

## Suggested Book List for English 12 Summer Reading

1. ***Up Close: Frank Lloyd Wright*** by Jan Adkins

Frank Lloyd Wright was the most influential architect of the twentieth century and a rogue genius whose life was a wild ride. Wright routinely ignored unpaid bills, client's wishes, budget constraints. Only his creative vision mattered to him. That vision transformed the way we live, sweeping aside the Victorian home and creating a uniquely American architecture exemplified by his Prairie Style houses. Wright built hotels, churches, and offices, too, incorporating endless innovations in techniques and materials.

2. ***A Long Way Gone*** by Ishmael Beah

This absorbing account by a young man who, as a boy of 12, gets swept up in Sierra Leone's civil war goes beyond even the best journalistic efforts in revealing the life and mind of a child abducted into the horrors of warfare. Beah's harrowing journey transforms him overnight from a child enthralled by American hip-hop music and dance to an internal refugee bereft of family, wandering from village to village in a country grown deeply divided by the indiscriminate atrocities of unruly, sociopathic rebel and army forces. Beah then finds himself in the army – in a drug-filled life of casual mass slaughter that lasts until he is 15, when he's brought to a rehabilitation center sponsored by UNICEF and partnering NGOs. The process marks out Beah as a gifted spokesman for the center's work after his "repatriation" to civilian life in the capital, where he lives with his family and a distant uncle. When the war finally engulfs the capital, it sends 17-year-old Beah fleeing again, this time to the U.S., where he now lives.

3. ***Let's Roll!*** by Lisa Beamer

Tells the story of an ordinary person with extraordinary courage.

Lisa Beamer was thrust into the national spotlight after her husband, Todd, led a counterattack against terrorists on United Flight 93. He--and all the other passenger heroes--lost their lives in a Pennsylvania field. But that plane was the only one of the four hijacked planes on 9-11 that didn't hit its target--most likely the White House or the Capitol. Todd's last known words, "Let's roll!" have become a rallying cry for the entire American nation to move ahead in hope, courage, and faith, despite today's troubled times, and to live real life...right now.

4. ***Thomas Jefferson: The Revolution of Ideas*** by R.B. Bernstein

Jefferson's public achievements were many: he sent Lewis and Clark to explore the West, he was a congressman, diplomat, Secretary of State, and President of the United States. But his work was not all political. He founded the University of Virginia and built -- and rebuilt -- Monticello, his beloved home, filled with the fruits of his constant tinkering: revolving bookcases, a copying machine, and a clock rigged to tell the day of the week. Bernstein also examines Jefferson's luxurious (and debt-burdened) life as a Virginia gentleman and his conflicted feelings over his role as slaveholder. Exploring all sides of Jefferson -- architect, inventor, writer, musician, diplomat, propagandist, planter, and politician -- the author illuminates Jefferson's central place in the revolution of ideas that created the nation we know today.

5. ***Please Stop Laughing at Me.....*** by Jodee Blanco

This powerful memoir chronicles how one child was shunned--and sometimes physically abused--by her classmates from elementary school through high school. It is an unflinching look at what it means to be the outcast and how bullying has been mishandled by the mental health community.

6. ***Jim Thorpe - Original All-American* by Joseph Bruchac**

Jim Thorpe played professional football and major league baseball, and won Olympic gold medals in track and field. Born on the Sac and Fox Reservation in 1887, Jim was sent as a young boy to various Indian boarding schools-strict, cold places that didn't allow their students to hold on to their Native American traditions. Jim ran away from school many times, until he found his calling at Pennsylvania's Carlisle School. There, coach Pop Warner recognized Jim's athletic excellence and welcomed him onto the football and track teams. Glory followed, as did a surprising disgrace. But through everything, Jim was a person to admire-an engaging, spirited, and impressive young man.

7. ***A Lucky Child: A Memoir of Surviving Auschwitz as a Young Boy* by Thomas Buergenthal**

Thomas Buergenthal, now a Judge in the International Court of Justice in The Hague, tells his astonishing experiences as a young boy in his memoir A LUCKY CHILD. He arrived at Auschwitz at age 10 after surviving two ghettos and a labor camp. Separated first from his mother and then his father, Buergenthal managed by his wits and some remarkable strokes of luck to survive on his own. Almost two years after his liberation, Buergenthal was miraculously reunited with his mother, and in 1951 arrived in the United States to start a new life. Now dedicated to helping those subjected to tyranny throughout the world, Buergenthal writes his story with a simple clarity that highlights the stark details of unimaginable hardship. A LUCKY CHILD is a different kind of holocaust survivor tale because of its sense of grace and beauty and wonder.

8. ***The Girl in the Green Sweater* by Krystyna Chiger**

A life in the shadow of the Holocaust.

In 1943, with Lvov's 150,000 Jews having been exiled, killed, or forced into ghettos and facing extermination, a group of Polish Jews daringly sought refuge in the city's sewer system. The last surviving member this group, Krystyna Chiger, shares one of the most intimate, harrowing and ultimately triumphant tales of survival to emerge from the Holocaust. The Girl in the Green Sweater is Chiger's harrowing first-person account of the fourteen months she spent with her family in the fetid, underground sewers of Lvov.

9. ***The Human, the Orchid, and the Octopus* by Jacques Cousteau**

The last book by the legendary explorer, activist, filmmaker, and oceanographer offers a call for action to preserve our world, its wildlife, and its natural wonders for future generations, looking at the impact of human action on our precarious environment. Part adventure story, part manifesto, this is ocean explorer Cousteau's passionate plea for sustaining life on earth.

10. ***King of the Mild Frontier: an ill-advised autobiography* by Chris Crutcher**

Drawing on his experience as a family therapist and child protection specialist, Crutcher writes honestly about real issues facing teenagers today: making it through school, competing in sports, handling rejection and failure, dealing with parents.

11. ***Holler If you Hear Me: Searching for Tupac Shakur* by Michael Eric Dyson**

Five years after his murder, rap artist Tupac Shakur is even more loved, contested and celebrated than he was in life. His posthumously released albums, poetry, and movies still top the charts; he inspires countless plays, articles, and websites by fans and critics alike. Who was Tupac and why does he

matter so much to us?" "In *Holler If You Hear Me*, "hip-hop intellectual" Michael Eric Dyson turns his attention to one of the most enigmatic and enduring figures of our time. Through original interviews and reporting, Dyson offers us a wholly original understanding of the controversial icon who has been called the "black Elvis".

**12. *At the Altar of Speed* by Dale Earnhardt**

This book takes readers behind the scenes of auto-racing champion, Dale Earnhardt's, celebrated life, tracing his rags-to-riches journey to the top of America's fastest-growing sport. Begins with his childhood days in small-town North Carolina, & examines how a 9th-grade dropout started on the dusty dirt tracks of the South, went through two marriages & a string of no-future jobs before turning 25, then took about a million left turns to glory. Through the pitfalls & triumphs, Earnhardt would ultimately become a celebrated champion whose lifetime earnings would top \$41 million. The son of a legendary racer, the father of a NASCAR star, he lived a total auto-racing life filled with triumph & sadness, great joy & great pain.

**13. *Planetwalker* by John Francis**

When the struggle to save oil-soaked birds and restore blackened beaches left him feeling frustrated and helpless, John Francis decided to take a more fundamental and personal stand. He stopped using all forms of motorized transportation. Soon after embarking on this quest that would span two decades and two continents, the young man took a vow of silence that endured for 17 years. It began as a silent environmental protest, but as a young African-American man, walking across the country in the early 1970s, his idea of "the environment" expanded beyond concern about pollution and loss of habitat to include how we humans treat each other and how we can better communicate and work together to benefit the earth. Through his silence and walking, he learned to listen, and along the way, earned college and graduate degrees in science and environmental studies.

**14. *Hole in My Life* by Jack Gantos**

In the summer of 1971, Jack Gantos was an aspiring writer looking for adventure, cash for college tuition, and a way out of a dead-end job. For ten thousand dollars, he recklessly agreed to help sail a sixty-foot yacht loaded with a ton of hashish from the Virgin Islands to New York City, where he and his partners sold the drug until federal agents caught up with them. For his part in the conspiracy, Gantos was sentenced to serve up to six years in prison. Gantos pieces together the story of his restless final year of high school, his short-lived career as a criminal, and his time in prison.

**15. *Soul Surfer* by Bethany Hamilton**

A True Story of Faith, Family, and Fighting to Get Back on the Board.

They say Bethany Hamilton has saltwater in her veins. How else could one explain the passion that drives her to surf? How else could one explain that nothing -- not even the loss of her arm -- could come between her and the waves? That Halloween morning in Kauai, Hawaii, Bethany responded to the shark's stealth attack with the calm of a girl with God on her side. Pushing pain and panic aside, she began to paddle with one arm, focusing on a single thought: "Get to the beach...." And when the first thing Bethany wanted to know after surgery was "When can I surf again?" it became clear that her spirit and determination were part of a greater story

**16. *Mountains beyond Mountains* by Tracy Kidder**

The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World.

This powerful and inspiring book shows how one person can make a difference, as Kidder tells the true story of a gifted man who is in love with the world and has set out to do all he can to cure it. At the center of *Mountains Beyond Mountains* stands Paul Farmer, doctor, Harvard professor, renowned infectious-disease specialist, anthropologist, the recipient of a MacArthur genius grant, world-class Robin Hood. Farmer was brought up in a bus and on a boat, and in medical school found his life's calling: to diagnose and cure infectious diseases and to bring the lifesaving tools of modern medicine to those who need them most. This magnificent book shows how radical change can be fostered in situations that seem insurmountable.

**17. *Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mt. Everest Disaster* by Jon Krakauer**

A bank of clouds was assembling on the not-so-distant horizon, but journalist-mountaineer Jon Krakauer, standing on the summit of Mt. Everest, saw nothing that "suggested that a murderous storm was bearing down." He was wrong. The storm, which claimed five lives and left countless more--including Krakauer's--in guilt-ridden disarray, would also provide the impetus for *Into Thin Air*, Krakauer's epic account of the May 1996 disaster.

**18. *The Soloist* by Steve Lopez**

Scurrying back to his office one day, Lopez, a columnist for the *L.A. Times*, is stopped short by the ethereal strains of a violin. Searching for the sound, he spots a homeless man coaxing those beautiful sounds from a battered two-string violin. When the man finishes, Lopez compliments him briefly and rushes off to write about his newfound subject, Nathaniel Ayers, the homeless violinist. Over the next few days, Lopez discovers that Nathaniel was once a promising classical bass student at Julliard, but that various pressures -- including being one of a few African-American students and mounting schizophrenia -- caused him to drop out. Enlisting the help of doctors, mental health professionals and professional musicians, Lopez attempts to help Nathaniel move off Skid Row, regain his dignity, develop his musical talent and free himself of the demons induced by the schizophrenia.

**19. *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson**

One Man's Journey to Change the World... One Child at a Time.

The astonishing, uplifting story of a real-life Indiana Jones and his humanitarian campaign to use education to combat terrorism in the Taliban's backyard. Anyone who despairs of the individual's power to change lives has to read the story of Greg Mortenson, a homeless mountaineer who, following a 1993 climb of Pakistan's treacherous K2, was inspired by a chance encounter with impoverished mountain villagers and promised to build them a school. Over the next decade, he built fifty-five schools, especially for girls, that offer a balanced education in one of the most isolated and dangerous regions on earth.

**20. *Ronaldo* by James Mosley**

The Journey of a Genius

This book tells about the highs and lows of the Brazilian soccer star's remarkable career to date. Brimming with exclusive interviews and full of revealing new insights into his life and personality, this is the definitive Ronaldo biography. James Mosley's exclusive access to the footballer's close management and advisers allows him to reveal the inside story of Ronaldo's explosive impact on the

world game at Barcelona in 1997, the mysterious events of the World Cup final at France '98 and the horrendous knee injury that threatened to finish his career.

**21. *A Beautiful Mind* by Sylvia Nasar**

The Life of a Mathematical Genius and Nobel Laureate

"How could you, a mathematician, believe that extraterrestrials were sending you messages?" the visitor from Harvard asked the West Virginian with the movie-star looks and Olympian manner. Thus begins the true story of John Nash, the mathematical genius who was a legend by age thirty when he slipped into madness, and who -- thanks to the selflessness of a beautiful woman and the loyalty of the mathematics community -- emerged after decades of ghostlike existence to win a Nobel Prize and world acclaim.

**22. *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* by Barack Obama**

Elected the first black president of the Harvard Law Review, Obama was offered a book contract, but the intellectual journey he planned to recount became instead this poignant, probing memoir of an unusual life. Born in 1961 to a white American woman and a black Kenyan student, Obama was reared in Hawaii by his mother and her parents, his father having left for further study and a return home to Africa. So Obama's not-unhappy youth is nevertheless a lonely voyage to racial identity and tensions in school.

**23. *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow**

After being recently diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer, Randy Pausch, a computer science and human-computer interaction professor at Carnegie Mellon gave a last lecture entitled "Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams."

**24. *Three Little Words - a memoir* by Ashley Rhodes-Courter**

Taken from her mother when she was scarcely four years old, Rhodes-Courter spent the next nine years in foster care with "more than a dozen so-called mothers." She gives a voice to countless thousands of children who continue to be abused, abandoned, and ignored, and one hopes her book will make a positive difference in their lives.

**25. *Mayada. Daughter of Iraq* by Jean Sasson**

One Woman's Survival under Saddam Hussein

A member of one of the most distinguished and honored families in Iraq, Mayada grew up surrounded by wealth and royalty. But when Saddam Hussein's regime took power, she was thrown into cell 52 in the infamous Baladiyat prison with seventeen other nameless, faceless women from all walks of life. To ease their suffering, these women passed each day by sharing their life stories. Now, through Jean Sasson, Mayada is finally able to tell her story-and theirs-to the world.

**26. *The Radioactive Boy Scout* by Ken Silverstein**

The true story of a boy and his backyard nuclear reactor.

Growing up in suburban Detroit, David Hahn was fascinated by science, and his basement experiments -- building homemade fireworks, brewing moonshine, and concocting his own self-tanning lotion -- were more ambitious than those of other boys his age.

**27. *Tell Them I Didn't Cry* by Jackie Spinner**

A young journalist's story of joy, loss, and survival in Iraq.

In her gripping account of the Iraq war, Jackie Spinner goes beyond the headlines to reveal the challenges of reporting news in a place where danger and fear accompany journalists everywhere. This is a vivid and personal story of her time in Iraq -- where for thirteen months she covered the war from its center in Baghdad, Fallujah, Kurdistan, and Abu Ghraib -- and of being transformed from a naive woman and rookie correspondent into a seasoned foreign reporter.

**28. *Born On a Blue Day* by Daniel Tammet**

Inside the extraordinary mind of an autistic savant.

Born on a Blue Day is a journey into one of the most fascinating minds alive today -- guided by its owner himself. Daniel Tammet sees numbers as shapes, colors, and textures, and he can perform extraordinary calculations in his head. He can learn to speak new languages fluently, from scratch, in a week. In 2004, he memorized and recited more than 22,000 digits of pi, setting a record. He has savant syndrome, an extremely rare condition that gives him almost unimaginable mental powers. Daniel has a compulsive need for order and routine -- he eats the same precise amount of cereal for breakfast every morning and cannot leave the house without counting the number of items of clothing he's wearing. When he gets stressed or is unhappy, he closes his eyes and counts. But in one crucial way Daniel is virtually unique among people who have severe autistic disorders in that he is capable of living a fully independent life.

**29. *My Name is Number 4 - a true story from the cultural revolution* by Ting-Xing Ye**

*Number Four will have a difficult life.* These are the words that were uttered upon Ting-Xing Ye's birth.

Soon this prophecy would prove only too true. Here is the real-life story about the fourth child in a family torn apart by China's Cultural Revolution. After the death of both of her parents, Ting-Xing and her siblings endured brutal Red Guard attacks on their schools and even in their home. At the age of sixteen, Ting-Xing is exiled to a prison farm far from the world she knows. How she struggled through years of constant terror while keeping her spirit intact is at the heart of *My Name Is Number 4*. Haunting and inspiring, Ting-Xing Ye's personal account of this horrific period in history is one that no reader will soon forget.

**30. *Teen Angst? Naaah - a quasi autobiography* by Ned Vizzini**

The events in these stories are real. Some names have been changed so I don't get yelled at.

Ned Vizzini writes about the weird, funny, and sometimes mortifying moments that made up his teen years. With wit, irony, and honesty, *Teen Angst? Naaah . . .* invites you into his world of school, parents, street people, rock bands, friends, fame, camp, Cancun (almost), prom, beer, Nintendo, the cool (and almost cool), and more.

**\*Book summaries taken from "Books in Print" and Amazon.com**