May 4, 2020

Dear Parents and Incoming Eighth Graders,

We are excited about our active and engaging reading curriculum at Greenhill and regard summer as a great opportunity for our students to read every chance they get. The attached list of titles offers exciting journeys into worlds like and very unlike our own and will, we feel sure, enrich your children’s imagination and broaden their social awareness.

All students must read the required book, *Of Mice and Men*, which will be provided to them by their current English teachers before the end of this year. This classic novel by John Steinbeck will spark lively discussion and inspire deep compassion. Taking notes in their copy of *Of Mice and Men* is required for incoming eighth graders who were at Greenhill in seventh grade. For students who are new to Greenhill, this is not required.

In addition to *Of Mice and Men*, each student needs to read a minimum of two more books not previously read from the attached list. The other two selections will be the spur for activities and assignments in the fall.

All of us hope that you and your child will have a relaxing summer full of good books and the time to read them.

Sincerely,

Susan Palmer
Head of Middle School

Katie Peterson
Middle School English Department Chair

Susan Bauman
Jack Fisher
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Attachments
Summer Reading List for Incoming Eighth Graders

All students must read the required book, Of Mice and Men, which will be provided to them by their current English teachers, and a minimum of TWO books from the following list that they have not read previously. Students should select books from two different genres. Please do not read To Kill a Mockingbird.

Some descriptions courtesy of Amazon.com and Follett.

**General Fiction**

*The Impossible Knife of Memory*, Anderson
Hayley Kincaid and her father move back to their hometown to try a "normal" life, but the horrors he saw in the war threaten to destroy their lives.

*Pride and Prejudice*, Austen (or any other titles by Jane Austen)
When Elizabeth Bennet first meets eligible bachelor Fitzwilliam Darcy, she thinks him arrogant and conceited; he is indifferent to her good looks and lively mind. When she later discovers that Darcy has involved himself in the troubled relationship between his friend Bingley and her beloved sister Jane, she is determined to dislike him more than ever. In the sparkling comedy of manners that follows, Jane Austen shows us the folly of judging by first impressions and superbly evokes the friendships, gossip and snobberies of provincial middle-class life.

*A Man Called Ove: A Novel*, Backman
When a new, chatty, young couple and their two daughters move in next door, Ove's well-ordered, solitary world turns upside down.

*Jane Eyre*, Bronte
This classic is the wonderful story of a young orphan girl, her life growing up, her loves, and her dreams. It is a passionate, powerful, and romantic novel of a woman who tries to find what is right, wrong, and (finally) what her heart tells her to do.

*Cold Sassy Tree*, Burns
A novel full of warm humor and honesty, told by Will Tweedy, a fourteen-year-old boy living in a small, turn-of-the-century Georgia town. When Will’s hero, Grandpa Rucker, suddenly marries his store’s young milliner barely three weeks after his wife’s death, the town is on its ear. Will Tweedy matures as he watches his family’s reaction and adjustment to the news.

*Not if I Save You First*, Carter
Six years ago Maddie lived in Washington D.C. with her father, a Secret Service agent assigned to the President's family, and her best friend was Logan, the President's son; but after her father was wounded in an attempted kidnapping the two of them moved to a remote cabin in Alaska and Logan never replied to her letters--but now he has suddenly turned up on her doorstep. She soon realizes that first she has to save him from the winter wilderness and the men who are pursuing him.

*Time Bomb*, Charbonneau
Six students are trapped in their school after a bomb goes off, and must fight to survive while discovering who among them is the bomber.

*Voices: The Final Hours of Joan of Arc*, Elliott
Told through medieval poetic forms and in the voices of the people and objects in Joan of Arc's life, (including her family and even the trees, clothes, cows, and candles of her childhood), this book offers a perspective on this young woman. Along the way it explores timely issues such as gender, misogyny, and the peril of speaking truth to power. Before Joan of Arc became a saint, she was a girl inspired.

*Here to Stay*, Farizan
When a cyberbully sends the entire high school a picture of basketball hero Bijan Majidi, photo-shopped to look like a terrorist, the school administration promises to find and punish the culprit, but Bijan just wants to pretend the incident never happened and move on.

*Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, Ford
Henry Lee is a Chinese-American boy who falls for a Japanese-American girl just before her family is sent to an internment camp during WWII. Years later, the adult Henry discovers clues that may lead him to his lost love.

*Lord of the Flies*, Golding
William Golding’s classic tale about a group of English schoolboys who are plane-wrecked on a deserted island is just as chilling and relevant today as when it was first published in 1954. Golding’s gripping novel explores the boundary between human reason and animal instinct, all on the brutal playing field of adolescent competition.
The War Outside, Hesse
Teens Haruko, a Japanese American, and Margot, a German American, form a life-changing friendship as everything around them starts falling apart in the Crystal City family internment camp during World War II.

Darius the Great Is Not Okay, Khorram
Clinically-depressed Darius Kellner, a high school sophomore, travels to Iran to meet his grandparents, but it is their next-door neighbor, Sohrab, who changes his life.

The Secret Life of Bees, Kidd
Set in South Carolina in 1964, The Secret Life of Bees tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed. When Lily's fierce-hearted black "stand-in mother," Rosaleen, insults three of the deepest racists in town, Lily decides to spring them both free. They escape to Tiburon, South Carolina--a town that holds the secret to her mother's past. Taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sister, Lily is introduced to their mesmerizing world of bees and honey, and the Black Madonna.

Tradition, Kiely
At Fullbrook Academy, where tradition reigns supreme, James Baxter and Jules Devereux take on privilege, sexism, and the importance of consent.

The Namesake, Lahiri
A young man, Gogol Ganguli, is a first-generation American who is torn between the traditional culture of his Indian family and his modern American surroundings.

Hostage Three, Lake
Amy's self-absorbed view of the world changes dramatically when her family's yacht is hijacked by Somali pirates.

The Downstairs Girl, Lee
1890, Atlanta. By day, seventeen-year-old Jo Kuan works as a lady's maid for the cruel Caroline Payne, the daughter of one of the wealthiest men in Atlanta. But by night, Jo moonlights as the pseudonymous author of a newspaper advice column for 'the genteel Southern lady.

Moxie: A Novel, Mathieu
An unlikely teenager starts a feminist revolution at a small-town Texan high school in the new novel from Jennifer Mathieu, author of The Truth About Alice.

I Am Alfonso Jones, Medina
The ghost of fifteen-year-old Alfonso Jones travels in a New York subway car full of the living and the dead, watching his family and friends fight for justice after he is killed by an off-duty police officer while buying a suit in a Midtown department store.

A Monster Calls, Ness (graphic novel)
The monster comes for Conor just after midnight, again and again. That is, until he’s ready to share how he feels about his mom’s cancer.

You Bring the Distant Near, Perkins
From 1965 through the present, an Indian American family adjusts to life in New York City, alternately fending off and welcoming challenges to their own traditions.

The Chosen, Potok
Two teenage Jewish boys struggle to maintain their friendship as other forces pull them apart. One comes from a very conservative family, the other, from a liberal background. It blends adolescence, Judaism, and family life.

Long Way Down, Reynolds
An ode to Put the Damn Guns Down, this is National Book Award finalist and New York Times bestseller Jason Reynolds’s fiercely stunning novel that takes place in sixty potent seconds—the time it takes a kid to decide whether or not he’s going to murder the guy who killed his brother. Told in verse.

The Catcher in the Rye, Salinger
Holden Caulfield narrates the story of a couple of days in his sixteen-year-old life, just after he's been expelled from prep school, in a slang that sounds edgy even today and keeps this novel on banned book lists. His constant wry observations about what he encounters, from teachers to phonies (the two of course are not mutually exclusive) capture the essence of the eternal teenage experience of alienation.
Scythe, Shusterman (Arc of a Scythe trilogy)
In a world where disease has been eliminated, the only way to die is to be randomly killed ('gleaned') by professional reapers ('scythes'). Two teens must compete with each other to become a scythe—a position neither of them wants. The one who becomes a scythe must kill the one who doesn't.

Dry, Shusterman
A lengthy California drought escalates to catastrophic proportions, turning Alyssa's quiet suburban street into a warzone, and she is forced to make impossible choices if she and her brother are to survive.

Dear Martin, Stone
Writing letters to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., seventeen-year-old college-bound Justyce McAllister struggles to face the reality of race relations today and how they are shaping him.

A Time to Dance, Venkatraman
When an accident leaves Veda, a classical dancer in India, a below-knee amputee, she becomes determined not to give up her passion.

Piecing Me Together, Watson
Tired of being singled out at her mostly-white private school as someone who needs support, high school junior Jade would rather participate in the school's amazing Study Abroad program than join Women to Women, a mentorship program for at-risk girls.

The Sun is Also a Star, Yoon
Natasha is a girl who believes in science and facts. Daniel has always been a good son and good student. But when he sees Natasha he forgets all that and believes there is something extraordinary in store for both of them.

Pride, Zoboi
Pride and Prejudice gets remixed in this smart, funny, gorgeous retelling of the classic, starring all characters of color.

Science Fiction/Fantasy

Foundation, Asimov
This is an interesting science fiction book where a man who uses a combination of history and psychology predicts the future of The Empire. This is complex at times, but it makes you think!

Something Wicked This Way Comes OR The Martian Chronicles, Bradbury (Do not read both Bradbury books for your minimum of two.)
- In the first, an evil circus comes into a small town and starts to destroy the town. Two boys team up to try to stop the dark wickedness of the circus.
- The second is a collection of several short stories about humans colonizing Mars dealing with issues of racism, social life, conservation, and peace. Written in the 1940’s, Bradbury’s vision of the future (1999-2026!) is eerily familiar.

Jurassic Park, Crichton
What if a modern scientist was able to clone dinosaurs? This book is much different from (and better than) the movie. This is fast-paced action!

Stepsister, Donnelly
Isabelle is one of Cinderella's ugly stepsisters, who cut off her toes in an attempt to fit into the glass slipper; but there is more to her story than a maimed foot, for the Marquis de la Chance is about to offer her a choice and the opportunity to change her fate--there will be blood and danger, but also the possibility of redemption and triumph, and most of all the chance to find her true self.

We Hunt the Flame, Faizal
In a world inspired by ancient Arabia, seventeen-year-old huntress Zafira must disguise herself as a man to seek a lost artifact that could return magic to her cursed world.

The House of the Scorpion, Farmer
Sometime in the near future, Matt grows up on the estate of Matteo Alacran, a feudal drug lord in the country of Opium. He discovers that he is a clone of El Patron, which makes him despised by all around him except El Patron who treasures and pampers him.

A Curse So Dark and Lonely, Kemmerer
Eighteen for the three hundred twenty-seventh time, Prince Rhen despairs of breaking the curse that turns him into a beast at the end of each day until feisty Harper enters his life.
This Dark Endeavor: The Apprenticeship of Victor Frankenstein, Oppel  (first in a series)
Victor Frankenstein, his twin brother, and his cousin explore the dark and forbidden depths of the Frankenstein castle, stumbling across the ancient magical texts that Victor later hopes will save his brother’s life.

Mystery

The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie, Bradley  (first in a series)
Flavia de Luce is an 11-year-old girl living in the English countryside with her insufferable older sisters and her somewhat distant father when she finds a dead bird at the door and a stranger dying in the garden. She takes it upon herself to get to the bottom of the mystery.

Don’t Get Caught, Dinan
When Max receives a mysterious invite from the untraceable, epic prank-pulling Chaos Club, he has to ask: why him? After all, he's Mr. 2.5 GPA, Mr. No Social Life. He's Just Max. And his favorite heist movies have taught him this situation calls for Rule #4: Be suspicious. But it's also his one shot to leave Just Max in the dust.

Hound of the Baskervilles, Doyle
The legendary Sherlock Holmes investigates the mysterious killings of members of the Baskerville family. A legend of a massive, killer hound is key to this story. Great suspense.

Truly Devious, Johnson
New at Ellingham Academy, Stevie Bell tries to both solve a murder at campus and the cold case of a double kidnapping.

Warcross, Lu
When teenage coder Emika Chen hacks her way into the opening tournament of the Warcross Championships, she glitches herself into the game as well as a sinister plot with major consequences for the entire Warcross empire.

The #1 Ladies’ Detective Agency, Smith
Precious Ramotswe opens the very first detective agency run by a woman in Botswana. Her kind manner and her clever and resourceful thinking allow her to solve many mysteries for her clients.

Non-Fiction

Pinstripe Pride: The Inside Story of the New York Yankees, Appel
Profiles the New York Yankees team and chronicles the teams World Series championships and American League pennants.

1968: Today’s Authors Explore a Year of Rebellion, Revolution, and Change, Aronson
Welcome to 1968 -- a revolution in a book. Essays, memoirs, and more by fourteen award-winning authors offer unique perspectives on one of the world's most tumultuous years.

The Grand Escape: The Greatest Prison Breakout of the 20th Century, Bascomb
The story of a group of Allied POWs in WWI who dared to escape from Germany's most notorious prison camp, Holzminden.

Strike! The Farm Workers’ Fight for Their Rights, Brimmer
The circumstances surrounding the 1965 Filipino farm workers strike place the California UFW fight for farm workers’ rights within the canvas of the civil rights movements and the political tensions of the day. Emphasis is on the hardships and precarious survival while battling injustices. Generously illustrated.

The contributions of women serving in the armed forces during WWII are often overlooked, but not in this intense study of the nurses stationed in the Philippines. Many of them not only survived combat situations, they also survived POW camps. Farrell tells their story, using firsthand accounts and secondary sources to bring their hardships, courage and commitment to light.

The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion, & the Fall of Imperial Russia, Fleming
Traces the story of the Russian Revolution, the lives of the Romanov family, and the story of their tragic deaths, in an account that draws on primary source materials and includes period photography.

American Road Trip, Flores-Scott
Brothers Teodoro and Manny Avila take a road trip to address Manny's PTSD following his tour in Iraq, and to help T. change his life and win the heart of Wendy Martinez.

_A Few Red Drops: The Chicago Race Riots of 1919_, Hartfield
On a hot day in July 1919, five black youths went swimming in Lake Michigan, unintentionally floating close to the "white" beach. An angry white man began throwing stones at the boys, striking and killing one. Racial conflict on the beach erupted into days of urban violence that shook the city of Chicago to its foundations.

_Charles and Emma: The Darwins' Leap of Faith_, Heiligman
After creating a list of the pros and cons of marriage, science-minded Charles Darwin chooses to marry his strictly religious first cousin. Little does he know that he is about to embark upon the most loving, creative, and intellectually important relationship of his life.

_Vincent and Theo: The Van Gogh Brothers_, Heiligman and Fox
The true story of the relationship between brothers, Theo and Vincent van Gogh.

_(Don’t) Call Me Crazy: 33 Voices Start the Conversation About Mental Health_, Jensen
An anthology of essays and illustrations that illuminate mental health topics in a straightforward way.

_Mary's Monster: Love, Madness, and How Mary Shelley Created Frankenstein_, Judge
Pairing free verse with over three hundred pages of black-and-white watercolor illustrations, _Mary's Monster_ is a unique and stunning biography of Mary Shelley, the pregnant teenage runaway who became one of the greatest authors of all time.

_Hey Kiddo_, Krosoczka
The powerful, unforgettable graphic memoir from Jarrett Krosoczka, about growing up with a drug-addicted mother, a missing father, and two unforgettable opinionated grandparents.

_March (Book One), (graphic novel)_ Lewis & Aydin
March (Book One) uses vivid black-and-white artwork and John Lewis’s personal story to connect readers to the depth and scope of the Civil Rights Movement. Lewis and Aydin’s words and Powell’s art combine to paint a vivid picture of Lewis’s life and times.

_Proud: Living My American Dream_, Muhammad
An autobiography of the Olympic fencer, Ibtihaj Muhammad, and how she became the first American woman to compete in the Olympics wearing a hijab.

_Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood_, Noah
Trevor Noah, the funny guy who hosts _The Daily Show_, shares his remarkable story of growing up in South Africa, with a black South African mother and a white European father at a time when it was against the law for a mixed-race child like him to exist. But he did exist--and from the beginning, the often-misbehaved Trevor used his keen smarts and humor to navigate a harsh life under a racist government.

_Chasing King’s Killer: The Hunt for Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Assassin_, Swanson
James Earl Ray and Martin Luther King, Jr. had two very different life journeys -- but their paths fatally collide when Ray assassinates the world-renown civil rights leader.

_Just Mercy: Adapted for Young Adults: The True Story of the Fight For Justice_, Stevenson
Bryan Stevenson delves deep into the broken U.S. justice system, detailing from his personal experience his many challenges and efforts as a lawyer and social advocate, especially on behalf of America's most rejected and marginalized people.

_Captured: An American Prisoner of War in North Vietnam_, Townley
Naval aviator Jeremiah Denton was shot down and captured in North Vietnam in 1965. As a POW, Jerry Denton led a group of fellow American prisoners in withstanding gruesome conditions behind enemy lines. They developed a system of secret codes and covert communications to keep up their spirits. Later, he would endure torture and long periods of solitary confinement. He did finally return home in 1973 after the longest and harshest deployment in US history.

_Dear America: The Story of an Undocumented Citizen_, Vargas
In this young readers’ adaptation of his adult memoir Dear America, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and undocumented immigrant Jose Antonio Vargas tells his story, in light of the 12 million undocumented immigrants currently in the United States.