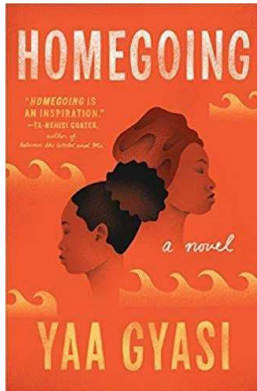


# Summer Reading Book List 2024-2025

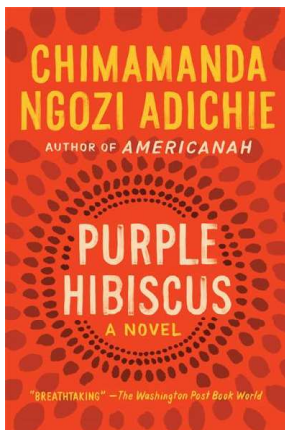
**Note:** Books are categorized by recommendations for grades 9-12, grades 9-10, and grades 11-12. Please choose your book according to your grade level and interests. Once you have finished reading, be sure to look at the requirements for the [one-pager project](#).

## **Recommended for 9-12:**



### ***Homegoing*, Yaa Gyasi**

*Homegoing*, by Yaa Gyasi, is a historical novel that traces the descendants of two half-sisters Effia and Esi, born into different villages in Ghana. The sisters' lives follow different paths: Effia marries a wealthy Englishman and lives in Cape Coast Castle, while Esi is captured during a raid and sold into slavery. *Homegoing* follows the parallel narrative lines of their descendants through eight generations, intimately portraying the African and African American experience in the aftermath of enslavement.



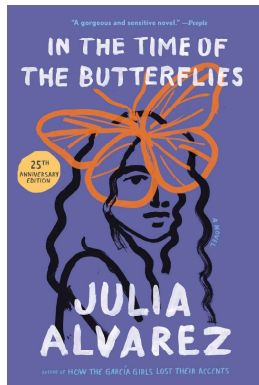
### ***The Purple Hibiscus*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

Fifteen-year-old Kambili and her older brother Jaja lead a privileged life in Enugu, Nigeria. They live in a beautiful house, with a caring family, and attend an exclusive missionary school. They're completely shielded from the troubles of the world. Yet, as Kambili reveals in her tender-voiced

account, things are less perfect than they appear. Although her Papa is generous and well respected, he is fanatically religious and tyrannical at home—a home that is silent and suffocating.

As the country begins to fall apart under a military coup, Kambili and Jaja are sent to their aunt, a university professor outside the city, where they discover a life beyond the confines of their father's authority. Books cram the shelves, curry and nutmeg permeate the air, and their cousins' laughter rings throughout the house. When they return home, tensions within the family escalate, and Kambili must find the strength to keep her loved ones together.

*Purple Hibiscus* is an exquisite novel about the emotional turmoil of adolescence, the powerful bonds of family, and the bright promise of freedom.

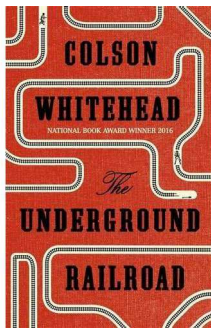


### ***In the Time of Butterflies, Julia Alvarez***

Set during the waning days of the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic in 1960, this extraordinary novel tells the story of the Mirabal sisters, three young wives and mothers who are assassinated after visiting their jailed husbands.

From the author of *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* comes this tale of courage and sisterhood set in the Dominican Republic during the rise of the Trujillo dictatorship. A skillful blend of fact and fiction, *In the Time of the Butterflies* is inspired by the true story of the three Mirabal sisters who, in 1960, were murdered for their part in an underground plot to overthrow the government. Alvarez breathes life into these historical figures--known as "las mariposas," or "the butterflies," in the underground--as she imagines their teenage years, their gradual involvement with the revolution, and their terror as their dissent is uncovered.

Alvarez's controlled writing perfectly captures the mounting tension as "the butterflies" near their horrific end. The novel begins with the recollections of Dede, the fourth and surviving sister, who fears abandoning her routines and her husband to join the movement. Alvarez also offers the perspectives of the other sisters: brave and outspoken Minerva, the family's political ringleader; pious Patria, who forsakes her faith to join her sisters after witnessing the atrocities of the tyranny; and the baby sister, sensitive Maria Teresa, who, in a series of diaries, chronicles her allegiance to Minerva and the physical and spiritual anguish of prison life.

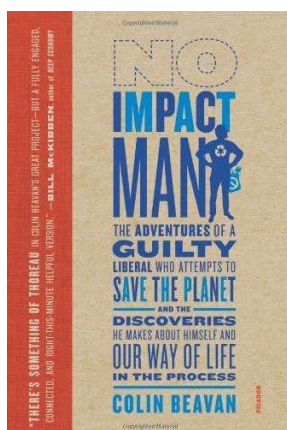


### ***The Underground Railroad, Colson Whitehead***

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is hell for all the slaves, but especially bad for Cora; an outcast even among her fellow Africans, and she is coming into womanhood--where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. Matters do not go as planned--Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted.

In Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor--engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora and Caesar's first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. But the city's placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels. Forced to flee again, Cora embarks on a harrowing flight, state by state, seeking true freedom.

Like the protagonist of Gulliver's Travels, Cora encounters different worlds at each stage of her journey--hers is an odyssey through time as well as space. As Whitehead brilliantly re-creates the unique terrors for black people in the pre-Civil War era, his narrative seamlessly weaves the saga of America from the brutal importation of Africans to the unfulfilled promises of the present day. The Underground Railroad is at once a kinetic adventure tale of one woman's ferocious will to escape the horrors of bondage and a shattering, powerful meditation on the history we all share.

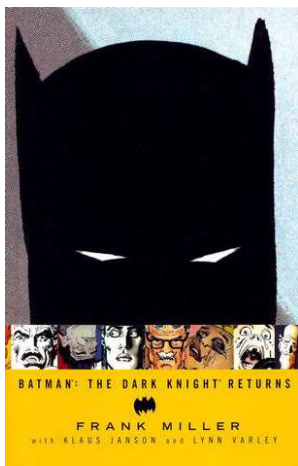


### ***No Impact Man, Colin Beavan***

A guilty liberal finally snaps, swears off plastic, goes organic, becomes a bicycle nut, turns off his

power, and generally becomes a tree-hugging lunatic who tries to save the polar bears and the rest of the planet from environmental catastrophe while dragging his baby daughter and Prada-wearing, Four Seasons-loving wife along for the ride. And that's just the beginning. Bill McKibben meets Bill Bryson in this seriously engaging look at one man's decision to put his money where his mouth is and go off the grid for one year—while still living in New York City—to see if it's possible to make no net impact on the environment. In other words, no trash, no toxins in the water, no elevators, no subway, no products in packaging, no air-conditioning, no television . . .

What would it be like to try to live a no-impact lifestyle? Is it possible? Could it catch on? Is living this way more satisfying or less satisfying? Harder or easier? Is it worthwhile or senseless? Are we all doomed or can our culture reduce the barriers to sustainable living so it becomes as easy as falling off a log? These are the questions at the heart of this whole mad endeavor, via which Colin Beavan hopes to explain to the rest of us how we can realistically live a more “eco-effective” and by turns more content life in an age of inconvenient truths.



### ***The Dark Knight Returns*, Frank Miller**

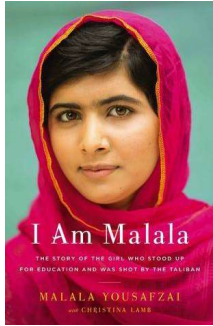
This masterpiece of modern comics storytelling brings to vivid life a dark world and an even darker man. Together with inker Klaus Janson and colorist Lynn Varley, writer/artist Frank Miller completely reinvents the legend of Batman in his saga of a near-future Gotham City gone to rot, ten years after the Dark Knight's retirement.

Crime runs rampant in the streets, and the man who was Batman is still tortured by the memories of his parents' murders. As civil society crumbles around him, Bruce Wayne's long-suppressed vigilante side finally breaks free of its self-imposed shackles.

The Dark Knight returns in a blaze of fury, taking on a whole new generation of criminals and matching their level of violence. He is soon joined by this generation's Robin—a girl named Carrie Kelley, who proves to be just as invaluable as her predecessors.

But can Batman and Robin deal with the threat posed by their deadliest enemies, after years of incarceration have made them into perfect psychopaths? And more important, can anyone survive the coming fallout of an undeclared war between the superpowers—or a clash of what were once the world's greatest superheroes?

Over fifteen years after its debut, *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* remains an undisputed classic and one of the most influential stories ever told in the comics medium.



### ***I Am Malala*, Malala Yousafzai**

*I come from a country that was created at midnight. When I almost died it was just after midday.*

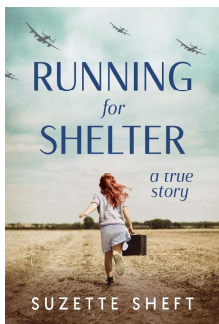
When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education.

On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive.

Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she has become a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

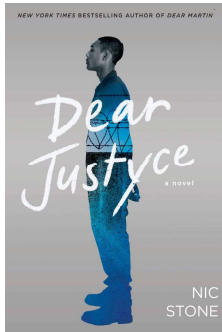
*I Am Malala* is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons.

### **Recommended for Grades 9-10:**



### ***Running for Shelter- A True Story*, Suzette Sheft**

Vienna, late 1930s. Bright, red-headed Inge Eisenger leads a privileged life with her glamorous, distant mother. When forced to flee from Nazi-occupied Austria to Switzerland, Inge sees her young life turned upside down. She hopes to finally connect with her mother during their escape, but her mother soon abandons her. Vulnerable and alone, Inge makes her way to Paris before reuniting with her grandmother in Central France. But even there, Inge endures one hardship after another—all while her grandmother keeps a family secret that, if revealed, could result in their whole family's demise. *Running for Shelter* is written by Inge's 15-year-old granddaughter, Suzette Sheft. The gripping, true story offers a window through which young adult readers can witness the challenges of growing up during the Holocaust. As this important chapter of history fades from living memory, Inge's tale offers hope to a new generation who must also cultivate courage and determination in the face of personal and political challenges.

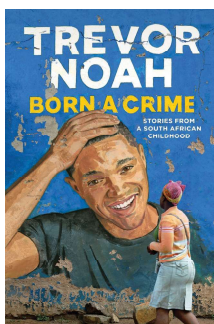


### ***Dear Justyce*, Nic Stone**

In the stunning and hard-hitting sequel to the *New York Times* bestseller *Dear Martin*, incarcerated teen Quan writes letters to Justyce about his experiences in the American prison system.

Shortly after teenager Quan enters a not guilty plea for the shooting death of a police officer, he is placed in a holding cell to await trial. Through a series of flashbacks and letters to Justyce, the protagonist of *Dear Martin*, Quan's story unravels.

From a troubled childhood and bad timing to a coerced confession and prejudiced police work, Nic Stone's newest novel takes an unflinching look at the flawed practices and ideologies that discriminate against African American boys and minorities in the American justice system.



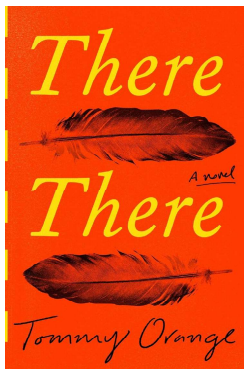
### ***Born a Crime: Stories From a South African Childhood*, Trevor Noah**

The memoir of one man's coming-of-age, set during the twilight of apartheid and the tumultuous days of freedom that followed.

Trevor Noah's unlikely path from apartheid South Africa to the desk of *The Daily Show* began with a criminal act: his birth. Trevor was born to a white Swiss father and a black Xhosa mother at a time when such a union was punishable by five years in prison. Living proof of his parents' indiscretion, Trevor was kept mostly indoors for the earliest years of his life, bound by the extreme and often absurd measures his mother took to hide him from a government that could, at any moment, steal him away. Finally liberated by the end of South Africa's tyrannical white rule, Trevor and his mother set forth on a grand adventure, living openly and freely and embracing the opportunities won by a centuries-long struggle.

*Born a Crime* is the story of a mischievous young boy who grows into a restless young man as he struggles to find himself in a world where he was never supposed to exist. It is also the story of that young man's relationship with his fearless, rebellious, and fervently religious mother—his teammate, a woman determined to save her son from the cycle of poverty, violence, and abuse that would ultimately threaten her own life.

### **Recommended for Grades 11-12:**

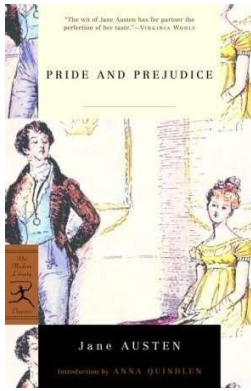


#### ***There, There*, Tommy Orange**

Tommy Orange's wondrous and shattering novel follows twelve characters from Native communities: all traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow, all connected to one another in ways they may not yet realize.

Among them is Jacquie Red Feather, newly sober and trying to make it back to the family she left behind. Dene Oxendene, pulling his life together after his uncle's death and working at the powwow to honor his memory. Fourteen-year-old Orvil, coming to perform traditional dance for the very first time. Together, this chorus of voices tells of the plight of the urban Native American--grappling with a complex and painful history, with an inheritance of beauty and spirituality, with communion and sacrifice and heroism.

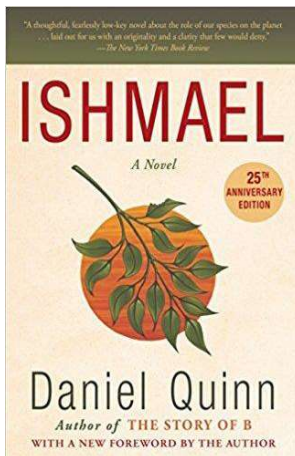
Hailed as an instant classic, *There There* is at once poignant and unflinching, utterly contemporary and truly unforgettable.



### ***Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen**

Set in England in the early 19th century, *Pride and Prejudice* tells the story of Mr and Mrs Bennet's five unmarried daughters after the rich and eligible Mr Bingley and his status-conscious friend, Mr Darcy, have moved into their neighborhood. While Bingley takes an immediate liking to the eldest Bennet daughter, Jane, Darcy has difficulty adapting to local society and repeatedly clashes with the second-eldest Bennet daughter, Elizabeth.

Though Austen set the story at the turn of the 19th century, it retains a fascination for modern readers, continuing near the top of lists of "most loved books." It has become one of the most popular novels in English literature, selling over 20 million copies, and receiving considerable attention from literary scholars. Modern interest in the book has resulted in a number of dramatic adaptations and an abundance of novels and stories imitating Austen's memorable characters or themes.

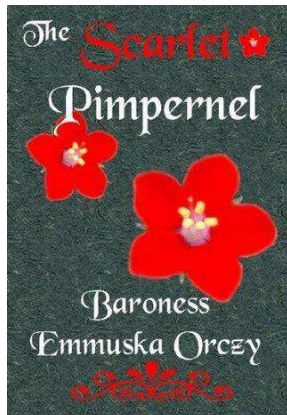


### ***Ishmael*, Daniel Quinn**

An Adventure of the Mind and Spirit

The narrator of this extraordinary tale is a man in search of truth. He answers an ad in a local newspaper from a teacher looking for serious pupils, only to find himself alone in an abandoned office with a full-grown gorilla who is nibbling delicately on a slender branch. "You are the teacher?" he asks incredulously. "I am the teacher," the gorilla replies. Ishmael is a creature of immense wisdom and he has a story to tell, one that no other human being has ever heard. It is a

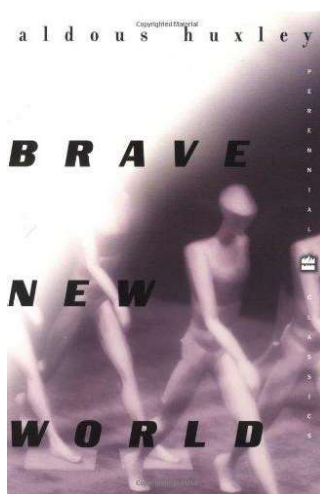
story that extends backward and forward over the lifespan of the earth from the birth of time to a future where there is still time to save. Like all great teachers, Ishmael refuses to make the lesson easy; he demands the final illumination to come from within ourselves. Is it man's destiny to rule the world? Or is it a higher destiny possible for him-- one more wonderful than he has ever imagined?



### **The Scarlet Pimpernel - Baroness Orczy**

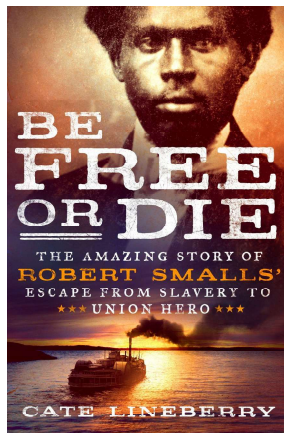
The year is 1792. The French Revolution, driven to excess by its own triumph, has turned into a reign of terror. Daily, tumbrels bearing new victims to the guillotine roll over the cobbled streets of Paris.... Thus the stage is set for one of the most enthralling novels of historical adventure ever written.

The mysterious figure known as the Scarlet Pimpernel, sworn to rescue helpless men, women, and children from their doom; his implacable foe, the French agent Chauvelin, relentlessly hunting him down; and lovely Marguerite Blakeney, a beautiful French exile married to an English lord and caught in a terrible conflict of loyalties—all play their parts in a suspenseful tale that ranges from the squalid slums of Paris to the aristocratic salons of London, from intrigue on a great English country estate to the final denouement on the cliffs of the French coast.



### ***Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley**

Aldous Huxley's profoundly important classic of world literature, *Brave New World* is a searching vision of an unequal, technologically-advanced future where humans are genetically bred, socially indoctrinated, and pharmaceutically anesthetized to passively uphold an authoritarian ruling order—all at the cost of our freedom, full humanity, and perhaps also our souls. “A genius [who] who spent his life decrying the onward march of the Machine” (*The New Yorker*), Huxley was a man of incomparable talents: equally an artist, a spiritual seeker, and one of history's keenest observers of human nature and civilization. *Brave New World*, his masterpiece, has enthralled and terrified millions of readers, and retains its urgent relevance to this day as both a warning to be heeded as we head into tomorrow and as thought-provoking, satisfying work of literature. Written in the shadow of the rise of fascism during the 1930s, *Brave New World* likewise speaks to a 21st-century world dominated by mass-entertainment, technology, medicine and pharmaceuticals, the arts of persuasion, and the hidden influence of elites.



### ***Be Free or Die*, Cate Lineberry**

*Be Free or Die* is a compelling narrative that illuminates Robert Smalls' amazing journey from slave to Union hero and ultimately United States Congressman. It also gives fascinating insight and knowledge into the country's first efforts to help newly freed slaves while also illustrating the many struggles and achievements of African Americans during the war.

It was a mild May morning in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1862, the second year of the Civil War, when a twenty-three-year-old enslaved man named Robert Smalls boldly seized a Confederate steamer. With his wife and two young children hidden on board, Smalls and a small crew ran a gauntlet of heavily armed fortifications in Charleston Harbor and delivered the valuable vessel and the massive guns it carried to nearby Union forces. Smalls' courageous and ingenious act freed him and his family from slavery and immediately made him a Union hero. It also challenged much of the country's view of what African Americans were willing to do for their freedom.

In *Be Free or Die*, Cate Lineberry tells the remarkable story of Smalls' escape and his many accomplishments during the war, including becoming the first black captain of an Army vessel. In a particularly poignant moment, Smalls even bought the home that he and his mother had once served in as house slaves.