**SOUTH GWINNETT HIGH SCHOOL – Summer Reading 2017 – 11th Grade American Literature**

**SUMMER READING:** Students entering eleventh grade English classes are to choose one book from the list below. These titles have been chosen based on interest level as well as thematic and social relevancy to high school students. **Please note:** Books marked with an \* are ones which either deal with mature subject matter, have strong language, and/or realistic descriptions. Books marked with an C:\Users\e200700875\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\R16OYEOF\154201244[1].jpgare Georgia Peach Books. We have attempted to mark all books that we feel some parents may have concerns about; however, we encourage parents to review any book your child chooses. Students taking more than one Language Arts class should read the book for the grade level they SHOULD be in, not the grade being made up.

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| **TITLE** | **Book descriptions from Amazon.com** |
| **\*Almost Perfect** | *Everyone has that one line they swear they’ll never cross, the one thing they say they’ll never do. We draw the line. Maybe we even believe it.* *Sage Hendricks was my line.* Logan Witherspoon befriends Sage Hendricks at a time when he no longer trusts or believes in people. As time goes on, he finds himself drawn to Sage, pulled in by her deep, but sexy feminine voice and her constant smile. Eventually Logan’s feelings for Sage grow so strong that he can’t resist kissing her. Moments later, he wishes he never had. Sage finally discloses her big secret: she was born a boy. Enraged, frightened, and feeling betrayed, Logan lashes out at Sage. Once his anger has cooled, however, his regrets lead him to attempt to rekindle their friendship. But it’s hard to replace something that’s been broken—and it’s even harder to find your way back to friendship when you began with love. |
| **C:\Users\e200700875\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\R16OYEOF\154201244[1].jpgHow It Went Down** by Kekla Magoon | When sixteen-year-old Tariq Johnson dies from two gunshot wounds, his community is thrown into an uproar. Tariq was black. The shooter, Jack Franklin, is white.  In the aftermath of Tariq's death, everyone has something to say, but no two accounts of the events line up. Day by day, new twists further obscure the truth.  Tariq's friends, family, and community struggle to make sense of the tragedy, and to cope with the hole left behind when a life is cut short. In their own words, they grapple for a way to say with certainty: This is how it went down. |
| **C:\Users\e200700875\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\R16OYEOF\154201244[1].jpgPaperweight** by Meg Haston | 17-year-old Stevie is trapped in her body. And now in an eating-disorder treatment center on the dusty outskirts of the New Mexico desert. Her dad has signed her up for 60 days, but she plans on dying on the anniversary of her brother’s death, a death she caused. |
| **C:\Users\e200700875\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\R16OYEOF\154201244[1].jpgSimon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda** by Becky Albertelli | 16-year-old and not-so-openly gay Simon Spier prefers to save his drama for the school musical. But when an email falls into the wrong hands, his secret is at risk of being thrust into the spotlight. Now change-averse Simon has to find a way to step out of his comfort zone before he's pushed out. |
| ***\*A Prayer for Owen Meany*** by John Irving | Diminutive Owen Meaney, the social outcast with the high, pinched voice, has an enormous influence on his friend Johnny Wheelwright—not least because the only baseball Owen ever hits causes the death of Johnny’s mother. Spookily prescient, convinced that he is an instrument of God, Owen intimidates child and adult alike. Why Johnny “is a Christian because of Owen Meaney” is the novel’s central mystery but not its only one. |
| ***Looking for Alaska*** *by John Green* | Before. Miles “Pudge” Halter is done with his safe life at home. His whole life has been one big non-event, and his obsession with famous last words has only made him crave “the Great Perhaps” even more (Francois Rabelais, poet). He heads off to the sometimes crazy and anything-but-boring world of Culver Creek Boarding School, and his life becomes the opposite of safe. Because down the hall is Alaska Young. The gorgeous, clever, funny, sexy, self-destructive, screwed up, and utterly fascinating Alaska Young. She is an event unto herself. She pulls Pudge into her world, launches him into the Great Perhaps, and steals his heart. Then. . . .After. Nothing is ever the same. |
| **Luna** *By Julie Anne Peters* | 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, with help from his sister's clothes and makeup. Now, everything is about to change-Luna is preparing to emerge from her cocoon. But are Liam's family and friends ready to welcome Luna into their lives? Compelling and provocative, this is an unforgettable novel about a transgender teen's struggle for self-identity and acceptance. |
| **Tenderness** *by Robert Cormier* | Eighteen-year-old Eric has just been released from juvenile detention for murdering his mother and stepfather.  Now he's looking for tenderness--tenderness he finds in caressing and killing beautiful girls. Fifteen-year-old Lori has run away from home again.  Emotionally naive but sexually precocious, she is also looking for tenderness--tenderness she finds in Eric.  Will Lori and Eric be each other's salvation or destruction?  Told from their alternating points of view, this harrowing thriller speeds to its fateful conclusion with an irresistible force, and a final twist that will not be easily forgotten. |
| **I’ll Give you the Sun** *by Jandy Nelson* | At first, Jude and her twin brother are NoahandJude; inseparable. Noah draws constantly and is falling in love with the charismatic boy next door, while daredevil Jude wears red-red lipstick, cliff-dives, and does all the talking for both of them.  Years later, they are barely speaking. Something has happened to change the twins in different yet equally devastating ways . . . but then Jude meets an intriguing, irresistible boy and a mysterious new mentor.  The early years are Noah’s to tell; the later years are Jude’s. But they each have only half the story, and if they can only find their way back to one another, they’ll have a chance to remake their world.  This radiant, award-winning novel from the acclaimed author of *The Sky Is Everywhere* will leave you breathless and teary and laughing—often all at once. |
| **C:\Users\e200700875\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\R16OYEOF\154201244[1].jpgDime** *by E. R. Frank* | As a teen girl in Newark, New Jersey, lost in the foster care system, Dime just wants someone to care about her, to love her. A family. And that is exactly what she gets—a daddy and two “wifeys.” Dime never meant to become a prostitute. It happened so gradually, she pretty much didn’t realize it was happening until it was too late. |
| **\**Fallen Angels*** by Walter Dean Myers | A coming of age tale for young adults set in the trenches of the Vietnam War in the late 1960s, **Fallen Angels** is the story of Perry, a Harlem teenager who volunteers for the service when his dream of attending college falls through. Sent to the front lines, Perry and his platoon come face-to-face with the Vietcong and the real horror of warfare. But violence and death aren’t the only hardships. As Perry struggles to find virtue in himself and his comrades, he questions why black troops are given the most dangerous assignments, and why the U.S. is there at all. **Fallen Angels** won the 1989 [Coretta Scott King Award](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/subst/lists/awards/csking.html/$%7b0%7d). |
| ***My Jim*** by Nancy Rawles | In her spare, moving retelling of the story of escaped slave Jim from Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Rawles shifts the focus to Jim’s wife, Sadie, whose unspeakable losses set the tone for Jim’s flight. Trained as a healer, Sadie helps bring Jim into the world when she herself is “no higher than a barrel.” Writing in sonorous slave dialect, Rawles creates a memorable protagonist in Sadie and builds on Twain’s portrayal of Jim while remaining true to the original. |
| **\*I Hunt Killers** by Barry Lyga | Jazz is a likable teenager. A charmer, some might say. But he's also the son of the world's most infamous serial killer, and for Dear Old Dad, "Take Your Son to Work Day" was year-round. Jazz has witnessed crime scenes the way cops wish they could--from the criminals' point of view. And now, even though Dad has been in jail for years, bodies are piling up in the sleepy town of Lobo's Nod. Again. In an effort to prove murder doesn't run in the family, Jazz joins the police in the hunt for this new serial killer. But Jazz has a secret--could he be more like his father than anyone knows? |
| **Code Name Verity** by Elizabeth Wein | Oct. 11th, 1943-A British spy plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France. Its pilot and passenger are best friends. One of the girls has a chance at survival. The other has lost the game before it's barely begun. When "Verity" is arrested by the Gestapo, she's sure she doesn't stand a chance. As a secret agent captured in enemy territory, she's living a spy's worst nightmare. Her Nazi interrogators give her a simple choice: reveal her mission or face a grisly execution.  As she intricately weaves her confession, Verity uncovers her past, how she became friends with the pilot Maddie, and why she left Maddie in the wrecked fuselage of their plane. On each new scrap of paper, Verity battles for her life, confronting her views on courage, failure and her desperate hope to make it home. But will trading her secrets be enough to save her from the enemy? |
| **Ball Don’t Lie** by Matt de la Pena | Sticky is a beat-around-the-head foster kid with nowhere to call home but the street, and an outer shell so tough that no one will take him in. He started out life so far behind the pack that the finish line seems nearly unreachable. He’s a white boy living and playing in a world where he doesn’t seem to belong.     But Sticky can ball. And basketball might just be his ticket out . . . if he can only realize that he doesn’t have to be the person everyone else expects him to be. |
| **Whale Talk** by Chris Crutcher | A varsity letter jacket: it's exclusive, nearly unattainable, revered . . . and everything that's screwed up about Cutter High, as far as T. J. Jones is concerned. That's why T. J. is determined to have the Cutter All Night Mermen—the unlikeliest swim team a high school has ever seen—earn letter jackets of their own.  It won't be easy. For one thing, they don't even have a pool. They will fight for their dignity, they will fight with each other, and sometimes they will just fight. And then they will realize that a single moment can bring lifelong heartache or lifelong friendship. For T. J. and his crew of misfits, the quest may be far more valuable than the reward. |
| **\**The Innocent Man*** by John Grisham  (nonfiction) | In the town of Ada, Oklahoma, Ron Williamson was going to be the next Mickey Mantle. But on his way to the Big Leagues, Ron stumbled, his dreams broken by drinking, drugs, and women. Then, on a winter night in 1982, not far from Ron’s home, a young cocktail waitress named Debra Sue Carter was savagely murdered. The investigation led nowhere. Until, on the flimsiest evidence, it led to Ron Williamson. The washed-up small-town hero was charged, tried, and sentenced to death—in a trial littered with lying witnesses and tainted evidence that would shatter a man’s already broken life…and let a true killer go free. Impeccably researched, grippingly told, filled with eleventh-hour drama, John Grisham’s first work of nonfiction reads like a page-turning legal thriller. It is a book that will terrify anyone who believes in the presumption of innocence—a book no American can afford to miss. |
| **We Are Americans** *by William Perez*  *(nonfiction)* | About 2.4 million children and young adults under 24 years of age are undocumented. Brought by their parents to the US as minors―many before they had reached their teens―they account for about one-sixth of the total undocumented population. Illegal through no fault of their own, some 65,000 undocumented students graduate from the nation's high schools each year. They cannot get a legal job, and face enormous barriers trying to enter college to better themselves―and yet America is the only country they know and, for many, English is the only language they speak.  What future do they have? Why are we not capitalizing, as a nation, on this pool of talent that has so much to contribute? What should we be doing? |