

Upper School Independent Reading 2015
Grades 9 and 10

| Title | Author | Description | Genre |
|--|------------------|--|----------------------|
| <i>The Bee Keeper's Apprentice</i> | King, Laurie R. | Sherlock Holmes takes on a young, female apprentice in this delightful story. In the early years of WWI, 15-year-old American Mary Russell encounters Holmes, retired in Sussex Downs where Conan Doyle left him raising bees. Mary, an orphan rebelling against her guardian aunt's strictures, impresses the sleuth with her intelligence and acumen. Holmes initiates her into the mysteries of detection, allowing her to participate in a few cases.. | Historical Fiction |
| <i>Between Shades of Gray</i> | Sepetys, Ruta | Fifteen-year-old Lina is a Lithuanian girl living an ordinary life in 1939 - until Soviet officers invade her home and tear her family apart. Separated from her father and forced onto a crowded train, Lina, her mother, and her young brother make their way to a Siberian work camp, where they must to fight for their lives. Will strength, love, and hope be enough for Lina and her family to survive? | Historical Fiction |
| <i>Buddha Boy</i> | Kathe Koja | The kids at school call Jinsen "Buddha Boy"—he wears oversize tie-dyed dragon T-shirts, shaves his head, and always seems to be smiling. Justin is not happy to be paired with him in Science. What matters more: the high school social order or getting to know someone extraordinary? | Contemporary Fiction |
| <i>Code Name Verity</i> | Wein, Elizabeth | - Rich in historical detail and intrigue. In exchange for a temporary stay of execution and lesser forms of torture, a young female spy captured in Nazi-occupied France writes a confession of her activities in the Resistance. Her story is that of two women who should never have crossed paths, yet were destined to become the best of friends and embark upon the covert mission that would determine which of them would live or die. | Historical Fiction |
| <i>The Color of Water</i> | McBride, James | The extraordinary memoir of a young black man's search to uncover his white mother's past along with his own identity results in a powerful portrait of growing up, a meditation on race and identity, and a poignant, beautifully crafted hymn from a son to his mother. | Biography/Memoir |
| <i>The Double Helix: a Personal Account of the Discovery of the Structure of DNA</i> | Watson, James D. | Pioneering scientist in the discovery of the structure of DNA, Watson holds nothing back when revealing the petty sniping and backbiting among his colleagues, while acknowledging that he himself was a willing participant in the melodrama. This is the joy of <i>The Double Helix</i> - instead of a chronicle of stainless-steel heroes toiling away in their sparkling labs, Watson's chronicle gives readers an idea of what living science is like, warts and all. | Science Writing |
| <i>Forks Over Knives</i> | Stone, Gene | What if one simple change could save you from heart disease, diabetes, and cancer? For decades, that question has fascinated a small circle of impassioned doctors and researchers—and now, their life-changing research is making headlines. | Non-Fiction |

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| <i>Game Seven</i> | Volponi, Paul | Since he was ten, Julio has lived in the shadow of his famous father. Not just because Julio Senior is a pitcher for the Miami Marlins, but because he fled Cuba to play professional baseball, leaving his Julio and his mother and sister branded as the family of a traitor. Now sixteen, Julio dreams of playing for Cuba's national team—until he finds out his father's defection may destroy his chances. When he's given the opportunity to flee Cuba, he has to make the toughest choice of his life. | Contemporary Fiction |
| <i>The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic—and How It Changed Science, Cities...</i> | Johnson, Steven | The book chronicles the outbreak and spread of cholera in London during the summer of 1854 and the efforts of Reverend Henry Whitehead and Dr. John Snow to isolate the disease and put an end to the epidemic. | Science Writing |
| <i>I'll Give you the Sun</i> | Nelson, Jandy | Talented fraternal twins Jude and Noah are inseparable at age 13 and practically strangers at age 16. In the years that have transpired, a tragic event has torn their family apart, and readers must puzzle through the alternating chapters and time lines to figure out if the siblings' relationship could ever be made whole again. Filled with lyrical prose, swoon-worthy romance, and threads of magical realism, this luminous coming-of-age novel shines. | Contemporary Fiction |
| <i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i> | Skloot, Rebecca | "HeLa" cells, named after Henrietta Lacks, a poor African American woman born in 1920, were taken from a tumor removed during Lacks' treatment for cervical cancer. While she died from the disease, her cancer cells proved uncommonly robust. Years later, billions of these cells are used in laboratories around the world. A complex and fascinating drama -- a mixture of science and biography with profound themes of racism, ethics, and scientific illiteracy. | Science Writing |
| <i>Courage Has No Color, The True Story of the Triple Nickles: America's First Black Paratroopers</i> | Stone, Tanya | this large-format book offers an informative introduction to the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion. Known as the Triple Nickles, they were America's first black paratrooper unit. Though WWII brought increased racial integration to the military, the pace was painfully slow. This book traces the paratroopers' story through their training and their long wait for orders .. | Non-Fiction |
| <i>The Grimm Legacy</i> | Shulman, Polly | New York high school student Elizabeth gets an after-school job as a page at the "New-York Circulating Material Repository," and when she gains coveted access to its Grimm Collection of magical objects, she and the other pages are drawn into a series of frightening adventures involving mythical creatures and stolen goods. | Science Fiction/Fantasy |
| <i>Lovely, Dark and Deep</i> | McNamara, Amy | Since the night of the crash, Wren Wells has been running away. Though she lived through the accident that killed her boyfriend Patrick, the girl she used to be didn't survive. Instead of heading off to college as planned, Wren retreats to her father's studio in the far-north woods of Maine. Somewhere she can be alone. | Contemporary Fiction |

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| <i>Luna</i> | Peters, Julie Anne | Regan's brother Liam can't stand the person he is during the day. Like the moon from whom Liam has chosen his female namesake, his true self, Luna, only reveals herself at night. In the secrecy of his basement bedroom Liam transforms himself into the beautiful girl he longs to be. National Book Award | Realistic Fiction |
| <i>Monster</i> | Myers, Walter Dean | 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. | Realistic Fiction |
| <i>The Night Circus</i> | Morgenstern, Erin | The circus arrives without warning. It is simply there. Within the black-and-white striped canvas tents is an utterly unique experience full of breathtaking amazements. Behind the scenes, a fierce competition is underway – duel between two young magicians, who have been trained since childhood expressly for this purpose by their mercurial instructors. "A Romeo and Juliet tale drenched in magic realism, <i>The Night Circus</i> defies both genres and expectations. In short, it's a showstopper." -- <i>The Boston Globe</i> | Science Fiction/Fantasy |
| <i>Paper Towns</i> | Green, John | When Margo Roth Spiegelman beckons Quentin Jacobsen in the middle of the night—dressed like a ninja and plotting an ingenious campaign of revenge—he follows her. Margo has always planned extravagantly, and, until now, she has always planned solo. After a lifetime of loving Margo from afar, things are finally looking up for Q . . . until day breaks and she has vanished. | Mystery/Crime |
| <i>Picture Me Gone</i> | Rosoff, Meg | Mila, 12, is something of a mentalist. She can read expressions, sense underlying emotions, and put human puzzles together. When her father's lifelong friend Matthew goes missing, Gil and Mila fly to upstate NY to find him. It's a mystery and so much more. Rosoff shapes this story as much by form and intuitions as by events. In making the choice not to use quotation marks for the dialogue, readers are immediately pushed inside Mila's head. Every conversation is filtered through her observations; even the way she can "read" Matthew's loyal dog. | Contemporary Fiction |
| <i>The Poisoner's Handbook: Murder and the Birth of Forensic Medicine in Jazz Age New York</i> | Blum, Deborah | A fascinating Jazz Age tale of chemistry and detection, poison and murder, <i>The Poisoner's Handbook</i> is a page-turning account of a forgotten era. In early twentieth-century New York, poisons offered an easy path to the perfect crime. Science had no place in the Tammany Hall-controlled coroner's office, and corruption ran rampant. However, with the appointment of chief medical examiner Charles Norris in 1918, the poison game changed forever. | Science Writing |
| <i>Reality Check</i> | Abrahams, Peter | Cody sustains a serious knee injury that leaves him on the bench during the most important recruiting year in his high school career. With no college scholarship in sight, he drops out of school. When his rich girlfriend, Clea, is reported missing from her Vermont boarding school, he drives East to find her, endangering himself in the process. | Mystery/Crime |

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| <i>The Secret Life of Bees</i> | Kidd, Sue Monk | Lily has grown up believing she accidentally killed her mother when she was four. Now fourteen, she yearns for her mother, and for forgiveness. Living on a peach farm in South Carolina with her father, she has only one friend: Rosaleen, a black servant whose sharp exterior hides a tender heart. However, South Carolina in the sixties full of segregation. When racial tension explodes one summer afternoon, and Rosaleen is arrested and beaten, Lily is compelled to act. | Historical Fiction |
| <i>The Silence of Murder</i> | Mackall, Dandi Daley | Coach Johnson is dead, and sixteen-year-old Hope Long is the only person who believes that her eighteen-year-old brother, Jeremy, is innocent. Sure, Jeremy is a little different--he's always been that way--but he's no killer. But there are no other suspects, so Hope must set out to find some herself and prove that Jeremy didn't kill Coach. | Mystery/Crime |
| <i>Steve Jobs</i> | Isaacson, Walter | "An unforgettable tale of a one-of-a-kind visionary. With a unique ability to meld arts and technology and an uncanny understanding of consumers' desires, Apple founder Steve Jobs (1955--2011) played a major role in transforming not just computer technology, but a variety of industries." | Biography/Memoir |
| <i>Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers</i> | Roach, Mary | An oddly compelling, often hilarious exploration of the strange lives of our bodies postmortem. For two thousand years, cadavers have been involved in science's boldest strides and weirdest undertakings. They've tested France's first guillotines, ridden the NASA Space Shuttle, been crucified in a Parisian laboratory, and helped solve the mystery of TWA Flight 800. For every new surgical procedure cadavers have been there alongside surgeons, making history in their quiet way. | Science Writing |
| <i>Stormfront</i> | Butcher, Jim | For Harry Dresden, Chicago's only professional wizard, business, to put it mildly, stinks. So when the police bring him in to consult on a grisly double murder committed with black magic, Harry sees dollar signs. But where there's black magic, there's a black mage behind it. And now that mage knows Harry's name. A lively cast of characters populates this story, including gentleman gangster Johnny Marconi, his henchmen, a sexy female werewolf, and Bob, the talking skull. | Science Fiction/Fantasy |
| <i>Tell the Wolves I'm Home</i> | Brunt, Carol Rifka | Before her Uncle Finn died of an illness people don't want to talk about, 14-year-old June Elbus thought she was the center of his world. A famous and reclusive painter, Finn made her feel uniquely understood, privy to secret knowledge like how to really hear Mozart's <i>Requiem</i> or see the shape of negative space. After his death her family must face the fact of his illness (AIDS) and the life her parents kept secret. | Contemporary Fiction |
| <i>The Terrorist's Son: A Story of Choice Accompanying TED Talk I am the son of a terrorist</i> | Ebrahim, Zak | What is it like to grow up with a terrorist in your home? Zak Ebrahim was only seven years old when, on November 5th, 1990, his father El-Sayyid Nosair shot and killed the leader of the Jewish Defense League. While in prison, Nosair helped plan the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993. | Non-Fiction |

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| <i>Those Who Wish Me Dead</i> | Koryta, Michael | When fourteen-year-old Jace Wilson witnesses a brutal murder, he's plunged into a new life, issued a false identity and hidden in a wilderness skills program for troubled teens. The plan is to get Jace off the grid while police find the two killers. The result is the start of a nightmare. | Mystery/Crime |
| <i>Unbowed: a Memoir.</i> | Maathai, Wangari | Nobel Prize winner Wangari Maathai recounts her extraordinary journey from her childhood in rural Kenya to the world stage. When Maathai founded the Green Belt Movement in 1977, she began a vital poor people's environmental movement, focused on the empowerment of women that soon spread across Africa. Persevering through run-ins with the Kenyan government and personal losses, and jailed and beaten on numerous occasions, Maathai continued to fight tirelessly to save Kenya's forests and to restore democracy to her beloved country. | Biography/Memoir |
| <i>Unbroken: a World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption</i> | Hillenbrand, Laura | On a May afternoon in 1943, an Army Air Forces bomber crashed into the Pacific Ocean and disappeared, leaving only a spray of debris and a slick of oil, gasoline, and blood. Then, on the ocean surface, a face appeared. It was that of a young lieutenant, the plane's bombardier, who was struggling to a life raft and pulling himself aboard. So began one of the most extraordinary odysseys of the Second World War. | Biography/Memoir |
| <i>Water for Elephants: a Novel</i> | Gruen, Sara | "Lively with historical details and unexpected turns.... <i>Water for Elephants</i> is a rich surprise, a delightful gem springing from a fascinating footnote to history that absolutely deserved to be minded." - <i>The Denver Post</i> | Historical Fiction |
| <i>What If: Serious Scientific Answers to Absurd Scientific Questions</i> | Munroe, Randall | What if you tried to hit a baseball pitched at 90 percent the speed of light? How fast can you hit a speed bump while driving and live? If there was a robot apocalypse, how long would humanity last? | Science Writing |