

Recommended Summer Reading List

Dear Roosevelt Student,

Welcome to Roosevelt High School! As your Social Studies and Language Arts block teachers, we are very excited for your arrival and expect many good things from the class of 2014. This summer you will be making important transitions between your life in middle school and your future as a Roughrider. Because Roosevelt is a place that values a strong life of the mind, and because your blocked LA and SS classes will explore cultures and literature outside the United States, we would like you to challenge yourself to read some international literature this summer. We recommend that you read at least one of the books from the attached list.

We look forward to meeting you! Your Language Arts and Social Studies teachers.

| Title | Author | Summary | Nation | Lexile Score |
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| Annie John | Kincaid, Jamaica | A fictional account of a young girl's coming of age in Antigua, from a doted upon childhood to an adolescence fraught with events and alliances leading her away from mutual complacent acceptance. | Antigua | 1120L |
| Santa Evita | Martinez, Tomas Eloy | Fictional portrayal of factual events that occurred upon the death of Argentina's legendary Eva Peron, following the travels of her corpse which was hidden, stolen, duplicated, smuggled, buried, dug up, and hijacked before finally being laid to rest. | Argentina | 1270L |
| A Secret For Julia | Sagastizabal, Patricia | Teenaged Julia learns powerful secrets about her mother's past in Argentina when a mysterious stranger enters their lives in 1990s London and sends her mother careening two decades back into psychological terror. | Argentina | 800L |
| Musicians & Watchmakers | Steimberg, Alicia | A translation of the semi-autobiographical novel, first published in Spanish, about growing up Jewish in Argentina in the 1940s. | Argentina | 970L |
| Asphalt Angels | Holtwijk, Ineke | Abandoned on the streets of Rio de Janeiro, thirteen-year-old Alex joins a group of children like him and finds himself adapting to his new life. | Brazil | 490L |
| Becoming Madame Mao | Min, Anchee | The author takes on the identity of Madame Mao, wife of Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong, presenting her as insecure and in need of love instead of simply vindictive and cruel, and uses historical facts, characters, and documents to tell her story. | China | 590L |
| The Pagoda | Powell, Patricia | Lowe, an immigrant who fled China for Jamaica years earlier, writes to his long-estranged daughter in an attempt to tell her the truth about what happened during their years apart. | China | 1200L |
| A Simple Habana Melody | Hijuelos, Oscar | Israel Levis, a Cuban composer, returns to Habana still recovering physically and emotionally from his experiences in Paris during the Nazi occupation, where he brings to life his love for Rita Valdares in his most famous rumba song "Rosas Puras." | Cuba | 1590L |
| Havana World Series | Latour, Jose | Criminal mastermind Mariano "Ox" Contreras, handpicked by the Joe Bonanno crime family, assembles a team of skilled ex-cons in Havana to aid him in pulling off a casino heist at the height of betting on the 1958 World Series, which might bring rival mob boss Meyer Lansky to his knees. | Cuba | 1890L |
| Yo! | Alvarez, Julia | Yolanda finds success with her first novel in which she made characters out of her family members and friends, but her "fictionally victimized" relatives exact revenge by telling all they know about the author, Yo. | Dominican Republic | 1010L |
| The Feast Of The Goat | Vargas Llosa, Mario | Forty-nine-year-old Urania Cabral, haunted all her life by terror and emptiness, returns to her homeland, the Dominican Republic, and finds herself reliving the bloody revolution of 1961, when brutal dictator Rafael "The Goat" Trujillo--under whom Urania's father served as secretary of state--was overthrown. | Dominican Republic | 1240L |
| Nadia's Song | Khashoggi, Soheir | A novel set in the Middle East between WW2 & the first Gulf War, in which Nadia, daughter of an Egyptian servant turned famous singer, is abducted & returns to her homeland decades later in search of her past. | Egypt | 710L |
| Palace Walk | Mahfouz, Naguib | Set in post-WWI Egypt, this first installment of the sweeping Cairo Trilogy introduces wealthy merchant Ahmad Abd al-Jawad who imprisons the women in his family while he indulges in Cairo's seedy nightlife. | Egypt | 1030L |
| Akhenaten, Dweller In Truth | Mahfuz, Najib | A young man interviews the Egypt "sun king" Akhenaten's friends, enemies, and wife, Nefertiti, in search of the truth about the pharaoh notorious for his monotheistic beliefs. | Egypt | 1070L |
| The Cairo House | Serageldin, Samia | Gihan, daughter of a politically prominent Egyptian family, looks back over the history of her country in an effort to reconcile her past and present. | Egypt | 810L |
| In Search Of Bernabe | Limon, Graciela | Describes the horrors of the 12 years of Civil War in El Salvador in this story of Luz Delcano's search for her son & the struggles of her people to survive. | El Salvador | 1070L |
| Mother Tongue | Martinez, Demetria | Nineteen-year-old Mary, longing for something meaningful in her life, agrees to help Jose Luis, a refugee from El Salvador who has been smuggled into the United States as part of a sanctuary movement, and immediately falls in love with both the movement and the man. | El Salvador | 780L |
| Cousin Bette | de Balzac, Honore | Secrets, betrayal, and vengeance converge in this suspenseful story in which sweet and venomous Cousin Bette quietly manipulates the wealthy relatives who abuse and underestimate her. | France | 1490L |

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| A Woman in her Prime | Konadu, Asare | Pokuwaa would like a child, but her prayers have not been answered. She discovers that disappointment may be balanced by tenderness and peace -- and we sometimes get the thing we want only after we have let it go. | Ghana | |
| Under The Silk Cotton Tree | Buffong, Jean | Flora sits under the silk cotton tree weaving tales of village life, families and friends, strange neighbors, and weird events. | Grenada | 870L |
| The Dew Breaker | Danticat, Edwidge | A man tries to hide his violent past in Haiti from his new family as he tries to rebuild his life in America. | Haiti | 910L |
| Koyal Dark, Mango Sweet | Sheth, Kashmira | This story takes place in a traditional Indian family in a modern Indian town. Jeeta's family is in the midst of arranging marriages for 2 of the 3 older daughters, & she is beginning to dread her turn. When Jeeta meets a new friend she starts to question the traditions she has always accepted before. | India | 790L |
| Midnight's Children | Rushdie, Salman | Saleem's varied and surreal journey through life also depicts the cataclysmic birth and coming-of-age of modern India. | India | 1120L |
| Pomegranate Soup | Mehran, Marsha | The Aminpour sisters flee their native Iran for Ireland, hoping they might finally be able to build a peaceful home for themselves, & as they draw in townfolk with fragrant pastries, they learn what it means to find a home. | Iran | 1490L |
| The Bathhouse | Moshiri, Farnoosh | A seventeen-year-old girl, arrested in Iran because of her brother's involvement with leftist politics in the early days of the fundamentalist revolution, struggles to remain strong while being held in a makeshift jail that once served as a bathhouse. | Iran | 790L |
| The Distance Between Us | Hamilton, Masha | Journalist Caddie Blair is torn between vengeance and emotional survival when her colleague and lover is killed in an ambush while traveling across the Israeli border into Lebanon. | Israel | 1040L |
| Dancing Arabs | Qashu, Sayed | A teenage boy from a militant Arab family in Israel wins a scholarship to an elite Jewish boarding school and, already looking more Jewish than Arab, tries to reject his Arab identity, and finds himself in limbo as he grows to manhood, torn between two worlds. | Israel | 1150L |
| Pirates! | Rees, Celia | At the dawn of the eighteenth century, Nancy Kington and Minerva Sharpe, set sail from Jamaica on a pirate vessel, hoping to escape from an arranged marriage and slavery. | Jamaica | 800L |
| Spring Snow | Mishima, Yukio | In turn-of-the-century Tokyo, love and death unite as Satoko falls in love with a young man from an elite provincial family, despite her betrothal to an imperial prince. | Japan | 1280L |
| The Devil Of Nanking | Hayder, Mo | Grey, a young English woman, travels to Tokyo in search of a rare piece of film footage that has been lost for decades and reveals a horrifying incident during the 1937 Nanking Massacre, but her search for the truth is hindered by a government intent on keeping secrets and a culture that does not respond to curious women. | Japan | 950L |
| A Wild Sheep Chase | Murakami, Haruki | A select group of people in Japan are impelled into the bizarre pursuit of a super sheep. | Japan | 730L |
| The Tale Of Genji | Murasaki Shikibu | Translation of an early eleventh-century novel about the life of Japanese nobleman Genji, the son of an emperor who finds himself falling in love with women who remind him of the mother he lost in his youth. | Japan | 1420L |
| Staircase Of A 1000 Steps | Hamilton, Masha | The residents of a Middle Eastern village bond together to protect their neighbors from evil curses. | Jordan | 880L |
| Summer 1990 | Alshalabi, Firyal | Separated from her family by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, spoiled thirteen year old Danah, stealthily returns to say "sorry" to her parents and help liberate her country. | Kuwait | 780L |
| The Bleeding of the Stone | Ibrahim Al-Koni | Only Asouf, a lone Bedouin who cherishes the desert and identifies with its creatures, knows exactly where to find the prized moufflon. He and the moufflon together come under threat from hunters who have already slaughtered the once numerous desert gazelles. | Libya | 1240L |
| The Ordinary Seaman | Goldman, Francisco | Nineteen-year-old Esteban finds himself trapped in New York without money or legal status. Along with fourteen other men he takes a job on a cargo ship, only to discover that the vessel is not seaworthy. | Nicaragua | 1210L |
| Beasts Of No Nation | Iweala, Uzodinma | Agu, a young boy in an unnamed West African nation, is discovered by guerrilla fighters after his mother and sister escape and his father is brutally murdered, and is forced into becoming a soldier at the mercy of a treacherous terrorist leader. | Nigeria | 1120L |
| The News From Paraguay | Tuck, Lily | In 1854 Paraguay, Francisco Solano Lopez, the future dictator of Paraguay, begins to court a beautiful Irishwoman who will play a key role in the country's development. | Paraguay | 1540L |
| The Meaning Of Consuelo | Ortiz Cofer, Judith | A Puerto Rican girl coming of age in the 1950s struggles to negotiate her own terms of survival within the confines of her culture. | Puerto Rico | 1290L |
| Salt : A Novel | Lovelace, Earl | Alford George, the youngest son of a Trinidadian farm worker, overcomes his childhood difficulties to become a respected teacher, but his dream of emigrating to England is repeatedly postponed and eventually he is drawn into the political struggle over racism on the island. | Trinidad | 1410L |
| The Dragon Can't Dance | Lovelace, Earl | Philo, Sylvia, Aldrick, Cleothilde, and Fisheye feel they are invisible to the rest of their small town in Trinidad until they participate in the Carnival, where they are able to hide behind the beautiful masks that give them the freedom to express themselves. | Trinidad | |
| The Stone Woman | Ali, Tariq | At the end of the nineteenth century, Iskander Pasha's family is forced to confront difficult questions about the state of their country. | Turkey | 730L |
| The Tree Of Red Stars | Bridal, Tessa | Magda, a young woman of privilege, is drawn into unexpected danger when she joins the underground struggle against the government of Uruguay. | Uruguay | 1480L |