

# INDEPENDENT READING LIST

YOU MAY NOT CHOOSE A BOOK THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY READ | NO ABRIDGED VERSIONS

## CLASSICS

*Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott  
*Emma* by Jane Austen  
*Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen  
*The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett  
*White Fang* Jack London  
*Anne of Green Gables* by L. M. Montgomery

## HISTORICAL FICTION

*The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane  
*Ghost Hawk* by Susan Cooper  
*The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini  
*The Scarlet Pimpernel* by Baroness Orczy  
*All Quiet on the Western Front* Erich Maria Remarque  
*Between Shades of Gray* by Ruta Sepetys  
\* *Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys

## FICTION

*Life of Pi* by Yann Martel  
*The Last Sin Eater* by Francine Rivers

## SCI-FI

*Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card  
*Jurassic Park* by Michael Crichton  
\* *The Martian* by Andy Weir

## FANTASY

*The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins  
*The False Prince* by Jennifer Nielsen  
\* *The Golden Compass* by Phillip Pullman  
*The Rithmatist* by Brandon Sanderson  
*The Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien

## FAIRY TALES & RETELLINGS

*The Wrath and the Dawn* by Renee Ahdieh  
*The Goose Girl* by Shannon Hale  
*The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman  
*Cinder* by Marissa Meyer  
*Heartless* by Marissa Meyer  
\* *Dorothy Must Die* by Danielle Paige

## FOLKLORE, MYTHOLOGIES, & LEGENDS

\* *Norse Mythology* by Neil Gaiman  
*The Scorpio Races* by Maggie Stiefvater  
*Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* by Grace Lin  
\* *The Dark is Rising* by Susan Cooper  
*The Once and Future King* by T.H. White

**TITLES WITH AN ASTERISK  
REQUIRE A PARENT EMAIL  
GRANTING PERMISSION**

**Little Women** by Louisa May Alcott

Following the lives of four sisters on a journey out of adolescence, Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* explores the difficulties associated with gender roles in a Post-Civil War America.

**Emma** by Jane Austen

Beautiful, clever, rich - and single - Emma Woodhouse is perfectly content with her life and sees no need for either love or marriage. Nothing, however, delights her more than interfering in the romantic lives of others. But when she attempts to arrange a suitable match for Harriet Smith, her carefully laid plans soon unravel and have consequences that she never expected.

**Sense and Sensibility** by Jane Austen

Marianne Dashwood wears her heart on her sleeve. Meanwhile Elinor, always sensitive to social convention, is struggling to conceal her own romantic disappointment, even from those closest to her. Through their parallel experience of love and loss, the sisters learn that sense must mix with sensibility if they are to find personal happiness in a society where status and money govern the rules of love.

**The Secret Garden** by Frances Hodgson Burnett

When orphaned Mary Lennox comes to live at her uncle's great house on the Yorkshire Moors, she finds it full of secrets. The mansion has nearly one hundred rooms, and her uncle keeps himself locked up. The gardens are Mary's only escape. Then, Mary discovers a secret garden, surrounded by walls and locked with a missing key. One day, with the help of two unexpected companions, she discovers a way in.

**White Fang** by Jack London

White Fang is part dog and part wolf, and the lone survivor of his family. In his lonely world, he soon learns to follow the harsh law of the North--kill or be killed. But nothing in White Fang's life can prepare him for the cruel owner who turns him into a vicious killer. Will White Fang ever know the kindness of a gentle master?

**Anne of Green Gables** by L.M. Montgomery

Everyone's favorite redhead, the spunky Anne Shirley, begins her adventures at Green Gables, a farm outside Avonlea, Prince Edward Island. When the freckled girl realizes that the elderly Cuthberts wanted to adopt a boy instead, she begins to try to win them over.

**The Red Badge of Courage** by Stephen Crane

During an unnamed battle, 18-year-old private Henry Fleming survives what he considers to be a lost cause by escaping into a nearby wood, deserting his battalion.

**Ghost Hawk** by Susan Cooper

If Little Hawk survives three moons in the woods by himself, he will be a man. John Wakely is only ten when his father dies, but he has experienced the friendship of the nearby tribes. The intertwining stories of Little Hawk and John Wakely are a fascinating tale of friendship and an eye-opening look at the history of our nation.

**The Kite Runner** by Khaled Hosseini

The heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, *The Kite Runner* is about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption. A sweeping story of family, love, and friendship told against the devastating backdrop of the history of Afghanistan over the last thirty years, *The Kite Runner* is an unusual and powerful novel.

**The Scarlet Pimpernel** by Emmuska Orczy

Armed with only his wits and cunning, one man recklessly defies the French revolutionaries and rescues scores of innocent men, women, and children from the deadly guillotine. His friends and foes know him only as the Scarlet Pimpernel. But the ruthless French agent Chauvelin is sworn to discover his identity and to hunt him down.

**All Quiet on the Western Front** by Erich Maria Remarque

Paul Bäumer enlists with his classmates in the German army of World War I. These young men become enthusiastic soldiers, but their world breaks into pieces under the first bombardment in the trenches. Through years of vivid horror, Paul holds fast to a single vow: to fight against the hatred that meaninglessly pits young men of the same generation but different uniforms against one another – if only he can come out of the war alive.

**Between Shades of Gray** by Ruta Sepetys

Lina is just like any other fifteen-year-old Lithuanian girl in 1941. Until one night when Soviet officers barge into her home, tearing her family from the comfortable life they've known. Lina slowly makes her way north to a work camp in the coldest reaches of Siberia. Lina finds solace in her art, meticulously--and at great risk--documenting events by drawing.

**Salt to the Sea** by Ruta Sepetys

Winter, 1945. Four teenagers. Four secrets. Each one born of a different homeland; each one hunted, and haunted, by tragedy, lies, and war. As thousands of desperate refugees flock to the coast in the midst of a Soviet advance, four paths converge. Ruta Sepetys lifts the veil on a shockingly little-known event of World War II.

**Life of Pi** by Yann Martel

Life of Pi is a fantasy adventure and survival novel. Piscine Molitor "Pi" Patel, a Tamil boy from Pondicherry, explores issues of spirituality and practicality from an early age.

**The Last Sin Eater** by Francine Rivers

All that matters for Cadi Forbes is finding the one man who can set her free from the sin that plagues her, that has stolen her mother's love and made her wish she could flee. Cadi and the sin eater must face themselves and the One who will demand everything from them. A captivating tale of suffering, seeking, and redemption.

**Ender's Game** by Orson Scott Card

The result of genetic experimentation, Ender may be the military genius Earth desperately needs in a war against an alien enemy seeking to destroy all human life. The only way to find out is to throw Ender into ever harsher training, to chip away and find the diamond inside, or destroy him utterly.

**Jurassic Park** by Michael Crichton

A billionaire has created a technique to clone dinosaurs. From the DNA that his crack team of scientists extract, he is able to grow the dinosaurs in his laboratories and lock them away on an island behind electric fences, creating a sort of theme park. He asks a group of scientists from several different fields to come and view the park, but something goes terribly wrong.

**The Martian** by Andy Weir

Astronaut Mark Watney became one of the first people to walk on Mars. Now, he's sure he'll be the first person to die there. Chances are, though, Mark won't have time to starve to death. The damaged machinery, unforgiving environment or plain-old "human error" are much more likely to kill him first. But Mark's not ready to quit. Armed with nothing but his ingenuity and his engineering skills, he embarks on a dogged quest to stay alive.

**The Hunger Games** by Suzanne Collins

Winning will make you famous. Losing means certain death. Each district must yield one boy and one girl between the ages of 12 and 18 through a lottery system to participate in the games. The 'tributes' are chosen during the annual Reaping and are forced to fight to the death, leaving only one survivor to claim victory.

**The False Prince** by Jennifer A. Nielsen

In a discontent kingdom, civil war is brewing. Conner devises a cunning plan to find an impersonator of the king's long-lost son and install him as a puppet prince. Four orphans are recruited to compete for the role, including a defiant boy named Sage. An adventure filled with danger and action, lies and deadly truths.

**The Golden Compass** by Philip Pullman

Lyra Belacqua's carefree life among the scholars at Oxford's Jordan College is shattered by the arrival of two visitors. Her fearsome uncle, Lord Asriel, appears with evidence of danger in the North, including photographs of a celestial phenomenon and a city suspended in the Aurora Borealis that he suspects is part of an alternate universe. He leaves Lyra in the care of Mrs. Coulter, an enigmatic scholar who offers to give Lyra the attention her uncle has long refused her. However, *nothing* is as it seems.

**The Rithmatist** by Brandon Sanderson

Rithmatists have the power to infuse life into two-dimensional figures known as Chalklings. Rithmatists are humanity's only defense against the Wild Chalklings. Having nearly overrun the territory of Nebrask, the Wild Chalklings now threaten all of the American Isles. As the son of a lowly chalkmaker at Armedius Academy, Joel can only watch as Rithmatist students learn the magical art that he would do anything to practice. Then students start disappearing—kidnapped from their rooms at night, leaving trails of blood.

**The Fellowship of the Ring** by J.R.R. Tolkien

One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them, One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them. In a sleepy village in the Shire, young Frodo Baggins finds himself faced with an immense task. Frodo must leave his home and make a perilous journey across Middle-earth to the Cracks of Doom, there to destroy the Ring and foil the Dark Lord in his evil purpose.

**The Wrath & the Dawn** by Renee Ahdieh

In a land ruled by a murderous boy-king, each dawn brings heartache to a new family. Khalid, the eighteen-year-old Caliph of Khorasan, is a monster. Each night he takes a new bride only to have a silk cord wrapped around her throat come morning. When sixteen-year-old Shahrzad's dearest friend falls victim to Khalid, Shahrzad vows vengeance. Inspired by *A Thousand and One Nights*, *The Wrath and the Dawn* is a sumptuous and enthralling read from beginning to end.

**The Goose Girl** by Shannon Hale

Anidori-Kiladra Talianna Isilee, Crown Princess of Kildenree, develops the skills of animal speech, but is never comfortable speaking with people, so when her silver-tongued lady-in-waiting leads a mutiny, Ani is helpless and cannot persuade anyone to assist her. Shannon Hale has woven an incredible, original and magical tale of a girl who must find her own unusual talents.

**The Graveyard Book** by Neil Gaiman

Nobody Owens, known to his friends as Bod, is a normal boy. He would be completely normal if he didn't live in a sprawling graveyard, being raised and educated by ghosts, with a solitary guardian who belongs to neither the world of the living nor of the dead. There are dangers and adventures in the graveyard for a boy. But if Bod leaves the graveyard, then he will come under attack from the man Jack.

**Cinder** by Marissa Meyer

Sixteen-year-old Cinder is considered a technological mistake by most of society and a burden by her stepmother. Being cyborg does have its benefits, though: Cinder's brain interference has given her an uncanny ability to fix things (robots, hovers, her own malfunctioning parts), making her the best mechanic in New Beijing. This reputation brings Prince Kai himself to her weekly market booth, needing her to repair a broken android before the annual ball.

**Heartless** by Marissa Meyer

Catherine may be one of the most desired girls in Wonderland and a favorite of the unmarried King, but her interests lie elsewhere. A talented baker, she wants to open a shop and create delectable pastries. But for her mother, such a goal is unthinkable for a woman who could be a queen. Cath is determined to choose her own destiny. But in a land thriving with magic, madness, and monsters, fate has other plans.

### **Dorothy Must Die** by Danielle Paige

I didn't ask to be some kind of hero. But when your whole life gets swept up by a tornado - taking you with it - you have no choice but to go along. Sure, I've read the books. I've seen the movies. I know the song about the rainbow and the happy little bluebirds. But I never expected Oz to look like this. To be a place where Good Witches can't be trusted and Wicked Witches may just be the good guys. There's still a yellow brick road - but even that's crumbling. What happened? Dorothy. They say she found a way to come back to Oz. And now no one is safe.

### **Norse Mythology** by Neil Gaiman

Gaiman fashions stories into a novelistic arc that begins with the genesis of the legendary nine worlds; delves into the exploits of the deities, dwarves, and giants; and culminates in Ragnarok, the twilight of the gods. Gaiman stays true to the myths while vividly reincarnating Odin, Thor, and Loki. From Gaiman's deft and witty prose emerges the gods with their fiercely competitive natures, their susceptibility to being duped and to dupe others, and their tendency to let passion ignite their actions, making these long-ago myths breathe life again.

### **The Scorpio Races** by Maggie Stiefvater

It happens every November: the Scorpio Races. Riders attempt to keep hold of their water horses long enough to make it to the finish line. Some riders live. Others die. At nineteen, Sean Kendrick is the returning champion. He is a young man of few words, and if he has any fears, he keeps them buried deep, where no one else can see. Puck Connolly is different. She never meant to ride in the Scorpio Races. But fate hasn't given her much of a chance.

### **Where the Mountain Meets the Moon** by Grace Lin

A fantasy crossed with Chinese folklore, *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* is a timeless adventure story. A young girl named Minli spends her days working hard in the fields and her nights listening to her father spin fantastic tales about the Jade Dragon and the Old Man of the Moon. Minli's mother chides him for filling her head with nonsense. But Minli believes these enchanting stories and embarks on an extraordinary journey to find them.

### **The Dark Is Rising** by Susan Cooper

*"When the Dark comes rising, six shall turn it back, three from the circle, three from the track; wood, bronze, iron; water, fire, stone; five will return, and one go alone."* With these mysterious words, Will Stanton discovers that he is no mere boy. He is destined to battle the powers of evil that trouble the land. His task is monumental: he must find and guard the six great Signs of the Light, which will create a force strong enough to match and perhaps overcome that of the Dark. Will must work within a continuum of time and space much broader than he ever imagined.

### **The Once and Future King** by T.H. White

Once upon a time, a young boy "Wart" was tutored by a magician named Merlyn in preparation for a future he couldn't possibly imagine, in which he would ally himself with the greatest knights, love a legendary queen and unite a country dedicated to chivalrous values. During Arthur's reign, the kingdom of Camelot was founded to cast enlightenment on the Dark Ages, while the knights of the Round Table embarked on many a noble quest.