

PCA Suggested *Summer* Reading List

Upper School: Grades 9-12

If we look to the answer as to why for so many years we achieved so much, prospered as no other people on earth, it was because here in this land we unleashed the energy and individual genius of man to a greater extent than has ever been done before.

Freedom and the dignity of the individual have been more available and assured here than in any other place on earth.

Ronald Reagan

In general, these titles are classics of Literature or they are current Christian titles. To be an American and to be a Christian means that we think nobly, act with kindness and love and believe in higher truths. As we grow and develop our ability to think critically, we are faced with many choices that will reflect our character as maturing learners and as persons with core beliefs. Developing these things requires learning from others and practice. Some of our best teachers and vision keepers are characters found in some of these books. Challenge yourself! Read 75 pages a week this summer (10 pages a day). Check out the links to extend the list. Read a good book this summer!

Many of the titles can be found at your Public Library all can be found on Amazon and some can be read on a screen.

The Last of the Mohicans, James Fenimore Cooper

A gripping tale set during the French and Indian War, following the adventures of Natty Bumppo, known as Hawkeye, and his Mohican friends, Chingachgook and his son Uncas. The story intertwines themes of love, survival, and cultural conflict as they strive to protect two sisters, Cora and Alice Munro, from various dangers in the wilderness. Rich in historical detail and vivid descriptions, this classic novel explores the complexities of frontier life and the tragic fate of the Native American tribes.

Mathew Alabaster Guided Meditations, Brian Chung and Bryan Ye-Chung eds.

A peaceful collection of meditative exercises that encourage mindfulness and spiritual growth, aligning well with Christian values of inner peace and reflection. Each meditation is thoughtfully designed to help believers reduce stress, deepen their faith, and enhance their daily connection with God. This uplifting guide offers practical tools for Christians seeking to integrate meditation into their spiritual practice, fostering a closer walk with the Lord.

The Red Badge of Courage, Stephan Crane

A compelling novel that delves into the psychological trials of a young soldier named Henry Fleming during the American Civil War. As Henry grapples with fear, courage, and his desire for redemption, the story poignantly explores themes of bravery, self-discovery, and the harsh realities of war. This classic work offers a profound reflection on the human spirit and the moral challenges faced in the crucible of battle.



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Rhythms for Life: Spiritual Practices for Who God Made You to Be, Alistair Sterne

A transformative guide to embracing spiritual disciplines that align with God's unique design for each individual. Through practical insights and biblical wisdom, Sterne encourages believers to cultivate habits that foster spiritual growth, rest, and a deeper relationship with Christ. This inspiring book provides a pathway for Christians to live out their faith authentically and purposefully, honoring the rhythms God has woven into their lives.

A Tale of Two Cities, Charles Dickens

A profound narrative set against the tumultuous backdrop of the French Revolution, contrasting the cities of London and Paris. The novel intricately weaves themes of sacrifice, resurrection, and redemption through the lives of its characters, particularly focusing on the noble acts of Sydney Carton. This classic work offers a compelling reflection on the transformative power of love and grace amidst the chaos of historical upheaval.

The Path Between Us: An Enneagram Journey to Healthy Relationships, Suzanne Stabile

An exploration of how understanding the Enneagram can enrich our relationships by revealing our unique interpersonal dynamics. Through a Christian lens, Stabile offers insights and practical guidance on how each Enneagram type interacts, helping readers foster deeper connections marked by empathy and grace. This insightful book equips believers to navigate their relationships with greater self-awareness and Christ-like love.

Selected Essays, Ralph Waldo Emerson

A collection of thought-provoking works by the renowned 19th-century philosopher and essayist. Emerson's essays explore profound themes such as individuality, nature, and spirituality, emphasizing the importance of self-reliance and the divine presence in everyday life. For Christian readers, this compilation offers valuable reflections on the interconnectedness of faith, personal growth, and the search for deeper meaning.

The Connected Life: The Art and Science of Relational Spirituality, Todd W. Hall

A comprehensive exploration of the intersection between spirituality and human relationships from a Christian perspective. Through biblical principles and psychological insights, the author delves into the significance of authentic connection with God and others in fostering spiritual growth and wellbeing. This insightful guide offers practical strategies for believers to cultivate deeper, more meaningful relationships, ultimately leading to a more fulfilling spiritual journey.

Sound and the Fury, William Faulkner

Post Reconstruction the Compson family of Mississippi grapples with the decay of Southern aristocracy and the burdens of their troubled past. Through the perspectives of the Compson sibling Benjy, Quentin, and Jason the novel explores themes of memory, loss, and the disintegration of traditional values. Set against the backdrop of the early 20th century, Faulkner's masterpiece offers a profound meditation on the complexities of human existence and the quest for redemption.



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A Week in the Life For a Slave; A Week in the Life Series, John Byron

From the "A Week in the Life" series provides a compelling firsthand account of the daily struggles and triumphs of enslaved individuals in America's history. Through vivid narratives and historical context, readers gain insight into the harsh realities of bondage, while also discovering stories of resilience, faith, and the pursuit of freedom. This eye-opening book serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of empathy, justice, and the ongoing fight against oppression in the Christian journey towards social justice.

Grant, Robert Chernow

A comprehensive biography of the 18th President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant. Through meticulous research and engaging narrative, Chernow offers readers a deep understanding of Grant's life, from his humble beginnings to his remarkable military leadership during the Civil War and presidency. This insightful biography not only explores Grant's military and political achievements but also delves into his personal struggles, offering valuable lessons of resilience, leadership, and the complexities of historical legacy for Christian high school students to ponder.

Posting Peace: Why Social Media Divides Us and What We Can Do About It, Douglas S. Bursch

Exploration of the impact of social media on our relationships, communication, and society as a whole. Through thoughtful analysis and practical insights, the author unpacks the ways in which online platforms often contribute to polarization and conflict. By offering strategies for cultivating empathy, understanding, and constructive dialogue, this book empowers Christian high school students to engage with social media in ways that promote unity, compassion, and the pursuit of peace in the digital age.

Their Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neale Hurston

A poignant exploration of one woman's journey towards self-awareness and spiritual fulfillment in the face of societal constraints and personal trials. Through the character of Janie Crawford, Hurston delves into themes of love, resilience, and the search for meaning, inviting readers to reflect on the complexities of faith and identity. This classic novel offers Christian high school students a profound meditation on the intersection of race, gender, and spirituality, prompting discussions about the nature of God's presence in our lives and the pursuit of authenticity in relationship with Him.

The Gospel of Peace in a Violent World: Christian Nonviolence for Communal Flourishing, Shawn Graves and Marlena Graves eds.

Illuminates the transformative potential of Christ's teachings in addressing conflict and promoting reconciliation. Through biblical principles and practical examples, the book equips believers to embody Christ's message of love and forgiveness, fostering peace in communities marred by violence. An invaluable resource for spreading the message of Christ's peace and inspiring others to pursue nonviolent solutions for the flourishing of all.

Babbitt, Sinclair Lewis

A middle-aged real estate agent in the fictional city of Zenith. Through Babbitt's experiences, the novel explores themes of conformity, materialism, and the emptiness of the American Dream. This classic work is recommended for its insightful critique of societal values and its potential to prompt reflection on the pursuit of authentic purpose and spiritual fulfillment.



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The God Question: An Invitation to a Life of Meaning, J.P. Moreland

A thoughtful exploration of the quest for purpose and spirituality in a secular age. Through engaging narratives and philosophical reflections, the author invites readers to consider the existence of God and the implications for their lives. Recommend as a valuable resource for students seeking to deepen their understanding of faith and find meaning in an increasingly complex world.

The Call of the Wild, Jack London

Follows the journey of Buck, a domesticated dog who must adapt to the harsh realities of life in the Yukon wilderness during the Klondike Gold Rush. Through Buck's experiences, the novel explores themes of survival, instinct, and the primal forces of nature, prompting readers to ponder the complexities of God's creation. This classic tale is recommended for its gripping narrative and its potential to spark discussions about resilience, obedience, and the call to embrace one's true nature in the face of adversity.

When Everything is on Fire: Faith Forged from the Ashes, Brain Zahnd

A poignant memoir by author and pastor Reinhard Bonnke, recounting his remarkable journey of faith and ministry amidst trials and triumphs. Through powerful anecdotes and spiritual insights, Bonnke shares how his unwavering trust in God sustained him through challenging seasons, inspiring readers to find hope and courage in their own lives. Recommended for its stirring testament to the transformative power of faith and the enduring grace of God in the midst of life's fires.

Theology Questions Everyone Asks: Christian Faith in Plain Language, Gary M. Burge and David Lauber eds.

A comprehensive exploration of fundamental theological concepts in an accessible format. Through clear explanations and thoughtful insights, the book addresses common questions about God, faith, and the Christian worldview. A resource for students seeking to deepen their understanding of theology and engage with their faith in a meaningful way.

All Quiet on the Western Front, Erich Maria

A powerful novel that offers a haunting portrayal of the horrors of World War I through the eyes of a young German soldier, Paul Bäumer. As Paul grapples with the brutalities of war and the loss of his comrades, the novel explores themes of camaraderie, disillusionment, and the moral complexities of combat. Through its vivid prose and poignant reflections, this classic work prompts readers to contemplate the profound toll of violence and the enduring need for peace in a fallen world.

Eyes to See: Recognizing God's Common Grace in an Unsettled World, Tim Muelhbach

A profound exploration of finding God's presence and goodness amid the chaos of modern life. Through insightful reflections and practical examples, the author guides readers to recognize and appreciate the everyday blessings that reveal God's grace. This inspiring book offers Christian high school students a renewed perspective on the world around them, empowering them to cultivate gratitude and faith in the midst of uncertainty.



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The House of Mirth, Edith Wharton

A novel set in New York City's high society at the end of the 19th century. It follows the story of Lily Bart, a well-born but impoverished woman, as she navigates social gossip, financial struggles, and romantic conflicts in her pursuit of marriage and wealth. Lily's indecision and tragic fate lead her from privilege to a lonely existence on the margins of society.

Simple Prayer: Learning to Speak to God with Ease, Charles Dawes

A refreshing perspective on prayer. Dawes emphasizes that prayer need not be complicated; instead, it can be as simple as a single word or short sentence. By focusing on these elemental prayers, readers can deepen their relationship with God and experience a heart level connection that transcends words.

To the Lighthouse, Virginia Woolf

Divided into three sections: "The Window," "Time Passes," and "The Lighthouse." In "The Window," the Ramsay family prepares for a dinner party at their summer home, with tensions and emotions simmering beneath the surface. In "Time Passes," the novel fast-forwards through a decade marked by war, loss, and decay.

Selections From:

College Board's 101 Books for the College Bound Reader

<https://www.listchallenges.com/college-boards-101-books-for-the-college-bound>

The 25 Best Christian Books for Your College Student

<https://www.ivpress.com/pages/the-25-best-christian-books-for-college-students>

