



## WASHINGTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER COMMUNITY READING 2010

“On April 20, 1910, Halley’s Comet appeared again in the night sky. Mark Twain had often said that he had come to this earth with the comet, and that he would leave with it. True to his word, the next day he died. The world mourned for the author who had loved to poke fun at society and events. But for all his jokes, Mark Twain had a deep feeling for humanity and a hatred for injustice...His best-loved books – *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and *Life on the Mississippi* – continue to be translated into many foreign languages. In their pages are found Twain’s family and the playmates of his boyhood in marvelous tales that tell us something about ourselves....” (Quackenbush 36)

One hundred years after his death, Mark Twain (aka Samuel Clemens) is regarded as one of the finest and most authentic American authors. During this anniversary year, many of the historic places associated with his life have hosted celebrations – including the Mark Twain House in Hartford, CT where Twain lived with his family for seventeen of his happiest and most productive years.

This summer we will join readers throughout the world in reading works by Mark Twain and learning more about his life and times. Most of his books and stories are available in paperback and audio versions. You are welcome to listen or to read, or both – keeping in mind the projects that you will do about his life or his writing. You may also watch movies that have been made from his stories, although doing so would be in addition to reading or listening to the original work.

Attached is a list of some of Mark Twain’s works, any of which are acceptable. Those that we think may be more enjoyable for you have been marked with an asterisk (\*). One biography is also included.

### BOOKS BY MARK TWAIN

- 1867 *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calvaras County and Other Sketches\**
- 1869 *The Innocents Abroad*
- 1872 *Roughing It*
- 1873 *The Gilded Age*
- 1867 *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer\**
- 1880 *A Tramp Abroad*
- 1882 *The Prince and the Pauper\**
- 1883 *Life on the Mississippi*
- 1885 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- 1889 *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court\**

- 1892 *The American Claimant*
- 1893 *The 100,000 Bank Note*
- 1894 *Tom Sawyer Abroad: The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson.....*
- 1896 *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc; Tom Sawyer Abroad et al.*
- 1897 *How to Tell a Story and Other Essays*
- 1900 *The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg and Other Stories*
- 1916 *The Mysterious Stranger*
- 1938 *Letters from Earth*
- Fleishman, Sid – The Trouble Begins at 8: a life of Mark Twain in the wild, wild west (2008)*

In addition to a book by or about Mark Twain, you should read (at least) three other books. Attached is a suggested list but know there are many wonderful resources to consult. Ask your friends, people at your local bookshop, librarians, and family members for suggestions. You should feel free to read all kinds of books from autobiographies to collections of poems or short stories to fiction. If you love a particular author, please note that only one book by that author counts toward your total of four books.

For writing, we are asking you to respond to a variety of questions. You may choose which questions to answer or come up with your own. Due on the first day of school is a two page, double- spaced response of 500 to 600 words. This covers all the books. Include your name and a separate list of the titles and authors of **all** the books you read.

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN WRITING:**

What was your favorite book, and why – or your least favorite, and why?

Who was your favorite character? What made that character so memorable?

Of all the books you read this summer which one had the best story? Why did it appeal to you?

Which book was the biggest challenge? What made it challenging?

If you could recommend one book to be turned into a movie tell which would you pick and explain why it would be a good choice.

Of all the authors you read over the summer, whose style did you like the best?

If you could pick the next Middle School group book, which one would you pick? Why would it work for many different ages?



## Washington Montessori School

### Suggestions for Summer Reading for Middle School Students 2010

The following list includes books that are traditionally considered classics for young adults, as well as more contemporary works. The suggestions represent a variety of genres, books about many different cultures and historical periods, and varying degrees of difficulty. This list is offered only as a place to begin. Often other books by the same author are also good choices. You are encouraged to consider books not mentioned on this list, including many adult novels.

Choose those that offer enough of a challenge that reading them is a satisfying accomplishment.

**Adams, Richard**

***Watership Down***

"The stirring story of a hardy band of adventurers (rabbits) fleeing the chaos of their doomed city (a rabbit warren) to face peril and adversity in pursuit of a glorious dream called home." (From the book)

**Allende, Isabel**

***City of the Beasts***

Also recommended are additional titles in this series.

**Anderson, M.T.**

***Feed***

In a future where most people have computer implants in their heads to control their environment, a boy meets an unusual girl who is in serious trouble.

**Anderson, Laurie Halse**

***Fever 1793***

Mattie and her family try to keep their coffeehouse open in the face of the plague that ultimately kills ten percent of the population of Philadelphia. In light of contemporary concerns about pandemics, this story describing the yellow fever epidemic of another era is extremely relevant.

**Armstrong, William**

***Sounder***

A sad story of the racial injustice suffered by a sharecropper's family, and also the story of a boy and his dog.

**Avi**

***The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle***

Charlotte Doyle retells the story of her transatlantic voyage in 1832 at age thirteen, when, alone among a mutinous crew and a brutal captain, she is tried for murder.

**Barron, T.A.**

***The Lost Years of Merlin (a quintet)***

The journey of Emrys from young boy to a wizard with great power in the court of King Arthur.

**Blackman, Malorie**

***Noughts and Crosses***

The racial tension between the second-class pale Noughts and the ruling dark-skinned Crosses makes it impossible for Callum and Sephy to find a way to be together.

**Bloor, Edward**

***Tangerine***

**Bradbury, Ray**

***Martian Chronicles; Something Wicked This Way Comes***

**Bradley, Marion Zimmer**                      *The Mists of Avalon*  
Told from the point of view of the women, this is a riveting version of the Arthurian legend.

**Chevalier, Tracy**                              *The Girl with the Pearl Earring*  
Best-selling book, also a movie, which chronicles the coming of age of sixteen-year-old Griet who is a maid in the household of Johannes Vermeer. A rich, absorbing tale that offers a fascinating, look into the world of the seventeenth century artist.

**Choi, Sook Nyul**                              *The Year of Impossible Goodbyes*

**Cisneros, Sandra**                              *The House on Mango Street*  
Short stories about growing up in a Mexican American family in Chicago.

**Cooney, Caroline B.**                              *The Face on the Milk Carton*

**Cooper, Susan**                                  *Dark is Rising (series)*  
Will Stanton discovers that he is immortal and is destined to save the world, but first he must seek the six signs that will save the world.

**Cormier, Robert**                              *The Chocolate War*  
This is a story of the power struggles and the misuse of power at a New England boys' boarding school. Also recommended is the sequel, *Beyond the Chocolate War*.

**Crane, Stephen**                                *The Red Badge of Courage*  
A classic novel about the Civil War in which a young soldier passes from adolescence to manhood on the battlefields.

**Creech, Sharon**                                *Walk Two Moons*  
While thirteen-year-old Salamanca Tree Hiddle undertakes a 2,000-mile car trip with her grandparents in search of the mother who left her and her American Indian roots, she shares stories from the life of her outrageous friend, Phoebe.

**Crossly-Holland, Kevin**                      *Magic Kingdom for Sale – Sold!*  
Ben Holiday pays a million dollars to purchase the magic kingdom of Landover - and then confronts myriad problems, including dragons, while trying to restore the kingdom.

**Cushman, Karen**                              *Catherine Called Birdy*  
The journal of a thirteen-year-old daughter of an English country knight records her daily life and reveals her longing for adventure beyond the usual role of women of the time.

**Dahl, Roald**                                      *Boy: Tales of Childhood*

**Delaney Sisters**                                *Having Our Say*  
The authors were 100+ when they wrote this saga about growing up in the south and overcoming prejudice, lack of opportunity and other obstacles. One of the sisters became the first black woman dentist, and the other the first black woman teacher in the New York public schools system.

**De Trevino, Elizabeth Borton**              *I, Juan de Pareja.*  
The son of a black African woman and white Spaniard begins his life as a slave who is willed to the great seventeenth century Spanish artist, Diego Velazquez.

**Diamant, Anita**                                *The Red Tent*  
A first-person account of the life of Dinah, daughter of the biblical Jacob, set in 1500 B.C. in Israel and Egypt.

**Donnelly, Jennifer**

*A Northern Light*

Based on a true story and set in 1906. Sixteen-year-old Mattie, determined to attend college and be a writer against the wishes of her father and fiancé, takes a job at a summer inn where she discovers the truth about the death of a guest.

**De Saint-Exupery, Antoine**

*The Little Prince*

The narrator is a downed pilot in the Sahara Desert who begins a dialogue with a "little" prince while trying to repair his plane.

**Dickinson, Peter**

*The Ropemaker*

Fantasy combined with a coming-of-age story about four people on a quest to restore the magical protection of their homeland.

**DuMaurier, Daphne**

*Rebecca*

Starting with one of the most memorable opening lines in fiction "Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again" this satisfying mystery is one of the all-time great gothic novels.

**Erdrich, Louise**

*The Game of Silence*

The sequel to *The Birchbark House*, this novel is set in the mid-nineteenth century on an island in Lake Superior. It tells the story of Native Americans displaced by white settlers

**Farmer, Nancy**

*The House of the Scorpion; The Sea of Trolls*

**Filipovic, Zlata  
Bosnia**

*Zlata's Diary A Child's life in Sarajevo during the war in*

**Fox, Paula**

*Borrowed Finery*

The Newbery-Medal – winning author of *The Slave Dancer* and other acclaimed novels for adults and teens, Paula Fox tells of her life after being dropped off at an orphanage from which she was rescued by a clergyman.

**Freedman, Russell**

*Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery.*

Also of interest are biographies by the same author about the life of Martha Graham, Marian Anderson, Abraham Lincoln, the Wright Brothers, and Crazy Horse.

**Frank, Anne**

*Diary of a Young Girl*

**Frazier, Charles**

*Cold Mountain*

Winner of the National Book Award, this Civil War novel charts the course of W.D. Inman, a Confederate soldier, as he returns home to his sweetheart Ada. Using the framework of The Odyssey, the author tells of the warrior 's journey, the characters he meets, the challenges he encounters, and the ultimate, devastating conclusion.

**Funke, Cornelia**

*Inkheart*

The first in a popular series combines fantasy and intrigue in medieval and modern settings. Characters emerge from books and trade places with real people.

**Furlong, Monica**

*Wise Child*

In a remote Scottish village a girl named Wise Child is abandoned by her parents and taken in by Juniper, a good witch. She teaches Wise Child reading, herbal lore and magic. Ultimately Wise Child must choose between her mother and Juniper.

**George, Jean Craighead**

*My Side of the Mountain (and sequels)*

The classic wilderness survival story of a young man trying to make it alone in the Catskills for a year.

**Golding, William**

*Lord of the Flies*

**Greenberg, Joanne**

*I Never Promised You a Rose Garden*

**Greene, Bette**

*Summer of My German Soldier*

**Hamil, Pete**

***Snow in August***

Set in Brooklyn in 1947, this novel tells of the friendship between the Catholic altar boy Michael and an aging rabbi, Judah Hirsch and the decision Michael ultimately has to make when he witnesses the beating of a Jewish shop-keeper.

**Hesse, Karen**

***Stowaway; Witness***

**Hinton, S.E.**

***The Outsiders***

**Hunt, Irene**

***Up a Road Slowly***

When her mother dies, Julie begins to see all the changes in her life as losses. After her mother's death she is sent to live with a maiden aunt who seems cold and prudish. Julie's life seems lonely and sad, but as she grows up she begins to see that the people and relationships in her life are growing and changing.

**Jacques, Brian**

***Redwall (series)***

**Jordan, Sherryl**

***The Raging Quiet***

Suspicious of sixteen-year-old Mamie, a newcomer to their village, the residents accuse her of witchcraft when she discovers that the village madman is not crazy, but deaf, and she begins to communicate to him with hand gestures.

**Kelly, Eric P.**

***The Trumpeter of Krakow***

Fifteen-year-old Joseph Chametski and his family flee to Krakow in a tale of alchemy, superstition, loyalty, and conspiracy set in fifteenth century eastern Europe.

**LeGuin, Ursula**

***The Wizard of Earthsea***

**Lowry, Lois**

***The Giver (series)***

Winner of the Newbery Medal, this story concerns the coming-of-age of twelve-year-old Jonas in a futuristic world where it appears that all the world's problems have been solved.

**Myers, Walter Dean**

***Hoops***

**Nimmo, Jenny**

***Midnight for Charlie Bone***

Also recommended are the sequels.

**Nye, Naomi Shihab**

***Habibi***

An Arab American girl moves from St. Louis, Missouri, to Jerusalem to experience the confusion of life with her family in a new society and a relationship with a Jewish boyfriend against a backdrop of the historical conflict between Arabs and Jews.

**O'Brien, Robert**

***Z for Zachariah***

A sixteen-year-old girl is alone in the aftermath of an Atomic War until she finds another survivor.

**Orwell, George**

***1984***

**Paulsen, Gary**

***Hatchet***

*Hatchet* has been described as the "best modern survival story for young readers...far more exciting than anything seen on television or in the movies." (Anita Silvey)

**Peck, Richard**

***A Long Way From Chicago***

Reminiscences of summers with a feisty grandmother in a small town in Illinois during the Depression. Also recommended is the sequel, *A Year Down Under*.

**Potok, Chaim**

***The Chosen***

This is the powerful story of two adolescent Jewish boys growing up together in Brooklyn in the early part of the twentieth century. They come to learn important lessons about themselves, their culture, and their places in the world.

**Pullman, Philip**

***The Golden Compass***

In the first volume of the His Dark Materials trilogy, Lyra's adventures take her and her daemon, that physical, animal embodiment of one's soul, to an Arctic world and a parallel universe.

**Remarque, Erich**

***All Quiet on the Western Front***

World War I from the point of view of soldiers on the battlefield and in the trenches. A classic on the horror and ugliness of war.

**Rinaldi, Ann**

***A Stitch in Time***

Ms. Rinaldi is a well-regarded writer of historical fiction. This is the first in her quilt trilogy.

**Ryan, Pam Munoz**

***Esperanza Rising***

When tragedy shatters Esperanza's beloved life on the family ranch in Mexico, she and her mother become migrant workers in California. When Mama gets sick Esperanza must, again, rise above her circumstances.

**Sachar, Louis**

***Holes***

Winner of the Newbery medal, this book takes place in a boot camp for juvenile delinquents in Texas in the summer – Sachar believes the moral of the book is simple: “Reading is fun.”

**Sleator, William**

***Interstellar Pig***

**Smith, Betty**

***A Tree Grows in Brooklyn***

The story of the Nolan family in the slums of Brooklyn in the early 1900s in which the main character, Francie, learns strength and wisdom from her life of deprivation. A classic.

**Spinelli, Jerry**

***Stargirl***

The new girl in town is unlike anyone local ninth-graders have met before

**Staples, Suzanne Fisher**

***Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind***

When the marriage plans of her older sister and only sibling go awry, Shabanu, who lives in the Cholistan Desert of Pakistan, is expected to sacrifice her personal dreams.

**Steinbeck, John**

***The Pearl***

Kino is a pearl diver, a hard and dangerous way to make a living. One day he finds the great pearl. He is very poor, and the pearl is worth a great deal of money, so he believes this will ensure his family's future.

**Stroud, Jonathan**

***The Amulet of Samarkand***

Book One in *The Bartimaeus Trilogy* tells the story of Nathaniel, a magician's apprentice, who summons the djinni Bartimaeus and instructs him to steal the Amulet of Samarkand from the powerful magician Simon Lovelace. Also recommended are the sequels

**Sutcliffe, Rosemary**

***Warrior Scarlet (and others)***

**Taylor, Mildred**  
***Hear My Cry***

***The Well; Let the Circle Be Unbroken; Roll of Thunder***

These three books follow the Logan family, Mississippi farmers, during a time of racial hatred, intolerance and injustice.

**Taylor, Theodore**

***The Cay***

This story of a shipwreck is also the story of the relationship between a twelve-year-old white boy and the dignified West Indian man with whom he survives.

**Tolkien, J.R.R.**

***The Hobbit; The Lord of the Rings***

**Twain, Mark**

***Tom Sawyer***

**Voigt, Cynthia**

***Homecoming***

The first in a series of seven novels in which Dicey leads her siblings across America on foot in the hope of finding a home with her aunt when her mother disappears from the car park.

**Whelan, Gloria**

***Homeless Bird***

Thirteen-year-old Koly escapes an arranged marriage to find her destiny on the streets of India.

**Wolff, Virginia Euwer**

***The Lemonade Trilogy***

## **BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

**Angelou, Maya**

***I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings***

Ms. Angelou's autobiography describes her childhood in a racist South where she faced economic hardship and social injustice, ultimately overcoming these and other challenges to become a famous and esteemed writer.

**Conway, Jill Ker**

***The Road From Coorain***

Ms. Conway, who later became the president of Smith College, tells of growing up in Australia in the mid twentieth century. Crow Dog, Mary *Lakota Woman* **Fritz, Jean**

***Homesick***

**Gibson, William**

***The Miracle Worker***

**Herriot, James**

***All Creatures Great and Small***

**Krakauer, Jon**

***Into Thin Air***

**Montgomery, Sy**

***Walking with the Great Apes***

**Paulsen, Gary**  
***Books***

***Guts: The True Stories Behind Hatchet and the Brian***

**Watkins, Yoko Kawashima**

***So Far From Bamboo Grove***

Also recommended is the sequel, *My Brother, My Sister and I*.

**Wiesel, Elie**

***Night***

As a teenage boy the author suffered through the Nazi death camps, Auschwitz and Buchenwald, during World War II. He survived to become an eminent writer, a spokesperson for victims everywhere of man's inhumanity to man, and a Nobel Peace Prize recipient

**Yep, Laurence**

***The Star Fisher***

Based on the author's own experiences, this is the story of what happens to fifteen-year-old Joan Lee when her Chinese American family settles in West Virginia in 1927.