-year-old girl loses her mother in the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and goes through a healing process which includes her estranged father.

Myers, Walter Dean, MONSTER

While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison, and in the courtroom, in the form of a film script as he tries to come to terms with the course his life has taken.

Na, An, WAIT FOR ME

As her senior year in high school approaches, Mina yearns to find her own path in life but working at the family business, taking care of her little sister, and dealing with her mother's impossible expectations are as stifling as the southern California heat, until she falls in love with a young man who offers a way out.

Oates, Joyce Carol, BIG MOUTH AND UGLY GIRL

When sixteen-year-old Matt is falsely accused of threatening to blow up his high School, and his friends turn against him, an unlikely classmate comes to his aid.

Picoult, Jody, MY SISTER'S KEEPER

Thirteen-year-old Anna, conceived specifically to provide blood and bone marrow for her sister Kate who was diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia at the age of two, decides to sue her parents for control of her body when her mother wants her to donate a kidney to Kate.

Shusterman, Neal, THE SCHWA WAS HERE

A Brooklyn eighth-grader nicknamed Antsy befriends the Schwa, an "invisible-ish" boy who is tired of blending into his surroundings and going unnoticed by nearly everyone.

Westerfeld, Scott, SO YESTERDAY

Hunter Braque, a New York City teenager who is paid by corporations to spot what is "cool," combines his analytical skills with girlfriend Jen's creative talents to find a missing person and thwart a conspiracy directed at the heart of consumer culture.

Historical Fiction

Alvarez, Julia, BEFORE WE WERE FREE

In the early 1960s in the Dominican Republic, twelve-year-old Anita learns that her family is involved in the underground movement to end the bloody rule of the dictator, General Trujillo.

Anderson, M.T., THE ASTONISHING LIFE OF OCTAVIAN NOTHING,
TRAITOR TO THE NATION

Various diaries, letters, and other manuscripts chronicle the experiences of Octavian, a young African American, from birth to age sixteen, as he is brought up as part of a science experiment in the years leading up to and during the Revolutionary War.

Barrett, Tracy, ANNA OF BYZANTIUM

In the eleventh century the teenage princess Anna Comnena fights for her birthright, the throne to the Byzantine Empire, which she fears will be taken from her by her younger brother John because he is a boy.

Chevalier, Tracy, GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING

Griet, a maid in Vermeer's household, is singled out by the famous painter to sit as his model for one of his most well-known paintings.

Chotjewitz, David, DANIEL HALF-HUMAN

In 1933, best friends Daniel and Armin admire Hitler, but as anti-Semitism buoys Hitler to power, Daniel learns he is half Jewish, threatening the friendship even as life in their beloved Hamburg, Germany, is becoming nightmarish. Interspersed chapters detail Daniel and Armin's reunion in 1945.

Kidd, Ronald, MONKEY TOWN

The year is 1925 and Dayton, Tennessee, is the hottest and the sleepest place on earth. That is, until the day fifteen-year-old Frances Robinson's dad has John Scopes arrested for teaching evolutionary theory in schools. Overnight, the world's most famous thinkers are flocking to Dayton to ask, "Are people really descended from monkeys?"

Myers, Walter Dean, FALLEN ANGELS

Richie Perry, a sensitive seventeen-year-old, enlists in the Army in order to postpone a dead-end life in Harlem. He doesn't understand what awaits him in Vietnam.

Napoli, Jo, DAUGHTER OF VENICE

Frustrated with the restrictions her gender imposes on her life, fourteen-year-old Donata, disguised as a boy, sneaks out of her noble family's house to roam the streets of late sixteenth-century Venice, and then must confront the repercussions of her actions.

Otsuka, Julie, WHEN THE EMPEROR WAS DIVINE: A NOVEL

A novel in which the members of a Japanese-American family present their unique perspectives on the experience of being forced into an internment camp during World War II.

Park, Linda Sue, **WHEN MY NAME WAS KEOKO**

With national pride and occasional fear, a brother and sister face the increasingly oppressive occupation of Korea by Japan during World War II, which threatens to suppress Korean culture entirely.

Rees, Celia, **WITCH CHILD**

In 1659, fourteen-year-old Mary Newbury keeps a journal of her voyage from England to the New World and her experiences living as a witch in a community of Puritans near Salem, Massachusetts.

Rinaldi, Ann, **HANG A THOUSAND TREES WITH RIBBONS: THE STORY OF PHILLIS WHEATELY**

A fictionalized biography of the eighteenth-century African woman who, as a child, was brought to New England to be a slave, and after publishing her first poem as a teenager, gained renown throughout the colonies as an important African-American poet.

Rinaldi, Ann, **BROOKLYN ROSE**

On St. Helena Island, South Carolina, fifteen year-old Rose meets and marries Rene, a Yankee from Brooklyn, New York, who takes her north to his home where she encounters many differences in attitudes and lifestyles.

Salisbury, Graham, **EYES OF THE EMPEROR**

Following orders from the United States Army, several young Japanese-American men train K-9 units to hunt Asians during World War II.

See, Lisa, **SNOW FLOWER AND THE SECRET FAN**

In the late 19th century, two girls grow up in a remote Hunan village, sharing their experience of becoming women through secret language written on fans and handkerchiefs.

Yolen, Jane, **GIRL IN A CAGE**

As English armies invade Scotland in 1306, eleven-year-old Princess Marjorie, daughter of the newly crowned Scottish king, Robert the Bruce, is captured by England's King Edward Longshanks and held in a cage on public display.

Mystery and Adventure

Abrahams, Peter, **DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE**

Like her idol, Sherlock Holmes, eighth-grader Ingrid Levin-Hill uses her intellect to solve the murder of an eccentric local woman in her hometown of Echo Falls.

Christie, Agatha, **MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS**

Belgian detective Hercule Poirot solves a murder that occurs on the famous European luxury train, the Orient Express.

Cooney, Caroline, CODE ORANGE

While conducting research for a school paper on smallpox, Mitty finds an envelope containing 100-year-old smallpox scabs and fears that he has infected himself and all of New York City.

Crichton, Michael, THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY

A master criminal plots and carries out the robbery of gold bullion being sent by train from London to Paris in supposedly invulnerable safes. This story is based on the famous train robbery which occurred in Victorian England in 1885.

Donnelly, Jennifer, A NORTHERN LIGHT

Sixteen-year-old Mattie, determined to attend college and be a writer against the wishes of her father and boyfriend, takes a job at a hotel in 1906 where the death of a guest renews her determination to live her own life.

King, Laurie, THE BEEKEEPER'S APPRENTICE

The world renowned fictional character Sherlock Holmes meets sassy 15-year-old feminist Mary Russell and, surprisingly, they make a great team.

Nixon, Joan Lowery, THE OTHER SIDE OF DARK

Seventeen-year-old Stacy awakens from a four-year coma ready to identify, locate, and prosecute the young man who murdered her mother and wounded Stacy so badly.

Updale, Eleanor, MONTMORENCY: THIEF, LIAR, GENTLEMAN

In Victorian London, after his life is saved by a young physician, a thief utilizes the knowledge he gains in prison, and from the scientific lectures he attends as the physician's case study exhibit, to create a new, highly successful, double life for himself. The story continues in Montmorency on the Rocks: Doctor, Aristocrat, Murderer?, and Montmorency and the Assassins: Master, Criminal, Spy?

Fantasy

Bray, Libba, A GREAT AND TERRIBLE BEAUTY

Following the suspicious death of her mother in 1895, sixteen-year-old Gemma returns to England, after many years in India, to attend a finishing school where she becomes aware of her magical powers and ability to see into the spirit world. Rebel Angels and The Sweet Far Thing are sequels to this story.

Crossley-Holland, Kevin, THE SEEING STONE

In late twelfth-century England, a thirteen-year-old boy named Arthur recounts how Merlin gave him a magical seeing stone that shows him images of the legendary King Arthur, the events of whose life seem to have many parallels to his own. Book One in the Arthur trilogy.

Kinsella, W.P., SHOELSS JOE

An Iowa insurance agent turned farmer builds a baseball stadium in his cornfield hoping his hero, Shoeless Joe, will play in it.

Martel, Yann, THE LIFE OF PI

Pi Patel, having spent an idyllic childhood in Pondicherry, India, as the son of a zookeeper, sets off with his family at the age of sixteen to start anew in Canada, but his life takes a marvelous turn when their ship sinks in the Pacific, leaving him adrift on a raft with a 450-pound Bengal tiger for company.

Nix, Garth, SABRIEL

Sabriel, daughter of the necromancer Abhorsen, must journey into the mysterious and magical Old Kingdom to rescue her father from the Land of the Dead.

Pierce, Tamora, TERRIER

When sixteen-year-old Beka becomes "Puppy" to a pair of "Dogs," as the Provost's Guards are called, she uses her police training, natural abilities, and a touch of magic to help them solve the case of a murdered baby in Tortall's Lower City.

Wynn-Jones, Tim, THIEF IN THE HOUSE OF MEMORY

The death of an apparent stranger in the Steeple family's old home triggers troubling questions for sixteen-year-old Declan as he tries to make sense of his fragmented dreams, random memories, and unexplained coincidences, hoping to learn the truth about the mother who suddenly left when he was ten.

Zevin, Gabrielle, ELSEWHERE

After fifteen-year-old Liz Hall is hit by a taxi and killed, she finds herself in a place that is both like and unlike Earth, where she must adjust to her new status and figure out how to "live."

Zusak, Markus, THE BOOK THIEF

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel - a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.

Science Fiction

Adams, Douglas, HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

Seconds before Earth is demolished to make room for a galactic freeway, an earthman is saved by his friend and together they journey through the galaxy. Sequels in this series are The Restaurant at the End of the Universe, Life, the Universe and Everything, and So Long and Thanks for All the Fish.

Bradbury, Ray, FAHRENHEIT 451

Guy enjoys his job as a book-burning fireman in a cruel and insane future world until he hears forbidden tales of the past, when books and ideas were respected.

Clarke, Arthur C., 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

The spacecraft Discovery journeys to the outer edge of the solar system, and two navigators become uneasy when Hal, the craft's talking computer system, demonstrates unusual behavior.

Crichton, Michael, TIMELINE

When a group of scientists learns how to travel through time, they enter life in fourteenth-century feudal France and threaten the history of the world.

Farmer, Nancy, THE HOUSE OF THE SCORPION

In a future where humans despise clones, Matt enjoys special status as the young clone of El Patrón, the 142-year-old leader of a corrupt empire nestled between Mexico and the United States.

Finney, Jack, TIME AND AGAIN

Illustrator Si Morley steps out of his twentieth-century New York apartment one night - right into the winter of 1882.

Hautman, Pete, RASH

In a future society that has decided it would "rather be safe than free," sixteen-year-old Bo's anger management problems land him in a tundra jail where he survives with the help of his running skills and an artificial intelligence program named Bork.

Oppel, Kenneth, AIRBORN

Matt, a young cabin boy aboard an airship, and Kate, a wealthy young girl traveling with her chaperone, team up to search for the existence of mysterious winged creatures reportedly living hundreds of feet above the Earth's surface. The story continues in [Skybreaker](#).

Reeve, Philip, MORTAL ENGINES

In a distant future in which technology has been lost and tiered cities move about the Earth on caterpillar tracks, often absorbing smaller locales, Tom, a third class apprentice, has many dangerous adventures after being pushed off London by Thaddeus Valentine, a historian who is trying to resurrect an ancient atomic weapon.

Werlin, Nancy, DOUBLE HELIX: A MYSTERY

Eighteen-year-old Eli discovers a shocking secret about his life and his family while working for a Nobel Prize-winning scientist whose specialty is genetic engineering.

Westerfeld, Scott, **UGLIES**

Tally is faced with a difficult choice when her new friend Shay decides to risk life on the outside rather than submit to the forced operation that turns sixteen-year-old girls into gorgeous beauties. Tally realizes that there is a whole new side to the pretty world that she doesn't like. The sequels are Pretties and Specials.

NON-FICTION

Caputo, Philip, **TEN THOUSAND DAYS OF THUNDER: A HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR**

Presents a collection of illustrated photographs and maps depicting the war in Vietnam from its beginning under French control to the fall of Saigon in 1975, and contains accounts from soldiers and civilians, profiles of those involved, discussion of the role of women on the battlefield, and more.

Carson, Ben, **GIFTED HANDS**

Describes the African American physician's fight to beat the odds, the secret behind his outstanding accomplishments, and what drives him to take risks.

Jacobson, Sid, **THE 9/11 REPORT: A GRAPHIC ADAPTATION**

A graphic novel adaptation of "The 9/11 Commission Report," the results of the investigation of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States.

Satrapı, Marjane, **PERSEPOLIS: THE STORY OF A CHILDHOOD**

Contains black-and-white comic strip images in which the author shares the story of her life in Tehran, Iran, where she lived from ages six to fourteen while the country came under control of the Islamic regime. The story continues in *Persepolis 2*.

Partridge, Elizabeth, **JOHN LENNON: ALL I WANT IS THE TRUTH**

Presents a biography of musician John Lennon, chronicling his life and times, from his troubled childhood in Liverpool, England, through his career writing, recording, and performing as a member of the Beatles. Includes 140 black-and-white photographs.

Schlosser, Eric, **FAST FOOD NATION**

Traces the history of the fast food industry and discusses how it developed in post-war America.

Yen Mah, Adeline, **CHINESE CINDERELLA: THE TRUE STORY OF AN UNWANTED DAUGHTER**

The author tells the story of her painful childhood in China where she lived until the age of fourteen with her father, stepmother, and siblings, all of whom considered her bad luck because her mother died shortly after giving birth to her.

**New and Noteworthy Books: ALA's Best Books for
Young Adults
2008
Selected Titles**

Alexie, Sherman, **THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART-TIME INDIAN**
Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Native American is the school mascot.

Bausum, Ann, **MUCKRAKERS: HOW IDA TARBELL, UPTON SINCLAIR, AND LINCOLN STEFFENS HELPED EXPOSE SCANDAL, INSPIRE REFORM, AND INVENT INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM**
Describes how reporters exposed the corruption of the Standard Oil monopoly, the meatpacking industry, city government, as well as pesticide use, Watergate, and the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

Beah, Ismael, **A LONG WAY GONE: MEMOIRS OF A BOY SOLDIER**
Ishmael Beah describes his experiences after he was driven from his home by war in Sierra Leone and picked up by the government army at the age of thirteen, serving as a soldier for three years before being removed from fighting by UNICEF and eventually moving to the United States.

Cullen, Lynn, **I AM REMBRANDT'S DAUGHTER**
In Amsterdam in the mid-1600s, Cornelia's life as the illegitimate child of renowned painter Rembrandt is marked by plague, poverty, and despair at ever earning her father's love, until she sees hope for a better future in the eyes of a wealthy suitor.

Hale, Shannon, **BOOK OF A THOUSAND DAYS**
Fifteen-year-old Dashti, sworn to obey her sixteen-year-old mistress, the Lady Saren, shares Saren's years of punishment locked in a tower, then brings her safely to the lands of her true love, where both must hide who they are as they work as kitchen maids.

McCaughrean, Geraldine, **THE WHITE DARKNESS**
Taken to Antarctica by the man she thinks of as her uncle for what she believes to be a vacation, Symone - a troubled fourteen year old - discovers that he is dangerously obsessed with seeking Symme's Hole, an opening that supposedly leads into the center of a hollow Earth.

Marrin, Albert, **THE GREAT ADVENTURE: THEODORE ROOSEVELT AND THE RISE OF MODERN AMERICA**

Describes the life of American president Theodore Roosevelt, exploring his experiences as a scholar, cowboy, and war hero, his domestic and foreign policies, and his impact on world history.

Peet, Mal, **TAMAR: A NOVEL OF ESPIONAGE, PASSION, AND BETRAYAL**

In England in 1995, fifteen-year-old Tamar, grief-stricken by the puzzling death of her beloved grandfather, slowly begins to uncover the secrets of his life in the Dutch resistance during the last year of the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, and the climactic events that forever cast a shadow on his life and that of his family.

Sharenow, Robert, **MY MOTHER THE CHEERLEADER**

Thirteen-year-old Louise uncovers secrets about her family and her neighborhood during the violent protests over school desegregation in 1960 New Orleans.

Smith, Roland, **PEAK**

A fourteen-year-old boy attempts to be the youngest person to reach the top of Mount Everest.

Tammet, Daniel, **BORN ON A BLUE DAY: INSIDE THE EXTRAORDINARY MIND OF AN AUTISTIC SAVANT**

Daniel Tammet, an autistic savant, offers an inside look at his life, describing how his rare condition, which gives him incredible mental powers and a compulsive need for order and routine, has influenced every aspect of his life and what challenges he has faced while trying to be independent.