

Chadwick School
Suggested Reading

Non-Fiction, Memoirs, and Other True Tales That Will Make You Think

All Creatures Great and Small by James Herriot (MS/US). If you like animals and humor, you will love Herriot's stories of his veterinary experiences in the English countryside. The pages are filled with graphic, heart-warming stories of a courageous veterinarian and the people and animals who depend on him.

Animal, Vegetable, Mineral: A Year of Food Life by Barbara Kingsolver (US). A year of family, life, community and the benefits of eating locally.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Malcolm X (US). Alex Haley assembles an intense portrait of one of the most forceful personalities in the struggle for equal rights for African Americans.

Black Elk Speaks by Black Elk and John G. Neihardt (MS/US). Black Elk (1863-1950) tells the remarkable story of his life as a Lakota Sioux Indian who witnessed the battles at Little Big Horn and Wounded Knee and traveled as far east as Europe.

Black Like Me by John Howard Griffin (MS/US). The riveting story of John Howard Griffin, a white man, who in the late 1950s artificially darkened his skin and took up the impossible task of masquerading as a black man in the Deep South. A deeply moving firsthand account of racism.

The Blind Side, Evolution of a Game by Michael Lewis (US). A multidimensional story that traces the upbringing of a young boy through to young adulthood, all through the lens of football, sports, and his community of support.

The Bookseller of Kabul by Asne Seierstad (US). The intense, true story of a journalist's experience living with a family in Afghanistan. If you liked **The Kite Runner**, you will be intrigued by this portrayal of family life during tumultuous political times.

Bringing Down the House: The Inside Story of Six M.I.T. Students Who Took Vegas by Ben Mezrich (US). The true story of how a group of college students used their intellectual skills to beat the system at various Vegas casinos.

Catch Me If You Can: The True Story of a Real Fake by Frank W. Abagnale (US). The fascinating story of one of the most daring con men, imposters, and escape artists in history.

Chew on This: Everything You Don't Want to Know about Fast Food, by Eric Schlosser (MS/US). In this adaptation of his popular **Fast Food Nation**, Schlosser delves into the history of the fast food industry and reveals the astonishing (and sometimes gruesome) details behind those burgers and fries.

The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother by James McBride (US). McBride beautifully juxtaposes the story of his interracial childhood with that of his

mother, a rabbi's daughter who marries an African-American man and raises twelve children.

Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science by Atul Gawande (US). A book about medicine that reads like a thriller, "Complications" is "a uniquely soulful book about the science of mending bodies.

Desert Solitaire by Edward Abbey (US). Abbey writes with deep passion and salty humor of his love for wilderness and wild adventures among the canyonlands of Southern Utah.

Devil in the White City by Erik Larsen (US). The breathtaking history of mass murderer H.H. Holmes, who dispatched somewhere between 27 and 200 people during Chicago's 1893 World's Fair. Reads like a novel, but it's a true story!

The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank (MS/US). Anne Frank's insightful discoveries are recorded in the diary that was published after her death in a Nazi concentration camp.

Dreams From My Father by Barack Obama (US). In this compelling memoir, the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for a workable meaning to his life as a black American.

Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage by Alfred Lansing (MS/US). Following two successful expeditions to the Antarctic, Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton (1874-1922) led his crew to the region in order to lead a transantarctic trek in the summer of 1914. This outstanding book focuses on the several months of hardship followed by the destruction of their ship "Endurance".

Fermat's Enigma : The Epic Quest to Solve the World's Greatest Mathematical Problem by Simon Singh and John Lynch (MS/US). From the author of **The Code Book** (also recommended) comes the story of a mathematical problem that remained a mystery for 350 years. A fascinating read for anyone passionate about math and unsolved riddles!

Forgotten Fire by Adam Bagdasarian (US). One of the few books written for young people about the Turkish genocide of the Armenians, this book is based on the true story of a twelve-year-old boy who survived the massacre that saw hundreds of thousands of Armenians – including his own family -- murdered after the Young Turks came to power.

The Freedom Writers Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them, by Freedom Writers and Zlata Filipovic (MS/US). A group of "unteachable, at-risk" students and their idealistic young teacher undertake a life-changing, eye-opening, spirit-raising odyssey against intolerance and misunderstanding.

Funny in Farsi by Firoozeh Dumas (US). Think your mom and dad are embarrassing? The sweet and often hilarious memoir of an Iranian girl who moves with her family to the OC. Also try her latest, ***Laughing Without an Accent: Adventures of an Iranian American, at Home and Abroad***.

The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls (MS/US). In her extraordinary memoir, Walls recalls her painful, nomadic life with surprising affection. Yet, instead of condemning her parents, she examines how they transformed hardship into family romance and adventure.

Guests of the Sheik by Elizabeth Warnock Fernea (US). The author, newly married to an anthropologist in the 1950's, tells the true story of her year-long "honeymoon" to a village in rural Iraq and the friendships she makes with local women who live behind the veil. An intelligent look at a much misunderstood society.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou (US). In this first volume of her celebrated collection of memoirs, the poet Maya Angelou describes in vivid, lyrical detail her childhood as a young black girl in the South.

Improv Wisdom: Don't Prepare, Just Show Up (US). Free yourself! Drama teacher Patricia Madson suggests ways to improvise in our daily lives. Drawing exercises from improv acting, Madson teaches readers to enjoy life by taking things as they come.

In These Girls, Hope Is a Muscle by Madeleine Blais (US). The true story of the women basketball players of Amherst High School and their championship season. This book appeals to every reader's hoop dreams.

Into Thin Air by Jon Krakauer (MS/US). A true account of the worst year for Mount Everest climbing and of two expeditions that ran into high altitude trouble that left many members dead on the snowy slopes. Also by this author, ***Into the Wild***, a story of a disastrous solo hike in Alaska.

The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Tales by Oliver Sacks (US). A collection of clinical tales that recounts, with sensitivity and empathy, the amazingly complex lives of people who live with neurological impairments.

Mayflower : A Story of Courage, Community, and War by Nathaniel Philbrick (US). The author of *In the Heart of the Sea*, skillfully brings us a new interpretation of the Pilgrim settlers and the effect of their landing on the generations that followed.

Night by Eli Wiesel (MS/US). The moving, true story of the Nobel Prize winner's efforts to survive his teenage years in a Nazi concentration camp.

Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood by Marjane Satrapi (US). Told in graphic novel format, this is the story of Marji, who at 14 is forced to leave Iran to ensure her safety. You will learn much about the history of Iran; consider also reading Art Spiegelman's graphic novel ***Maus*** – the story of his parents' survival of the Holocaust.

The Places in Between by Rory Stewart (US). Stewart's walk across Afghanistan provides an informative history of the region as well as an accurate and compelling portrayal of the country and its people today.

The Planets by Dava Sobel (US). The author of ***Galileo's Daughter*** brings us essays that focus on her fascination with the solar system, each written from a different point of view – including science fiction writers and astronomers.

The Race to Save the Ivory-billed Woodpecker by Phillip Hoose (MS/US). The story of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, the first modern endangered species. All future biologists and conservationists will love this fascinating and true story of politics, economics, and environmentalism.

Revolution is Not a Dinner Party by Ying Chang Compestine (MS). Drawing from her childhood experience, the author brings hope to this fascinating story of a young girl growing up and fighting to survive during the Cultural Revolution in China.

Rocket Boys (October Sky) by Homer Hickam (MS/US). Set in a coal town, this is Homer Hickam's poignant and humorous story of a teenage boy who learns about dedication, responsibility, and thermodynamics -- and ultimately grows up to be a NASA engineer.

Six Questions of Socrates: A Modern-Day Journey of Discovery through World Philosophy and ***Socrates Café: A Fresh Taste of Philosophy*** by Christopher Phillips (US). What is virtue? Courage? Justice? Piety? In these engaging books, the author embarks on a search for truth and meaning through a series of conversations that are thought-provoking, humorous, and fascinating. Asking questions of anyone who is interested, these public conversations are held with people from all walks of life.

Songbook by Nick Hornby (US). From the bestselling author of ***Fever Pitch*** and ***High Fidelity***. Here is the ultimate list of Hornby's 31 all-time favorite songs, along with smart, funny, and personal commentary on the music that rocks his world.

Stick Figure: A Diary of My Former Self by Lori Gottlieb (US). Hospitalized with an eating disorder as a teen, this is the author's story of her struggle with family relationships and an image-obsessed society. A powerful memoir based on the author's real childhood diary.

T. Rex and the Crater of Doom, by Walter Alvarez (MS/US). Do you ever wonder what happened to the dinosaurs? Find out more in this entertaining story of Alvarez's scientific discovery of a meteor impact crater in the Yucatan Peninsula.

A Walk in the Wood: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail, by Bill Bryson (US). Bill Bryson, known in England as "the funniest travel writer alive," returns to the States and attempts to walk the entire Appalachian Trail.

A Whack on the Side of the Head: How You Can Be More Creative by Roger von Oech (MS/US). This bestselling classic includes stories, exercises, and examples on how to be the most creative person on your block.

When I was Puerto Rican by Esmeralda Santiago (MS/US). Uprooted from an impoverished life in Puerto Rico, the author recounts her fight to survive in New York City along with her mother and ten brothers and sisters. A great memoir!

A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future by Daniel Pink (US). Six fundamentally human abilities that are essentials for success and personal fulfillment in the coming years -- and how to master them.

Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China by Jung Chang (US). The gripping, true story of a woman's life in turbulent Communist China.

YELL-Oh Girls! Emerging Voices Explore Culture, Identity, and Growing Up Asian American by Vickie Nam (US). In this anthology of stories and poetry, Asian-American young women speak out about what it is like to grow up in two cultures.

The Zookeeper's Wife: A War Story by Diane Ackerman (US). The remarkable story of Jan Zabinski, the director of the Warsaw Zoo, and his wife, Antonina, who courageously hid 300 Jews and Polish resisters from the Nazis.

These annotations have been adapted from library review journals and Amazon.com