GRADE 12 SUMMER READING LIST

**The Color Purple**
Alice Walker
Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel is the story of Celie, a young girl abused by her father and then married off to a violent and angry man. She maintains her dignity and strength through her relationship with Shug, a flamboyant blues singer who is having an affair with Celie's husband. With Shug's love comes great courage, and Celie finds a new person inside herself, awaiting bloom.

**The Complete Maus**  GRAPHIC NOVEL
Art Spiegelman
Art Spiegelman's unsettling account of his family's dark history, including internment in a Nazi concentration camp, won the Pulitzer Prize for its brash and human story. MAUS continues to set the standard for excellence in comics today.

**Captain Corelli's Mandolin**
Louis De Bernieres
On an Italian-occupied Greek island during WWII, Pelagia, a willful, beautiful local girl, has two suitors vying for her love: Mandras, a gentle fisherman turned ruthless guerilla, and the charming, mandolin-playing Captain Corelli. Corelli's Mandolin is rich with loyalties and betrayals, and set against a landscape where the factual blends seamlessly with the fantastic.

**Dear John**
Nicholas Sparks
Internationally bestselling author Nicholas Sparks explores the complexities of love -- how it survives time and heartbreak, and how it transforms us forever --- in this incredibly moving novel about a young couple whose commitment to one another is put to the test.

**The Postmistress**
Sarah Blake
In the years preceding the United States' entrance into World War II, radio journalist Frankie Bard broadcasts from London during the air raids. Among her listeners are several residents of a small Cape Cod town. Writing in starkly descriptive prose, novelist Blake offers a revealing and intimate look at this moment in history, moving back and forth between small-town America and war-torn Europe and intertwining the narratives of three unique women along the way.

**Wicked**
Gregory Maguire
Elphaba, born with emerald green skin, comes of age in the land of Oz, rooming with debutante Glinda at the university, and following a path in life that earns her the label of Wicked.

**The Midwife of Venice**
Roberta Rich
Hannah is known throughout sixteenth century Venice for her skill in midwifery. When a Christian nobleman appears at her door in the Jewish ghetto, imploring her to help his wife who is dying in childbirth, Hannah's compassion is tested.
**The Accidental Billionaire** NON FICTION
Ben Mezrich
Presents an account of Eduardo Saverin and Mark Zuckerberg's creation of Facebook, the social networking site, as a way to meet women during their time as Harvard undergraduates, and covers how the two men's different ideas about the business caused a rift between them.

**Water for Elephants**
Sara Gruen
Ninety-year-old Jacob Jankowski finds himself haunted by memories of his past in the circus and the freaks, exotic animals, and other people he encountered as a performer.

**Seabiscuit** NON FICTION
Lauren Hillenbrand
The amazing rags-to-riches story of 1930's horse hero Seabiscuit is chronicled in captivating detail. The book contains actual accounts of Seabiscuit's rise to fame starting with his first victory in a stakes race at age two to the coast-to-coast victories that made him a national icon during the darkest years of the Depression.

**The Firm**
John Grisham
Harvard law graduate finds that the tax firm he's employed by is not what it seems when the FBI approaches him to become an informant.

**Suite Francaise**
Irene Nemirovsky
In 1941, when the Germans occupied Paris, the author fled with her family to a small village in an attempt to elude the Nazis. There, she began writing about her life and the behaviour of ordinary people around her. When she was arrested and killed in Auschwitz, her daughters managed to escape into hiding. They preserved their mother's most cherished possessions - a small suitcase which contained notebooks written in a tiny script. Sixty five years later, her daughter discovered that what she assumed was a diary was in fact a novel. This is the resulting novel.

**Never let me go**
Kazuo Ishiguro
Thirty-one-year-old Kathy, along with old friends from a private school in England, is forced to face the truth about their childhood when they all come together again.

**Open** NON FICTION
Andre Agassi
*Open* is one of the most passionately anti-sports books ever written by a superstar athlete. Agassi's announced theme is that the game he mastered (tennis) was a prison he spent 30 years trying to escape.

**Fables, Book One** GRAPHIC NOVEL
written by Bill Willingham
illustrated by Mark Buckingham and Lan Medina
The first 10 issues of the bestselling *Fables* series are collected in this edition. Meet the reinvented cast of folklore, fairy tales and myths as they live their lives in modern-day New York City --- and face the possibility of a serial killer in their midst.
Confessions of an Economic Hitman NON FICTION
John Perkins
The author relates his experiences as a destroyer of developing economies. He worked for an international consultancy firm for many years, his prime task being to convince developing countries to take on ruinously huge loans and then funnel the spin-off money into US corporations. This book will fascinate those interested in economics and politics.

Man and Boy
Tony Parsons
This novel, about a 30 year old man with a perfect life (great wife, super kid, wonderful home) who throws it away for a night of casual infidelity, sold a staggering three million copies in Britain.

The Charming Quirks of Others
Alexander McCall Smith
You can read any of the books in his Sunday Philosophy Club series about the activities and love life of a female amateur detective, Isabel Dalhousie. They are all set in Edinburgh and are affectionate in their treatment of this wonderful Scottish city.

Secret Daughter
Shilpi Somaya Gowda
The heartaches of motherhood are matched by an adopted daughter’s yearning to find her true family in this new compelling novel. Gowda brings to life two opposing but heart-rending concerns – infertility for North American women and the disregard for girls in India – through the stories of two families, the American Thakkars, both doctors, and the poverty-stricken Merchants in rural India.

The Map that Changed the World NON FICTION
Simon Winchester
Winchester presents the fascinating story of William Smith, the nineteenth century impoverished orphan, who became obsessed with creating the world’s first geological map and ultimately became the father of modern geology.

MORE CHALLENGING READS

Wuthering Heights
Emily Bronte
Written in 1848, this book is generally considered the most passionate of all literary novels. Ms Clarke’s advice: skip over the northern dialect of the servant Joseph- he doesn’t say anything you really need to know. The plot is confusing at first, but stick with it for the love-and revenge…

Great Expectations
Charles Dickens
In Ms Clarke’s opinion, this is Dickens greatest novel, combining as it does comedy with a serious message; Dickens always does one or the other but this includes both. In addition to worthy messages about the perils of vanity and greed, there is a love story that spans many years.
**Crime and Punishment**  
Fyodor Dostoevsky  
This chilling novel set in nineteenth century St Petersburg follows a protagonist-a young man in his twenties- who murders an old woman, and then has to live with the practical and moral consequences.

**Dr Zhivago**  
Boris Pasternak  
This wonderful love story is set in the Russian Revolution and follows the vicissitudes of the relationship between the eponymous character and his beloved Lara. Stock up on Kleenex!

**Vanity Fair**  
William Makepeace Thackeray  
This nineteenth century novel tracks the adventures of the cunningly nasty Becky Sharp as this impoverished heroine claws her way up the ranks of London society.

**A Confederacy of Dunces**  
John Kennedy Toole  
This American comic masterpiece, set in New Orleans, is filled with unforgettable characters and unbelievable plot twists, shimmering with intelligence, and dazzling in its originality.