

2017 High School Reading List Annotations

***Simon vs the Homo Sapiens Agenda* by Becky Albertalli**

Sixteen-year-old Simon is not-so-openly gay. He's not exactly hiding, but he hasn't figured out the right way to tell his family and friends. And then his classmate Martin stumbles upon his secret and blackmails him: help Martin get a date with new girl Abby or risk the whole school knowing about Simon's email flirtations with mystery boy Blue. *Lexile 640L*

***Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher**

Clay Jensen came home from school to discover a package on his porch. Inside are cassette tapes recorded by Hannah Baker - his classmate and crush - who killed herself two weeks ago. Hannah says there are 13 reasons why she decided to end her life - and Clay is one of them. He'll have to listen to the tapes to find out why. *Lexile 550L*

***Chasing Shadows* by Swati Avasthi**

Holly, Corey, and Savitri are closer than family until a random act of violence shatters their world. A gunman shoots at their car, leaving Corey dead, Holly in a coma, and Savitri the only witness to the crime. When Holly wakes up, she is changed -- determined to hunt down Corey's killer, whatever the cost, but Savitri fears that Holly is losing her grip on reality. *Lexile 630L*

***Red Rising* by Pierce Brown**

Darrow is a Red, a lowborn miner who works tirelessly to help make Mars habitable for humans escaping from a dying Earth. And then he discovers that Mars has been safe for humans for centuries, and the Gold caste has been using the Reds as slave labor. He joins the rebellion to fight for freedom and revenge. *Lexile 630L*

***The Living* by Matt de la Pena**

Shy has a sweet summer job working as a towel boy on a luxury ship cruising around the Pacific Ocean. The girls are cute, the tips are great, and his coworkers are a lot of fun to hang out with. But then the storm comes, and after that the tsunami, and soon nothing is left but the open sea. *Lexile 700L*

***An Abundance of Katherines* by John Green**

Colin has just graduated high school, and he has just been dumped for the 19th time by a girl called Katherine. He sets out on a road trip with his best friend to try to make some sense of his life while also trying to create a mathematical formula to explain his relationships with Katherines. *Lexile 890L*

***The Girl in the Blue Coat* by Monica Hesse**

It's 1943 in Amsterdam. Hanneke spends her days finding and delivering black-market goods to local customers. It's a small act of rebellion against the German invaders, but Hanneke is stunned when her neighbor asks for help finding a missing Jewish teenager whom she was hiding. *Lexile 720L*

***Traffick* by Ellen Hopkins**

Five very different teens, all victims of the child trafficking trade, try to find their way to a new life. The heart-wrenching story follows five separate but intertwined journeys through the challenges of recovery, rehabilitation, and renewal to forgiveness and love. *Lexile 770L*

***Conversion* by Katherine Howe**

Girls at Colleen's elite private school are falling ill with mysterious symptoms. Is it academic hysteria, environmental, or something else? Only Colleen connects today's events with what happened 300 years ago, when a group of girls in Salem Village suffered a similar epidemic. *Lexile 770L*

***We Are the Ants* by Shaun David Hutchinson**

Henry Denton has spent years being periodically abducted by aliens. Then the aliens give him an ultimatum: The world will end in 144 days, and all Henry has to do to stop it is push a big red button...only he's not so sure he wants to. *Lexile 800L*

***Those Who Wish Me Dead* by Michael Koryta**

When 13-year-old Jace witnesses a brutal murder, he's put into witness protection and hidden in a wilderness program for troubled teens. The plan is supposed to give the police time to catch the killers, but the killers are determined to find Jace, and they're slaughtering anyone who stands in their way.

***A Death-Struck Year* by Makiia Lucier**

When the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918 finally reaches Portland, Oregon, 17-year-old Cleo leaves the safety of her boarding school to work for the Red Cross, even though she knows each day might be her last because the disease is so deadly. *Lexile 600L*

***How It Went Down* by Kekla Magoon**

When 16-year-old Tariq Johnson is shot to death, his community is thrown into an uproar because Tariq was black and the shooter, Jack Franklin, is white. In the aftermath, everyone has something to say, but everyone's story is different. *Lexile 560L*

***Dumplin'* by Julie Murphy**

Self-proclaimed fat girl Willowdean Dickson has always been comfortable in her own skin, until a cute boy at work starts flirting with her. Determined to regain her confidence, she enters the local beauty pageant run by her mother, a former queen of the beauty pageant scene. *Lexile 710L*

***I'll Give You the Sun* by Jandy Nelson**

A story of first love and family loss follows the estrangement between daredevil Jude and her loner twin brother, Noah, as a result of a mysterious event that is brought to light by a beautiful, broken boy and a new mentor. *Lexile 740L*

***The Rest of Us Just Live Here* by Patrick Ness**

What if you *aren't* the Chosen One? What if you are *not* the hero who is supposed to defeat the zombies, vampires, dark wizards, or sith lords? This is the story of Mikey and his friends.

They're just trying to get through exams, go to prom, and graduate before someone blows up the school...again. *Lexile 700L*

***Gabi, a Girl in Pieces* by Isabel Quintero**

Sixteen-year-old Gabi Hernandez chronicles her senior year of high school as she copes with her friend Cindy's pregnancy, her friend Sebastian's coming out, her father's meth habit, her own cravings for food and cute boys, and especially the poetry that helps forge her identity. *Lexile 820L*

***When I Was the Greatest* by Jason Reynolds**

Ali lives in Bed-Stuy, a Brooklyn neighborhood known for guns and drugs, but he and his sister Jazz, and their neighbors Needles and Noodles, manage to stay out of trouble - until they go to the wrong party, where one gets badly hurt and another leaves with a target on his back. *Lexile 740L*

***Jackaby* by William Ritter**

Newly arrived in 1892 New England, Abigail Rook becomes assistant to R.F. Jackaby, an investigator who has the ability to see supernatural beings. The two begin investigating a series of murders, and Jackaby is convinced a nonhuman creature is responsible. *Lexile 920L*

***Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs**

A horrific family tragedy sets 16-year-old Jacob journeying to a remote island off the coast of Wales, where he discovers the crumbling ruins of Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children. As he explores the building, it becomes clear that the children were more than just peculiar. *Lexile 890L*

***21: The Story of Roberto Clemente* by Wilfred Santiago**

A biography of the baseball superstar. Clemente overcame prejudice as he traveled from an impoverished childhood in Puerto Rico to fame and fortune playing for the Pittsburgh Pirates. Tragically, he died in a plane crash while delivering aid to earthquake victims. (Graphic Novel)

***X: A Novel* by Ilyasah Shabazz and Kekla Magoon**

Malcolm is a straight-A student, but after his father is murdered and his mother sent to a mental institution, Malcolm goes to live with his sister in Boston. There he drifts into the world of drugs, alcohol, gambling, and eventually prison.

***Bomb: The Race to Build - and Steal - the World's Most Dangerous Weapon* by Steve Sheinkin**

Nonfiction that reads like a thriller: as Allied Forces thwarted Nazi efforts to build an atomic bomb, the Americans were rushing to create their own nuclear weapon -- while at the same time, the Soviets were stealing their plans.

***Challenger Deep* by Neal Shusterman**

A realistic exploration of one teen's experience with schizophrenia. Caden Bosch is a brilliant high school student who is convinced someone is trying to kill him. Caden Bosch is also part of a crew sailing to the deepest part of the ocean. How can he tell what is real anymore? *Lexile 800L*

***More Happy Than Not* by Adam Silvera**

Aaron has endured a lot in his 16 years - his father's suicide, his own attempt, the deaths of friends in his Bronx neighborhood. If anyone deserves to have his bad memories erased by the Leteo Institute, it's Aaron. And if he can forget he's gay, everything will be okay, right? *Lexile 850L*

***The Way I Used to Be* by Amber Smith**

Eden was always a nerdy good girl, but the night her brother's best friend raped her, everything changed. Told over the four years of high school, the story follows Eden through the aftermath - her descent into pain and despair, survival, and eventually hope and healing. *Lexile 640L*

***Sway* by Kat Spears**

Life is a series of business transactions for Jesse "Sway" Alderman. He gets things people want: term papers, fake IDs, anything at all, no questions asked. When the football captain wants his help getting a date with angelic Bridget Smalley, Sway gets to work because the price is right, but realizes that he might have to put feelings before business for the first time ever. *Lexile 900L*

***Nimona* by Noelle Stevenson**

Lord Blackheart, a villain with a vendetta, and his sidekick, Nimona, an impulsive young shapeshifter, must prove to the kingdom that Sir Goldenloin and the Institution of Law Enforcement and Heroics aren't the heroes everyone thinks they are. (Graphic Novel)

***An Ember in the Ashes* by Sabaa Tahir**

Laia is a Scholar living under the iron-fisted rule of the Martial Empire. When her brother is arrested for treason, Laia goes undercover as a slave at the empire's military academy in exchange for assistance from rebel Scholars who claim that they will help to save her brother from execution. *680L*

***The Fifth Wave* by Rick Yancey**

Cassie Sullivan, the survivor of an alien invasion, must rescue her young brother from the enemy with help from a boy who may be one of them. *Lexile 690L*.

