

**Central Bucks School District**  
**Summer Reading -- 2009**  
**C.B. East and C.B. West**

The purpose of summer reading is to encourage in each student a lifelong love of reading. By choosing books students will enjoy and by reinforcing and inviting you to cogitate on your reading with a follow-up activity, we hope to engage and entertain you as well as communicate the joys of participating in a lively, interactive community of fellow readers.



## Grade 10

### Honors

- The Things They Carried (O'Brien)
- Cat's Cradle (Vonnegut)
- Into The Wild (Krakauer)
- The Secret Life of Bees (Kidd)

### Academic and Basic

- Durable Goods (Berg)
- The Things They Carried (O'Brien)
- Into The Wild (Krakauer)
- The Secret Life of Bees (Kidd)

## Grade 11

### Honors

- Great Expectations (Dickens)
- The Picture of Dorian Gray (Wilde)
- Rebecca (DuMaurier)
- Dracula (Stoker)

### Academic and Basic

- The Time Machine (H.G. Wells)
- The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (Adam)
- Dracula (Stoker)
- Rebecca (DuMaurier)

## Grade 12

### Honors

- Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith (Nahai)
- The Kite Runner (Hosseini)
- Bel Canto (Patchett)
- Nectar in a Sieve (Markandaya)

### Academic and Basic

- Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith (Nahai)
- The Kite Runner (Hosseini)
- Bel Canto (Patchett)
- A Lesson Before Dying (Gaines)

***“When I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young.”***  
– Maya Angelou

***Students should select and read one book from the list for their grade and course level.***

***The book should be completed before the beginning of the semester during which the student has English class.***

***Early in the semester, students will complete a follow-up project based on the summer reading books. This project will be graded.***

## Book Synopses

### Grade 10

#### ***The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien**

O'Brien gives a frank portrayal of the horrors of the Vietnam War. This book is a series of fictional episodes taking place in the childhoods of its characters, in the jungles of Vietnam, and back home in America two decades later.

\*\*\* contains strong language

#### ***Cat's Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut**

This entertaining novel, in pure Vonnegut style, is filled with scientists, G-men, and even ordinary folks caught up in chasing each other around in search of the world's most important and dangerous new substance, a new form of ice that freezes at room temperature.

#### ***The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd**

In Sue Monk Kidd's *The Secret Life of Bees*, 14-year-old Lily Owen, neglected by her father and isolated on their Georgia peach farm, spends hours imagining a blissful infancy when she was loved and nurtured by her mother, Deborah, whom she barely remembers. All Lily has left of Deborah is a strange image of a Black Madonna, with the words "Tiburon, South Carolina" scrawled on the back. The search for a mother, and the need to mother oneself, are crucial elements in this coming-of-age story set in the early 1960s against a background of racial violence and unrest. When Lily's beloved nanny, Rosaleen, manages to insult a group of angry white men on her way to register to vote and has to skip town, Lily takes the opportunity to go with her, fleeing to the only place she can think of - Tiburon, South Carolina - determined to find out more about her dead mother.

#### ***Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer**

Krakauer retraces the steps of a 23-year-old young man who renounces his possessions and heads into the Alaska wild where he is destroyed by nature and his own bad choices.

#### ***Durable Goods* by Elizabeth Berg**

Adolescent Katie spends the lazy days of summer waiting for life to begin; waiting for womanhood to begin; waiting to fall in love; and waiting for the beatings to stop.

### Grade 11

#### ***Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens**

An absorbing mystery as well as a morality tale, *Great Expectations* is the story of Pip, a poor boy who desires to improve his lot in life. With colorful and original characters, multiple plot twists, and two different endings from which to choose, *Great Expectations* is Dickens at his most entertaining.

#### ***The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde**

A young man obtains eternal youth but descends into decadence in this dark tale of a perverted soul. This is the enduringly eerie story of a painted portrait that ages and decays although the person who modeled for it remains young and beautiful.

#### ***Dracula* by Bram Stoker**

Jonathan Harker has been asked by the mysterious Count Dracula to make arrangements for a stay in England. Little does Harker realize the Count's ulterior motives. Although students are familiar with the plot of Dracula thanks to multiple film versions, no film does justice to Bram Stoker's original Gothic masterpiece.

#### ***Rebecca* by Daphne Du Maurier**

A young girl marries a handsome, wealthy Prince Charming, only to find herself haunted by the memory of his first wife. What is the secret of the house?

#### ***The Time Machine* by H. G. Wells**

An inventor of a "time machine" makes a sobering and harrowing visit to a future where a subterranean race of ape-like beings dominate, breed, and consume a docile race of human beings. The time traveler must be strong and resourceful if he is to survive and escape.

#### ***The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams**

Join normal human Arthur, alien Zaphod, depressed robot Marvin, and the rest of their crew on the most improbable adventure in the universe! This zany romp through the galaxy has it all - action, mystery, comedy, drama, and dolphins. If you like science fiction, you'll like this book.

### Grade 12

#### ***Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith* by Gina B. Nahai**

When she is five, Lili, the narrator, watches her mother throw herself off the balcony of their lavish home on The Avenue of Faith, only to miraculously grow wings and fly "into the star-studded night of Iran." Lili will not see her mother, known as Roxanna the Angel, for 13 years, but she will be haunted by a desire to understand why she left and to bring about her safe return. The novel is a strong example of "magical realism."

#### ***The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini**

Despite their class differences, Amir, the son of a wealthy businessman, and Hassan, his devoted sidekick and the son of Amir's household servant, play together, cause mischief together, and compete in the annual kite-fighting tournament -- Amir flying the kite, and Hassan running down the kites as they fall. But one day, Amir betrays Hassan, and his betrayal grows increasingly devastating as their tale continues. Amir will spend much of his life coming to terms with his initial and subsequent acts of cowardice until he finally seeks to make reparations.

#### ***Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett**

Somewhere in South America, at the home of the country's vice president, a lavish birthday party is being held in honor of the powerful businessman, Mr. Hosakawa of Japan. Roxanne Coss, opera's most revered soprano, has mesmerized the international guests. It is a perfect evening until a band of gun-wielding terrorists takes the entire party hostage. What begins as a panicked life-threatening scenario, slowly evolves into something quite different as terrorists and hostages forge unexpected bonds. Friendship, compassion, and the chance for great love lead the characters to forget the real danger that has been set in motion... and cannot be stopped.

#### ***Nectar in a Sieve* by Kamala Markandaya**

In the 1920s, young Rakmani leaves her family to marry a tenant farmer and lead a quiet life with her husband in rural India. As years pass, despite poverty, monsoons, and drought, Rukmani and her husband persevere. As British industrialization brings cultural conflict, Markandaya illustrates the clash of old ways versus new ways.

#### ***A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines**

In a small Cajun community in Louisiana in the 1940s, a young black man is about to go to the electric chair for a murder he did not commit. When Jefferson is convicted and sentenced to die, his grandmother begs the lawyer for one last favor - to teach her grandson to die like a man.