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English Summer Reading

South Side High School

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Anonymous: *Go Ask Alice*

“A teenager whose life is dominated by her drug problems recounts in her diary her experiences from her indoctrination into the world of drugs to three weeks before her death.”

Crichton, Michael: *Timeline*

“Using a quantum time machine, a group of young historians is sent back to the year 1357 to rescue their trapped project leader.”

Chbosky, Stephen: *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*

“A series of letters to an unknown correspondent reveals the coming-of-age trials of a high-schooler named Charlie.”

Conroy, Pat: *The Great Santini*

“Bull Meecham is all Marine, a fighter pilot, and absolute ruler of his family. Ben, his oldest son, has to fight against a father who doesn't give in.”

Cormier, Robert: *After the First Death*

“On a New England bridge, schoolchildren are being held hostage, and drawn into the intrigue are the sixteen-year-old terrorist, Miró, the young bus driver, Kate, and Ben, whose father heads a secret government agency.”

Cormier, Robert: *I Am the Cheese: a Novel*

“In this complicated, chilling novel of the savagery of modern society, Adam mentally relives his past while facing the interrogation and trauma of his present life as a guest of the government.”

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan: *The Hound of the Baskervilles*

“The country doctor had come to 221B Baker Street, the famous lodgings of Sherlock Holmes, with an eerie tale -the legend of the devil-beast that haunted the lonely moors around the Baskervilles... The tale warned the descendants of that ancient family never to venture out on the moor in those dark hours when the power of evil is exalted. But the most recent Baskerville, Sir Charles, was now dead -and the footprints of a giant hound had been found near his body. Would the new heir of the Baskervilles meet the same dreadful fate? Sherlock Holmes and his faithful friend Doctor Watson are faced with their most terrifying case in this wonderful classic of masterful detection and bone-chilling suspense.”

Greene, Bette: *Summer of My German Soldier*

“When German prisoners of war are brought to her Arkansas town during World War II, twelve-year-old Patty, a Jewish girl, befriends one of them and must deal with the consequences of that friendship. “

Gunther, John: *Death Be not Proud*

“Johnny Gunther was only seventeen years old when he died of a brain tumor. During the months of his illness, everyone near him was unforgettably impressed by his level-headed courage, his wit and quiet friendliness, and, above all, his unfaltering patience through times of despair. This deeply moving book is a father's memoir of a brave, intelligent, and spirited boy.”

Hinton, S.E.: *Tex*

“Usually easygoing and affable, fifteen-year-old Tex undergoes a startling personality change when his rodeo-riding father reveals the truth about Tex's birth, unwittingly pushing the boy to the point of murder.”

Johnson, Angela: *The First Part Last*

“Brief, poetic, and absolutely riveting, this gem of a novel tells the story of a young father struggling to raise an infant.

Bobby, 16, is a sensitive and intelligent narrator. His parents are supportive but refuse to take over the child-care duties, so he struggles to balance parenting, school, and friends who don't comprehend his new role. Alternate chapters go back to the story of Bobby's relationship with his girlfriend Nia and how parents and friends reacted to the news of her pregnancy.

Bobby's parents are well-developed characters, Nia's upper-class family somewhat less so. Flashbacks lead to the revelation in the final chapters that Nia is in an irreversible coma caused by eclampsia.”

Lubar, David, *Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie*

“Scott's wacky life always plays out in totally unexpected ways. His excitement to be a freshman, finally, is overturned by the horrible reality where he's whacked on the head on the bus, his spare change is stolen, he's totally ignored by all females and he constantly suffers being the lowliest of the low. Even at home, things have turned upside down with older hunky brother's return to base and Mom's surprise announcement of a new sibling to come. Scott nicknames the new arrival Smelly-a combo of Sean and Emily appropriate for either gender, and writes a "NOT a diary" journal with advice and tips for the future. Lubar's gift is in his presentation of the horrors of daily life and the humor that sneaks in as real-life lessons are inadvertently learned. The mystery is who the true friends turn out to be, and the comedy is inherent in how hard it is to learn to go with the flow. Fresh, funny and perfectly plausible as a demonstration of various writing exercises for classroom use, but only if you like laughter.”

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Na, An: *A Step From Heaven*

“When four-year-old Young Ju and her parents emigrate from Korea to California by plane, the child, who knows that God is in the sky, concludes that America is heaven.” A step from heaven," her uncle corrects her after they arrive. However, life proves to be far from that for the family, which now includes a new baby. While told in the girl's voice as she matures from a preschooler into a capable young woman about to set off to college, the spare but lyrical text has an adult tone. The loosely structured plot is a series of vignettes that touch upon the difficulties immigrants face: adjusting to strange customs, learning a new language, dealing with government bureaucracy, adults working two jobs each, and children embarrassed by their parents' behavior. Woven throughout is the underlying theme of dealing with an alcoholic and abusive father. Na has effectively evoked the horror and small joys of the girl's home life while creating sympathetic portraits of all of the members of the family.”

Renault, Mary: *The King Must Die*

“The story of the mythical hero Theseus, slayer of monsters, abductor of princesses and king of Athens. He emerges from these pages as a clearly defined personality; brave, aggressive and quick. The core of the story is Theseus' Cretan adventure.”

Roth, Philip: *Goodbye Columbus*

“The title story of the collection, Goodbye, Columbus, is told from the point of view of the narrator, Neil Klugman. Neil is an intelligent graduate of Rutgers University who works in a low paying position in a library. He lives with his Aunt Gladys and Uncle Max in a working class neighborhood. One summer, Neil meets and falls in love with Brenda Patimkin, a student at Radcliff College who is from a wealthy family. The novella explores the level of classicism which afflicts the relationship, despite the fact that Brenda's father, Ben, is from the same environment as Neil.”

Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

“Harry Potter, a fourth-year student at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, longs to escape his hateful relatives, the Dursleys, and live as a normal fourteen-year-old wizard, but what Harry does not yet realize is that he is not a normal wizard, and in his case, different can be deadly.”

Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

“Harry Potter, now a fifth-year student at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, struggles with a threatening teacher, problematic house elf, the dread of upcoming final exams, and haunting dreams that hint toward his mysterious past.”

Rowling, J.K.: *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*

“Novice wizard Harry Potter, now sixteen-years-old, begins his sixth year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the midst of the battle between good and evil which has heated up with the return of the Dark Lord Voldemort.”

Sachar, Louis: *Holes*

“As further evidence of his family's bad fortune, Stanley Yelnats is sent to a hellish correctional camp in the Texas desert where he finds his first real friend, a treasure, and a new sense of himself.”

Tan, Amy: *The Bonesetter's Daughter*

"The Bonesetter's Daughter dramatically chronicles the tortured, devoted relationship between LuLing Young and her daughter Ruth. . . . A strong novel, filled with idiosyncratic, sympathetic characters, haunting images, historical complexity, significant contemporary themes, and suspenseful mystery." -Los Angeles Times

Tolkien, J.R.R.: *The Hobbit*

“A hobbit named Bilbo Baggins sets out on a great adventure with Gandalf the wizard and some dwarves in order to kill a dragon and finds the One Ring of Power on the way.”

Tolkien, J.R.R.: *Lord of the Rings (any one of the books in the trilogy)*

“The Lord of the Rings takes up the story a few years after the end of The Hobbit. It follows the adventures of an alliance of the various 'races' of Middle-Earth, including Elves, Dwarves, Hobbits and Men, a coalition that hopes to destroy the dreaded Ring of Power, which has come into their possession at the very time Sauron once again threatens conquest.

Although the One Ring confers great powers (including invisibility) on its wearer, the alliance knows that the victory of Sauron is certain if the Ring falls back into his hands. The hero of the saga is the hobbit Frodo Baggins who, in order to destroy it, must secretly take the Ring into the very heart of Sauron's realm.”

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Trueman, Terry: *Stuck in Neutral*

“Shawn McDaniel thinks his father is considering killing him. Of course, no one knows that Shawn is able to think at all because the 14-year-old, who has cerebral palsy, can't speak, interact, or control his movements and bodily functions. But Shawn is also a genius; he remembers everything that he hears and is even able to read. And one more thing--the seizures, which his family members find so pitiable, release his soul in a way that allows him to move about the universe and feel and see things that would be impossible to experience in his trapped body. Shawn would like to live, but he understands that his father, a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, who won the award for a poem about Shawn, wants him dead for the most unselfish reasons. Mr. McDaniel has watched and loved Shawn since he was a baby; he left the family when he couldn't bear to watch him anymore. Still he's a part of Shawn's life, and he fears his boy suffers with no reason and no

hope. Does the responsibility of a parent to care for a child include ending suffering? This short novel packs a punch that transcends its length. Readers spend the whole book inside Shawn's head, a place that is so vivid, so unique they will be hard pressed to forget its mix of heaven and hell.”

Williams-Garcia, Rita: *Like Sisters on the Homefront*

A streetwise teenage mother goes to live with religious relatives in Georgia in this "unusually perceptive, streetwise novel,"

(Publisher's Weekly)

Wells, H.G.: *War of the Worlds*

“An intellectually-superior race from Mars invades the Earth with plans to enslave human beings.”

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Bolt, Robert: *A Man For All Seasons*

“The classic play about Sir Thomas More, the Lord Chancellor who refused to compromise and was executed by Henry VIII.”

Bradbury, Ray: *Fahrenheit 451*

“A totalitarian regime has ordered all books to be destroyed, but one of the book burners suddenly realizes their merit.”

Brashares, Ann: *The Sisterhood of Traveling Pants*

“During summer break, longtime friends Lena, Tibby, Carmen, and Bridget each embark on adventures that they share with each other through a pair of jeans that they have decided will be worn by all and so will absorb all of their stories.”

Bronte, Charlotte: *Jane Eyre*

“Jane Eyre’ is the story of its title character, a poor orphaned girl who comes to live with her aunt where she endures poor treatment from her aunt and cousins. Jane subsequently ships off to Lowood, a Christian boarding school where she endures more horrible conditions. After some time, life becomes more bearable at Lowood for Jane and she eventually finishes her coursework and spends a period of time as a teacher at the school. After leaving Lowood she comes into the employment of Mr. Rochester as a governess at Thornfield Hall. "Jane Eyre" is the story of one woman's struggle to overcome adversity and a classic love story.”

Crichton, Michael: *Eaters of the Dead: the Manuscript of Ibn Fadlan, relating his experience with the Northmen in A.D. 922*

“An ambassador of the tenth-century Caliph of Baghdad is carried off by the Norsemen to endure, for three years, the harshness of their way of life and the creatures that terrorize them.”

Christie, Agatha: *Murder on the Orient Express*

“Just after midnight, a snowdrift stopped the Orient Express in its tracks. The luxurious train was surprisingly full for the time of year, but by the morning there was one passenger fewer. An American lay dead in his compartment, stabbed a dozen times, his door locked from the inside...Red herrings galore are put in the path of Hercule Poirot to try to keep him off the scent, but in a dramatic denouement he succeeds in coming up with not one but two solutions to the crime.”

Cornwell, Pat: *From Potter's Field*

“Dr. Kay Scarpetta, chief medical examiner of Virginia and consultant for the FBI, is in the midst of a late-night autopsy when the call comes: Temple Brooks Gault, the sadistic serial killer has struck again, and he is hunting for her.”

Dickens, Charles: *Tale of Two Cities*

“The epic story of two cities and two men. Charles Darnay and Sydney Carton are alike in appearance, very different in character, but in love with the same woman. Darnay, who has abandoned the cruelty of the French nobility for London, must return to Paris during the violent Revolution to rescue his faithful servant from the guillotine. But what part does Carton play in the dramatic events that follow?”

Finney, Jack: *Time and Again*

"Sleep. And when you awake everything you know of the twentieth century will be gone from your mind. Tonight is January 21, 1882. There are no such things as automobiles, no planes, computers, television. 'Nuclear' appears in no dictionary. You have never heard the name Richard Nixon." Did illustrator Si Morley really step out of his twentieth-century apartment one night -- right into the winter of 1882? The U.S. Government believed it, especially when Si returned with a portfolio of brand-new sketches and tintype photos of a world that no longer existed -- or did it?"

Hong Kingston, Maxine: *Woman Warrior: Memoirs Of Girlhood Among Ghosts*

“A Chinese American woman tells of the Chinese myths, family stories and events of her California childhood that have shaped her identity.”

Kidd, Sue Monk: *The Secret Life of Bees*

“After her "stand-in mother," a bold black woman named Rosaleen, insults the three biggest racists in town, Lily Owens joins Rosaleen on a journey to Tiburon, South Carolina, where they are taken in by three black, bee-keeping sisters.”

Lupica, Mike: *Travel Team*

“Danny Walker is crushed when he doesn't make the Vikings, the seventh-grade basketball team. He is told that he is too short, but he suspects that the real reason has something to do with the bad blood between his divorced father (a former NBA star whose career was cut short by a car accident) and Mr. Ross, the father of the team's best player. Then Danny's father announces that he is starting his own youth team, but unexpected setbacks sideline his dad and the team until Danny steps in and coaches the team himself.”

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McCourt, Frank: *Teacher Man: a Memoir*

“...McCourt focuses upon his particular journey as a teacher in New York City public school classrooms, from his first day in front of a class at a vocational high school in Staten Island...to his accomplishments as a veteran instructor, skilled in unorthodox methods of teaching English and creative writing to exceptional students. McCourt's characteristically vivid storytelling, with his rendering of the distinct and searing voices of particular students, enables his readers to see, hear, and feel this story, a voyage of discovery for students and teacher and, ultimately, all who read this marvelous book.”

Mukherjee, Bharati: *Jasmine*

“When Jasmine is suddenly widowed at seventeen, she seems fated to a life of quiet isolation in the small Indian village where she was born. But the force of Jasmine's desires propels her explosively into a larger, more dangerous, and ultimately more life-giving world. In just a few

years, Jasmine becomes Jane Ripplemeyer, happily pregnant by a middle-aged Iowa banker and the adoptive mother of a Vietnamese refugee. Jasmine's metamorphosis, with its shocking upheavals and its slow evolutionary steps, illuminates the making of an American mind; but even more powerfully, her story depicts the shifting contours of an America being transformed by her and others like her -- our new neighbors, friends, and lovers."

Pelzer, David: *A Child Called It: an abused child's journey from victim to victor*

"This book chronicles the unforgettable account of one of the most severe child abuse cases in California history. It is the story of Dave Pelzer, who was brutally beaten and starved by his emotionally unstable, alcoholic mother: a mother who played tortuous, unpredictable games--games that left him nearly dead. He had to learn how to play his mother's games in order to survive because she no longer considered him a son, but a slave; and no longer a boy, but an "it.""

Picoult, Jodi, *My Sister's Keeper: a Novel*

"Conceived to provide a bone marrow match for her leukemia-stricken sister, teenage Kate begins to question her moral obligations in light of countless medical procedures and decides to fight for the right to make decisions about her own body."

Prose, Francine: *Household Saints: a Novel*

"Set in New York's Little Italy in the 1950s -- a community closely knit by gossip and tradition -- this is the story of an extraordinary family, the Santangelos. Joseph, the butcher, cheats in his shop and at pinochle, only to find the deck is stacked against him; his mother Mrs. Santangelo, sees the evil eye everywhere and calls on her saints; his wife Catherine's determination to raise a modern daughter leads her to confront ancient questions. Finally, there is Theresa, their daughter, whose astonishing discovery of purpose moves the novel towards its unpredictable conclusion."

Remarque, Erich Maria: *All Quiet on the Western Front*

"Paul Baumer enlisted with his classmates in the German army of World War I. Youthful, enthusiastic, they become soldiers. But despite what they have learned, they break into pieces under the first bombardment in the trenches. And as horrible war plods on year after year, Paul holds fast to a single vow: to fight against the principles of hate that meaninglessly pits young men of the same generation but different uniforms against each other--if only he can come out of the war alive."

Sebold, Alice: *Lovely Bones: a Novel*

"A New York Times Bestseller When we first meet Susie Salmon, she is already in heaven. As she looks down from that strange new place she tells us, in the fresh and spirited voice of a fourteen-year-old, a tale that is both haunting and full of hope. Susie watches life continuing after her brutal death: her loved ones holding out hope she'll be found, her killer covering his tracks. As months pass without leads, she sees her family contorted by loss. With compassion, longing, and a growing understanding, she sees them face the worst -- then, in time, pass through grief and begin to mend."

Shaw, George Bernard: *Pygmalion*

"Follows the transformation of a Cockney flower girl's speech, dress, and manners as the result of a wager between Professor Henry Higgins and Colonel Pickering until she successfully passes as a duchess at an ambassador's reception."

Stoker, Bram: *Dracula*

"For centuries he has rules armies of wolves, hordes of rats, legions of walking undead. He becomes a bat, a shadow, a moonbeam. He corrupts the pure and destroys the innocent. He enters dreams and torments minds. Now he means to take

our world and feast forever on our blood. But six people have faced his horror--and lived. Six mortals desperate enough to hunt him, to dare his evil.”

Tartt, Donna: *The Secret History*

“Under the influence of their charismatic classics professor, a group of clever, eccentric misfits at an elite New England college discover a way of thinking and living that is a world away from the humdrum existence of their contemporaries. But when they go beyond the boundaries of normal morality their lives are changed profoundly and forever, and they discover how hard it can be to truly live and how easy it is to kill.”

Wells, H.G.: *The Invisible Man*

“This masterpiece of science fiction is the fascinating story of Griffin, a scientist who creates a serum to render himself invisible, and his descent into madness that follows. “

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Alvarez, Julia: *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*

“Forced to flee their native Caribbean island after an attempted coup, the Garcias--Carlos, Laura, and their four daughters-- must learn a new way of life in the Bronx, while trying to cling to the old ways that they loved.”

Capote, Truman: *In Cold Blood: a True Account of a Multiple Murder and its Consequences*

“Recreates the slaying of the Clutter family of Kansas, and the capture, trial, and execution of their murderers.”

Cunningham, Michael: *The Hours*

“In a novel of love, family inheritance, and desperation, the author offers a fictional account of Virginia Woolf's last days and her friendship with a poet living in his mother's shadow.”

Crane, Stephen: *Red Badge of Courage: an Episode of the American Civil War*

“During his service in the Civil War a young Union soldier matures to manhood and finds peace of mind as he comes to grips with his conflicting emotions about war.”

Flaubert, Gustave: *Madame Bovary*

“Emma Bovary, the wife of a provincial doctor, seeks to escape her boredom by indulging in romantic fantasies and adulterous affairs.”

George, Elizabeth: *Playing for the Ashes*

“Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley and his partner Detective Sergeant Barbara Havers investigate an arson and murder at Celandine Cottage in Kent.”

Golden, Arthur: *Memoirs of a Geisha*

“The "memoirs" of one of Japan's most celebrated geishas describes how, as a little girl in 1929, she is sold into slavery; her efforts to learn the arts of the geisha; the impact of World War II; and her struggle to reinvent herself to win the man she loves.”

Grisham, John: *A Time to Kill*

“Criminal lawyer Jake Brigance faces the fight of his life when he is asked to defend Carl Hailey, who, in a rage of anger, shot and killed the men on trial for the rape of his daughter.”

Hawthorne, Nathaniel: *Short stories of Hawthorne (any collection)*

Heller, Joseph: *Catch-22*

“*Catch-22* is like no other novel. It is one of the funniest books ever written, a keystone work in American literature, and even added a new term to the dictionary. At the heart of *Catch-22* resides the incomparable, malingering bombardier, Yossarian, a hero endlessly inventive in his schemes to save his skin from the horrible chances of war. His efforts are perfectly understandable because as he furiously scrambles, thousands of people he hasn't even met are trying to kill him.”

Hemingway, Ernest: *The Old Man and the Sea*

“The last novel Ernest Hemingway saw published, *The Old Man and the Sea* has proved itself to be one of the enduring works of American fiction. It is the story of an old Cuban fisherman and his supreme ordeal: a relentless, agonizing battle with a giant marlin far out in the Gulf Stream. Using the simple, powerful language of a fable, Hemingway takes the timeless themes of courage in the face of defeat and personal triumph won from loss and transforms them into a magnificent twentieth-century classic.”

Hosseini, Khaled: *The Kite Runner*

“Traces the unlikely friendship of a wealthy Afghan youth and a servant's son, in a tale that spans the final days of Afghanistan's monarchy through the atrocities of the present day.”

Keyes, Daniel: *Flowers for Algernon*

“A man who was once mentally retarded must face his gradual return to his former state when the astounding results of an experimental surgery that increased his intelligence prove only temporary.”

King, Stephen: *'Salem's Lot*

When a writer returns to his Maine home town, he discovers that the peaceful hamlet is being overrun by vampires and sets out to curb this ancient evil before it can spread.

Kingsolver, Barbara: *The Poisonwood Bible: a Novel*

The *Poisonwood Bible* is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it--from garden seeds to Scripture--is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa.

Malamud, Bernard: *The Natural*

Malamud uses the fanatical and aggressive world of professional baseball to mirror contemporary society.

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McCourt, Frank: *Angela's Ashes: a Memoir*

The author recounts his childhood in Depression-era Brooklyn as the child of Irish immigrants who decide to return to worse poverty in Ireland when his infant sister dies.

Melville, Herman: *Billy Budd*

A tyrannical captain tries to break the spirit of a courageous sailor.

Miller, Arthur: *The Crucible*

Based on historical people and real events, Miller's play uses the destructive power of socially sanctioned violence

unleashed by the rumors of witchcraft as a powerful parable about McCarthyism.

McCourt, Frank: *'Tis: a Memoir*

Continues the sometimes harrowing tale of the author's youth as he emigrates from Ireland to the United States, joins the

Army, goes to college, and begins building a life.

Morrison, Toni: *Sula*

At its center is a friendship between two women, a friendship whose intensity first sustains, then injures.

Orwell, George: *1984*

Portrays life in a future time when a totalitarian government watches over all citizens and directs all activities.

Perez-Reverte, Arturo: *The Seville Communion*

A "diabolically good" hacker puts a message on the pope's computer, pleading for him to save a seventeenth-century Spanish church--a church that is killing to defend itself. Although Our Lady of the Tears is but a crumbling baroque building in the heart of Seville, it is also the center of a multilayered mystery--one that will force ecclesiastical sleuth Father Lorenzo Quart to question his loyalty, his vow of chastity, and his faith itself.

Shakespeare, William: *The Taming of the Shrew*

The "shrew" is Katherina, or Kate, a wildly moody woman. She meets her match in the spirited Petruchio, who marries her

and behaves even more wildly than she, meanwhile treating her as if she were a kind and gentle lady. By the end of the

play, she has been reformed, and she makes a memorable speech urging wives to submit to their husbands.

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Allende, Isabel: *Daughter of Fortune: a Novel*

Eliza Sommers, a Chilean orphan raised in a Victorian home, follows her lover to California during the dangerous Gold

Rush of 1849 and discovers a new life of freedom.

Allende, Isabel: *Paula*

With an enchanting blend of magical realism, politics, and romance reminiscent of her classic bestseller *The House of the*

Spirits, Isabel Allende presents a soul-baring memoir that seizes the reader like a novel of suspense. Written for her

daughter Paula when she became ill and slipped into a coma, Paula is the colorful story of Allende's life--from her early

years in her native Chile, through the turbulent military coup of 1973, to the subsequent dictatorship and her family's years

of exile.

Atwood, Margaret: *The Handmaid's Tale*

It is the world of the near future, and Offred is a Handmaid in the home of the Commander and his wife. She is allowed out once a day to the food market, she is not permitted to read, and she is hoping the Commander makes her pregnant, because she is only valued if her ovaries are viable. Offred can remember the years before, when she was an independent woman, had a job of her own, a husband and child. But all of that is gone now...everything has changed.

Brown, Dan: *Angels and Demons*

The murder of a world-famous physicist raises fears that the Illuminati are operating again after centuries of silence, and religion professor Robert Langdon is called in to assist with the case.

Carr, Caleb: *The Alienist*

In 1896 New York, psychologist--or in period terminology, an alienist--Laszlo Kreizler joins forces with journalist John Schuyler Moore to track a vicious serial killer.

Christie, Agatha: *And Then There Were None*

First there were ten--a curious assortment of strangers summoned as weekend guests to a private island off the coast of Devon. Their host, an eccentric millionaire unknown to all of them, is nowhere to be found. All that the guests have in common is a wicked past they're unwilling to reveal--and a secret that will seal their fate. For each has been marked for murder. One by one they fall prey. Before the weekend is out, there will be none. And only the dead are above suspicion.

Clancy, Tom: *Patriot Games*

While vacationing in London, CIA analyst Jack Ryan saves the Prince and Princess of Wales from a terrorist attack and gains the gratitude of a nation and the enmity of its most dangerous men.

DeMille, Nelson: *The Charm School*

The disappearance in Moscow of American Greg Fisher prompts U.S. Embassy and CIA agents to the discovery of a Soviet conspiracy that could devastate the West.

DeMille, Nelson: *Plum Island*

As New York Police Detective John Corey investigates the shooting of a husband-and-wife team of biologists at a top-secret island research site, the media suggest that the couple planned to use a stolen virus to carry out a deadly plot.

Doctorow, E.L.: *The Book of Daniel*

[A] is semi-historical novel...loosely based on the trial and execution of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg....tells the story of Paul & Rochelle Isaacson ... through the person of their older son, Daniel and his sister, Susan, who are both students heavily involved in 1960s student politics. Writing his thesis ('The Book of Daniel') Daniel investigates the background to his parents' conviction and execution with his adoptive parents... The final denouement is the revisiting, in flashback, of the death of his parents, and in due course the death from nervous disorder (and attempted suicide) of Daniel's sister. The novel closes with the library in which Daniel is working being closed by student unrest, and Daniel closing his work with a parody of lines from Chapter 12 of the Biblical *Book of Daniel*.

Dumas, Alexandre: *The Count of Monte Cristo*

A young French sailor unjustly accused of aiding the exiled Napoleon escapes from prison and seeks buried treasure on an island and revenge in Paris during the 1800s.

Faulkner, William: *As I Lay Dying*

Recounts the Bundren family's odyssey across the Mississippi countryside to bury Addie, their wife and mother, through the eyes of each of the family members.

Gladwell, Malcolm: *Blink: the Power of Thinking without Thinking*

Blink is about the first two seconds of looking--the decisive glance that knows in an instant. Gladwell, the best-selling author of *The Tipping Point*, campaigns for snap judgments and mind reading with a gift for translating research into splendid storytelling.

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Haddon, Mark: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*

Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother.

Joyce, James: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

In his first and still most widely read novel, James Joyce makes a strange peace with the traditional narrative of a young man's self-discovery by respecting its substance while exploding its form, thereby inaugurating a literary revolution.

Published in 1916 when Joyce was already at work on "Ulysses," "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" is exactly what its title says and much more. In an exuberantly inventive masterpiece of subjectivity, Joyce portrays his alter ego, Stephen Dedalus, growing up in Dublin and struggling through religious and sexual guilt toward an aesthetic awakening. In part a vivid picture of Joyce's own youthful evolution into one of the twentieth century's greatest writers, it is also a moment in the intellectual history of an age.

Martel, Yann: *Life of Pi: a Novel*

Possessing encyclopedic-like intelligence, unusual zookeeper's son Pi Patel sets sail for America, but when the ship sinks, he escapes on a life boat and is lost at sea with a dwindling number of animals until only he and a hungry Bengal tiger remain.

O'Connor, Flannery: *Short Stories (any collection)*

Plath, Sylvia: *The Bell Jar*

Autobiographical novel about an ambitious and brilliant young woman's search for values, and her eventual breakdown.

Salinger, J.D.: *Nine Stories*

"DeDaumier-Smith's Blue Period," "Teddy," and "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" are among the nine works in a collection of Salinger's perceptive and realistic short stories.

Senna, Danzy: *Caucasia*

The time is the 1970s, the place is Boston, and the story is of a biracial marriage and the two little girls born of it. Cole, the first child, preferred by both parents, is beautifully black like her father. Birdie, the narrator, is light enough to pass as white. The wife is a "bleeding heart liberal" who has involved herself in civil rights causes against the wishes of her intellectual husband. Finally, the marriage ruptures. A general breakdown ensues when a gun-running political activity precipitates the need for the family to disappear. Cole is taken off to Brazil with her father to begin a new life in a black environment more open to people of color. Birdie is caught up in a series of wrenching deprivations when her mother insists on the need to go underground. There is a change of location, name, appearance, and in Birdie's case, a change of race; she is to pass as white. Money shortages, a complete lack of stability, the loss of a sister almost a twin, a feeling of displacement, the strains of adjustment, no sense of community or relationship, and the

growing suspicion that her mother is psychotic make for disturbing adolescent years. Throughout, Birdie keeps alive her need to connect with her father and sister, and faces the knowledge that the liability of her sister's blackness to her mother and her own unwelcome whiteness to her father has brought the family to this sorry situation.

Shakur, Assata: *Assata: an Autobiography*

This black activist's memoir is like a freeze frame of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Though the polemical rhetoric is dated, the book is an otherwise compelling tale of the impact of white racism on a sensitive and powerful young black woman. Born Joanne Chesimard, she took an African name to confirm her commitment to black liberation, joined militant organizations, and was ultimately convicted of the murder of a New Jersey highway patrol officer in 1977. Her descriptions of life in prison and the vagaries of the court system are especially wrenching. Living now in Cuba as an escaped felon, she continues her utopian plea for revolution.

Sittenfeld, Curtis: *Prep: a Novel*

Midwesterner, Lee Fiora is sent by her father to a prestigious boarding school in Massachusetts where she manages to survive in spite of the social differences between her and her classmates.

Walker, Alice: *The Color Purple*

The lives of two sisters--Nettie, a missionary in Africa, and Celie, a southern woman married to a man she hates--are revealed in a series of letters exchanged over thirty years.

Weisberger, Lauren: *The Devil Wears Prada*

Most recent college grads know they have to start at the bottom and work their way up. But not many picture themselves having to pick up their boss's dry cleaning, deliver them hot lattes, land them copies of the newest Harry Potter book before it hits stores and screen potential nannies for their children. Charmingly unfashionable Andrea Sachs, upon graduating from Brown, finds herself in this precarious position: she's an assistant to the most revered-and hated-woman in fashion, Runway editor-in-chief Miranda Priestly. The self-described "biggest fashion loser to ever hit the scene," Andy takes the job hoping to land at the New Yorker after a year. As the "lowest-paid-but-most-highly-perked assistant in the free world," she soon learns her Nine West loafers won't cut it-everyone wears Jimmy Choos or Manolos-and that the four years she spent memorizing poems and examining prose will not help her in her new role of "finding, fetching, or faxing" whatever the diabolical Miranda wants, immediately. Life is pretty grim for Andy, but Weisberger, whose stint as Anna Wintour's assistant at Vogue couldn't possibly have anything to do with the novel's inspiration, infuses the narrative with plenty of dead-on assessments of fashion's frivolity and realistic, funny portrayals of life as a peon.

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