

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2009

Grade 11 and Grade 12

Any available unabridged edition of a title is acceptable.

- Ackerman, Diane. ***The Zookeeper's Wife: a War Story***. Norton, 2007. Based on a little known chapter from Nazi Poland, Ackerman works from the diary of Antonina Zabinski. Not only was Hitler interested in human genetics but also the purity of animal breeds. At the Warsaw Zoo, Antonina and her director husband struggle with wartime shortages, care for the animals, their own family, and hundreds of Jews hidden at the zoo from the occupying Nazis. A dramatic, true story. ALA Notable Book.
- Amirrezvani, Anita. ***The Blood of Flowers***. Little, Brown, 2007. Following the death of her father, a fourteen-year-old girl, living in seventeenth-century Persia, is left without a dowry. She and her mother, a master storyteller, toil as servants in the home of her uncle where she becomes a skillful rug designer.
- Austen, Jane. ***Pride and Prejudice***. First published 1813. Elizabeth and Jane Bennet overcome obstacles to their happiness with Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley in this comedy of manners set in early nineteenth-century England.
- Baldwin, James. ***Go Tell It On the Mountain***. First published 1953. In 1935 Harlem, young John Grimes searches for God while struggling with his identity as the stepson of a stern, evangelist preacher.
- Beah, Ishmael. ***A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier***. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2007. Twelve-year old Ishmael first flees from attacking rebels with his friends, but later is transformed into a cold-blooded soldier. This is a heartbreaking personal memoir of a boy growing up in Sierra Leone in the 1990s. Alex Award 2008
- Bradbury, Jennifer. ***Shift***. Atheneum, 2008. The summer before they begin college, Chris and Win bike from West Virginia to Seattle. After a fight, and 50 miles from their goal, Win rides off while Chris changes a flat tire and simply disappears.. Win's manipulative father enlists the FBI to question Chris.
- Brooks, Geraldine. ***People of the Book: A Novel***. Viking, 2008. While working on an ancient manuscript, Hannah Heath, a conservationist, traces its path through the ages and discovers her own contemporary life. National Jewish Book Award 2008
- Caletti, Deb. ***The Fortunes of Indigo Skye***. Simon & Schuster, 2008. Indigo wants nothing more from life than her job as a waitress until a customer gives her \$2,500,000. Then everything changes.
- Capote, Truman. ***In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and Its Consequences***. First published 1965. The senseless, brutal murder of four members of the Clutter family by two psychotic young men shocked their small-town community of Holcomb, Kansas and the entire country. Edgar Award 1966
- Carey, Peter. ***His Illegal Self***. Knopf, 2008. Che, age 7, is abducted by his "possible" mother and lands in a hippie commune in tropical Australia. There he learns by experience the ways of evil and of love in human relationships.

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2009

Grade 11 and Grade 12

- Carter, Stephen L. ***The Emperor of Ocean Park***. Knopf, 2002. A look into the world of professional African American society as seen through the eyes of Talcott Garland, who suddenly finds himself investigating the death of his father, "The Judge." Was it as suspicious as his sister believes, or natural? Mystery, suspense, and plot twists unfold as Garland searches for answers. Black Caucus of the American Library Association Literary Award 2003
- Chandler, Raymond. ***The Long Goodbye***. First published 1953. A classic "hard-boiled" detective story where Philip Marlowe, private eye, deals with a cast of reprehensible characters in a doom-laden city. Edgar Award 1955
- Chbosky, Stephen. ***The Perks of Being a Wallflower***. MTV, 1999. In this controversial, coming-of-age novel, Charlie's collection of letters to an unspecified recipient details the humorous trials and tribulations of trying to discover who he is and who he might become.
- Coben, Harlan. ***Tell No One: A Novel***. Delacorte, 2001. After years of struggling with grief over his wife's murder by a serial killer, Dr. David Beck receives a mysterious e-mail that includes a secret word only known to his wife and himself.
- Collins, Billy. ***Ballistics: Poems***. Random House, 2008. Notable collection of verse from the U.S. Poet Laureate, expressing love, joy, and death in his inimitable language.
- Collins, Suzanne. ***The Hunger Games***. Scholastic, 2008. In the not too distant future, the United States has collapsed and has been replaced by the totalitarian regime, Panem. Sixteen-year-old Katniss becomes a contestant in the annual Hunger Games, a televised, gladiator-like contest where teens compete to the death.
- Cone, Marla. ***Silent Snow: The Slow Poisoning of the Arctic***. Grove, 2005. Traditionally thought of as the last great, unspoiled territory on Earth, the Arctic is actually home to some of the most contaminated people and animals on the planet.
- Connolly, John. ***The Book of Lost Things: A Novel***. Atria, 2006. After the death of his mother, David retreats to his attic bedroom, where the books on his shelf begin whispering to him, dragging him into another world. Alex Award 2007
- Courtenay, Bryce. ***The Power of One: A Novel***. Ballantine, 1996. Originally published in 1989. A weak, friendless English boy grows up in South Africa during World War II where he learns to box and finds the courage to champion the cause of injustice using the force of the Power of One.
- Danticat, Edwidge. ***Brother, I'm Dying***. Knopf, 2007. In 2005, expecting her first child and facing the death of her father, Danticat relates her childhood experiences of living in a loving and devoted Haitian family torn by immigration, political upheaval, and violence. A poignant and painful memoir filled with hope and grace. National Book Critics Circle Award 2007; Christopher Award 2008

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2009

Grade 11 and Grade 12

- Dean, Debra. ***The Madonnas of Leningrad***. HarperCollins, 2006. During the 1941 siege of Leningrad, Marina, a docent at the Hermitage Museum, helps to remove paintings for safekeeping. Decades later as she prepares for her granddaughter's wedding, Marina, now suffering from Alzheimer's, vividly recalls details of those paintings.
- Doctorow, Cory. ***Little Brother***. Tor, 2008. An interesting read with terrorism plots, lots of electronic gadgets and students with hacker smarts. The students are picked up after a terrorist attack and at first do not cooperate. Their experience is reflective of today's fears and concerns regarding government control and the Department of Homeland Security.
- Downham, Jenny. ***Before I Die***. David Fickling, 2007. This is a touching story that draws the reader into the last months of Tessa's life after battling leukemia for four years. The reader experiences a wide range of activities from her to-do list, emotional upheaval, and thoughts told through Tessa's narrative.
- Dostoyevsky, Fyodor. ***Crime and Punishment***. First published 1866. Raskolnikov, a student who believes that his own intellectual and spiritual superiority places him above the masses, tests his theory of invincibility by committing murder.
- Egan, Timothy. ***The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl***. Houghton Mifflin, 2005. A Pulitzer Prize-winning author follows a half-dozen families and their communities during the darkest years of the Depression, when the people of America's High Plains were terrorized by relentless dust storms unlike any ever seen before or since. National Book Award for Nonfiction 2006
- Erlbaum, Janice. ***Girlbomb: A Halfway Homeless Memoir***. Villard, 2006. In 1983, at age fifteen, Janice Erlbaum walks away from her dangerous home life and into the streets of New York determined to make it on her own in this unflinching portrait of being underprivileged, underage, and underdressed.
- Garcia Marquez, Gabriel. ***Love in the Time of Cholera***. First published 1988. In a tale of unrequited love lasting over fifty years, Florentino Ariza has the bad grace to declare his undying love for Fermina Daza at the funeral of her husband, the illustrious physician and leader in the fight against cholera in their South American country.
- Goonan, Kathleen Ann. ***In War Times***. Tor, 2007. If World War II era brainpower could invent the atomic bomb, could equally brilliant minds find a way to nudge human nature toward desiring peace instead of violence? American soldier, Sam Dance, finds himself in the middle of a war and, sometimes, in an alternate reality. John S. Campbell Memorial Award 2008
- Green, John. ***Paper Towns***. Dutton, 2008. Quentin idolizes his next door neighbor, Margo Roth Spiegelman. When she includes him in a wild night of revenge and then disappears, Quentin must follow the clues she has left in order to find her. Edgar Allan Poe Award 2009.

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2009

Grade 11 and Grade 12

- Gruen, Sara. ***Water for Elephants: A Novel***. Algonquin, 2006. Jacob Jankowski, a penniless orphan forced to drop out of veterinary school during the Great Depression, joins a traveling circus. He forges a bond with Rosie the elephant and Marlena, the beautiful star of an equestrian act, whose husband is a handsome circus boss with a violent temper. Alex Award 2007
- Haley, Alex. ***The Autobiography of Malcolm X***. First published 1965. If there was any one man who articulated the anger, the struggle, and the beliefs of African Americans in the 1960s, that man was Malcolm X. His autobiography is the result of a unique collaboration between Alex Haley and Malcolm X, whose voice and philosophy resonate from every page.
- Hall, Donald. ***White Apples and the Taste of Stone: Selected Poems, 1946-2006***. Houghton Mifflin, 2006. In this representative work, the Poet Laureate collects 226 poems from sixty years of published writing.
- Hosseini, Khaled. ***A Thousand Splendid Suns***. Riverhead, 2007. Mariam and Laila, married to Rasheed, form an uneasy alliance so that they and their children survive despite horrific circumstances. In this second novel, Hosseini depicts Afghanistan from a woman's point of view during three decades of anti-Soviet jihad, civil war, and Taliban tyranny. Book Sense Book of the Year 2008
- Ishiguro, Kazuo. ***Never Let Me Go***. Knopf, 2005. A dark secret lurks behind the nurturing façade of Hailsham, a private school in the English countryside where Kathy, now thirty-one years old, lived as a child. Alex Award 2006
- Jordan, Hillary. ***Mudbound***. Algonquin, 2008. Two young war heroes return home to their neighboring families in the Mississippi Delta after World War II. Jamie is haunted by memories of combat, and Ronsel by the horrors of the segregated South. Laura McAllan is adjusting to farm life with her mean-spirited father-in-law. A compelling family tragedy. Alex Award 2009
- Kenyon, Kay. ***Bright of the Sky***. Pyr, 2007. A parallel universe has been discovered by voyager Titus Quinn, but he has lost his family in the process. Saving them involves finding a way back, infiltrating the society, and rising to power; ingenuity, deceit, and luck will be required.
- Kidder, Tracy. ***Mountains Beyond Mountains***. Random House, 2003. In his quest to cure the world of infectious diseases, the brilliant, charismatic Dr. Paul Farmer finds time to make house calls both in Boston and the mountains of Haiti. He blasts through convention to get results with his dedication to the philosophy that "the only real nation is humanity." Book Sense Book of the Year Award 2004
- Krakauer, Jon. ***Into the Wild***. Villard, 1996. Christopher McCandless abandoned all he knew, gave his entire savings account to charity, and hitchhiked to Alaska in an attempt to rebel against authority and his privileged upbringing. Four months later, his body was found by hunters in the wilderness.

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2009

Grade 11 and Grade 12

- Kurson, Robert. ***Shadow Divers: True Adventure of Two Americans Who Risked Everything to Solve One of the Last Mysteries of World War II***. Random House, 2004. Two weekend scuba divers flirt with danger and intrigue in their six-year quest to learn more about a sunken World War II German U-boat they discovered sixty miles off the New Jersey coast. Alex Award 2005
- Kyle, Aryn. ***God of Animals***. Scribner, 2007. Alice and her father struggle to keep the family horse ranch going by boarding horses that are owned by wealthy neighbors. Pressures caused by debt, family illness, and the unrelenting work of the ranch explode and Alice must grow up quickly, making a few mistakes along the way, but learning important lessons about life and being human. Alex Award 2008
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. ***Unaccustomed Earth: Stories***. Knopf, 2008. As with her previous Pulitzer-winning collection, *Interpreter of Maladies*, Lahiri's magic lies in the warm-blooded richness with which she deftly renders each and every one of her characters, not to mention the ambiguity, joy and grief that imbue the liminal spaces between those characters.
- Larson, Erik. ***Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America***. Crown, 2003. The fates of an architect and a serial killer are linked by the greatest fair in American history: the Chicago World's Exposition of 1893, nicknamed "The White City." Edgar Award for Best Fact Crime 2004
- Levitt, Steven D. and Stephen J. Dubner. ***Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything***. William Morrow, 2005. Using analytical tools from economics, the authors find quirky ways to tie economics to a range of emotional forces affecting human behavior, from cheating sumo wrestlers to the relative dangers of guns versus swimming pools.
- Lewis, Michael. ***The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game***. Norton, 2006. The development of the offensive left tackle position to protect a quarterback in the National Football League is presented in combination with the story of Michael Oher, who lived in a Memphis ghetto until he was taken under the protection of a wealthy, loving family. Alex Award 2007
- Margonelli, Lisa. ***Oil on the Brain: Adventures from the Pump to the Pipeline***. Nan A. Talese/Doubleday, 2007. A journalist visited domestic oil industry insiders from the drilling rig to the independent gas station and traveled to international producers. The results of her journeys and research are lively anecdotes and descriptions of the history and politics of the global oil industry.
- Martinez, A. Lee. ***Gil's All Fright Diner***. Tor, 2005. Vampire Earl and Werewolf Duke stop at a diner in the desert town of Rockwood, Texas, where they help Loretta dispose of her zombie problem and agree to stay on to help the town with its other supernatural issues. Alex Award 2006
- McCarthy, Cormac. ***The Road***. Knopf, 2006. In a post-apocalyptic landscape, a man and a boy struggle toward the unknown. This dark and doomed quest offers a spiritual sense of soul and humanity. Pulitzer Prize for Fiction 2007

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2009

Grade 11 and Grade 12

- McEwan, Ian. ***Atonement: A Novel***. Doubleday, 2001. In the summer of 1935, the lives of three people are changed forever by a young girl's scheming imagination. National Book Critics Circle Award 2002
- Moalem, Sharon. ***Survival of the Sickest: A Medical Maverick Discovers Why We Need Disease***. William Morrow, 2007. If every living thing dances to the same two-step imperative, survive and reproduce, then why do we still have diabetes, hemochromatosis, and other life-threatening ailments? With fascinating insights and cutting-edge research, the author looks at evolutionary history, epigenetics, and modern medical research to try to figure out why we developed as we did.
- Moehringer, J. R. ***The Tender Bar: A Memoir***. Hyperion, 2005. While growing up, young J.R. found his male role models among the flamboyant characters who were regulars at Publicans, a Long Island bar owned by his uncle.
- Morrison, Toni. ***The Bluest Eye***. First published 1969. A young Black girl yearns for beautiful blue eyes like the little white girls she sees in this Nobel Prize-winning author's novel.
- Mullen, Thomas. ***Last Town on Earth***. Random House, 2006. Set during the twin catastrophes of WWI and the 1918 flu epidemic, this fiction title explores the risks of trading freedom for safety in a small milling town in Commonwealth, Washington. Mullen examines the parallels with our current fear of contagious viruses, obsession with foreign operatives, and repression of political dissent.
- Neruda, Pablo. ***Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair***. First published 1924. This collection of romantic poems was originally published when the Nobel Laureate was just nineteen.
- Newby, Eric. ***A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush***. Lonely Planet, 2008. First published in 1958 by an Englishman, this humorous account describes a sobering expedition to Afghanistan. Reissued in 2008, this true adventure has added relevance due to the war situation in that country.
- Palwick, Susan. ***The Necessary Beggar***. Tor, 2005. Banned from a parallel universe for a crime of passion, Palwick's exiles arrive in Reno, Nevada, through a shimmering blue portal. Action focuses on the family's falling apart under the strain of adapting to a new life while the back-story of Darroti's crime provides a haunting mystery. Alex Award 2006
- Patchett, Ann. ***Run***. HarperCollins, 2007. An accident during a snowstorm near the Harvard campus suddenly thrusts Mayor Doyle and his sons from their world of privilege into one of complicated and personal issues related to race, class, politics, and faith. Book Sense Book of the Year 2008
- Pettersen, Per. ***Out Stealing Horses***. Translated by Anne Born. Picador USA, 2008. In an austere style, with a series of flashbacks, a Norwegian boy finds his family and friendships unraveling as his courage grows.
- Philbrick, Nathaniel. ***Mayflower: a Story of Courage, Community, and War***. Viking, 2006. Philbrick's historical account of the Pilgrims' preparations, voyages, and colonial settlements in New England conveys a realistic and lively story of remarkable events.

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2009

Grade 11 and Grade 12

- Picoult, Jodi. ***Nineteen Minutes***. Atria, 2007. The residents of a small, ordinary New Hampshire town seek justice in the aftermath of a shocking school shooting carried out by a teenage boy who had been bullied since kindergarten.
- Pink, Daniel H. ***A Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Will Rule the Future***. Riverhead, 2005. The future belongs to a different kind of person with a different kind of mind: artists, inventors, storytellers—creative and holistic "right-brain" thinkers whose abilities mark the fault line between who gets ahead and who does not.
- Plath, Sylvia. ***The Bell Jar***. First published 1963. This autobiographical novel describes an ambitious and brilliant young woman's search for values and her eventual breakdown. The 2004 edition includes additional poems.
- See, Lisa. ***Snow Flower and the Secret Fan: A Novel***. Random House, 2005. Snow Flower and Lily find solace in their bond of friendship as they face isolation, arranged marriage, motherhood, and loss in nineteenth-century China.
- Solzhenitsyn, Alexander. ***One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich***. Knopf, 1995. Although innocent of any crime, Ivan Denisovich Shukhov is convicted of treason and sentenced to serve ten years in a Soviet work camp in Siberia.
- Steinbeck, John. ***The Grapes of Wrath***. First published 1939. Forced out of their home in the Oklahoma Dust Bowl by economic desperation, a family of Okie farmers drives west to California in search of work as migrant fruit pickers. Pulitzer Prize for Fiction 1940.
- Sullivan, Robert. ***Rats: Observations on the History and Habitat of the City's Most Unwanted Inhabitants***. Bloomsbury, 2004. Sullivan overlays his observation and study of the brown rat onto the history of New York City in a narrative which details the rat's seemingly inexhaustible number of connections to mankind.
- Thoreau, Henry David. ***Walden***. First published 1854. Thoreau's observations on nature and life were penned during his solitary stay at Walden Pond, outside Concord, Massachusetts, from 1845 to 1847.
- Tolan, Sandy. ***The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East***. Bloomsbury, 2006. An account of the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts is compiled from interviews with Arab and Israeli families and bound together with the fragile symbol of the lemon tree as hope for peace in these troubled lands.
- Turgenev, Ivan. ***Fathers and Sons***. First published 1862. In this portrayal of conflicts between the older aristocratic generation and the new Russian intelligentsia of the nineteenth century, a young graduate student returns home accompanied, much to the discomfort of his father and uncle, by a friend who does not acknowledge any authority and who refuses to accept any principle on faith.

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2009

Grade 11 and Grade 12

- Tyler, Anne. ***Digging to America***. Knopf, 2006. Two Korean babies are flown to Baltimore and adopted into different American families. Each experiences acculturation, family life, contrasting ideas of what is important, and two very different approaches to adolescence, all the while sharing birthday and holiday celebrations.
- Wade, Nicholas. ***Before the Dawn: Recovering the Lost History of Our Ancestors***. Penguin, 2006. A fascinating account of the history of human evolution that focuses on our common ancestors, possibly only 150 humans, who crossed the Red Sea from Africa 50,000 years ago. Wade's admiration for the wisdom of Charles Darwin permeates the book.
- Walls, Jeannette. ***The Glass Castle: A Memoir***. Scribner's, 2005. This successful gossip columnist, who "made it" against all odds, shares her astonishing memoir of a childhood lived in a seriously dysfunctional, but uniquely vibrant, family. Alex Award 2006
- Wiggins, Marianne. ***The Shadow Catcher***. Simon & Schuster, 2007. Real people and facts provide fictional threads which are used to draw parallels between the lives of photographer Edward Curtis (1868-1952) and the writer's own father, John Wiggins (1920-1970).
- Wilson, August. ***Fences: A Play***. Plume, 1986. In the pre-television, pre-air-conditioned era of the fifties when families spent time on their porches and back yards, Troy Maxson, a tough Black man who has struggled against the reality of unequal opportunities in America, spins yarns and tells stories to his circle of family. Pulitzer Prize for Drama 1987
- Wright, Lawrence. ***The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11***. Knopf, 2006. A sweeping narrative history of the events leading up to 9/11. A groundbreaking look at the people and ideas, the terrorist plans, and the Western intelligence failures that culminated in the assault on America. Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction 2007
- Yang, Gene Luen. ***American Born Chinese***. First Second, 2006. A graphic novel depicts Chinese myths and legends that influence the life of a high school boy as he struggles to fit in with his peers. Michael L. Printz Award 2007
- Zusak, Markus. ***The Book Thief***. Knopf, 2006. Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel, a young German girl, whose book stealing and storytelling talents help sustain her family, the Jewish man they are hiding, and her neighbors. National Jewish Book Award 2006

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2009

Grade 11 and Grade 12

Compiled by:

Jenni Elliott, Chair, and Suzanne Webb, *Episcopal High School*

Jane Chesney and Stephanie Penttila, *The John Cooper School*

Cyndie Jones, *Houston Christian High School*

Marilyn McEvoy, *St. Pius X High School*

Dorain Myers and Julia McGarey, *Kinkaid School*

Heather Nodler, *Emery Weiner School*

Peg Patrick, *St. John's School*

Susan Penny, *Strake Jesuit College Preparatory*

Diane Roberts and Anna Henderson, *St. Thomas High School*

Rebecca Shields, *Incarnate Word Academy*

Herman Sutter and Carol Jackson, *St. Agnes Academy*

Barbara Weathers, *Duchesne Academy*

Copyright ©2009 Houston Area Independent Schools Library Network