***The world belongs to those who read*—Rick Holland**

Happy New Year!

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* Selecting reading choices from a wide range of texts.
* Selecting texts that are increasing in complexity.

During the next two weeks, you will be reading one of the fictional texts listed below. Please take the time to read the descriptions of each text as well as the learning goal governing this particular reading enterprise. After reviewing each description, indicate your first and second choice in the column labeled choice. Be sure to make an informed decision with your parent or guardian as adolescent literature often contains sensitive or mature themes.

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Thank you,

Ms. Rutigliano

krutigliano@mayfieldschools.org

440.995.6966

 **Learning Goal:**

* RL.8.10: I can by the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

|  |  |  |
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| **Title & Author** | **Summary** | **Choice** |
| A Brave New World by Aldous Huxley  | "Community, Identity, Stability" is the motto of Aldous Huxley's utopian World State. Here everyone consumes daily grams of soma, to fight depression, babies are born in laboratories, and the most popular form of entertainment is a "Feelie," a movie that stimulates the senses of sight, hearing, and touch. Though there is no violence and everyone is provided for, Bernard Marx feels something is missing and senses his relationship with a young woman has the potential to be much more than the confines of their existence allow. Huxley foreshadowed many of the practices and gadgets we take for granted today--let's hope the sterility and absence of individuality he predicted aren't yet to come. |  |
| Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay by Michael Chabon | A “towering, swash-buckling thrill of a book” (*Newsweek*), hailed as Chabon’s “magnum opus” (*The New York Review of Books*), *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay* is a triumph of originality, imagination, and storytelling, an exuberant, irresistible novel that begins in New York City in 1939. A young escape artist and budding magician named Joe Kavalier arrives on the doorstep of his cousin, Sammy Clay. While the long shadow of Hitler falls across Europe, America is happily in thrall to the Golden Age of comic books, and in a distant corner of Brooklyn, Sammy is looking for a way to cash in on the craze. He finds the ideal partner in the aloof, artistically gifted Joe, and together they embark on an adventure that takes them deep into the heart of Manhattan, and the heart of old-fashioned American ambition. From the shared fears, dreams, and desires of two teenage boys, they spin comic book tales of the heroic, fascist-fighting Escapist and the beautiful, mysterious Luna Moth, otherworldly mistress of the night. Climbing from the streets of Brooklyn to the top of the Empire State Building, Joe and Sammy carve out lives, and careers, as vivid as cyan and magenta ink. Spanning continents and eras, this superb book by one of America’s finest writers remains one of the defining novels of our modern American age. |  |
| Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close by Jonathan Safran Foer | Oskar Schell is not your average nine-year-old. A budding inventor, he spends his time imagining wonderful creations. He also collects random photographs for his scrapbook and sends letters to scientists. When his father dies in the World Trade Center collapse, Oskar shifts his boundless energy to a quest for answers. He finds a key hidden in his father's things that doesn't fit any lock in their New York City apartment; its container is labeled "Black." Using flawless kid logic, Oskar sets out to speak to everyone in New York City with the last name of Black.  |  |
| Life of Pi by Yann Martel | Only one lifeboat survived the sinking of the Japanese freighter in the heart of the Pacific Ocean. The boat crammed five survivors: Orange - an orangutan, a hyena, a zebra with a broken leg, a huge Bengal tiger named Richard Parker and Pi Patel, an Indian boy was 16. This little boat is the main setting of this wonderful novel, whose power could light a reader’s faith in God, as one of the heroes. |  |
| Lord of the Flies by William Golding | William Golding's compelling story about a group of very ordinary small boys marooned on a coral island has become a modern classic. At first it seems as though it is all going to be great fun; but the fun before long becomes furious and life on the island turns into a nightmare of panic and death. As ordinary standards of behavior collapse, the whole world the boys know collapses with them—the world of cricket and homework and adventure stories—and another world is revealed beneath, primitive and terrible. |  |

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| **Title & Author** | **Summary** | **Choice** |
| Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian by Sherman Alexie | This book tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the reservation to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. |  |
| Divergent by Veronica Roth | One choice can transform you. Beatrice Prior's society is divided into five factions—Candor (the honest), Abnegation (the selfless), Dauntless (the brave), Amity (the peaceful), and Erudite (the intelligent). Beatrice must choose between staying with her Abnegation family and transferring factions. Her choice will shock her community and herself. But the newly christened Tris also has a secret, one she's determined to keep hidden, because in this world, what makes you different makes you dangerous. |  |
| How I Live Now by Meg Rosoff | Fifteen-year-old Daisy is sent from Manhattan to England to visit her aunt and cousins she’s never met: three boys near her age, and their little sister. Her aunt goes away on business soon after Daisy arrives. The next day bombs go off as London is attacked and occupied by an unnamed enemy.As power fails, and systems fail, the farm becomes more isolated. Despite the war, it’s a kind of Eden, with no adults in charge and no rules, a place where Daisy’s uncanny bond with her cousins grows into something rare and extraordinary. But the war is everywhere, and Daisy and her cousins must lead each other into a world that is unknown in the scariest, most elemental way. |  |
| Going Bovine by Libba Bray | All 16-year-old Cameron wants is to get through high school—and life in general—with a minimum of effort. It’s not a lot to ask. But that’s before he’s given some bad news: he’s sick and he’s going to die. Which totally sucks. Hope arrives in the winged form of Dulcie, a loopy punk angel/possible hallucination with a bad sugar habit. She tells Cam there is a cure—if he’s willing to go in search of it. With the help of a death-obsessed, video-gaming dwarf and a yard gnome, Cam sets off on the mother of all road trips through a twisted America into the heart of what matters most. |  |
| The Book Thief by Markus Zusak | It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still.Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can’t resist–books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement. |  |
| The Color Purple by Alice Walker | *The Color Purple* is the story of two sisters—one a missionary to Africa and the other a child wife living in the South—who remain loyal to one another across time, distance, and silence. Beautifully imagined and deeply compassionate, this classic of American literature is rich with passion, pain, inspiration, and an indomitable love of life. |  |
| The Curious Incident of the Dog in Night Time by Mark Haddon | Fifteen-year-old Christopher John Francis Boone is mathematically gifted and socially hopeless, raised in a working-class home by parents who can barely cope with their child's quirks. He takes everything that he sees (or is told) at face value, and is unable to sort out the strange behavior of his elders and peers.Late one night, Christopher comes across his neighbor's poodle, Wellington, impaled on a garden fork. Wellington's owner finds him cradling her dead dog in his arms, and has him arrested. After spending a night in jail, Christopher resolves--against the objection of his father and neighbors--to discover just who has murdered Wellington. He is encouraged by Siobhan, a social worker at his school, to write a book about his investigations. |  |
| The Fault in Our Stars by John Green | Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel’s story is about to be completely rewritten. |  |
| The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd | When Lily’s fierce-hearted black “stand-in mother,” Rosaleen, insults three of the town’s most vicious racists, Lily decides they should both escape to Tiburon, South Carolina—a town that holds the secret to her mother’s past. There they are taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sisters who introduce Lily to a mesmerizing world of bees, honey, and the Black Madonna who presides over their household.  |  |

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| * **Title& Author**
 | **Summary** | **Choice** |
| Ketchup Clouds by Annabel Pitcher | Hidden away in her backyard shed in the middle of the night with a jam sandwich in one hand and a pen in the other, Zoe gives a voice to her heart and her fears after months of silence. Mr. Harris may never respond to Zoe's letters, but at least somebody will know her story--somebody who knows what it's like to kill a person you love. Only through her unusual confession can Zoe hope to atone for her mistakes that have torn lives apart, and work to put her own life back together again. |  |
| Memoirs of a Teenage Amnesiac by Gabrielle Zevin | After high-school junior Naomi conks her head, she can't remember anything that happened since sixth grade. She is by turns mystified and startled by evidence of her present life, from the birth-control pills in her bedside table to her parents' astonishing, rancorous split. Eventually, the memories return, leaving Naomi questioning the basis of a new, intense romance, and wondering which of her two lives, present or former, represents her most authentic self. |  |
| Monster by Walter Dean Myers | Steve Harmon, a teenage boy in juvenile detention and on trial, presents his story as a screenplay of Steve's own imagination, and peppered with journal entries, the book shows how one single decision can change our whole lives.Fade In: Interior: Early Morning In Cell Block D, Manhattan Detention Center.Steve (Voice-Over)Sometimes I feel like I have walked into the middle of a movie. Maybe I can make my own movie. The film will be the story of my life. No, not my life, but of this experience. I'll call it what the lady prosecutor called me ... Monster. |  |
| Okay for Now by Gary Schmidt | In this companion novel to *The Wednesday Wars*, Doug struggles to be more than the "skinny thug" that some people think him to be. He finds an unlikely ally in Lil Spicer, who gives him the strength to endure an abusive father, the suspicions of a town, and the return of his oldest brother, forever scarred, from Vietnam. Schmidt expertly weaves multiple themes of loss and recovery in a story teeming with distinctive, unusual characters and invaluable lessons about love, creativity, and survival. |  |
| Tears of a Tiger by Sharon Draper | A hard-hitting story of the unraveling of a young black man who was the drunk driver in an accident that killed his best friend. Andy cannot bear his guilt or reach out for help, and chapter by chapter his disintegration builds to inevitable suicide. Counselors, coaches, friends, and family all fail him. The story is artfully told through English class assignments, including poetry; dialogues; police and newspaper reports; and letters. |  |
| The Adoration of Jenna Fox by M. Pearson | Who is Jenna Fox? Seventeen-year-old Jenna has been told that is her name. She has just awoken from a coma, they tell her, and she is still recovering from a terrible accident in which she was involved a year ago. But what happened before that? Jenna doesn't remember her life. Or does she? And are the memories really hers? |  |

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