

Independent Reading Overview

Along with the books we read together in class, each student is expected to read one independent book of their choice each quarter. Students will visit the school library at the beginning of each quarter to help choose a book they're interested in. Sometimes, they will be asked to connect their independent reading to the main book we are studying in class.

The book lists below offer safe, engaging, and age-appropriate options that support the themes we're exploring in class. Students may choose from these suggestions or pick another book with teacher approval.

Quarter One: *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

Theme: Human Nature – What makes us who we are?

Suggested Books:

- *Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes – A man with a low IQ undergoes a medical procedure to become smarter.
- *The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer – A young clone struggles with identity and belonging.
- *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson – A scientist's experiments reveal the good and evil sides of human nature.
- *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman – In a future world without death, teens are chosen to “glean” lives to keep the population under control.
- *Origin* by Jessica Khoury – A girl raised in a secret lab begins to question her perfect life.
- *Eva* by Peter Dickinson – A girl wakes up in a new body and faces questions about technology and identity.

Quarter Two: *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare

Theme: Power and Choices – What happens when people will do anything for power?

Suggested Books:

- *Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds – A boy struggles with a big decision after his brother is killed.

- *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak – A girl discovers the power of words in Nazi Germany.
- *The Knife of Never Letting Go* by Patrick Ness – A boy lives in a world where everyone can hear each other's thoughts.
- *Code Talker* by Joseph Bruchac – A Navajo teen becomes a World War II hero by using his language in secret missions.
- *Peak* by Roland Smith – A boy climbs Mount Everest and learns about courage and character.
- *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card – A boy genius trains to save the world from an alien threat.

Quarter Three: *Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann

Theme: Justice and Truth – What is fair, and who gets to decide?

Suggested Books:

- *Just Mercy* (Young Adult Edition) by Bryan Stevenson – A lawyer fights for fairness in the justice system.
- *The Boys Who Challenged Hitler* by Phillip Hoose – True story of teens who resisted Nazi rule in Denmark.
- *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* by Phillip Hoose – A brave teen stood up for civil rights before Rosa Parks.
- *The Port Chicago 50* by Steve Sheinkin – African American sailors fight back after a deadly explosion and unfair treatment.
- *March: Book One* by John Lewis – A graphic memoir about the Civil Rights Movement.
- *Uprising* by Margaret Peterson Haddix – The story of three girls during the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire.

Quarter Four: *1984* by George Orwell

Theme: Communication and Control – Who controls what we know and believe?

Suggested Books:

- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – A boy learns the truth about a perfect but controlled society.

- *Among the Hidden* by Margaret Peterson Haddix – In a world with population limits, a third child must hide his entire life.
- *Legend* by Marie Lu – A gifted teen and a wanted criminal discover the truth about their government.
- *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury – A future where books are banned and independent thinking is dangerous.
- *Running Out of Time* by Margaret Peterson Haddix – A girl raised in a 19th-century village finds out it's all a lie.
- *Prisoner B-3087* by Alan Gratz – A teen survives 10 concentration camps during WWII by holding onto hope and truth.

All these books were chosen for their engaging stories, appropriate content, and strong connections to classroom themes. Students are welcome to ask Mrs. Yabrough or one of the Freedom High School librarians for help choosing a book that matches both their interests and reading level.