

Packer Collegiate Institute
Summer Reading List
2008
Incoming 6th Graders

CHOOSE THREE SELECTIONS FROM THIS LIST

FICTION

Classics

Alcott, Louisa May, *LITTLE WOMEN*

The classic story of four sisters living in nineteenth century New England, with their mother under modest circumstances while their father serves in the Union forces during the Civil War.

Burnford, Sheila, *THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY*

A Siamese cat, an old bull terrier, and a young Labrador retriever travel together 250 miles through the Canadian wilderness to find their family.

Burnett, Frances, *THE SECRET GARDEN*

Ten-year-old Mary comes to live in a lonely house on the Yorkshire moors and discovers an invalid cousin and the mysteries of a locked garden.

Forbes, Esther, *JOHNNY TREMAIN*

The award-winning novel about a young boy who encounters many historical figures before the Revolutionary War as he works as a horse boy for the local newspaper.

Knight, Eric, *LASSIE COME-HOME*

A collie undertakes a 1000-mile journey in order to once again meet her former master at the school gate.

Montgomery, L.M., *ANNE OF GREEN GABLES*

An adventurous young orphan goes to live on a farm with an elderly brother and sister.

North, Sterling, *RASCAL*

The author recalls his carefree life in a small midwestern town at the close of World War I, and his adventures with his pet raccoon, Rascal.

Rawls, Wilson, *WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS*

The adventures of a ten-year-old boy and the two dogs he bought with money he had earned and saved for two years.

Sewall, Anna, **BLACK BEAUTY**

A horse tells the story of his life in nineteenth-century England, and his treatment under many different masters, from a kind country squire, to various drivers when he was let out for hire.

Spyri, Johanna, **HEIDI**

A Swiss orphan is heartbroken when she must leave her beloved grandfather and their happy home in the mountains to go to school and care for an invalid girl in the city.

Stevenson, Robert Louis, **TREASURE ISLAND**

While going through the possessions of a deceased guest who owed them money, the mistress of the inn and her son find a treasure map that leads to a pirate fortune as well as great danger.

Taylor, Mildred, **ROLL OF THUNDER, HEAR MY CRY**

A black family living in the South during the 1930s are faced with prejudice and discrimination which their children don't understand.

Verne, Jules, **TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA**

A nineteenth-century science fiction tale of an electric submarine, its eccentric captain, Nemo, and the undersea world, which anticipated many of the scientific achievements of the twentieth century.

Wells, H.G., **THE TIME MACHINE**

A scientist invents a time machine and uses it to travel into the future, where he discovers the childlike Eloi and the hideous underground Morlocks.

Wells, H.G., **THE WAR OF THE WORLDS**

An intellectually superior race, the Martians from Mars, invades the earth.

Realistic Fiction

Dowell, Frances O'Roark, **THE SECRET LANGUAGE OF GIRLS**

Marylin and Kate have been friends since nursery school, but when Marylin becomes a middle school cheerleader and Kate begins to develop other interests, their relationship is put to the test.

Giff, Patricia Reilly, **PICTURES OF HOLLIS WOODS**

A troublesome twelve-year-old orphan, staying with an elderly artist who needs her, remembers the only other time she was happy in a foster home, with a family that truly seemed to care about her.

Holm, Jennifer, **PENNY FROM HEAVEN**

As she turns twelve during the summer of 1953, Penny gains new insights into herself and her family while also learning a secret about her father's death.

Konigsburg, E.L., THE VIEW FROM SATURDAY

Four students, with their own individual stories, develop a special bond and attract the attention of their teacher, a paraplegic, who chooses them to represent their sixth-grade class in the Academic Bowl competition.

Lupica, Mike, HEAT

Pitching prodigy Michael Arroyo is on the run from social services after being banned from playing Little League baseball because rival coaches doubt he is only twelve years old and he has no parents to offer them proof.

Martin, Ann, A CORNER OF THE UNIVERSE

The summer that Hattie turns twelve, she meets the childlike uncle she never knew and becomes friends with a girl who works at the carnival visiting Hattie's small town.

Nelson, Theresa, RUBY ELECTRIC

Twelve-year-old Ruby Miller, movie buff and aspiring screen writer, tries to resolve the mysteries surrounding her little brother's stuffed woolly mammoth and their father's five-year absence.

Peck, Richard, THE TEACHER'S FUNERAL: A COMEDY IN THREE PARTS

In rural Indiana in 1904, fifteen-year-old Russell's dreams of quitting school and joining a wheat threshing crew are disrupted when his older sister takes over the teaching at his one-room schoolhouse after mean old Myrt Arbuckle "hauls off and dies."

Ryan, Pam, ESPERANZA RISING

Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers on the eve of the Great Depression.

Sachar, Louis, SMALL STEPS

Three years after being released from Camp Green Lake, Armpit is trying hard to keep his life on track, but when his old pal X-Ray shows up with a tempting plan to make some easy money scalping concert tickets, Armpit reluctantly goes along.

Spinelli, Jerry, CRASH

Seventh-grader John Crash Coogan has always been comfortable with his tough, aggressive behavior, until his grandfather's stroke and his relationship with an unusual Quaker boy make him consider the importance of family and the meaning of friendship.

Van Draanen, Wendelin, FLIPPED

In alternating chapters, two teenagers describe how their feelings about themselves, each other, and their families have changed over the years.

Woodson, Jacqueline, **LAST SUMMER WITH MAIZON**

Eleven-year-old Margaret tries to accept the inevitable changes that come one summer when her father dies and her best friend, Maizon, goes away to a private boarding school. Sequels are Maizon at Blue Hill and Between Madison and Palmetto.

Historical Fiction

Collier, James Lincoln, **MY BROTHER SAM IS DEAD**

Conflicting political viewpoints create tensions within a Connecticut family in this Revolutionary War novel.

Cushman, Karen, **MATILDA BONE**

Fourteen-year-old Matilda, an apprentice bonesetter and practitioner of medicine in a village in medieval England, tries to reconcile the various aspects of her life, both spiritual and practical.

Hesse, Karen, **WITNESS**

A series of poems express the views of various people in a small Vermont town, including a young black girl and a young Jewish girl, during the early 1920s when the Ku Klux Klan is trying to infiltrate the town.

Konigsburg, E.L., **A PROUD TASTE OF SCARLET AND MINIVER**

While waiting in heaven for divine judgement to be passed on her second husband, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and three of the people who knew her well, recall the events of her life.

Larson, Kirby, **HATTIE BIG SKY**

Sixteen-year-old Hattie Brooks inherits her uncle's homesteading claim in Montana in 1917 and encounters some unexpected problems related to the war in Europe.

Lasky, Kathryn, **BEYOND THE BURNING TIME**

When, in the winter of 1691, accusations of witchcraft surface in her small New England village, twelve-year-old Mary Chase fights to save her mother from execution.

Lawrence, Ian, **LORD OF THE NUTCRACKER MEN**

An English boy during World War I comes to believe that the battles he enacts with his toy soldiers control the war his father is fighting on the front.

Mazer, Harry, **BOY AT WAR: A NOVEL OF PEARL HARBOR**

While fishing with his friends off Honolulu on December 7, 1941, teenaged Adam is caught in the midst of the Japanese attack and through the chaos of the subsequent days tries to find his father, a naval officer who was serving on the U.S.S. Arizona when the bombs fell.

McLauren, Clemence, **INSIDE THE WALLS OF TROY: A NOVEL OF THE WOMEN WHO LIVED THE TROJAN WAR**

The events surrounding the famous battle between the Greeks and the Trojans are told from the points of view of two women, the beautiful Helen and the prophetic Cassandra.

Park, Linda Sue, A SINGLE SHARD

Tree-ear, a thirteen-year-old orphan in medieval Korea, lives under a bridge in a potters' village and longs to learn how to make the delicate celadon ceramics himself. (Newbery Award, 2002)

Watkins, Yoko Kawashima, SO FAR FROM THE BAMBOO GROVE

The author recalls the harrowing close of World War II, when she was separated from her brother, Hideyo, and forced, along with her mother and older sister, to flee Korea for Japan.

Whelan, Gloria, ANGEL ON THE SQUARE

In 1913 Russia, twelve-year-old Katya eagerly anticipates leaving her St. Petersburg home, though not her older cousin Misha, to join her mother, a lady in waiting in the household of Tsar Nicholas II. The years to follow bring world war, revolution, and undreamed of changes to her life.

Science Fiction

Christopher, John, THE WHITE MOUNTAINS

In the 21st century three boys plan to escape from the dreaded Tripods, creatures who control the earth. Other books in the series are The City of Gold and Lead and The Pool of Fire.

DuPrau, Jeanne, CITY OF EMBER

In the year 241, twelve-year-old Lina trades jobs on Assignment Day to be a Messenger to run to new places in her decaying but beloved city, perhaps even to glimpse Unknown Regions. The sequels are The People of Sparks and The Prophet of Yonwood.

Farmer, Nancy, THE EAR, THE EYE, AND THE ARM

Zimbabwe, 2194: General Matsika's three children disappear. Their parents call in Africa's most unusual detectives: the Ear, the Eye, and the Arm.

Reeve, Philip, LARKLIGHT

In an alternate Victorian England, young Arthur and his sister Myrtle, residents of Larklight, a floating house in one of Her Majesty's outer space territories, uncover a spidery plot to destroy the solar system.

Fantasy

Almond, David, HEAVEN EYES

Having escaped from their orphanage on a raft, Erin, January, and Mouse float down into another world of abandoned warehouses and factories, meeting a strange old man and an even stranger girl with webbed fingers and little memory of her past.

Bell, Hilari, THE GOBLIN WOOD

A young Hedgewitch, an idealistic knight, and an army of clever goblins fight against the ruling hierarchy that is trying to rid the land of all magical creatures.

Buckley-Archer, Linda, THE TIME TRAVELERS

Ignored by his father and sent to Derbyshire for the weekend, twelve-year-old Peter and his new friend, Kate, are accidentally transported back in time to 1763 England where they are befriended by a reformed cutpurse.

Cooper, Susan, KING OF SHADOWS

While in London as part of an all-boy acting company preparing to perform in a replica of the famous Globe Theatre, Nat Field suddenly finds himself transported back to 1599 and performing in the original theatre under the tutelage of Shakespeare himself.

Cooper, Susan, OVER SEA, UNDER STONE

Three children on a holiday in Cornwall find an ancient manuscript which sends them on a dangerous quest for a grail that would reveal the true story of King Arthur. This book is volume one of the Dark is Rising series.

Corder, Zizou, LION BOY

In the near future, a boy with the ability to speak the language of cats, sets out from London to seek his kidnapped parents and finds himself learning to train lions on a Paris-bound circus ship. The second and third books in the trilogy are, Lion Boy: The Chase, and Lionboy: The Truth.

Delaney, Joseph, REVENGE OF THE WITCH

Young Tom, the seventh son of a seventh son, starts work as an apprentice for the village spook, whose job is to protect ordinary folk from "ghouls, boggarts, and all manner of wicked beasties."

Funke, Cornelia, INKSPELL

Dustfinger, the fire-eater brought into being from words in Inkheart, feels the need to return to the original tale and finds a crooked storyteller with the magical ability to read him back into the medieval inkscape.

Hunter, Erin, INTO THE WILD

Rusty, a bored house kitten, is apprenticed by the ThunderClan and must struggle to fit in when the group of feral cats is threatened by the enemy ShadowClan. This book is the first title in the Warrior series.

Jones, Diana Wynne, HOWL'S MOVING CASTLE

In the land of Ingary, the Witch of Waste and the Wizard Howl, whose black turreted castle can move at the discretion of its owner, fight a stormy duel. The story continues in Castle in the Air.

Nix, Garth, **THE FALL**

In order to secure his family's position among the Chosen, Tal attempts to steal a sunstone and is caught, so he is banished from the mountaintop castle and thrown into a new, unknown world where great dangers loom. The sequels in this Seventh Tower series are The Castle, Aenir, Above the Veil, and Into the Battle.

Pierce, Tamora, **FIRST TEST**

Ten-year-old Keladry of Mindalen, daughter of nobles, serves as a page but must prove herself to the males around her if she is ever to fulfill her dream of becoming a knight. The other books in the Protector of the Small series are Page, Squire, and Lady Knight.

Pratchett, Terry, **THE WEE FREE MEN**

Tiffany, a young witch-to-be on Discworld, teams up with the Wee Free Men, a clan of six-inch-high blue men, to rescue her baby brother and ward off a sinister invasion from Fairyland. The story continues in A Hat Full of Sky and Wintersmith.

Reiss, Kathryn, **PAINT BY MAGIC**

After his mom suddenly starts acting old-fashioned, eleven-year-old Conner is transported back to 1926, where he must discover and break the mysterious hold an obsessed artist has on his mom that is trapping her between times.

Wrede, Patricia, **DEALING WITH DRAGONS**

Bored with traditional palace life, a princess goes off to live with a group of dragons and soon becomes involved with fighting against some disreputable wizards who want to steal away the dragons' kingdom. The series continues in Searching for Dragons, Calling on Dragons, and Talking to Dragons.

Adventure

Ferris, Jean, **LOVE AMONG THE WALNUTS**

Born and raised in isolation in a wealthy, eccentric family, Sandy is shocked when he, his parents, and their servants become victims of a vicious plot by his greedy uncles to incapacitate them and take their money.

Frederick, Heather, **THE VOYAGE OF PATIENCE GOODSPEED**

Following their mother's death in Nantucket, Captain Goodspeed brings twelve-year-old Patience and six-year-old Tad aboard his whaling ship, where a new crew member incites a mutiny and Patience puts her mathematical ability to good use. The story continues in The Education of Patience Goodspeed.

Hobbs, Will, **THE MAZE**

Rich, a 14-year-old foster child, escapes from a juvenile detention facility near Las Vegas and travels to Canyonlands National Park in Utah, where he meets a bird biologist working on a project to reintroduce condors to the wild.

Paver, Michelle, WOLF BROTHER

Six thousand years ago, twelve-year-old Torak and his guide, a wolf cub, set out on a dangerous journey to fulfill an oath the boy made to his dying father--to travel to the Mountain of the World Spirit to destroy a demon-possessed bear that threatens all the clans. Sequels are Spirit Walker and Soul Eater.

Philbrick, Rodman, THE YOUNG MAN AND THE SEA

After his mother's death, twelve-year-old Skiff Beaman decides that it is up to him to earn money to take care of himself and his father, so he undertakes a dangerous trip alone out on the ocean off the coast of Maine to try to catch a huge bluefin tuna.

Mystery

Anderson, Janet, THE LAST TREASURE

Thirteen-year-old Ellsworth leaves his father to visit the relatives he has never met and eventually joins forces with Jess, his distant cousin, to uncover family secrets and search for their ancestor's hidden treasure.

Balliett, Blue, CHASING VERMEER

When seemingly unrelated and strange events start to happen and a precious Vermeer painting disappears, eleven-year-old Petra and Calder combine their talents to solve an international art scandal.

Balliet, Blue, THE WRIGHT 3

In the midst of a series of unexplained accidents and mysterious coincidences, sixth-graders Calder, Petra, and Tommy lead their classmates in an attempt to keep Frank Lloyd Wright's famous Robie House from being demolished.

Broach, Elise, SHAKESPEARE'S SECRET

Named after a character in a Shakespeare play, misfit sixth-grader Hero becomes interested in exploring this unusual connection because of a valuable diamond supposedly hidden in her new house, an intriguing neighbor, and the unexpected attention of the most popular boy in school.

Duncan, Lois, DOWN A DARK HALL

Suspicious and uneasy about the atmosphere at her new boarding school, fourteen-year-old Kit slowly realizes why she and the other three students at the school were selected.

Horowitz, Anthony, PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER TWO

Thirteen-year-old Nick Diamond has been framed for a robbery and must break out of jail in order to find the real criminals. However, between his bumbling older brother and the real crooks, he might be better off if he stays put. Other titles in the Diamond Brothers Mystery series are The Falcon's Malteser and South by Southeast.

Ibbotson, Eva, **STAR OF KAZAN**

Annika, a twelve-year-old foundling in late nineteenth-century Vienna, inherits a trunk of costume jewelry, and soon afterwards a woman claiming to be her aristocratic mother arrives and takes her to live in a strangely decrepit mansion in Germany.

Lawrence, Ian, **THIEVES OF OSTIA: A ROMAN MYSTERY**

In Rome in the year 79 A.D., a group of children from very different backgrounds work together to discover who beheaded a pet dog - and why.

Raskin, Ellen, **THE WESTING GAME**

The mysterious death of an eccentric millionaire brings together an unlikely assortment of heirs who must uncover the circumstances of his death before they can claim their inheritance.

Springer, Nancy, **THE CASE OF THE MISSING MARQUESS: AN ENOLA HOLMES MYSTERY**

Enola Holmes, much younger sister of detective Sherlock Holmes, must travel to London in disguise to unravel the disappearance of her missing mother.

NON-FICTION

Armstrong, Jennifer, **SHIPWRECK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD**

Describes the events of the 1914 Shackleton Antarctic expedition when, after being trapped in a frozen sea for nine months, their ship, Endurance, was finally crushed, forcing Shackleton and his men to make a very long and perilous journey across ice and stormy seas to reach inhabited land.

Fletcher, Ralph, **POETRY MATTERS: WRITING A POEM FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

Provides practical advice on how to write poems.

Gilbreth, Frank, **CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN**

Recounts the hilarious adventures of the twelve Gilbreth children as they grow up serving as subjects for their father, an efficiency expert conducting time and motion studies.

Janeczko, Paul, **TOP SECRET: A HANDBOOK OF CODES, CIPHERS, AND SECRET WRITINGS**

Presents a guide to codemaking, codebreaking, and their role in history, describing different types of codes and ciphers, discussing codebreaking and concealment techniques, and including brief stories about exciting moments in the history of the art.

Paulsen, Gary, **WOODSONG**

For a rugged outdoor man and his family, life in northern Minnesota is a wild experience involving wolves, deer, and the sled dogs that made their way of life possible. This autobiography includes an account of the author's first Iditarod, a dogsled race across Alaska.

Sleator, William, ODDBALLS: STORIES

A collection of stories based on experiences from the author's youth and peopled with an unusual assortment of family and friends.

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

Burns, Loree Griffin, **TRACKING TRASH: FLOTSAM, JETSAM, AND THE
SCIENCE OF OCEAN MOTION**

Describes the work of a man who tracks trash as it travels great distances by way of ocean currents.

Freedman, Russell, **WHO WAS FIRST? DISCOVERING THE AMERICAS**

Examines the evidence that indicates others may have traveled to the Americas before Columbus in 1492 including Viking ruins, Mayan stonework, and other mysterious objects found in New England that date before Columbus.

Schlitz, Laura Amy, **GOOD MASTERS! SWEET LADIES! VOICES FROM A MEDIEVAL
VILLAGE**

A collection of short one-person plays featuring characters, between ten and fifteen years old, who live in or near a thirteenth-century English manor. Winner of the 2008 Newbery Medal.

Stewart, Trenton Lee, **THE MYSTERIOUS BENEDICT SOCIETY**

After passing a series of mind-bending tests, four children are selected for a secret mission that requires them to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules.

Woodson, Jacqueline, **FEATHERS**

When a new student nicknamed "The Jesus Boy" joins her sixth grade class in the winter of 1971, Frannie's growing friendship with him makes her start to see some things in a new light.

Williams, Marcia, **CHAUCER'S CANTERBURY TALES**

A retelling of Geoffrey Chaucer's famous work in which a group of pilgrims in fourteenth-century England tell each other stories as they travel on a pilgrimage to the cathedral at Canterbury.