



Summer Reading List: Bridgeport Military Academy

****Summer Reading Assignment is at the END of the document****

Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card, Sara Saedi – 1030L

Americanized: Rebel without a Green Card, published in 2018 by **Sara Saedi**, is a **memoir** about Saedi's experiences growing up in California as an **undocumented immigrant** from Iran. Saedi's family immigrated to the United States in 1982, and the book recounts her family's 18-year struggle to receive permanent residency in the US. Lauded for its humorous writing **style**, *Americanized* nonetheless addresses weighty and politically sensitive topics like Iran's history, the intricacies of immigration, and traditional gender roles. It blends Saedi's coming-of-age story with sociological commentary that reveals the absurdity and, oftentimes, pain of immigration journeys in contemporary America. *Americanized* is currently in development to become a tv series from Reese Witherspoon's Hello Sunshine production company and ABC Studios.

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Rebecca Skloot – 1140L

In 1951, a 30-year-old African-American woman named Henrietta Lacks entered Johns Hopkins Hospital to be treated for cervical cancer. In a matter of months she was dead, overcome by her cancer's malignancy. Her cancer *cells*, however, would prove immortal—and change medicine forever.

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks tells the story of Henrietta, her family, and her incredible cells. Tracking both the scientific advances owed to "HeLa" cells and the struggles of Henrietta's descendants, author Rebecca Skloot leads readers through the history of cell research, the ethical implications of scientific study, and the human story of a poor and ailing family whose matriarch contributed to some of 20th-century science's greatest achievements.

The Gilded Ones, Namina Forna – 780L

Sixteen-year-old Deka lives in fear and anticipation of the blood ceremony that will determine whether she will become a member of her village. Already different from everyone else because of her unnatural intuition, Deka prays for red blood so she can finally feel like she belongs.

But on the day of the ceremony, her blood runs gold, the color of impurity--and Deka knows she will face a consequence worse than death.

Then a mysterious woman comes to her with a choice: stay in the village and submit to her fate, or leave to fight for the emperor in an army of girls just like her. They are called alaki--near-immortals with rare gifts. And they are the only ones who can stop the empire's greatest threat.

Knowing the dangers that lie ahead yet yearning for acceptance, Deka decides to leave the only life she's ever known. But as she journeys to the capital to train for the biggest battle of her life, she will discover that the great walled city holds many surprises. Nothing and no one are quite what they seem to be--not even Deka herself.

***Black Enough*, Edited by Ibi Zoboi – 750L**

Black Enough is a star-studded anthology edited by *National Book Award* finalist Ibi Zoboi that will delve into the closeted thoughts, hidden experiences, and daily struggles of black teens across the country. From a spectrum of backgrounds—urban and rural, wealthy and poor, mixed race, immigrants, and more—*Black Enough* showcases diversity within diversity.

***Internment*, Samira Ahmed – 660L**

Set in a horrifying near-future United States, seventeen-year-old Layla Amin and her parents are forced into an internment camp for Muslim American citizens.

With the help of newly made friends also trapped within the internment camp, her boyfriend on the outside, and an unexpected alliance, Layla begins a journey to fight for freedom, leading a revolution against the internment camp's Director and his guards.

Heart-racing and emotional, *Internment* challenges readers to fight complicit silence that exists in our society today.

***Little and Lion*, Brandy Colbert – 820L**

When Suzette comes home to Los Angeles from her boarding school in New England, she isn't sure if she'll ever want to go back. L.A. is where her friends and family are (along with her crush, Emil). And her stepbrother, Lionel, who has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, needs her emotional support.

But as she settles into her old life, Suzette finds herself falling for someone new...the same girl her brother is in love with. When Lionel's disorder spirals out of control, Suzette is forced to confront her past mistakes and find a way to help her brother before he hurts himself--or worse.

Color Me In, Natasha Diaz – 950L

Who is Nevaeh Levitz?

Growing up in an affluent suburb of New York City, sixteen-year-old Nevaeh Levitz never thought much about her biracial roots. When her Black mom and Jewish dad split up, she relocates to her mom's family home in Harlem and is forced to confront her identity for the first time.

Nevaeh wants to get to know her extended family, but one of her cousins can't stand that Nevaeh, who inadvertently passes as white, is too privileged, pampered, and selfish to relate to the injustices they face on a daily basis as African Americans. In the midst of attempting to blend their families, Nevaeh's dad decides that she should have a belated bat mitzvah instead of a sweet sixteen, which guarantees social humiliation at her posh private school. Even with the push and pull of her two cultures, Nevaeh does what she's always done when life gets complicated: she stays silent.

It's only when Nevaeh stumbles upon a secret from her mom's past, finds herself falling in love, and sees firsthand the prejudice her family faces that she begins to realize she has a voice. And she has choices. Will she continue to let circumstances dictate her path? Or will she find power in herself and decide once and for all who and where she is meant to be?

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You, Written and Adapted with Ibram X. Kendi – 1000L

A timely, crucial, and empowering exploration of racism--and antiracism--in America.

This is NOT a history book.

This is a book about the here and now.

A book to help us better understand why we are where we are.

A book about race.

The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power, to create dynamics that separate and silence. This is a remarkable reimagining of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's *Stamped from the Beginning*, winner of a National Book Award. It reveals the history of racist ideas in America and inspires hope for an antiracist future.

Stamped takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited.

Through a gripping, fast-paced, and energizing narrative, Jason Reynolds shines a light on the many insidious forms of racist ideas--and on ways readers can identify and stamp out racist thoughts in their daily lives.

***More Happy Than Not*, Adam Silvera – 850L**

Part *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, part *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*, Adam Silvera's extraordinary debut confronts race, class, and sexuality during one charged near-future summer in the Bronx.

Sixteen-year-old Aaron Soto is struggling to find happiness after a family tragedy leaves him reeling. He's slowly remembering what happiness might feel like this summer with the support of his girlfriend Genevieve, but it's his new best friend, Thomas, who really gets Aaron to open up about his past and confront his future.

As Thomas and Aaron get closer, Aaron discovers things about himself that threaten to shatter his newfound contentment. A revolutionary memory-alteration procedure, courtesy of the Leteo Institute, might be the way to straighten himself out. But what if it means forgetting who he truly is?

***The Poet X*, Elizabeth Acevedo – 800L**

A young girl in Harlem discovers slam poetry as a way to understand her mother's religion and her own relationship to the world. Debut novel of renowned slam poet Elizabeth Acevedo.

Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking.

But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook, reciting the words to herself like prayers—especially after she

catches feelings for a boy in her bio class named Aman, who her family can never know about. With Mami's determination to force her daughter to obey the laws of the church, Xiomara understands that her thoughts are best kept to herself.

So when she is invited to join her school's slam poetry club, she doesn't know how she could ever attend without her mami finding out, much less speak her words out loud. But still, she can't stop thinking about performing her poems.

Because in the face of a world that may not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to be silent.

Almost American Girl, Robin Ha – 850L

A teen graphic novel memoir about a Korean-born, non-English-speaking girl who is abruptly transplanted from Seoul to Huntsville, Alabama, and struggles with extreme culture shock and isolation, until she discovers her passion for comic arts.

For as long as she can remember, it's been Robin and her mom against the world. Growing up in the 1990s as the only child of a single mother in Seoul, Korea, wasn't always easy, but it has bonded them fiercely together.

So when a vacation to visit friends in Huntsville, Alabama, unexpectedly becomes a permanent relocation—following her mother's announcement that she's getting married—Robin is devastated. Overnight, her life changes. She is dropped into a new school where she doesn't understand the language and struggles to keep up. She is completely cut off from her friends at home and has no access to her beloved comics. At home, she doesn't fit in with her new stepfamily. And worst of all, she is furious with the one person she is closest to—her mother.

Then one day Robin's mother enrolls her in a local comic drawing class, which opens the window to a future Robin could never have imagined.

Slay, Brittney Morris – 930L

'We are different ages, genders and traditions ... but tonight we all SLAY'

Black Panther meets Ready Player One. A fierce teen game developer battles a real-life troll intent on ruining the Black Panther-inspired video game she created and the safe community it represents for black gamers.

By day, seventeen-year-old Kiera Johnson is a college student, and one of the only black kids at Jefferson Academy. By night, she joins hundreds of thousands of black gamers who duel worldwide in the secret online role-playing card game, SLAY.

No one knows Kiera is the game developer - not even her boyfriend, Malcolm. But when a teen in Kansas City is murdered over a dispute in the SLAY world, the media labels it an exclusionist, racist hub for thugs.

With threats coming from both inside and outside the game, Kiera must fight to save the safe space she's created. But can she protect SLAY without losing herself?

Fresh Ink: An Anthology of Short Stories by Contemporary Authors of Diversity – 700L

In partnership with We Need Diverse Books, thirteen of the most recognizable, diverse authors come together in this remarkable YA anthology featuring ten short stories, a graphic short story, and a one-act play from Walter Dean Myers never before in-print.

Careful--you are holding fresh ink. And not hot-off-the-press, still-drying-in-your-hands ink. Instead, you are holding twelve stories with endings that are still being written--whose next chapters are up to you.

Because these stories are meant to be read. And shared.

Thirteen of the most accomplished YA authors deliver a label-defying anthology that includes ten short stories, a graphic novel, and a one-act play. This collection will inspire you to break conventions, bend the rules, and color outside the lines. All you need is fresh ink.

Swing, Kwame Alexander with Mary Rand Hess – 610L

Things usually do not go as planned for seventeen-year-old Noah. He and his best friend Walt (aka Swing) have been cut from the high school baseball team for the third year in a row, and it looks like Noah's love interest since third grade, Sam, will never take it past the "best friend" zone. Noah would love to retire his bat and accept the status quo, but Walt has big plans for them both, which include making the best baseball comeback ever, getting the girl, and finally finding cool.

To go from lovelorn to ladies' men, Walt introduces Noah to a relationship guru—his Dairy Queen-employed cousin, Floyd—and the always informative Woohoo Woman Podcast. Noah is reluctant, but decides fate may be intervening when he discovers more than just his mom's birthday gift at the thrift shop. Inside the vintage Keepall is a gold mine of love letters from the 1960s. Walt is sure these letters and the podcasts are just what Noah needs to communicate his true feelings to Sam. To Noah, the letters are more: an initiation to the curious rhythms of love and jazz, as well as a way for him and Walt to embrace their own kind of cool. While Walt is hitting balls out of the park and catching the eye of the baseball coach, Noah composes anonymous love letters to Sam in an attempt to write his way into her heart. But as things are

looking up for Noah and Walt, a chain of events alters everything Noah knows to be true about love, friendship, sacrifice, and fate.

In *Swing*, bestselling authors Kwame Alexander and Mary Rand Hess (*Solo*) present a free-verse poetic story that will speak to anyone who's struggled to find their voice and take a swing at life.

***The Nickel Boys*, Colson Whitehead – 940L**

Elwood Curtis has taken the words of Dr Martin Luther King to heart: he is as good as anyone. Abandoned by his parents, brought up by his loving, strict and clear-sighted grandmother, Elwood is about to enroll in the local black college. But given the time and the place, one innocent mistake is enough to destroy his future, and so Elwood arrives at The Nickel Academy, which claims to provide 'physical, intellectual and moral training' which will equip its inmates to become 'honorable and honest men'.

In reality, the Nickel Academy is a chamber of horrors, where physical, emotional and sexual abuse is rife, where corrupt officials and tradesmen do a brisk trade in supplies intended for the school, and where any boy who resists is likely to disappear 'out back'. Stunned to find himself in this vicious environment, Elwood tries to hold on to Dr King's ringing assertion, 'Throw us in jail, and we will still love you.' But Elwood's fellow inmate and new friend Turner thinks Elwood is naive and worse; the world is crooked, and the only way to survive is to emulate the cruelty and cynicism of their oppressors.

The tension between Elwood's idealism and Turner's skepticism leads to a decision which will have decades-long repercussions.

Based on the history of a real reform school in Florida that operated for one hundred and eleven years and warped and destroyed the lives of thousands of children, *The Nickel Boys* is a devastating, driven narrative by a great American novelist whose work is essential to understanding the current reality of the United States.

***Dear Justyce*, Nic Stone – 780L**

Shortly after teenager Quan enters a not guilty plea for the shooting death of a police officer, he is placed in a holding cell to await trial. Through a series of flashbacks and letters to Justyce, the protagonist of *Dear Martin*, Quan's story unravels.

From a troubled childhood and bad timing to a coerced confession and prejudiced police work,

Nic Stone's newest novel takes an unflinching look at the flawed practices and ideologies that discriminate against African American boys and minorities in the American justice system.

Summer Reading Assignment for Bridgeport Military Academy:

This summer, you will choose ONE book from the list to read. After reading your selected book, you will complete the following which will count for EXTRA CREDIT in your English/Humanities Course:

- Determine the **central theme** of the novel and then describe:
 - What is it?
 - How is it developed?
 - Why is it important to the text?
 - How can you connect/apply this theme to your own life?
- Determine the **main protagonist** and the **main antagonist** in the novel and then describe:
 - Who is the main protagonist and how that character is developed – what are his/her qualities? What does he/she experience that establishes him/her as the main protagonist?
 - Who is the main antagonist and how that character is developed – what are his/her qualities? What does he/she experience that establishes him/her as the main antagonist?
- Determine the **central conflict** in the novel and then describe:
 - What is the central conflict?
 - How is it developed?
 - What events lead up to the central conflict?
 - What events occur because of the central conflict?
 - How can this conflict apply to your own life?
- Determine **one significant example of figurative language** from the novel and then describe:
 - What is the example and which type of figurative language is it?
 - How was it developed?
 - What is its purpose? How does it help to *move* the novel?
 - Why is figurative language important in literature? What does it help to establish?

Develop your response in the format of [CHOOSE ONE]:

- Written Response (one paragraph for each of the topics – 4 paragraphs TOTAL) - typed or handwritten
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Poster Board Presentation
- Prezi