

Honors 12 Suggested Summer Reading List

1. The Alchemist by Paulo Coehlo

The Alchemist is the magical story of Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy who yearns to travel in search of a worldly treasure as extravagant as any ever found. From his home in Spain he journeys to the markets of Tangiers and across the Egyptian desert to a fateful encounter with the alchemist.

2. Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Society by Jared Diamond

Diamond details the rise and fall of various human societies throughout world history, explaining the dominance of Eurasian cultures due to their technological and immunologic advantages, stemming from the early rise of agriculture after the last Ice Age.

3. The Forever War by Dexter Filkins

The Forever War is a non-fiction book by American journalist Dexter Filkins about his observations on assignment in Afghanistan and Iraq during the 2001 War in Afghanistan and the Iraq War.

4. Outliers: The Story of Success by Malcolm Gladwell

Gladwell takes us on an intellectual journey through the world of “outliers” -- the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful. He asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? His answer is that we pay too much attention to what successful people are like, and too little attention to where they are from: that is, their culture, their family, their generation, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing. Along the way he explains the secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, why Asians are good at math, and what made the Beatles the greatest rock band.

5. 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.

6. Where Men Win Glory by Jon Krakauer

Where Men Win Glory , a 2009 book written by Jon Krakauer, is a biography of Pat Tillman, an American football player who left his professional career in the NFL and enlisted in the United States Army after the 9/11 attacks.

7. John Adams by David McCullough

David McCullough unfolds the adventurous life journey of John Adams, the brilliant, fiercely independent, often irascible, always honest Yankee patriot who spared

nothing in his zeal for the American Revolution; who rose to become the second president of the United States and saved the country from blundering into an unnecessary war; who was learned beyond all but a few and regarded by some as “out of his senses;” and whose marriage to the wise and valiant Abigail Adams is one of the most moving love stories in American history.

8. The Wilderness World of John Muir by Edwin Way Teale (editor)

As a conservationist, John Muir traveled through most of the American wilderness alone and on foot, without a gun or a sleeping bag. In 1903, while on a three-day camping trip with President Theodore Roosevelt, he convinced the president of the importance of a national conservation program, and he is widely recognized for saving the Grand Canyon and Arizona’s Petrified Forest. Muir’s writing, based on journals he kept throughout his life, gives our generation a picture of an America still wild and unsettled only one hundred years ago.

9. Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Mary Shelley’s 19th century masterpiece begins with a fateful rescue in the Arctic and slowly evolves into a gripping story of horror—a contest of wills between Victor Frankenstein and the monster he creates.

10. Hamlet by William Shakespeare

Shakespeare’s most famous work, Hamlet is a quintessential revenge tragedy. The ghost of the King of Denmark tells his son, Prince Hamlet, to avenge his murder by killing the new king, Hamlet’s uncle. Hamlet feigns madness, contemplates life and death, and seeks revenge. His uncle, fearing for his life, also devises plots to kill Hamlet.

11. Macbeth by William Shakespeare

Three witches tell the Scottish general Macbeth that he will be King of Scotland. Encouraged by his wife, Macbeth kills the king, becomes the new king, and kills more people out of paranoia. Civil war erupts to overthrow Macbeth, resulting in more death.

12. Henry IV, Part 1 by William Shakespeare

While his son Prince Hal spends time in the taverns, King Henry IV argues with his former ally Hotspur. Angry, Hotspur gathers a rebellion, and Henry and Hal go to battle to stop him. Henry's army wins the battle, while Hal redeems himself from his wild youth and kills Hotspur.