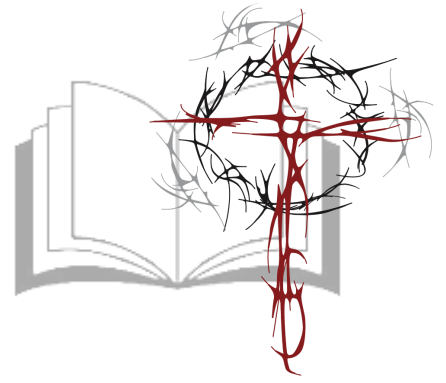


26-27 High School Independent Reading Program Overview



The Aurora Christian School English department requires independent reading in grades 6-12 to accomplish the following four objectives:

1. To encourage the enjoyment of reading
2. To improve students' reading comprehension—and writing—skills
3. To allow students to develop and exercise their ability to discern what is true and godly in what they read
4. To prepare students for the expectations of the colleges they will attend

The College Board suggests books of intellectual and educational merit, books that are part of the Western literary canon or esteemed by academics and scholars as essential reading for the college-bound student. (We have also included other classic and faith-based books of merit on the reading options lists.) Because some of the books on the list do not represent a Christian worldview and may contain language, sexual content, or philosophy contrary to the beliefs and values of your family, it is important that selections are made carefully.

At the start of the fall semester, you will receive a Google Form. On this form you must indicate that you are aware of students' freedom of choice and will be responsible to monitor and approve your own child's appropriate selections. Students may choose to read any books that they have not already read from the reading list.

It is wise to select and obtain books in advance; students must have hard copies of their selected books with them in class by the first Friday of each reading rotation. If a student has not obtained his/her book within 1 week of that assigned date, he/she loses the "choice" and must read a book that we provide and take an objective test over the book, with no option for any creative alternatives that other students may have. Although it is not mandatory, students may begin their Independent Reading on the first day of summer vacation and may read ahead of the deadlines.

****TAKE NOTE****

- The assessment for each quarter's Independent Reading book will account for a test grade.
- Individual teachers will explain grade-level assessments during the first week of school.
- Students who do not read the book or who turn in work that is not their original creation (AI-generated, or plagiarized) will receive no credit for this assignment.
- Students may **not** use books they have already read - independently or in a class.

Assessment Due Dates

Book #1: October 8, 2026

Book #2: December 10, 2026

Book #3: March 11, 2027

Book #4: May 20, 2027 (seniors exempt)

Assessments vary by grade level and will be explained in English classes during the first week of school in the fall.

High School Reading Lists

**Others by teacher approval (confirm with teacher BEFORE purchasing/beginning reading)*

Author: Title (Traditional College-Bound Reading List)

Achebe, Chinua: *Things Fall Apart*

Adams, Douglas: *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

Angelou, Maya: *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*

Austen, Jane: *Emma*

Austen, Jane: *Lady Susan*

Austen, Jane: *Persuasion*

Austen, Jane: *Pride and Prejudice*

Austen, Jane: *Sense and Sensibility*

Bernanos, George: *Diary of a Country Priest*

Berry, Wendell: *(any in the Port William series)*

Bronte, Emily: *Jane Eyre*

Bronte, Emily: *Wuthering Heights*

Buck, Pearl: *The Good Earth*

Buechner, Frederick: *Brendan*

Buechner, Frederick: *Godric*

Buechner, Frederick: *The Son of Laughter*

Bunyan, John: *Pilgrim's Progress*

Butler, Samuel: *The Way of All Flesh*

Campbell, Will: *Brother to a Dragonfly*

Card, Orson: *Ender's Game*

Carter, Asa Earl: *The Education of Little Tree*

Cather, Willa: *Death Comes for the Archbishop*

Cather, Willa: *My Antonia*

Cather, Willa: *O Pioneers!*

Chekhov, Anton: *The Cherry Orchard*

Chesterton, GK: *Manalive*

Chesterton, GK: *The Man Who Was Thursday*

Chevalier, Tracy: *Girl with a Pearl Earring*

Conrad, Joseph: *Heart of Darkness*

Conrad, Joseph: *Lord Jim*
Cooper, James Fenimore: *Last of the Mohicans*
Cooper, James Fenimore: *Deer Slayer*
Defoe, Daniel: *Robinson Crusoe*
Dickens, Charles: *A Tale of Two Cities*
Dickens, Charles: *David Copperfield*
Dickens, Charles: *Great Expectations*
Dickens, Charles: *Pickwick Papers*
Dillard, Annie: *American Childhood*
Dillard, Annie: *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*
Dostoyevsky, Fyodor: *The Brothers Karamazov*
Dostoyevsky, Fyodor: *The Idiot*
Dumas, Alexander: *The Three Musketeers*
DuMaurier, Daphne: *Rebecca*
Eliot, George: *Adam Bede*
Eliot, George: *Middlemarch*
Eliot, George: *Romola*
Eliot, George: *Silas Marner*
Eliot, George: *The Mill on the Floss*
Eliot, T.S: *Murder in the Cathedral*
Ellison, Ralph: *Invisible Man*
Endo, Shusaku: *Silence*
Endo, Shusaku: *The Samurai*
Endo, Shusaku: *Volcano*
Euripides: *Medea*
Faulkner, William: *Absalom, Absalom!*
Faulkner, William: *As I Lay Dying*
Faulkner, William: *Intruder in the Dust*
Faulkner, William: *Light in August*
Faulkner, William: *The Sound and the Fury*
Fitzgerald, F. Scott: *This Side of Paradise*
Forester, C.S.: *Captain from Connecticut*
Forester, C.S.: *Hornblower and the Atropos*
Forester, C.S.: *Hornblower and the Hotspur*
Forster, E.M: *A Passage to India*
Frazer, James: *George The Golden Bough*
Frazier, Charles: *Cold Mountain*
Goldsmith, Oliver: *Vicar of Wakefield*
Greenberg, Joanne: *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden*
Greene, Graham: *The Power and the Glory*
Hardy, Thomas: *Far from the Madding Crowd*
Hardy, Thomas: *Jude the Obscure*
Hardy, Thomas: *Mayor of Casterbridge*
Hardy, Thomas: *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*
Hardy, Thomas: *The Return of the Native*
Hawthorne, Nathaniel: *Blithedale Romance*
Hawthorne, Nathaniel: *House of Seven Gables*
Hemingway, Ernest: *For Whom the Bell Tolls*

Hemingway, Ernest: *The Sun Also Rises*
Herriot, James: *All Creatures Great and Small*
Hilton, James: *Goodbye Mr. Chips*
Homer: *The Iliad*
Homer: *The Odyssey*
Hosseini, Khaled: *A Thousand Splendid Suns*
Hosseini, Khaled: *The Kite Runner*
Hugo, Victor: *Les Misérables*
Hurston, Zorah Neale: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
Ibsen, Henrik: *Hedda Gabler*
James, Henry: *Daisy Miller*
James, Henry: *The Portrait of a Lady*
James, Henry: *The Turn of the Screw*
Keller, Helen: *The Story of My Life*
Kipling, Rudyard: *Kim*
Kipling, Rudyard: *Phantom Rickshaw*
Kipling, Rudyard: *Seven Seas*
Kipling, Rudyard: *The Light that Failed*
Lewis, C.S.: *Out of the Silent Planet*
Lewis, C.S.: *That Hideous Strength*
Lewis, C.S.: *The Screwtape Letters*
Lewis, C.S.: *Till We Have Faces*
Malamud, Bernard: *The Assistant*
Malamud, Bernard: *The Fixer*
Malamud, Bernard: *The Natural*
Melville, Herman: *Billy Budd*
Melville, Herman: *Moby Dick*
Miller, Arthur: *Death of a Salesman*
Miller, Walter: *A Canticle for Leibowitz*
Milton, John: *Samson Agonistes*
Mitchel, Margaret: *Gone With the Wind*
Morrison, Toni: *Beloved*
Nordoff and Hall: *Mutiny on the Bounty*
O'Connor, Flannery: *Wise Blood*
Orczy, Baroness: *The Scarlet Pimpernel*
Orwell, George: *1984*
Paton, Alan: *Cry, the Beloved Country*
Plath, Sylvia: *The Bell Jar*
Rand, Ayn: *Anthem*
Richter, Conrad: *The Fields*
Richter, Conrad: *The Light in the Forest*
Richter, Conrad: *The Trees*
Salinger, J.D.: *The Catcher in the Rye*
Scanlan and Clark: *America's Best Newspaper Writing*
Scott, Sir Walter: *Ivanhoe*
Shakespeare, William: *Othello*
Shakespeare, William: *The Merchant of Venice*
Shakespeare, William: *The Tempest*

Shelly, Mary: *Frankenstein*
Shute, Nevil: *On the Beach*
Solzhenitsyn, Alexander: *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*
Sophocles: *Oedipus Rex*
Steinbeck, John: *Cannery Row*
Steinbeck, John: *East of Eden*
Steinbeck, John: *Grapes of Wrath*
Steinbeck, John: *The Red Pony*
Stevenson, R.L.: *The Black Arrow*
Stevenson, R.L.: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
Stevenson, R.L.: *Treasure Island*
Swift, Jonathan: *Gulliver's Travels*
Tan, Amy: *The Joy Luck Club*
Thackeray, William: *Vanity Fair*
Thoreau, Henry: *Walden*
Tolkien, J.R.R.: *The Silmarillion*
Tolkien, J.R.R.: *The Lord of the Rings trilogy (choose one of the three)*
Twain, Mark: *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*
Twain, Mark: *Huckleberry Finn*
Twain, Mark: *Life on the Mississippi*
Twain, Mark: *The Prince and The Pauper*
Tyler, Anne: *The Accidental Tourist*
Verne, Jules: *Around the World in 80 Days*
Verne, Jules: *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*
Virgil: *The Aeneid*
Vonnegut, Kurt: *Slaughterhouse-Five*
Wells, H.G.: *The Island of Dr. Moreau*
Wells, H.G.: *War of the Worlds*
Wilde, Oscar: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
Wilder, Thornton: *Our Town*
Wright, Richard: *Native Son*

Biographical and Social Studies Focus (High School):

Adams, Henry: *The Education Of Henry Adams*
Beecher Stowe, Harriet: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
Boorstin, Daniel: *The Image*
Bradley, James: *Flag of Our Fathers*
Brown, Daniel James: *The Boys in the Boat*
Catton, Bruce: *A Stillness at Appomattox*
Douglass, Frederick: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
Fenimore, Trisha: *Pray For Them: The True Story of a Racist White Christian Called to Black Seminary*
Griffin, John Howard: *Black Like Me*
Haley, Alex: *Roots*
Hamilton, Bethany: *Soul Surfer*
Hillenbrand, Lauren: *Unbroken*
Lewis Allen, Frederick: *Only Yesterday*
Lewis, Sinclair: *Babbitt*

Leyson, Leon: *The Boy on the Wooden Box*
MacDonald, George: *Lilith*
MacDonald, George: *Phantastes*
MacDonald, George: *The Portent*
Malcolm X and Alex Haley: *The Autobiography Of Malcolm X*
Michener, James: *The Bridges at Toko-ri*
O'Brien, Tim: *The Things They Carried*
Pelzer, Dave: *A Child Called It: One Child's Courage to Survive*
Philbrick, Nathaniel: *Bunker Hill*
Reynolds, Quentin: *They Fought for the Sky*
Rolvaag, Ole: *Giants in the Earth*
Sinclair, Upton: *The Jungle*
Steffins, Lincoln: *The Shame of the Cities*
Tuchmann, Barbara: *The Guns of August*
Washington, Booker T: *Up From Slavery*
Weber, Carolyn: *Surprised by Oxford*
Westheimer, David Van: *Ryan's Express*

Art Focus (High School):

Levi, Allen: *Theo of Golden*
Picasso, Marina: *Picasso my Grandfather*
Pollitzer, Anita: *A Woman on Paper: Georgia O'Keeffe*
Potok, Chaim: *My Name is Asher Lev*
Rookmaaker, HR: *Modern Art and the Death of Culture*
Stone, Irving: *Depths of Glory; a biographical novel of Camille Pissaro*
Stone, Irving: *The Agony and the Ecstasy; a novel of Michelangelo*
Van Loon, Hendrik Willem: *R.V.R ; the life of Rembrandt van Rijn*

Bible/Faith Focus (High School):

Bigney, Brad J: *Gospel Treason: Betraying the Gospel with Hidden Idols*
Bonhoeffer, Dietrich: *The Cost of Discipleship*
Brother Lawrence: *The Practice of the Presence of God*
Chesterton, G.K. *Orthodoxy*
Colson, Charles: *How Should We Now Live*
Colson, Charles W. & Harold Pickett: *The Faith: What Christians Believe & Why They Believe It*
Crowe, Jacqueline: *This Changes Everything*
DeYoung, Kevin: *Just Do Something*
Dungey, Tony: *Quiet Strength*
Eldridge, John: *Wild at Heart*
Fee, Gordon: *How to Read the Bible for All it's Worth*
Goff, Bob: *Everybody Always*
Goff, Bob: *Love Does*
Harris, Alex and Brett Harris: *Do Hard Things*
Holtz, Wendy: *What You Aren't: 10 Things That Just Aren't True About You*
Idleman, Kyle: *Not A Fan*
James, William: *The Varieties Of Religious Experience*

Keller, Timothy: *King's Cross*
Keller, Timothy: *Prodigal God*
Koukle, Greg: *Tactics*
Lewis, C.S.: *Mere Christianity*
Lewis, C.S.: *The Pilgrim's Regress*
Ludy, Eric and Leslie: *When God Writes Your Love Story*
Majors, Katie Davis: *Kisses from Katie*
Majors, Katie Davis: *Daring to Hope*
Mathis, David: *Habits of Grace*
McKnight, Scot: *One Life*
Michener, James: *The Source*
Miller, Donald: *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years*
Ortberg, John: *Everybody's Normal Until You Get to Know Them*
Ortberg, John: *The Me I Want to Be*
Packer, J.I.: *Knowing God*
Piper, John: *Don't Waste Your Life*
Postman, Neil: *Amusing Ourselves to Death*
Sire, James: *The Universe Next Door*
St. Augustine: *Confessions*
Stanley, Charles: *How To Listen To God*
Strobel, Lee: *The Case for Christ*
Strobel, Lee: *The Case for Faith*
Tebow, Tim: *Shaken*
Wallace, J. Warner: *Cold Case Christianity*
Willard, Dallas: *The Divine Conspiracy*
Yancey, Philip: *What's So Amazing About Grace*
Zacharias, Rav: *Jesus Among the Other gods*

Math and Science Focus (High School):

Behe, Michael: *Darwin's Black Box*
Conway, John H. & Richard K. Guy: *The Book of Numbers*
Devlin and Lorden: *The Math Behind Numb3rs*
Ratey, Dr. John: *Spark*
Roach, Mary: *Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers*
Stewart, Ian: *Flatterland*
Strogatz, Steven: *The Joy of X*

Music Focus (High School):

Broach, Elise: *Duet*
Copeland, Aaron: *What to Look for in Music*
Kavanaugh, Peter: *Spiritual Lives of Great Composers*
Schmidt, Cary: *Music Matters: Understanding and Applying the Amazing Power of Godly Music*
Williams, Zach: *Rescue Story: Faith, Freedom, and Finding My Way Home*