

## Lowell High School Summer Reading 2008



Summer is almost here, which means it's time for vacation, days spent outside in the sun, and... summer reading! While we all know that it is essential to read in order to become better readers and better thinkers, sometimes we forget that reading can be fun. So this Summer Reading List was designed to give you an opportunity to find a novel that you can enjoy. HAPPY READING!

### **Directions for Summer Reading:**

#### *College-level courses:*

Summer reading is **encouraged**. If you choose **one** book from the appropriate list **AND** you **complete the attached Summer Reading Extra Credit Assignment**, you will be given an **extra-credit** writing grade to start your year.

#### *Honors-level courses:*

Summer reading is **required**. You must read **one** outside reading book from the appropriate list. You will be given an in-class writing assignment on your outside reading book during the week of September 2<sup>nd</sup> that **will count as a part of your first-quarter grade**. (You may use the attached Summer Reading Extra Credit Assignment Sheet to prepare for your in-class writing assignment.)

#### *Lyceum-level courses (entering 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>)*

Summer reading is **required**. You must read **two** outside reading books from the appropriate list. Lyceum required reading is designated by an asterisk (\*). You will be given an in-class writing assignment on your outside reading book during the week of September 4<sup>th</sup> that **will count as a part of your first-quarter grade**. (You may use the attached Summer Reading Extra Credit Assignment Sheet to prepare for your in-class writing assignment.)

#### *Lyceum, High Honors and AP-level courses (entering 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>):*

Summer reading is **required**. Students entering English courses at this level should contact Mr. Berard (room 202) or Mr. Francoeur (room 136) for book lists and assignments.

## **The Reading List:**

Summer reading is arranged by grade level.

Any selection with an asterisk (\*) indicates required reading for Lyceum students.

### **Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

\**Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie*, David Lubar  
(required)

*The Rules of Survival*, Nancy Werlin

\**The Secret Life of Bees*, Sue Monk Kidd

*Big Mouth, Ugly Girl*, Joyce Carol Oates

*The Boy in Striped Pajamas*, John Boyle

### **Students entering 10<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

*A Northern Light*, Jennifer Donnelly

\* *Life of Pi*, Yann Martel

*Feed*, M.T. Anderson

\**Summerland*, Michael Chabon

*The Usual Rules*, Joyce Maynard

### **Students entering 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*,  
Sherman Alexie

*Hole in My Life*, Jack Gantos

*When the Emperor was Divine*, Julie Otsuka

*Walk in the Woods*, Bill Bryson

### **Students entering 12<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

*I am the Messenger*, Markus Zusak

*Black Swan Green*, David Mitchell

*The Alchemist*, Paulo Coelho

*The Book of Lost Things: A Novel*, John  
Connolly

Any mystery novel by P.D. James

## Incoming 9<sup>th</sup> Graders

Students enrolled in HONORS level and LYCEUM English are required to read the following novel. COLLEGE level students are strongly encouraged to read this title.

***\*Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie, David Lubar***

Starting high school is never easy. Seniors take your lunch money. Girls you've known forever are suddenly beautiful and unattainable. And you can never get enough sleep. Scott Hudson decides high school would be a lot less overwhelming if it came with a survival manual, so he begins to write down tips to pass along to his new sibling. Overloaded with extracurricular activities and honors homework, he begins a journal filled with lists and tips for his expected sibling on how to survive freshman year.

**Lyceum students are also required to read the following novel.**

***\*Secret Life of Bees, Sue Monk Kidd***

Fourteen year-old Lily Owen, neglected by her father and isolated on their Georgia peach farm, spends hours imagining a blissful infancy when she was loved and nurtured by her mother, Deborah, whom she barely remembers. These consoling fantasies are her heart's answer to the family story that as a child, in unclear circumstances, Lily accidentally shot and killed her mother. All Lily has left of Deborah is a strange image of a Black Madonna, with the words "Tiburon, South Carolina" scrawled on the back. The search for a mother, and the need to mother oneself, are crucial elements in this well-written coming-of-age story set in the early 1960s against a background of racial violence and unrest.

**All incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders are encouraged to read selections from the list below.**

***Rules of Survival, Nancy Werlin***

Narrated by 17-year-old Matt as a letter to his youngest sister, Emmy, *The Rules of Survival* is his effort to come to terms with the vicious treatment he and his two sisters suffered at the hands of Nikki, their beautiful and unpredictable mother.

***Big Mouth, Ugly Girl, Joyce Carol Oates***

While horsing around in the high school cafeteria, Matt Donaghy makes some remarks that land him in a world of trouble. Yanked out of fifth-period study hall by plainclothes policemen, he learns that he's suspected of plotting to bomb the school. Only the resolutely individualistic, somewhat frightening Ursula Riggs, a girl he barely knows, is willing to speak up on Matt's behalf.

***The Boy in Striped Pajamas, John Boyne***

Through the eyes of Bruno, a naive nine-year-old raised in a privileged household by strict parents whose expectations included good manners and unquestioning respect for parental authority, the author describes a visit from the Fury and the family's sudden move from Berlin to a place called Out-With in Poland. There, not 50 feet away, a high wire fence surrounds a huge dirt area of low huts and large square buildings. From his bedroom window, Bruno can see hundreds (maybe thousands) of people wearing striped pajamas and caps, and something made him feel very cold and unsafe. Uncertain of what his father actually does for a living, the boy is eager to discover the secret of the people on the other side.

**\* Lyceum required reading.**

## **Incoming 10<sup>th</sup> Graders**

**Honors level students are required to read one of the following books. College level students are strongly encouraged to read selections from the list for extra credit. Lyceum students are required to read the two selections designated with asterisks(\*).**

### ***A Northern Light, Jennifer Donnelly***

It's 1906 and 16-year-old Mattie Gokey is at a crossroads in her life. She's escaped the overwhelming responsibilities of helping to run her father's broken-down farm in exchange for a paid summer job as a serving girl at a fancy hotel in the Adirondacks. At the hotel, Mattie gets caught up in the disappearance of a young couple who had gone out together in a rowboat. Mattie spoke with the young woman, Grace Brown, just before the fateful boating trip, when Grace gave her a packet of love letters and asked her to burn them. When Grace is found drowned, Mattie reads the letters and finds that she holds the key to unraveling the girl's death and her beau's mysterious disappearance. Grace Brown's story is a true one.

### ***\*Life of Pi, Yann Martel***

The precocious son of a zookeeper, 16-year-old Pi Patel is raised in Pondicherry, India, where he tries on various faiths for size, attracting "religions the way a dog attracts fleas." Planning a move to Canada, his father packs up the family and their menagerie and they hitch a ride on an enormous freighter. After a harrowing shipwreck, Pi finds himself adrift in the Pacific Ocean, trapped on a 26-foot lifeboat with a wounded zebra, a spotted hyena, a seasick orangutan, and a 450-pound Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. Drifting for 227 days through shark-infested waters, Pi fights hunger, the elements, and an overactive imagination.

### ***\*Summerland, Michael Chabon***

Following the death of his mother, 11-year-old Ethan Feld and his father, a designer of lighter-than-air-dirigibles move to Clam Island, Wash. The island is known for its almost constant rain, save for an area on its westernmost tip, called Summerland by the locals, which "knew a June, July and August that were perfectly dry and sunny." In Summerland, Ethan struggles to play baseball for the Ruth's Fluff and Fold Roosters, with dismal results. But here, too, a mystical baseball scout recruits Ethan and escorts him through a gateway to a series of interconnected worlds that are home to magical creatures called ferishers and an evil, shape-changing overlord called Coyote. Ethan and two of his fellow teammates soon accept a mission to save these other worlds (plus the one they live in) from ultimate destruction at Coyote's hand.

### ***Feed, M.T. Anderson***

Titus' ability to read, write, and even think for himself has been almost completely obliterated by his "feed," a transmitter implanted directly into his brain. Feeds are a crucial part of life for Titus and his friends. After all, how else would they know where to party on the moon, how to get bargains at Weatherbee & Crotch, or how to accessorize the mysterious lesions everyone's been getting? But then Titus meets Violet, a girl who cares about what's happening to the world and challenges everything Titus and his friends hold dear.

### ***The Usual Rules, Joyce Maynard***

Following the events of September 11, the book tells the coming-of-age story of a girl whose mother goes to work one morning and doesn't come back. Wendy, who must bear the burden of having the last conversation with her mother end in anger, must also help care for her four-year-old half-brother, Louie, while her stepfather, Josh, struggles to deal with his own grief. Attempting to escape her depressing surroundings and numb state of mind, Wendy leaves her family and best friend to live in California with her estranged father, Garrett.

**\* Lyceum required reading.**

## Incoming 11th Graders

Honors level students are **required** to read one of the following books. College level students are **strongly encouraged** to read selections from the list for extra credit.

### ***The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven, Sherman Alexie***

This work chronicles modern life on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Victor, through whose eyes we view the community, is strongly aware of Native American traditions but wonders whether his ancestors view today's Indians--mired in alcohol, violence, and an almost palpable sense of despair--with sympathy or disgust. In spite of the bleakness of reservation life, the text brims with humor and passion as it juxtaposes ancient customs with such contemporary artifacts as electric guitars and diet Pepsi.

### ***Hole in My Life, Jack Gantos***

The author relates how, as a young adult, he became a drug user and smuggler, was arrested, did time in prison, and eventually got out and went to college, all the while hoping to become a writer.

### ***When the Emperor was Divine, Julie Otsuka***

A precise, understated gem of a first novel, Julie Otsuka's *When the Emperor Was Divine* tells one Japanese American family's story of internment in a Utah enemy alien camp during World War II. We never learn the names of the young boy and girl who were forced to leave their Berkeley home in 1942 and spend over three years in a dusty, barren desert camp with their mother. But even after the war, when they have been reunited and are putting their stripped, vandalized house back together, the family can never regain its pre-war happiness. Broken by circumstance and prejudice, they will continue to pay, in large and small ways, for the shape of their eyes.

### ***A Walk in the Woods, Bill Bryson***

The Appalachian Trail stretches from Georgia to Maine and covers some of the most breathtaking terrain in America--majestic mountains, silent forests, sparkling lakes. If you're going to take a hike, it's probably the place to go. And Bill Bryson is surely the most entertaining guide you'll find. He introduces us to the history and ecology of the trail and to some of the other hardy (or just foolhardy) folks he meets along the way--and a couple of bears. Already a classic, *A Walk in the Woods* will make you long for the great outdoors (or at least a comfortable chair to sit and read in).

## Incoming 12<sup>th</sup> Graders

Honors level students are **required** to read one of the following books. College level students are **strongly encouraged** to read selections from the list for extra credit.

### ***I Am the Messenger, Markus Zusak***

When hapless cabdriver Ed Kennedy offhandedly stops a bank robbery, someone takes notice. The Ace of Diamonds appears in his mailbox with three addresses written on it. Ed is supposed to deliver a message to these addresses, but no one is telling him what that message is. All he is told is that his life depends on it.

### ***Black Swan Green, David Mitchell***

Thirteen chapters provide a monthly snapshot of Jason Taylor's life in small-town England from January 1982 to January 1983. Whether the 13-year-old narrator is battling his stammer or trying to navigate the social hierarchy of his schoolmates or watching the slow disintegration of his parents' marriage, he relates his story in a voice that is achingly true to life.

### ***The Alchemist, Paulo Coelho***

The charming tale of Santiago, a shepherd boy, who dreams of seeing the world, is compelling in its own right, but gains resonance through the many lessons Santiago learns during his adventures. He journeys from Spain to Morocco in search of worldly success, and eventually to Egypt, where a fateful encounter with an alchemist brings him at last to self-understanding and spiritual enlightenment.

### ***The Book of Lost Things: A Novel by John Connolly***

Thriller writer Connolly turns from criminal fears to primal fear in this enchanting novel about a 12-year-old English boy, David, who is thrust into a realm where eternal stories and fairy tales assume an often gruesome reality. Books are the magic that speak to David, whose mother has died at the start of WWII after a long debilitating illness. His father remarries, and soon his stepmother is pregnant with yet another interloper who will threaten David's place in his father's life. When a portal to another world opens in time-honored fashion, David enters a land of beasts and monsters where he must undertake a quest if he is to earn his way back out.

### **Any mystery novel by P.D. James**