

**Summer Reading**  
**Grade 9 – Class of 2022**  
**Downers Grove South High School**

Dear Class of 2022 (Grade 9) students,

Below you will find a list of books that you can choose from to fulfill your required summer reading. You must choose one of the books from the Class of 2022 list. When you get back to school in August you will be required to complete a graded assignment in your English class related to your reading. In order to help you prepare for that assignment, we would like to give you a reading focus. No matter which level or which teacher you have in the fall, your summer reading assignment will be based on the reading focus below. Though not required, you may choose to annotate and/or take notes in regards to the reading focus to help you with the assignment you will do in class.

**Class of 2022 (Grade 9) Reading Focus:**

**As you read your selected book from the list, focus on how one of the main characters develops throughout the book and what influences that development. You may want to consider some of the following influences: relationships, adults, peers, events, environments, experiences, moments, obstacles, etc.**

**Class of 2022 (Grade 9) Book List**

***The Girl I Used to Be* by April Henry**

Olivia Reinhart (born Ariel Benson) was only three years old when her mother was killed and everyone believed her father murdered her mother and then left Ariel at a Walmart before disappearing. Fast forward fourteen years, the police tell her that her father's body has been found only about a mile from where her mother's body had previously been discovered. They were both murdered that day, which leaves Olivia as the only survivor—the only witness to her parents' horrific ending. She returns to the town, determined to uncover the truth about how her parents died and who murdered them.

***Tell Me Three Things* by Julie Buxbaum**

This is a story about Jennifer Holmes and her comic, tragic, and romantic happenings. A short time after her mother died, Jennifer's father marries a rich woman – a really rich woman – in Los Angeles. This means Jennifer has to move from Chicago and her best friend into a place that's so different it doesn't even know how to make pizza. She sticks out like a sore thumb, and every other junior in her new, fancy-pants school tells her so. Everyone minus one. One person reaches out to her anonymously on email, and they begin a funny and close relationship that lasts all the way through the year. This anonymous emailer guides Jennifer to socially fulfilling relationships, a more positive self-esteem, and perhaps even love.

***I am the Weapon* by Allen Zadoff**

The mission was simple: kill the mayor of New York City; until he met the mayor's daughter, Sam. A trained assassin, Boy Nobody unassumingly slips in and out of the lives of teenagers with one catch; someone in their life is Boy Nobody's target. With the click of a pen, he can make it look like an untimely death when really it was a targeted kill. When Boy Nobody meets Sam, she is different than anyone else he has met on a mission. Boy Nobody begins to question his purpose and his handlers at The Program. He begins to miss a normal life instead of the fast-paced life of an assassin. This action-packed thriller will keep you on the edge of your seat until the very end.

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

Cadence returns to her family's island two years after the accident that caused her several injuries including loss of her memory. Even though she still suffers from horrible migraines, she is looking forward to seeing the Liars – her cousins Johnny and Mirren and their friend Gat. She hopes that seeing them will help her remember what happened the summer she was fifteen. As the summer progresses and tensions on the island grow, nothing prepares her for the truth about her family and what happened that fateful summer.

### ***Satellite* by Nick Lake**

Now that fifteen-year-old Leo is about to be sixteen, he is finally ready to go back home. Only home for Leo is somewhere he has never been before: Earth. He is one of three teenagers who grew up on the space station named Moon 2. As he floats 250 miles above Earth, Leo yearns to feel gravity, hear an echo, and experience a place he has only read about in encyclopedias. Even though the trip to Earth will be dangerous, Leo cannot help but look forward to the life that awaits him. But as Leo's expectations rise, his life takes an unexpected turn. Written in text-speak, this contemporary science-fiction novel follows Leo's captivating and suspenseful journey to discover the truth about what is really happening on Earth.

### ***Jackaby* by William Ritter**

Abigail Rook arrives in New Fiddleham, New England in 1892, with no money in her pocket, only the clothes on her back and no prospects in sight. Looking for a place to live and work, she meets R. F. Jackaby, a private detective who can see the supernatural. With a serial killer on the loose, Abigail is thrown headfirst into Jackaby's magical world and the two must solve the case before the body count gets any higher.

### ***Labyrinth Lost* by Zoraida Cordova**

*"Nothing says happy birthday like summoning the spirits of your dead relatives."* Alejandra Mortiz comes from a long line of powerful brujas (witches), but she would rather not embrace that destiny. Everyone in Alex's family is ready to celebrate her *Deathday*, also known as her coming-of-age-as-a-bruja day. As the day approaches, Alex decides to rebel and casts a forbidden Canto (spell) that will strip her of her magical abilities. Instead of reversing her magic though, Alex banishes her entire family to Los Lagos, a land in between worlds. With the help of her friends, Alex embarks on a dangerous journey to save her family and make things right.

### ***The Boy in the Black Suit* by Jason Reynolds**

After experiencing the loss of his mother, Matt finds himself having to at times be the adult of the house as his father struggles to cope with losing his wife. As Matt has to grow up perhaps too soon, he gets a job working at a funeral home, which actually helps him through the grieving process. Here he also is mentored by the funeral home owner and develops a relationship with a girl with whom he finds he has more in common than he thought. With humor and a range of emotion, the story showcases how relationships with others help in time of crisis to find normal again...whatever that is.

### ***Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass* by Meg Medina**

When Piddy Sanchez and her mom move, Piddy is forced to go to a new high school. Being the new kid is not always fun. Right away, Piddy hears that some girl she doesn't even know, Yaqui Delgado, wants to fight her. Piddy has no idea why she has become a target of one of the roughest girls in her new school. Piddy attempts to ignore the rumor and stay away from this girl, but Yaqui begins to bully Piddy. The bullying escalates from threats to physical attacks, and Piddy finds herself living in fear. Piddy has always been a good student, but because of the bullying, she starts skipping school, and her grades nosedive. With help from others, Piddy finally realizes that she must confront her fears, as well as Jaqui, in order to fix her future.

***Leviathan* by Scott Westerfeld**

The year is 1914, and the world is on the brink of war. On one side of the war are the British Darwinists, who grow their weapons of war from genetically modified animals. On the other side are the German Clankers, who build their giant walking war machines from steel and whose engines run on gas. The two nations are preparing for war, and when Archduke Ferdinand is assassinated, the Germans finally find a reason to start one. Caught in between are Deryn and Aleksander. Deryn is a girl who wants to serve her country and fly. She joins the British Air Service disguised as a boy and is assigned to the Leviathan, a giant hydrogen filled flying whale. Aleksander is the son of Archduke Ferdinand. The night his father is killed, he escapes only to find himself living his life on the run. Fate brings these two together for a Steampunk adventure that unites two enemies in a common cause.