

Summer 2018

Dear GSMST Freshmen,

We are so excited to welcome you to GSMST Language Arts! Although you are coming to a STEM school, our job is to help you realize the importance of ideas and stories in our lives and how we communicate them.

As you prepare to join us, over the summer we ask that you read **at least one book of your choice** (we'd love it if you read many more!). Choose either a fiction or nonfiction book. Choose something that interests you. Choose something you've always wanted to read. Choose something new to you. Perhaps you'll even choose to step outside of your comfort zone. We do ask that you respect the text and the assignment: while there are lots of good movies based on books, we want your insights as you interact with text on the page, not a film study.

You might want to consider the number of pages in the text, but recognize that the length of a book isn't really correlated with the reader's quality of experience. Once you've picked a book, give it a decent chance—read at least 20% before deciding that it isn't right for you. However, do not feel the need to keep slogging through a book that simply doesn't grab you or is too hard/too easy of a read.

As you're reading, keep in mind these four questions--you'll have an assignment when you come back to school in which you'll respond to these questions. Don't feel you have to "study" to answer these questions; just read the book and be sensitive to these questions as you read. We want to get a sense of what kind of reader you are through these questions.

For fiction or memoirs (memoirs are nonfiction stories about an author's life):

- What are the most important moments in the story, and why?
- Analyze the main character.
- What themes does the author develop in this story?
- What elements of the author's craft do you notice the author using, and what is the purpose (or the effect on the reader) of those elements?

For nonfiction:

- What are the most important ideas in the book, and why?
- Analyze the main person/event that is the focus of the book.
- What main ideas does the author develop in this text?
- What elements of the author's craft do you notice the author using, and what is the purpose (or the effect on the reader) of the author using those elements?

If you haven't read for pleasure recently, we hope your summer reading helps you fall in love with reading again. If you need more direction and would like a list from which to choose, we've included one as a starting point. As well, ask your local librarian, relatives, and friends for suggestions. We hope you enjoy the freedom of choice in your summer reading assignment as it will be an integral part of the 9th Language Arts experience. We look forward to working with you!

--Mrs. Weeks, Mr. Kurinzi, and Mrs. Finco

2018 GSMST Freshman Summer Reading Ideas

If you have absolutely no idea where to begin because there are too many choices, check out these titles below. (See links on the GSMST Summer Google Site. Go to gsmst.org to find it.

In the mood for nonfiction? [Take a look at these titles](#) or [these award winners](#) and see if you find anything you like!

And, if you want an even bigger search, go to this link, [the YALSA Book Finder](#), to search thousands of possibilities. Happy reading!!

National Book Award Winners--Young People's Literature

2018 Winner* and Finalists

*[Robin Benway](#), *Far from the Tree*

Far from the Tree is the poignant story of three young people discovering the complicated ways that families love. Grace, Maya, and Joaquin's quest to bond as they search for their biological mother resonates across the many definitions of family. In Benway's able hands, readers feast on a big-hearted and uplifting story about growing up, daring to count on others, and most importantly, having the courage to reveal and embrace our own imperfections.

[Elana K. Arnold](#), *What Girls Are Made Of*

When Nina Faye was fourteen, her mother told her there was no such thing as unconditional love. Nina believed her. Now she'll do anything for the boy she loves, to prove she's worthy of him. But when he breaks up with her, Nina is lost. What is she if not a girlfriend? What is she made of? Broken-hearted, Nina tries to figure out what the conditions of love are.

[Erika L. Sánchez](#), *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*

Perfect Mexican daughters do not go away to college. And they do not move out of their parents' house after high school graduation. Perfect Mexican daughters never abandon their family.

But Julia is not your perfect Mexican daughter. That was Olga's role.

Then a tragic accident on the busiest street in Chicago leaves Olga dead and Julia left behind to reassemble the shattered pieces of her family. And no one seems to acknowledge that Julia is broken, too. Instead, her mother seems to channel her grief into pointing out every possible way Julia has failed.

But it's not long before Julia discovers that Olga might not have been as perfect as everyone thought. With the help of her best friend Lorena, and her first kiss, first love, first everything boyfriend Connor, Julia is determined to find out. Was Olga really what she seemed? Or was there more to her sister's story? And either way, how can Julia even attempt to live up to a seemingly impossible ideal?

[Ibi Zoboi](#), *American Street*

On the corner of American Street and Joy Road, Fabiola Toussaint thought she would finally find une belle vie—the good life. But after leaving Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Fabiola's mother is detained by U.S. immigration, leaving Fabiola to navigate her loud, American cousins—Chantal, Donna and Princess—the grittiness of Detroit's west side, a new school, and a surprising romance, all on her own. Just as she finds her footing in this strange new world, a dangerous proposition presents itself, and Fabiola must learn that freedom comes at a cost. Trapped at the crossroads of an impossible choice, will she pay the price for the American dream?

[Angie Thomas](#), *The Hate U Give*

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.

[Nic Stone](#) (a Norcross Native) *Dear Martin*

Justyce McAllister is top of his class and set for the Ivy League—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. And despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates. Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out.

Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

Popular Books by Genre

Science Fiction

[Scythe](#) by Neal Shusterman

[Warcross](#) by Marie Lu

[Heart Of Iron](#) by Ashley Poston

Fantasy

[Six Of Crows \(Six Of Crows, #1\)](#) by Leigh Bardugo

[A Court Of Thorns And Roses \(A Court Of Thorns And Roses, #1\)](#) by Sarah J. Maas

[An Ember In The Ashes \(An Ember In The Ashes, #1\)](#) by Sabaa Tahir

Horror

[The Girl From The Well](#) by Rin Chupeco

[Shutter](#) by Courtney Alameda

[There's Someone Inside Your House](#) by Stephanie Perkins

Realistic Fiction

[Fangirl](#) by Rainbow Rowell

[When Dimple Met Rishi](#) by Sandhya Menon

[Long Way Down](#) by Jason Reynolds

Historical

[Alex And Eliza](#) by Melissa De La Cruz

[Loving Vs. Virginia: A Documentary Novel Of The Landmark Civil Rights Case](#) by Patricia Hruby Powell

Mystery

[City Of Saints And Thieves](#) by Natalie C. Anderson

[A Study In Charlotte](#) by Brittany Cavallaro

[One Of Us Is Lying](#) by Karen M. Mcmanus

Romance

[When We Collided](#) by Emery Lord

[The Sun Is Also A Star](#) by Nicola Yoon

[To All The Boys I've Loved Before](#) by Jenny Han