



## 2024 English Summer Reading

Students entering grades 9-12 should choose one book from the following list of six for their English summer reading.

Not every book is right for every reader. Students and families are encouraged to read the summaries and reviews to pick the best book for them.

Title/Author	Summary
<p><i>Any Sign of Life</i> by Rae Carson</p> 	<p><a href="#">Goodreads review</a></p> <p><b>When a teenage girl thinks she may be the only person left alive in her town—maybe in the whole world—she must rely on hope, trust, and her own resilience.</b></p> <p>Paige Miller is determined to take her basketball team to the state championship, maybe even beyond. But as March Madness heats up, Paige falls deathly ill. Days later, she wakes up attached to an IV and learns that the whole world has perished. Everyone she loves, and all of her dreams for the future—they're gone.</p> <p>But Paige is a warrior, so she pushes through her fear and her grief. And as she gets through each day—scrounging for food, for shelter, for safety—Paige encounters a few more young survivors. Together, they might stand a chance. But as they struggle to endure their new reality, they learn that the apocalypse did not happen by accident. And that there are worse things than being alone.</p>
<p><i>The Boy in the Black Suit</i> by Jason Reynolds</p> 	<p><a href="#">Goodreads review</a></p> <p>Just when seventeen-year-old Matt thinks he can't handle one more piece of terrible news, he meets a girl who's dealt with a lot more—and who just might be able to clue him in on how to rise up when life keeps knocking him down—in this wry, gritty novel from the author of <i>When I Was the Greatest</i>.</p> <p>Matt wears a black suit every day. No, not because his mom died—although she did, and it sucks. But he wears the suit for his gig at the local funeral home, which pays way better than the Cluck Bucket, and he needs the income since his dad can't handle the bills (or anything, really) on his own. So while Dad's snagging bottles of whiskey, Matt's snagging fifteen bucks an hour. Not bad. But everything else? Not good. Then Matt meets Lovey. She's got a crazy name, and she's been through more crazy than he can imagine. Yet Lovey never cries. She's tough. Really tough. Tough in the way Matt wishes he could be. Which is maybe why he's drawn to her, and definitely why he can't seem to shake her. Because there's nothing more hopeful than finding a person who understands your loneliness—and who can maybe even help take it away.</p>

*Patron Saints of Nothing*  
by Randy Ribay



[Goodreads review](#)

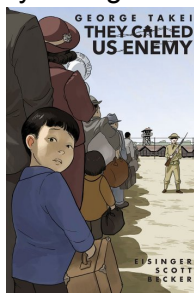
A coming-of-age story about grief, guilt, and the risks a Filipino-American teenager takes to uncover the truth about his cousin's murder.

Jay Reguero plans to spend the last semester of his senior year playing video games before heading to the University of Michigan in the fall. But when he discovers that his Filipino cousin Jun was murdered as part of President Duterte's war on drugs, and no one in the family wants to talk about what happened, Jay travels to the Philippines to find out the real story.

Hoping to uncover more about Jun and the events that led to his death, Jay is forced to reckon with the many sides of his cousin before he can face the whole horrible truth -- and the part he played in it.

**Teachers' Note: This book is better suited for older readers.**

*They Called Us Enemy*  
by George Takei



[Goodreads review](#)

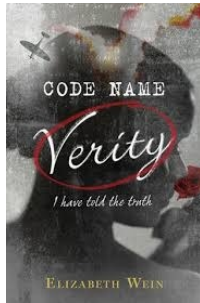
**A graphic memoir recounting actor/author/activist George Takei's childhood imprisoned within American concentration camps during World War II. Experience the forces that shaped an American icon -- and America itself.**

Long before George Takei braved new frontiers in *Star Trek*, he woke up as a four-year-old boy to find his own birth country at war with his father's -- and their entire family forced from their home into an uncertain future.

In 1942, at the order of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, every person of Japanese descent on the west coast was rounded up and shipped to one of ten "relocation centers," hundreds or thousands of miles from home, where they would be held for years under armed guard.

*They Called Us Enemy* is Takei's firsthand account of those years behind barbed wire, the joys and terrors of growing up under legalized racism, his mother's hard choices, his father's faith in democracy, and the way those experiences planted the seeds for his astonishing future.

**Code Name Verity** by Elizabeth Wein



[Goodreads review](#)

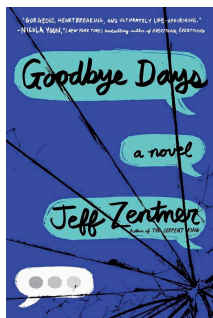
Oct. 11th, 1943 - A British spy plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France. Its pilot and passenger are best friends. One of the girls has a chance at survival. The other has lost the game before it's barely begun.

When "Verity" is arrested by the Gestapo, she's sure she doesn't stand a chance. As a secret agent captured in enemy territory, she's living a spy's worst nightmare. Her Nazi interrogators give her a simple choice: reveal her mission or face a grisly execution.

As she intricately weaves her confession, Verity uncovers her past, how she became friends with the pilot Maddie, and why she left Maddie in the wrecked fuselage of their plane. On each new scrap of paper, Verity battles for her life, confronting her views on courage and failure and her desperate hope to make it home. But will trading her secrets be enough to save her from the enemy?

Harrowing and beautifully written, Elizabeth Wein creates a visceral read of danger, resolve, and survival that shows just how far true friends will go to save each other. Code Name Verity is an outstanding novel that will stick with you long after the last page.

**Goodbye Days** by Jeff Zentner



[Goodreads review](#)

*What if you could spend one last day with someone you lost?*

One day Carver Briggs had it all—three best friends, a supportive family, and a reputation as a talented writer at his high school, Nashville Academy for the Arts.

The next day he lost it all when he sent a simple text to his friend Mars, right before Mars, Eli, and Blake were killed in a car crash.

Now Carver can't stop blaming himself for the accident, and he's not the only one. Eli's twin sister is trying to freeze him out of school with her death-ray stare. And Mars's father, a powerful judge, is pressuring the district attorney to open a criminal investigation into Carver's actions.

Luckily, Carver has some unexpected allies: Eli's girlfriend, the only person to stand by him at school; Dr. Mendez, his new therapist; and Blake's grandmother, who asks Carver to spend a Goodbye Day with her to share their memories and say a proper goodbye to his friend.

Soon the other families are asking for a Goodbye Day with Carver, but he's unsure of their motives. Will they all be able to make peace with their losses, or will these Goodbye Days bring Carver one step closer to a complete breakdown or—even worse—prison?

As you read:

- Create a system to keep track of the characters and major plot points.
- Look up and write down the definitions of unfamiliar words.
- Think about how the book you selected helps to answer one of the essential questions below.

Essential Questions:

- How do people survive and thrive when the world seems to fall apart?
- How do authors use language to create empathy for fictional characters?
- What can we learn from reading fictional accounts of historical events?
- To what extent is nonfiction “true”?