

**Upper School Independent Reading 2015**  
**Grades 11 and 12**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Genre</b>
<i>Awakenings</i>	Sacks, Oliver	The remarkable story of a group of patients who contracted sleeping-sickness during the great epidemic just after World War I. Frozen for decades in a trance-like state, these men and women were given up as hopeless until 1969, when Dr. Oliver Sacks gave them the then-new drug L-DOPA, which had an astonishing, explosive, "awakening" effect.	Biography/Memoir
<i>Bring Up the Bodies: A Novel</i>	Mantel, Hilary	This book tells the story of Anne Boleyn and Thomas Cromwell, chief minister to Henry VIII, and the soap-opera worthy machinations of Cromwell and his evil allies to bring down the powerful wife of the king. Her characters are real and vivid people who bring to life the clash of ideals that gripped England at the time.	Historical Fiction
<i>The Carnival at Bray</i>	Foley, Jessie	Generation X pulses to the beat of Kurt Cobain and the grunge movement. Sixteen-year-old Maggie Lynch is uprooted from big-city Chicago to the Irish Sea. Surviving on care packages of Spin magazine and Twizzlers from her rocker uncle Kevin, she wonders if she'll ever find her place in this new world. When first love and sudden death simultaneously strike, a naive but determined Maggie embarks on a forbidden pilgrimage that will take her to Dublin and on to a life-altering night to fulfill a dying wish. Through it all, Maggie discovers an untapped inner strength.	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>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>Help for the Haunted</i>	Searles, John	Sisters Sylvie and Rose try to unravel the mystery of the brutal murder of their parents, who had billed themselves as counselors, offering "help for the haunted." A creepy coming-of-age mystery full of family secrets.	Contemporary Fiction
<i>A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters .</i>	Barnes, Julian	A revisionist view of Noah's Ark, told by the stowaway woodworm. A chilling account of terrorists hijacking a cruise ship. A court case in 16th-century France in which the woodworm stands accused. A desperate woman's attempt to escape radioactive fallout on a raft. A thoughtful meditation on the novelist's responsibility regarding love. These and other stories make up Barnes's witty and sometimes acerbic retelling of the history of the world. Fascinating reading from the author of <i>Flaubert's Parrot</i> , but not for those wanting conventional plot.	Historical 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, reproducing at a rapid rate. 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>Is That a Fish in Your Ear?: Translation and the Meaning of Everything</i>	Bellos, David	People speak different languages, and always have. The Ancient Greeks took no notice of anything unless it was said in Greek; the Romans made everyone speak Latin. Ttoday, we all use translation to cope with the diversity of languages. Without translation there would be no world news, no repair manuals for cars or planes; we wouldn't even be able to put together flat-pack furniture. <i>Is That a Fish in Your Ear?</i> ranges across the human experience, from foreign films to philosophy, to show why translation is at the heart of what we do and who we are.	Non-Fiction
<i>Little Bee</i>	Cleave, Chris	A confrontation between a sixteen-year-old Nigerian orphan, called Little Bee, and a wealthy British couple on vacation, has life-changing consequences for everyone involved. The story is told from two points of view.	Contemporary Fiction
<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>The Magicians: A Novel</i>	Grossman, Lev	Like everyone else, precocious high school senior Quentin Coldwater assumes that magic isn't real, until he finds himself admitted to a very secretive and exclusive college of magic in upstate New York. There he indulges in the usual joys of college--and also receives a rigorous education in modern sorcery. Still, magic doesn't bring the happiness and adventure Quentin thought it would. After graduation, he and his friends stumble upon a secret that sets them on a remarkable journey...	Science Fiction/Fantasy
<i>The Martian</i>	Weir, Andy	Six days ago, astronaut Mark Watney became one of the first people to walk on Mars, now he is likely to die there. Mark finds himself stranded and completely alone with no way to even signal Earth that he's alive--and even if he could get word out, his supplies would be gone long before a rescue could arrive. But Mark isn't ready to give up yet. Drawing on his ingenuity, his engineering skills--and a relentless, dogged refusal to quit--he steadfastly confronts one seemingly insurmountable obstacle after the next.	Science Fiction/Fantasy
<i>The Name of the Star</i>	Johnson, Maureen	The day that Louisiana teenager Rory Deveau arrives in London to start a new life at boarding school is also the day a series of brutal murders breaks out over the city, killings that mimic the horrific Jack the Ripper spree of more than a century ago. Soon "Rippermania" takes hold of modern-day London, and the police are left with few leads and no witnesses. Except one. Rory spotted the man police believe to be the prime suspect. But she is the only one who saw him--the only one who can see him. And now Rory has become his next target.	Mystery/Crime
<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>The Nazi Hunters: How a Team of Spies and Survivors Captured the World's Most Notorious Nazi</i>	Bascomb, Neal	This true story of a group of Jewish men brought together to capture and bring to justice a notorious Nazi war criminal takes place 15 years after the end of WWII. Adolf Eichmann, who had been in charge of eradicating the 725,000 Jews from Hungary and was discovered living in Argentina, became the target of the Mossad. Eichmann's capture proved to be a hair-raising maneuver.	Non-Fiction

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<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>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
<i>Room</i>	Donoghue, Emma	Five-year-old Jack has spent his life living in an eleven-by-eleven foot space his mother calls Room. While Jack uses his imagination to create wondrous fantasies to entertain himself, his mother dreads the day her son begins to question why they must remain in Room and searches for an escape.	Contemporary Fiction
<i>The Sea of Tranquility</i>	Millay , Katje	Aspiring concert pianist Nastya's left hand has been so badly damaged, she will never play the piano again. What caused the injury has left the 17-year-old traumatized; in fact, she has chosen to become mute and hasn't spoken a word in more than a year. Meanwhile, Josh, also 17, has lost his entire family to death, leaving him bereft and very much alone in the world. The two troubled teens meet and begin a cautious friendship that will blossom into something deeper.	Realistic Fiction
<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

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<i>Silent Alarm</i>	Banash, Jennifer	Lunchtime will never be the same. What sounded like cherry bombs, were actually gunshots exploding throughout the halls of Plainewood High School where Alys Aronson and her brother, Luke, were students. A violinist in the making, Alys was trying to master a piece by Brahms, Violin Sonata No. 3 in D minor, while her classmate Miranda studied for a history test nearby, when Luke entered with a rifle in hand. After witnessing her brother kill Miranda, Alys tries to come terms with the terrible event in this gripping narrative.	Realistic Fiction
<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 Tiger's Wife</i>	Obreht, Tea	A tiger that's fled the zoo during World War II and the "deathless man" who collects the souls of the departed: two tales told to young medic Natalia by her grandfather that frame this bold, imaginative debut, effectively capturing the fearfulness that precipitated the recent fighting in the author's native Balkans. Obreht's storytelling is complex, humbling, and sheer magic.	Contemporary Fiction

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<i>The Tragedy Paper</i>	Laban, Elizabeth	Debut novelist LaBan takes us into the private school culture as well as the heads of two charming yet very different teenage boys and their parallel love stories... Nonexistent parents, well-intentioned, likeable faculty on the periphery, elaborate dorm rooms with overstuffed closets, even the romantic, snow-covered campus all contribute to a setting that adds to the story's heft and intrigue.	Contemporary Fiction
<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>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
<i>What Was Lost</i>	O'Flynn, Catherine	This debut novel, nominated for the Man Booker Prize, is part mystery, part ghost story. Lisa, working as an assistant manager at a record store, teams up with security guard Kurt to investigate sightings of a little girl clutching a toy monkey that have begun to appear on security tapes. Lisa believes these sightings must have some link to the disappearance of ten-year-old Kate Meaney twenty years earlier--a crime that ruined her brother's life when he became a suspect.	Mystery/Crime
<i>Wolf in the White Van</i>	Darnielle, John	Winner of the 2015 Alex Award for adult books with special appeal for young adults Welcome to Trace Italian, a game of strategy and survival! You may now make your first move. Isolated by a disfiguring injury since the age of seventeen, Sean Phillips crafts imaginary worlds for strangers to play in. From his small apartment in southern California, he orchestrates fantastic adventures where possibilities, both dark and bright, open in the boundaries between the real and the imagined.	Biography/Memoir