

Grade 9 Summer Reading

English Department 2021

All students entering Grade 9 in 2021 are required to read at least one novel in the summer months. You are, of course, encouraged to read many novels—both to broaden your literary understanding and for pleasure. However, you are required to read one of the following eight books. The eight books are: *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, *The Golden Spruce* by John Vaillant, *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagamese, *Smoke River* by Krista Foss, *The Marrow Thieves* by Cherie Dimaline, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* by Phillip K. Dick, and *Dune* by Frank Herbert. You should choose the book that appeals to you the most.

Please discuss your choice with your parents prior to reading your novel.

You may wish to purchase this book or check it out from the public library. There are also electronic and audio versions that are accessible via SORA. Alternatively, you may speak to Ms. Roy who has many copies of each book available to borrow over the summer.

Please discuss your choice with your parents prior to reading your novel.

When you return in August, you will be given an assignment based on the book you have chosen. You will be given class time to complete this assignment.

The 'thumbnail' book descriptions that follow have been excerpted from amazon.ca

Life of Pi

WINNER OF THE MAN BOOKER PRIZE

One boy. One boat. One tiger.

After the tragic sinking of a cargo ship, a solitary lifeboat remains bobbing on the wild, blue Pacific. The only survivors from the wreck are a sixteen-year-old boy named Pi, a hyena, a zebra (with a broken leg), a female orangutan--and a 450-pound Royal Bengal tiger. The scene is set for one of the most extraordinary and beloved works of fiction in recent years.

The Book Thief

The extraordinary #1 *New York Times* bestseller that is now a major motion picture, Markus Zusak's unforgettable story is about the ability of books to feed the soul.

It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still.

Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement.

In superbly crafted writing that burns with intensity, award-winning author Markus Zusak, author of *I Am the Messenger*, has given us one of the most enduring stories of our time.

The Golden Spruce

...is the story of a glorious natural wonder, the man who destroyed it, and the fascinating, troubling context in which his act took place.

A tree with luminous glowing needles, the golden spruce was unique and, biologically speaking, should never have reached maturity; Grant Hadwin, the man who cut it down, was passionate, extraordinarily well-suited to wilderness survival, and to some degree unbalanced. But as John Vaillant shows, the extraordinary tree stood at the intersection of contradictory ways of looking at the world; the conflict between them is one reason it was destroyed. Taking in history, geography, science and spirituality, this book raises some of the most pressing questions facing society today.

The golden spruce stood in the Queen Charlotte Islands (Haida Gwaii), an unusually rich ecosystem where the normal lines between species blur. Without romanticizing, Vaillant shows that this understanding is typified by the Haida, the native people who have lived there for millennia, and for whom the golden spruce was an integral part of their history and mythology. But seen a different way, the golden spruce stood in block 6 of Tree Farm License 39.

Grant Hadwin had worked as a remote scout for timber companies. But over time Hadwin was pushed into a paradox: the better he was at his job, the more the world he loved was destroyed. On January 20, 1997, with the temperature near zero, Hadwin swam across the Yakoun River with a chainsaw. He tore into the golden spruce, leaving it so unstable that the first wind would push it over. A few weeks later, Hadwin set off in a kayak across the treacherous Hecate Strait to face court charges. He has not been heard from since.

Vaillant describes Hadwin's actions in engrossing detail, but also provides the complex environmental, political and economic context in which they took place. **The Golden Spruce** forces one to ask: can the damage our civilization exacts on the natural world be justified?

Indian Horse

Saul Indian Horse has hit bottom. His last binge almost killed him, and now he's a reluctant resident in a treatment centre for alcoholics, surrounded by people he's sure will never understand him. But Saul wants peace, and he grudgingly comes to see that he'll find it only through telling his story. With him, readers embark on a journey back through the life he's led as a northern Ojibway, with all its joys and sorrows.

With compassion and insight, author Richard Wagamese traces through his fictional characters the decline of a culture and a cultural way. For Saul, taken forcibly from the land and his family when he's sent to residential school, salvation comes for a while through his incredible gifts as a hockey player. But in the harsh realities of 1960s Canada, he battles obdurate racism and the spirit-destroying effects of cultural alienation and displacement. *Indian Horse* unfolds against the bleak loveliness of northern Ontario, all rock, marsh, bog and cedar. Wagamese writes with a spare beauty, penetrating the heart of a remarkable Ojibway man.

Smoke River

An extraordinarily accomplished debut, *Smoke River* follows two families on different sides of a crisis with deep roots in history and territory through one fateful summer. For readers of Lori Lansens, Joseph Boyden, and John Bemrose's *The Island Walkers*.

After a proposed subdivision becomes the site of a Mohawk protest -- the land, which has long formed a kind of neutral border between a reserve and the neighbouring town, is contested -- tensions escalate through three sweltering summer months, exposing old wounds, as well as forging new and sometimes surprising connections.

This compelling contemporary story is told in the voices of several vivid, unforgettable characters, from the restless young Mohawk woman dreaming of adventure and fame in the wider world; to the successful businessman who has made good use of his position between two communities, and who harbours a surprisingly tender secret; to the high school hero whose inner life would shock his admirers, especially his ambitious mother; and to the unexpected lovers, who must weigh happiness against history and fierce pride.

Smoke River is wise and tender, fearless and often very funny. It heralds the arrival of a vibrant, original, and intrepid new voice in Canadian literature.

Dune

SOON TO BE A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE directed by Denis Villeneuve, starring Timothée Chalamet, Josh Brolin, Jason Momoa, Zendaya, Rebecca Ferguson, Oscar Isaac, Javier Bardem, Dave Bautista, Stellan Skarsgård, and Charlotte Rampling.

Frank Herbert's classic masterpiece—a triumph of the imagination and one of the bestselling science fiction novels of all time.

Set on the desert planet Arrakis, *Dune* is the story of the boy Paul Atreides, heir to a noble family tasked with ruling an inhospitable world where the only thing of value is the “spice” melange, a drug capable of extending life and enhancing consciousness. Coveted across the known universe, melange is a prize worth killing for....

When House Atreides is betrayed, the destruction of Paul's family will set the boy on a journey toward a destiny greater than he could ever have imagined. And as he evolves into the mysterious man known as Muad'Dib, he will bring to fruition humankind's most ancient and unattainable dream.

A stunning blend of adventure and mysticism, environmentalism and politics, *Dune* won the first Nebula Award, shared the Hugo Award, and formed the basis of what is undoubtedly the grandest epic in science fiction.

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheet

A masterpiece ahead of its time, a prescient rendering of a dark future, and the inspiration for the blockbuster film *Blade Runner*

By 2021, the World War has killed millions, driving entire species into extinction and sending mankind off-planet. Those who remain covet any living creature, and for people who can't afford one, companies built incredibly realistic simulacra: horses, birds, cats, sheep. They've even built humans. Immigrants to Mars receive androids so sophisticated they are indistinguishable from true men or women. Fearful of the havoc these artificial humans can wreak, the government bans them from Earth. Driven into hiding, unauthorized androids live among human beings, undetected. Rick Deckard, an officially sanctioned bounty hunter, is commissioned to find rogue androids and "retire" them. But when cornered, androids fight back—with lethal force.

The Marrow Thieves

Winner of the 2017 Governor General's Literary Award (Young People's Literature - Text)

Winner of the 2017 Kirkus Prize

Winner of the 2018 Sunburst Award

Winner of the 2018 Amy Mathers Teen Book Award

Winner of the 2018 Burt Award for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Young Adult Literature

Just when you think you have nothing left to lose, they come for your dreams.

Humanity has nearly destroyed its world through global warming, but now an even greater evil lurks. The Indigenous people of North America are being hunted and harvested for their bone marrow, which carries the key to recovering something the rest of the population has lost: the ability to dream. In this dark world, Frenchie and his companions struggle to survive as they make their way up north to the old lands. For now, survival means staying hidden - but what they don't know is that one of them holds the secret to defeating the marrow thieves.