

WHS SUMMER READING LIST

Grades 7 – 9 Nonfiction

2022

Aronson, Marc. **Master of Deceit**. The life of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover is explored in Marc Aronson's fascinating book. To learn about Hoover is to learn about 20th-century American history. World War I, gangsters, the Lindbergh kidnapping, World War II, the Cold War, and the civil rights movement. Hoover was there for it all.

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. **Terrible Typhoid Mary: A True Story of the Deadliest Cook in America**. The author focuses on Mary, using her as a lens through which to view -- and analyze -- a wider swath of American society. What was it like to be a servant, an immigrant, a woman at the dawn of the twentieth century? Bartoletti skillfully weaves the answers into the beginning of the story, before moving on to Sopers cat-and-mouse game of tracking Mary down and then keeping her quarantined for most of the rest of her life. And there are questions remaining at the end, too. How do we balance the rights of the individual with the safety of the entire community? Why was Mary made a public scapegoat, while other healthy carriers walked free?

Barton, Chris. **Can I See Your I.D.? : True Stories of False Identities**. Invites readers to travel with some of the world's greatest hoaxers, con artists, counterfeiters, and other great imposters, taking them into their deceptive minds. Ten short chapters feature clever pretenders, such as the legendary Catch Me If You Can's Frank Abagnale, Jr., and his forays into identity theft.

Bascomb, Neal. **The Nazi hunters : how a team of spies and survivors captured the world's most notorious Nazi** At the end of World War II, Adolf Eichmann walked into the mountains of Germany and vanished. Sixteen years later, an elite team of spies captured him at a bus stop in Argentina and smuggled him to Israel, resulting in one of the century's most important trials. Here is the story of what happened between these two events.

Castaldo, Nancy F. **When the World Runs Dry: Earth's Water in Crisis**. A narrative nonfiction account of the worldwide water crisis, explaining what's happening to the **world's** water supply, from industrial pollution to harmful algal blooms, and what kids can do about it.

Copeland, Misty. **Life in Motion** As the first female African American principal dancer in American Ballet Theatre history, Misty Copeland has been a constant game changer during her illustrious career. This is a story for all the kids who dare to be different, dream bigger, and want to break stereotypes in whatever they do.

Davis, Kenneth C. **Strongman**. At a time when dictators are rampant in such countries as North Korea, Turkey, China, Russia, and others, Davis' deep dive into the lives of five of history's most notorious dictators (or strongmen as he calls them)-Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and Hussein-is apposite and timely. Readers learn that each of the five was unspeakably vile in his own way, but together they did share areas of commonality: all of them developed a cult of personality, all of them created new generations of loyal young people (Hitler youth, for example), placed blame on a single group (as Hitler did with the Jews), called for law and order, took control of the media, etc. Davis does not sugarcoat his material, inviting long thoughts with his assertion that this is a decidedly human story that points to real people as evidence that evil exists in this troubled world. The philosopher Santayana famously said, "Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it."

Farrell, Mary Cronk. **Close Up On War: The Story of Pioneering Photojournalist Catherine Leroy in Vietnam**. tells the story of French-born Catherine Leroy, one of the Vietnam War's few woman photographers, who documented some of the fiercest fighting in the 20-year conflict. Despite being told that women didn't belong in a "man's world," she was cool under fire, gravitated toward the thickest battles, went along on the soldiers' slogs through the heat and mud of the jungle, crawled through rice paddies, and became the only official photojournalist to parachute into combat with American soldiers. Later, Leroy was gravely wounded from shrapnel, but that didn't keep her down more than a month. When captured by the North Vietnamese in 1968, she talked herself free after photographing her captors, scoring a cover story in Life magazine.

Feinstein, John. **The Back Roads to March: The Unsung, Unheralded, and Unknown Heroes of the College Basketball Season**. Feinstein follows a handful of players, coaches, and schools who dream, not of winning the NCAA tournament, but of making it past their first or second round games. Every once in a while, one of these coaches or players is plucked from obscurity to continue on to lead a major team or to play professionally, cementing their status in these fiercely passionate fan bases as a legend. These are the gifted players who aren't handled with kid gloves—they're hardworking, gritty teammates who practice and party with everyone else.

Fleischman, Paul. **Alphamaniacs: Builders of 26 Wonders of the Word**. Step right up and read the genuine stories of writers so intoxicated by the shapes and sound of language that they collected, dissected, and constructed verbal wonders of the most extraordinary kind. Jean-Dominique Bauby wrote his memoirs by blinking his left eyelid, unable to move the rest of his body. Frederic Cassidy was obsessed with the language of place, and after posing hundreds of questions to folks all over the United States, amassed (among other things) 176 words for dust bunnies. Georges Perec wrote a novel without using the letter *e* (so well that at least one reviewer didn't notice its absence), then followed with a novella in which *e* was the *only* vowel. A love letter to all those who love words, language, writing, writers, and stories, *Alphamaniacs* is a stunningly illustrated collection of mini-biographies about the most daring and peculiar of writers and their audacious, courageous, temerarious way with words.

Fleming, Candace. **Presenting Buffalo Bill : the man who invented the Wild West** Everyone knows the name Buffalo Bill, but few these days know what he did or, in some cases, didn't do. Was he a Pony Express rider? Did he ride with Wild Bill Hickok? Did he "scalp" countless Native Americans, or did he defend their rights?

Hill, Laban Carrick. **America Dreaming: How Youth Changed America in the 60's**. An in-depth exploration of America in the 1960's and the young people who built a new world around them and changed our society significantly.

Hill, Laban Carrick. **Harlem Stomp! A Cultural History of the Harlem Renaissance**. Hill explains the violence, frustration, and dreams of economic opportunity that led to the African-American migration to the North at the beginning of the 20th century.

Janeczko, Paul. **The Dark Game: True Spy Stories**. Since the Revolutionary War, espionage has created fascinating scenarios involving some quite unlikely participants. From Benedict Arnold and Mata Hari to the lesser-known Elizabeth Van Lew and Juan Pujol, Janeczko delves into their stories with delicious detail, drawing readers into a world of intrigue and danger.

Jahren, Hope. **Lab Girl**. Acclaimed scientist Hope Jahren has built three laboratories in which she's studied trees, flowers, seeds, and soil. Her first book is a revelatory treatise on plant life - but it is also so much more. Lab Girl is a book about work, love, and the mountains that can be moved when those two things come together. It is told through Jahren's remarkable stories: about her childhood in rural Minnesota; about how she found a sanctuary in science, and learned to perform lab work done "with both the heart and the hands"; and about the inevitable disappointments, but also the triumphs and exhilarating discoveries, of scientific work.

Kupferschmidt, Kal. **Blue: In Search of Nature's Rarest Color**. A globe-trotting quest to find blue in the natural world--and to understand our collective obsession with this bewitching color.

Lee Shetterly, Margo. **Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race**. Shetterly shines a much-needed light on the bright, talented, and wholly underappreciated geniuses of the institution that would become NASA. Called upon during the labor shortage of World War II, these women were asked to serve their country and put their previously overlooked skills to work-all while being segregated from their white coworkers. The author tells the compelling stories of Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson, and Christine Darden as they navigated mathematical equations, the space race, and the civil rights movement over three decades of brilliant computing and discoveries.

Lloyd, Carli. **All heart : my dedication and determination to become one of soccer's best**. In 2015, the U.S. Women's National Team won its first FIFA championship in sixteen years, culminating in an epic final game that featured a gutsy, brilliant performance by the midfielder Carli Lloyd. But there was a time when Carli almost quit sports. She had just been cut from the Under-21 team and told she wasn't working hard enough to be at this level. Carli was faced with a decision: should she give up or try again?

Martin, Iain. **Gettysburg: The True Account of Two Young Heroes in the Greatest Battle of the Civil War**. In this original retelling of the Gettysburg story, Iain Martin draws upon firsthand accounts—from the generals to the lowly privates and civilians caught in the epic struggle. Readers will discover history through the experiences of two Gettysburg teenagers—Matilda “Tillie” Pierce and Daniel Skelly.

Muhammad, Ibtihaj. **Proud: Living My American Dream**. Black but Muslim. Muslim but American. A hijab-wearing athlete. Ibtihaj Muhammad, an Olympic medalist in fencing and the first Muslim woman to represent the U.S. in international competition, explores identity, her path to the 2016 Olympics. Muhammad was always competitive, especially when it came to sports. Wearing a hijab and coming from a large family, she realized that fencing allowed her an easier way to maintain her faith than in other sports and work toward a scholarship for college. And it turned out she was excellent!

Mundy, Liza. **Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers Who Helped Win World War II**. As the U.S. headed to war in 1941, two things became clear to military leaders: victory depended on successful code breaking and they didn't have nearly enough people working on it. The solution was for the Army and Navy to recruit women for cryptanalysis. Tens of thousands of women answered the call for this top-secret work. Drawing from recently declassified National Security Agency files, Mundy rescues these women's stories from anonymity and obscurity. She vividly describes the intricacies of code breaking while weaving in crucial historical information about the war and women's participation in it.

Nelson, Marilyn. **Augusta Savage: The Shape of a Sculptor's Life**. A renowned poet brings a Harlem Renaissance artist's story to life. Nelson focuses her poetic skills on Black sculptor and teacher Augusta Savage in this biography for budding historians, artists, and poetry lovers alike. Savage's life makes for great material-she was born in Florida in 1892, a middle child with 13 siblings, into a world of racial discrimination. She was thrice married, the first time at only 15, and in 1921 moved to New York City in search of better opportunities. Savage created a number of stunning sculptures that captured elements and figures of contemporary Black life.

O'Brien, Anne. **After Gandhi: One Hundred Years of Nonviolent Resistance**. It's been a century since a young lawyer named Mohandas Gandhi peacefully defied the British Empire in support of Indian laborers working in South Africa. The authors trace the impact of that seminal event, highlighting the subsequent, worldwide history of nonviolent resistance. Coverage includes dozens of examples profiling the durable courage of leaders like Rosa Parks, Nelson Mandela, Vaclav Havel, and Wangari Maathai and ending with a chapter on the role of nonviolence in shaping the future.

Oppenheim, Joanne. **Dear Miss Breed: True Stories of the Japanese American Incarceration During World War II and a Librarian Who Made a Difference**. In the early 1940's, Clara Breed was the children's librarian at the San Diego Public Library. But she was also a friend to dozens of Japanese American children and teens when war broke out in December of 1941. The story of what happened to these American citizens is movingly told through letters that her young friends wrote to Miss Breed during their internment. This remarkable librarian and humanitarian served as a lifeline to these imprisoned young people, and was brave enough to speak out against a shameful chapter in American history.

Pitzer, Andrea. **Icebound**. The most astonishing survival tale of all might be that of 16th-century Dutch explorer William Barents and his crew of sixteen, who ventured farther north than any Europeans before and, on their third polar exploration, lost their ship off the frozen coast of Nova Zembla to unforgiving ice. The men would spend the next year fighting off ravenous polar bears, gnawing hunger, and endless winter. In **Icebound**, Andrea Pitzer masterfully combines a gripping tale of survival with a sweeping history of the great Age of Exploration-a time of hope, adventure, and seemingly unlimited geographic frontiers. At the story's center is William Barents, one of the 16th century's greatest navigators whose larger-than-life ambitions and obsessive quest to chart a path through the deepest, most remote regions of the Arctic ended in both tragedy and glory.

Rhodes-Courter, Ashley. **Three More Words**. Taken from her mom at age three, Ashley spent most of her childhood living in fourteen different foster homes - some nice, some not, and one that was very abusive. Her indomitable will to survive carried her through her toughest days. Ashley was finally adopted at the age of twelve and went on to become a success story - poised, hardworking, well-adjusted, and an unstoppable advocate for foster children. But what does it really mean to come out on the other side of the foster care system?

Simard, Suzanne. **Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest**. Forest ecologist Simard has been studying intricate, mutually sustaining forms of communication and interconnectivity among trees and fungi for decades, initially as a determined and controversial researcher for the Canadian Forest Service, then as a professor who attained TED Talk fame. In her galvanizing first book, she interleaves her family's history as British Columbia homesteaders and loggers with detailed accounts of her innovative and exacting fieldwork and paradigm-altering discoveries. As Simard elucidates her revolutionary experiments, replete with gorgeous descriptions and moments of fear and wonder, a vision of the forest as an "intelligent system, perceptive and responsive," comes into focus, leading to her revelation of how "mother trees" not only nourish and protect seedlings but also "continuously gauge, adjust, and regulate" their support of the entire forest through a finely calibrated web that mirrors our own neural network and cardiovascular system.

Slater, Dashka. **The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime That Changed Their Lives**. If it weren't for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met. Both were high school students from Oakland, California, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment. The case garnered international attention, thrusting both teenagers into the spotlight.

Tougas, Mike. **A Storm Too Soon: A Remarkable True Survival Story in 80-Foot Seas**. On May 2, 2007, three expert sailors embark on an epic voyage from Florida to France. But the trip of a lifetime **soon** turns into a nightmare when their sailboat disappears along the Gulf Stream in the throes of a relentless **storm**. From this point onward, their fate lies in the hands of four courageous coast guardsmen who must navigate brutal conditions in their Search and Rescue mission.

Tran, Ly. **House of Sticks: A Memoir**. A powerful memoir by 25-year-old Ly Tran about her immigrant experience and her recent family history in the aftermath of the war that spans from Vietnam to Brooklyn, and ultimately to the Ivy League.

Turrell, Arthur. **The Star Builders: Nuclear Fusion and the Race to Power the Planet** The most important energy-making process in the universe takes place inside stars. The ability to duplicate that process in a lab, once thought out of reach, may now be closer than we think. Today, all across the world teams of scientists are being assembled by the world's boldest entrepreneurs, big business, and governments to solve what is the most difficult technological challenge humanity has ever faced: building the equivalent of a star on earth. If their plans to capture star power are successful, they will unlock thousands, potentially millions, of years of clean, carbon-free energy.

Uwiringiyimana, Sandra. **How dare the sun rise : memoirs of a war child**. Sandra Uwiringiyimana, a girl from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, tells the incredible true story of how she survived a massacre, immigrated to America, and overcame her trauma through art and activism.

Wallace-Wells, David. **The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming** "The threat from climate change is more total than from the bomb. It is also more pervasive." The author observes, almost every major moment of "evolutionary reset" in Earth's history has been precipitated by climate change produced by an overproduction of greenhouse gases and there is now more carbon in the air than at any point in the last 15 million years, leading him to open, grimly, with the warning, "It is worse, much worse, than you think." The results will be catastrophic, from untold millions of environmental refugees to summers that, even in Scandinavia, will be accompanied by killer heat waves.

Wickenden, Dorothy. **The Agitators: Three Friends Who Fought for Abolition and Women's Rights**. From the intimate perspective of three friends the '**agitators**' of the title tells the fascinating and crucially American stories of abolition, the Underground Railroad, the early women's rights movement, and the Civil War. Harriet Tubman--no-nonsense, funny, uncannily prescient, and strategically brilliant--was one of the most important conductors on the underground railroad and hid the enslaved men, women and children she rescued in the basement kitchens of Martha Wright, Quaker mother of seven, and Frances Seward, wife of Governor, then Senator, then Secretary of State William H. Seward. Harriet worked for the Union Army in South Carolina as a nurse and spy, and took part in a river raid in which 750 enslaved people were freed from rice plantations. Martha, a 'dangerous woman' in the eyes of her neighbors and a harsh critic of Lincoln's policy on slavery, organized women's rights and abolitionist conventions with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Frances gave freedom seekers money and referrals and aided in their education.

Woodson, Jacqueline. **Brown Girl Dreaming**. Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement.