

June 15, 2021

Dear Willow Hill High School Student,

Thank you for making last year's summer reading raffle such a success! We had such great responses that we will continue the summer reading raffle again this summer. As with last year, students who choose to complete the assignment will be entered into a raffle for a gift card.

The requirements are simple. We will provide you lists of recommended reading books to choose from. You choose a book from the list and read it. When you are finished reading the book, you will write a personal response. After you turn in your response, your name will be entered into a raffle to win a free gift card!

### **Requirements for personal response**

Write a **one-page minimum personal response**. **Your response should be typed, Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced.** The response must include:

- 1) Your name
- 2) Title and author of the book
- 3) **Summary** - summarize the plot of your book in no more than 5-7 sentences. Give basic plot points.
- 4) **Context** - what is the context of your book?
  - a. Describe where and when it takes place
  - b. Describe the world or society in which it takes place
- 5) **Review**
  - a. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
  - b. What, specifically, did you like or dislike about it? (characters, plot etc.)
  - c. Would you recommend the book? Why or why not?
  - d. If you would recommend it, who would enjoy it or who should read it?

When your response is complete, it should be submitted to Mark Hall:  
[mhall@willowhillschool.org](mailto:mhall@willowhillschool.org)

Feel free to email if you have any questions, but check the **Frequently Asked Questions** section on the backside first.

Have a great summer and we can't wait to see you in the Fall!

Andrew Petzold-Eley  
ELA Department Chair  
[apetzold-eley@willowhillschool.org](mailto:apetzold-eley@willowhillschool.org)

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **Q: Can I read a book that I have read before?**

A: Expand into new books that you have not read before. If you did enjoy a particular book, look for other titles by the same author, or other books in a similar series or genre. You can also try something completely new!

### **Q: I don't know what book to read. Where should I start?**

A: Think about topics you're interested in. Is there a topic you'd like to learn more about? Consider different genres and styles: Would you like to read a realistic novel about someone like you? Would you like to try a nonfiction book about someone from a different country or time period?

### **Q: Can I listen to the audio book instead of reading?**

A: Listening is not the same as reading. It uses a different part of your brain and uses different skills than reading does. You may pair a "read-aloud" by listening to the audio book while you read along in the text, but you may not only listen to the book.

### **Q: I love reading! If I read fifteen books this summer, can I enter fifteen different times?**

A: Great question, love your enthusiasm. Read and write as many responses as you like, and your name will be entered **up to three times**. This will give you an advantage to win, but also gives others a chance to win, too.

### **Q: What should I write about in my response?**

A: Another great question. See "Requirements" above.

### **Q: Do I have to read it on my own? Can I read it with my mom or dad?**

A: You are welcome to read along with someone at home. Take the opportunity at the end of each section or chapter to talk with them about what you're reading. Try to summarize what happened or make a prediction about what you think will happen next.

### **Q: If my library is still closed, how can I get one of these books?**

A: Excellent question! This is a good time to problem-solve. You can purchase books online through sellers such as Amazon or Barnes & Noble, or safely purchase from a brick-and-mortar store. However, even during quarantine, there are lots of great digital options as well. Check your local library website to see what digital options might be available for you. Also see the next page for options from the Willow Hill School library...

**School is closed, but the Willow Hill School library is open virtually.**

**OverDrive - The Willow Hill School Digital Library**

**<https://willowhillma.libraryreserve.com/10/45/en/SignIn.htm?url=Default.htm>**

Email Nilima ([njamsandekar@willowhillschool.org](mailto:njamsandekar@willowhillschool.org)) if you need your library card number and pin.

**Sora**

**Sora** is an app that provides thousands of e- and audiobooks on your phone, your tablet, or your computer. You can access overdrive books through the Sora app.

**SYNC**

SYNC offers free audiobooks. Each week, from now through the end of August, two free books will be available for download from the Sora app. No waiting - there's a copy for everyone who wants one. You do NOT need to already have Sora to participate in SYNC. If interested, sign up here:

**<https://www.audiobooksync.com/>**

# High School Reading List

## **An Ember in the Ashes by Sabaa Tahir**

As one of the conquered Scholar people, Laia has grown wary of the ruthless Masks that enforce the Martial empire's laws. But the lesson doesn't hit home until Masks imprison her brother for aiding the Scholar Resistance. Desperate to save him, Laia agrees to spy for the rebels as a slave in Blackcliff, the hellish school where Masks are trained. Her mission becomes all the more dangerous when the empire's prophetic Augurs announce that, for the first time in centuries, four newly graduated Masks will compete for the emperor's throne. One of these "Aspirants," Elias, had been on the verge of desertion before he was chosen, and he only stays to compete because of the Augurs' warning that he will never know freedom unless he undergoes the Trials. Tahir's deft, polished debut alternates between two very different perspectives on the same brutal world, deepening both in the contrast. In a tale brimming with political intrigue and haunted by supernatural forces, the true tension comes from watching Elias and Laia struggle to decide where their loyalties lie.

## **Hood by Jenny Elder Moke**

Gr 7-10-The action-packed, plot-driven, reworked legend Moke's fans have come to expect, starring the daughter of Robin and Marien, Isabelle of Kirklees. Isabelle has known a quiet life inside the priory walls where she resides with her mother, the Prioress, until she is arrested by King John's royal soldiers for defending innocent villagers against his cruel laws. After Isabelle is rescued from confinement she is thrust into the world of ruthless mercenaries, sneaky thieves, and handsome wanted outlaws, where she becomes the target of Sir Rodger of Doncaster, aka the Wolf, hired by King John. While in hiding, Isabelle joins the Merry Men of Sherwood on a mission through the English countryside in search of her father, Robin Hood, former Earl of Huntingdon. With her mother's life hanging in the balance, she is forced to either betray her family, or stand up to the Wolf's treachery. Isabelle is a strong heroine, in the company of secondary characters-Adam of Locksley, Sir Rodger, Little John, and Helena-who enhance the emotional impact of her journey. Overall, the text is accessible, laden with adventure, heartfelt moments, and high humor. Robin Hood is a model hero with wit, cunning, and bravery. The ending leaves readers wanting more, and there is room for a sequel.

## **Loop by Ben Oliver**

"Luka Kane has spent 736 days wrongfully imprisoned inside the Loop awaiting his execution. Each day is the same. Each day is torturous. But things are starting to change. Whispers of war are circulating. Strange things are happening to the prisoners. And the warden delivers a message: Luka, you have to get out... Now Luka must decide whether breaking out of the Loop is his only way to survive, especially if there's any chance of saving the ones he loves. But the population on the outside may be far more terrifying than anything he could have imaged. And in order to save his family, he'll have to discover who is responsible for the chaos that has been inflicted upon the world".

### **Mosquitoland by David Arnold**

As she so often claims, “I am Mary Iris Malone and I am not okay.” For most of her 16 years, Mim has believed this to be the truth. But after her father and new stepmom conspire to keep her away from her mother, who is struggling to get well in Cleveland, Mim sets out on an odyssey from Mississippi. Arnold populates his debut novel with memorable, inventive characters who keep Mim company and keep the reader invested as the miles count down, such as her unlikely kinship with street kid Walt and the devastatingly handsome Beckett Van Buren. Meanwhile, the twists of Mim’s story involving her immediate family are fleshed out through letters she writes in her journal. Arnold boldly tackles mental illness and despair, and sexual assault and sexual identity, without ever once losing the bigheartedness of the story. Arnold gives Mim a worldview that is open and quirky-morphing-into-kitschy, and though some events come off as overly convenient, the honesty always resonates. As Mim reaches Cleveland, and Walt and Beck follow the road to their own destinations, Arnold never lets up on the accelerator of life’s hard lessons. In the words of one of Mim’s Greyhound seatmates, this has pizzazz—lots and lots of it. (Grades 8-12)

### **Wicked as You Wish by Rin Chupeco**

Years after the evil Snow Queen desolated the magical kingdom of Avalon, Prince Alexei, his friend Tala, and a ragtag band, inspired by the appearance of the Firebird, try to reclaim their land. A great read for fans of fairy tales, myths and legends... Come for the adventure, stay for the sassy jerkwad firebird.

### **Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson**

Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship--and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever. Just Mercy is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice.

### **Pet by Akwaeke Emezi**

The highly-anticipated, genre-defying new novel by award-winning author Akwaeke Emezi that explores themes of identity and justice. Pet is here to hunt a monster. Are you brave enough to look? Acclaimed novelist Akwaeke Emezi makes their riveting and timely young adult debut with a book that asks difficult questions about what choices you can make when the society around you is in denial.

### **Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi**

Seventeen-year-old Zélie and companions journey to a mythic island seeking a chance to bring back magic to the land of Orïsha, in a fantasy world infused with the textures of West

Africa. Dark-skinned Zélie is a divîner—someone with latent magical abilities indicated by the distinctive white hair that sets them apart from their countrymen. She saves Princess Amari, who is on the run from her father, King Saran, after stealing the scroll that can transform divîners into magic-wielding maji, and the two flee along with Zélie’s brother. The scroll vanished 11 years ago during the king’s maji genocide, and Prince Inan, Amari’s brother, is sent in hot pursuit. When the trio learns that the impending solstice offers the only chance of restoring magic through a connection to Nana Baruku, the maternal creator deity, they race against time—and Inan—to obtain the final artifact needed for their ritual. Over the course of the book allegiances shift and characters grow, change, and confront traumas culminating in a cliffhanger ending that will leave readers anxiously awaiting the next installment. Well-drawn characters, an intense plot, and deft writing make this a strong story. That it is also a timely study on race, colorism, power, and injustice makes it great. Powerful, captivating, and raw—Adeyemi is a talent to watch. Exceptional.

### **Children of Virtue and Vengeance by Tomi Adeyemi.**

After Zélie and Amari successfully completed the ritual that restored magic to magic-wielding majis, they soon find that they weren’t the only ones bestowed with powers as a result. Some nobles have developed powers, too, and—ironically enough—they’re building an army to carry out the legacy of King Saran and eliminate majis by any means necessary. Led by Prince Inan, Amari’s big brother and Zélie’s toxic yet electrifying love interest, the nobles wage a war against the Iyika, a group of maji rebels, testing the strength of blood, loyalty, magic, and love. Adeyemi’s propulsive writing will have readers aching for resolve as twists and turns hit unscrupulously and without pause. While the first installment builds the narrating characters’ foundations and familiarizes readers with the Yoruba orîshas, this follow-up gets into their psyches and unleashes the power of the deities and their respective maji as they fight for claim of Orîsha. From the beginning, Adeyemi has hinted that the fight for Orîsha would be won by either the monarchy or the maji, a political reality that will likely be all too familiar to today’s readers. Terrifyingly enough, however, this sequel seems to ask: What if neither wins? Relentless even beyond its finish, this is a sure-fire hit. Endpapers include maps of Orîsha, which will delight those looking for a little extra to color the reading experience. (Grades 9-12)

### **Endurance: A Year in Space, A Lifetime of Discovery by Scott Kelly**

Inspired by Tom Wolfe’s book *The Right Stuff* (1979), Kelly became a navy pilot and astronaut. Before retiring from NASA, he earned the record for the most total time spent in space, including 340 consecutive days at the International Space Station. This memoir is filled with stories of the daring, patience, and humanity necessary to be an effective leader in space, along with the stress of being away from family. His brother Mark Kelly is also a retired astronaut; Scott tells of hearing about the 2011 shooting of his sister-in-law U.S. congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, from afar and subsequently leading a moment of silence in honor of the victims. While Kelly’s story is personal, it’s also a cautionary tale about the future of space exploration, especially if deeper investment is not made. Highly recommended to anyone who has an interest in memoirs or space travel.

### ***Between Shades of Gray* by Ruta Sepetys**

As this historical novel opens, Lina and her family are being forcibly removed from their Lithuanian home by the KGB, for unknown reasons. Taken without warning, the family is transported to workers' camps. In 1941, the Soviets deport teachers, preachers, criminals, and other innocents to forced-labor camps with harsh conditions similar to Nazi camps. Told in first person with "before captivity" flashbacks, Lina relays her fifteen-year-old perceptions. As their train stops, talented Lina leaves artwork that may give a clue about where her family has gone. Poignant and compassionate, this story reveals a strong sense of hope, survival, belief, and family. As Lina describes the pain, cold, and oppression, the reader feels them as well. In the final chapter, the reader sees that Lina has survived, married, returned to Lithuania, and left a legacy of buried journals and drawings. In this compelling first novel, Sepetys portrays an unexplored topic. Sepetys took trips to Lithuania to obtain first-hand knowledge of those who survived. This story will stay with the reader long after the book has been finished, and this novel should be on every high school library shelf.

### ***I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai**

Malala Yousafzai describes her fight for education for girls under Taliban rule, the support she received from her parents to pursue an education, and how the Taliban retaliated against her by trying to kill her.

### ***To All the Boys I've Loved Before* By Jenny Han**

Sixteen-year-old Lara Jean Song keeps her love letters in a hatbox her mother gave her. They aren't love letters that anyone else wrote for her; these are ones she's written. One for every boy she's ever loved--five in all. When she writes, she pours out her heart and soul and says all the things she would never say in real life, because her letters are for her eyes only. Until the day her secret letters are mailed, and suddenly, Lara Jean's love life goes from imaginary to out of control.

### ***We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart**

Narrator Cady begins the book by divulging an unspecified accident that happened during her fifteenth summer on her family's private island that left her with debilitating migraines and memory loss. What follows is a taut psychological mystery marked by an air of uneasy disorientation. The ultimate reveal is shocking both for its tragedy and for the how-could-I-have-not-suspected-that feeling it leaves us with.

### ***The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne**

Berlin, 1942: When Bruno returns home from school one day, he discovers that his belongings are being packed in crates. His father has received a promotion and the family must move to a new house far, far away, where there is no one to play with and nothing to do. A tall fence stretches as far as the eye can see and cuts him off from the strange people in the distance. But Bruno decides there must be more to this desolate new place than meets the eye. While exploring his new environment, he meets another boy whose life and circumstances are very different from his own, and their meeting results in a friendship that has devastating consequences.

### ***The Light in Hidden Places* by Sharon Cameron**

One of nine children, 16-year-old Stefania Podgorska, "Fusia," leaves the farm in Bircza and moves to Przemysl to work for the Jewish Diamant family. Fusia, a Catholic, joins the Diamant household, but they are forcibly moved to the ghetto by Germans, leaving her behind as she scrambles to sneak food to them right under the nose of German patrols. After her secret love, Izio Diamant, is killed in a labor camp, grief-ridden, angry Fusia travels to Bircza to find that the Nazis have ruined both of her families, but she is reunited with her 6-year-old sister, Helena. Fusia begins a grueling factory job making screws and risks her own life and Helena's in order to hide Izio's brother, Max, and 12 other Jews in an apartment at Tatarska 3. Exhaustion and fear become her daily life, even more so when Nazis move nurses into her apartment, with 13 Jews hiding overhead. Authentic writing and well-researched history combined with the gripping and terrifying subject matter make this a must-read for historical fiction fans. VERDICT Cameron's remarkable, heartbreaking true story of one woman's bravery and selflessness in World War II Poland will intrigue both teens and adult readers. (Grade 9 Up)

### ***Unbroken: an Olympian's Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive by Laura Hillenbrand***

With media attention focused on the July 2014 death of Louis Zamperini, and Angelina Jolie's upcoming movie detailing his WWII experiences, this adaptation of Hillenbrand's best-selling *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption* puts the Zamperini story in the hands of many teens not ready or willing to tackle the adult version. Constantly in and out of scrapes as a child, Zamperini appeared to be heading for a life of crime. But Louis traded delinquency for adulation. He became a competitive runner, and gutsy performances earned him a slot on the 1938 Olympic track team. With the outbreak of World War II, he joined the Air Corps, surviving a plane crash and forty-seven days adrift on a raft only to be captured and interred in various Japanese POW camps until war's end. He returned to California alive but emotionally scarred; after battling alcoholism, he became a Christian crusader. This adaptation eliminates much of the original detail, particularly concerning Zamperini's survival at sea and his time as a POW, and Zamperini's eventual redemption receives fewer edits than other portions of the text -- and thus its impact is more prominent than in the original. But the tension built by his oceanic ordeal and by the unrelenting torture during his years in captivity never wavers, creating a humdinger of a page-turner: a noble story about the courage of America's Greatest Generation, personified.

### ***The 57 Bus by Dashka Slater***

Slater handles the sensitive subject matter of adolescence, hate crimes, the juvenile justice system, and the intersection of race and class with exemplary grace and emotional connection. Sasha, a genderqueer teen riding the 57 bus, was asleep when Richard Thomas, an African American teen, decided to play a prank by playing with a lighter by her skirt. But the skirt caught fire. Sasha spent grueling amounts of time in a hospital burn unit, and Richard spent the rest of his high-school career mired in a long trial and awaiting sentencing. In this true-crime tale, Slater excels at painting a humanistic view of both Sasha and Richard, especially in the aftermath of the crime. Readers will enjoy that Sasha's life is completely developed, while other readers may have a few unresolved questions surrounding Richard's upbringing. Ultimately, this book will give readers a better understanding of gender nonbinary people and a deep empathy for how one rash action can irrevocably change lives forever. (Grades 7-12)

### **OCDaniel by Wesley King**

Daniel, a budding writer and resident pariah, is tortured by a neurosis that racks his body and mind with pain if he doesn't fulfill obsessive rituals before bed, eating, or anything else in life. He lives in fear of these compulsions, until his path is crossed by someone whose cornucopia of irregularities rival his own. Sara is situationally mute and understands his problems because hers are more than she can bear. Believing her father was killed by her stepfather, Sara embarks with Daniel on a desperate search to reveal her father's fate. King uses crisp, believable dialogue to illustrate positive character dynamics, while sidestepping stereotypes and the typical YA tropes in this coming-of-age tale. Readers will find the characters sympathetic but may become disillusioned by the lack of a driving point in the book. At times, the work is a character-driven book of neuroses, and at others it's a quirky coming-of-age comedy. Then, it switches gears and becomes a plot-driven novel of suspense. King endeavors to explore too many avenues of possibility: the progression of Daniel's place kicking career; his unlikely pursuit of Raya, the popular girl from school; the inclusion of the character's own writing; and, finally, the arc unveiling the fate of Sara's father. (Grade 9 Up)

### **Dear Martin by Nic Stone**

Justyce is an African American teen caught between two worlds. He knows that the education he's receiving at a private school will grant him more economic opportunities, however he begins to question the effects his private school education on his own identity. Some of his classmates believe that the racial pendulum has swung too far, giving African Americans an unfair advantage over their white counterparts. The kids he grew up with believe Justyce has assimilated too much and has forgotten where he came from. He questions his blackness, his relationship with his biracial girlfriend, and his attraction to his white debate partner Sarah Jane. Through a series of journal entries, Justyce attempts to figure out his place in the world by exploring the life of Dr. Martin Luther King. A violent altercation between a retired white police officer and his best friend causes Justyce to examine what it means to be an African American male in 2017. The length and pace of this well-written story make it a perfect read for reluctant and sophisticated readers alike. The main characters are well balanced and will resonate with teens. However, the voice of African American women is largely absent from the narrative. The characterization of Justyce's mother and his girlfriend are one-dimensional compared to some of the other protagonists. Still, this important work should be read alongside Jason Reynolds's and Brendan Kiely's *All-American Boys* and Kekla Magoon's *How It Went Down*. (Grade 9 Up)

### **The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes by Suzanne Collins**

The long awaited prequel to *The Hunger Games* series. It is the morning of the reaping that will kick off the tenth annual Hunger Games. In the Capital, eighteen-year-old Coriolanus Snow is preparing for his one shot at glory as a mentor in the Games. The once-mighty house of Snow has fallen on hard times, its fate hanging on the slender chance that Coriolanus will be able to outcharm, outwit, and outmaneuver his fellow students to mentor the winning tribute. The odds are against him. He's been given the humiliating assignment of mentoring the female tribute from District 12, the lowest of the low. Their fates are now completely intertwined -- every choice Coriolanus makes could lead to favor or failure, triumph or ruin. Inside the arena, it will be a

fight to the death. Outside the arena, Coriolanus starts to feel for his doomed tribute... and must weigh his need to follow the rules against his desire to survive no matter what it takes.

### ***The Boy Who Challenged Hitler by Phillip M. Hoose***

Hoose (*Moonbird*) vividly recounts the true story of the courageous and brazen teens who inspired the Danish resistance movement in WWII. Angered and embarrassed by his nation's lack of opposition to the German invasion, 15-year-old Knud Pedersen, his older brother, and a few classmates formed the secret Churchill Club (named for the British prime minister they admired). For five months in 1942, club members committed daring acts of sabotage, often from their bikes and mostly in broad daylight ("Arson became our game. We took to carrying a small quantity of petrol with us... stuffing the canister in a school bag "). Hoose's narrative alternates with Pedersen's verbatim recollections (taken from a weeklong interview with him in 2012). Though readers initially may have trouble knowing when Pedersen's quotations end and the author's segues begin, this gripping story quickly gathers momentum, and the shifts between narrators flow smoothly. Archival photos break up the text, while an epilogue details what happened to each young resister after his imprisonment and the war's end. A bibliography and source notes conclude this inspiring account. Ages 12-18.

### ***I am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter by Erica L. Sanchez***

Grades 9-12. Julia's older sister, Olga, was always polite, respected her parents, and eagerly took up the Mexican traditions her mother insisted upon. After Olga dies in a car accident, Julia is thrust into a spotlight she's not ready for. She's too angry, too unappreciative, too American, which results in her mother shutting out her social and love life. Then Julia discovers Olga's trove of secrets, which hint at a hidden life. As Julia pursues the mystery of the real Olga, she begins to find out that more than one of her family members has secrets. This bildungsroman immigrant story captures the chaotic life of a young person trying to navigate two worlds while trying to follow her own path. Julia wants to leave Chicago and attend college, while a "perfect Mexican daughter" would stay put, get a job, and contribute to the family. Sánchez weaves these threads along with a tragic story of distant sisters to create an earnest and heartfelt tale that will resonate with teens.

### ***The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas***

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive

who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does-or does not-say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

***Eleanor & Park* by Rainbow Rowell**

It's the start of a new school year in 1986 Omaha when sophomores Eleanor and Park meet on the bus. She's an ostracized "big girl"; he's a skinny half-Korean townie who tries to stay out of the spotlight. Their slowly evolving relationship is life-changing for them both. Rowell imbues the novel with rich character development for a heart-wrenching portrayal of imperfect but unforgettable love