

Humanities Department Summer Reading List

For Baxter Students by Baxter Humanities Staff

The Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet - Book 1 of the Wayfarers Series by Becky Chambers
“A fun and mind-expanding book that will immerse the reader in a wonderful sci-fi galaxy where the Human race is only a small player amongst aliens and the vastness of space. I loved this book for pushing the boundaries on how we can see ourselves through the lens of aliens who would be so different from us, yet strangely so familiar.” - Delorme

Sara Sherr: *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky

This epistolary novel was the first time I ever read about queer people when I went to high school. And the results: fireworks. This book beautifully encapsulates what it means to manage high school school conflicts around peers, family, and society. I highly recommend this read. Note that this text includes violence.

Shauna: *Night* by Elie Wiesel, *Irena's Children* by Tillar Mazzeo and *The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak. The Holocaust is the setting for all these books, with *Night* probably the most widely known because Weisel dedicated the rest of his life to educating people about the Holocaust. Publishing his story about his life in Hungary, deportation to Auschwitz, and soul-wrenching experiences while there, make this a must read book in my mind. Irena, in *Irena's Children*, is a young Polish woman who saved more than 2500 babies, infants and young children from death by smuggling them through a safety network to new homes. Her story shines another warm light on the constant supply of unselfish acts, kindness and heroism within human beings while trapped in unfathomable violence and unspeakable acts. *The Book Thief*, the historical fiction of these three reads, is about a young German girl, Liesel, who has lost her own family, is adopted by another and then helps her new family hide a Jewish man in their basement. Have a tissue box near, if one of these books speaks to you for a summer history read.

Mr. B: *Children of Blood & Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi - The majority of the English-language fantasy canon (meaning the most popular, respected, and influential books) take inspiration from medieval European society. This fantasy book, however, takes inspiration from African cultures and rivals the best in the young adult genre. This relates to a unit in History class that all 9th graders take about West Africa.

Zenobia July by Lisa Bunker is a beautifully written YA novel about a trans girl who's also a skilled hacker. Set in Portland in recognizable settings at King Middle School (called Monarch Middle School, here), WMPG radio, and Back Cove, Zenobia wrestles with her identity, online hate, and making new friends. John Wensman

Ms. D: For me, summer has always been memoir season. Pick a memoir of your choice and think about what stories the author chooses to tell and how. I highly recommend *I'm Just a Person* by Tig Notaro, *Glass Castle* by Jeanette Walls, *Is Everyone Hanging Out Without Me?* Mindy Kaling, and *Little Weirds* by Jenny Slate. (Really, *Little Weirds* is in my top 10 favorite books).