Putnam Valley High School  
Eleventh Grade Summer Reading List  
2014

All students entering 11th grade English are to read any two of the following:

The author, an alumnus of Brandeis University, tells of his meetings with a former professor suffering from Lou Gehrig’s disease and all of the lessons he learned about life and death from his college mentor. *non-fiction* (publisher’s description)

Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. *realistic fiction*

Chronicles the obsession of the citizens of Odessa, Texas, with their champion high school football team, the Permian Panthers. *non-fiction*

Against a background of English moors in the 18th century, the lives of two families become intertwined through marriage, passion, and the dominating force of a man called Heathcliff. *classic*

Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon and French cryptologist Sophie Neveu work to solve the murder of an elderly curator of the Louvre, a case which leads to clues hidden in the works of Da Vinci and a centuries-old secret society. *realistic fiction* (publisher’s description)

Brunt, Carol Rifka. *Tell the Wolves I’m Home*. 2012
In this striking literary debut, Carol Rifka Brunt unfolds a moving story of love, grief, and renewal as two lonely people become the unlikeliest of friends and find that sometimes you don’t know you’ve lost someone until you’ve found them. *realistic fiction*

Recounts the slaying of the Clutter family of Kansas, and the capture, trial and execution of their murderers. *non-fiction* (publisher’s description)

A shepard’s journey from Spain to Egypt in search of worldly goods and discovers a treasure within. *classic* (publisher’s description)

Follows the Fort Yukon Eagles, winners of six regional championships in a row, through the course of an entire 28-game season, from their first day of practice in late November to the Alaska State Championship Tournament in March. *non-fiction* (publisher’s description)
Dr. David Henry is forced by a blizzard to deliver his own twins. His son is perfectly healthy, but his daughter has Down’s syndrome. Rationalizing it as a need to protect his wife, he asks his nurse to take the baby away to an institution. Instead, the nurse disappears into another city to raise the child herself. *realistic fiction* (publisher’s description)

Set in the ethnic neighborhoods of Seattle during World War II and Japanese American internment camps of the era, this debut novel tells the heartwarming story of widower Henry Lee, his father, and his first love Keiko Okabe. *historical fiction*

A Southern town is shocked when a 10-year-old black girl is raped by two white men—until the girl’s father takes the law into his own hands. *realistic fiction*

Nitta Sayuri is a young Japanese woman who was taken from her home at the age of nine and sold into slavery as a geisha. She discovers a rare opportunity for freedom when the outbreak of WWII forces an end to the only life she has ever known. *historical fiction* (publisher’s description)

Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic, fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor’s dog and uncovers secret information about his mother. *realistic fiction*

Chronicles Jack Kerouac’s years traveling the North American continent with his friend Neal Cassady, “a sideburned hero of the snowy West.” *classic*

In April 1992, a young man from a well-to-do East Coast family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. Four months later his decomposed body was found by a party of moose hunters. *non-fiction* (publisher’s description)

Who is Ruth McBride Jordan? Not even her son knew the answer to that question until he embarked on a twelve-year journey that changed himself and his family forever. James McBride explores his mother’s past, as well as his own upbringing and heritage. *non-fiction* (publisher’s description)

A New York City nanny tells the story of her stint with one family, from beginning to end. *realistic fiction* (publisher’s description)
After the eruption of the Yellowstone supervolcano destroys his city and its surroundings, fifteen-year-old Alex must journey from Cedar Falls, Iowa, to Illinois to find his parents and sister, trying to survive in a transformed landscape and a new society in which all the old rules of living have vanished. *science fiction*

A policeman's obsessive love for a tempestuous wig factory worker ends in tragedy in this updated version of Bizet's Carmen, set in Spanish Harlem, and told in screenplay format. *screenplay*

Lena looks forward to receiving the government-mandated cure that prevents the delirium of love and leads to a safe, predictable, and happy life, until ninety-five days before her eighteenth birthday and her treatment, she falls in love. *science fiction*

Conceived to provide a bone marrow match for her leukemia-stricken sister, teenage Kate begins to question her moral obligations in light of countless medical procedures and decides to fight for the right to make decisions about her own body. *realistic fiction* (publisher's description)

Hiking into the remote Utah canyonlands, Aron Ralston felt perfectly at home in the beautiful natural world. Then, at 2:41 p.m., eight miles from his truck, in a deep and narrow slot canyon, an eight-hundred-pound boulder tumbled loose, pinning Aron's right hand and wrist against the canyon wall. Through six days of hell, with scant water, food, or warm clothing, and the terrible knowledge that no one knew where he was, Aron eliminated his escape options one by one. Then a moment of stark clarity helped him to solve the riddle of the boulder, and commit one of the most extreme and desperate acts imaginable. *non-fiction*

On February 13, 1972, a Fairchild F-227 of the Uruguayan Air Force crashed with a rugby team and twenty-five of the friends and relatives aboard. *non-fiction* (publisher's description)

Recounting his first two hundred years of life, a vampire tells of his erotic alliance with Claudia, whose passions are forever locked up in the body of a child. *fantasy* (publisher's description)

Describes the Battle of Gettysburg through the eyes of Lee, Longstreet, and others who fought there. *historical fiction*
As London is emerging from the shadow of World War II, writer Juliet Ashton discovers her next subject in a book club on Guernsey—a club born as a spur-of-the-moment alibi after its members are discovered breaking curfew by the Germans occupying their island.  *historical fiction*

A family saga and a modern retelling of the book of Genesis.  *classic* (publisher's description)

The story of a farm family's Depression-era journey from the Dustbowl of Oklahoma to the California migrant labor camps in search of a better life.  *classic* (publisher's description)

In Jackson, Mississippi, in 1962, there are lines that are not crossed. With the civil rights movement exploding all around them, three women start a movement of their own, forever changing a town and the way women -- black and white, mothers and daughters -- view one another.  *historical fiction*

Billy Pilgrim serves as a chaplain's assistant in the Second World War, is captured by the Germans, and survives the fire bombing of Dresden to contemplate the human condition.  *science fiction*

The child of an alcoholic father and an eccentric artist mother discusses her family's nomadic upbringing, during which she and her siblings fended for themselves while their parents outmaneuvered bill collectors and the authorities.  *non-fiction* (publisher's description)

Wolff's account of his boyhood and the process of growing up includes paper routes, whiskey, scouting, fistfights, friendship, and betrayal in 1950s America.  *non-fiction* (publisher’s description)

*All plot synopses courtesy of the Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication (CIP) Program, unless otherwise noted.*