

**Upper School Independent Reading 2016**  
**Grades 11 and 12**

Title	Author	Description	Genre
<i>All the Light We Cannot See</i>	Doerr, Anthony	It rests, historically, during the occupation of France during WWII, but brief chapters told in alternating voices give the overall—and long—narrative a swift movement through time and events. We have two main characters, each one on opposite sides in the conflagration that is destroying Europe. Marie-Louise is a sightless girl who lived with her father in Paris before the occupation; he was a master locksmith for the Museum of Natural History. When German forces necessitate abandonment of the city, Marie-Louise's father, taking with him the museum's greatest treasure, removes himself and his daughter and eventually arrives at his uncle's house in the coastal city of Saint-Malo. Young German soldier Werner is sent to Saint-Malo to track Resistance activity there, and eventually, and inevitably, Marie-Louise's and Werner's paths cross.	Historical Fiction
<i>Between the World and Me</i>	Coates	In a series of essays, written as a letter to his son, Coates confronts the notion of race in America and how it has shaped American history, many times at the cost of black bodies and lives. Thoughtfully exploring personal and historical events, the author poignantly asks and attempts to answer difficult questions that plague modern society.	Biography/Memoir
<i>Bomb</i>	Sheinkin, Steve	The race to build the first atom bomb involves several stories: the Los Alamos scientists, the Soviet spies stealing our secrets, and the Norwegian saboteurs stopping the Germans.	Non-Fiction
<i>The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics</i>	Brown, Daniel	It was an unlikely quest from the start. With a team composed of the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington's eight-oar crew team was never expected to defeat the elite teams of the East Coast and Great Britain, yet they did, going on to shock the world by defeating the German team rowing for Adolf Hitler. The emotional heart of the tale lies with Joe Rantz, a teenager without family or prospects, who rows not only to regain his shattered self-regard but also to find a real place for himself in the world.	Non-Fiction
<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

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<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>Eating Animals</i>	Foer, Jonathan	A light-hearted but comprehensive account of one man's struggle with vegetarianism. On the eve of becoming a father, Foer takes all the arguments for and against vegetarianism a neurotic step beyond and, to decide how to feed his coming baby, investigates everything from the intelligence level of our most popular meat providers-cattle, pigs, and poultry-to the specious self-justifications (his own included) for eating some meat products and not others.	Biography/Memoir
<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

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<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>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
<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

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<i>The Name of the Star</i>	Johnson, Maureen	The day that Louisiana teenager Rory Deveaux 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
<i>On the Move: A Life</i>	Sacks, Oliver	Sacks' mother's severe reaction upon learning that he was gay: she called him "an abomination." Sacks forgave his mother for that, even if he couldn't shake her words. His solution appears to have been just to move on and keep moving. This can be seen in his love of motorcycles and weight lifting, in his desire to travel, and his former addiction to amphetamines.	Biography/Memoir
<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

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<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>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>The Universe versus Alex Woods</i>		Being struck by a meteorite when he was 10 has made Alex a celebrity as well as a target for bullies. When he befriends the curmudgeonly Mr. Peterson, who introduces him to the work of Kurt Vonnegut, Alex finds that life's meaning is less about survival than how you live and love.	Contemporary Fiction
<i>Trigger Warning</i>	Gaiman	Neil Gaiman pierces the veil of reality to reveal the enigmatic, shadowy world that lies beneath. Trigger Warning explores the masks we all wear and the people we are beneath them to reveal our vulnerabilities and our truest selves. Here is a rich cornucopia of horror and ghosts stories, science fiction and fairy tales that explore the realm of experience and emotion. Includes stories, verse, and a very special Doctor Who story that was written for the fiftieth anniversary of the beloved series.	Short Stories
<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