

## Summer Reading Booktalks

These are some of the titles that Ms. Bergin or Mrs. Stahl might have talked about in your class.

Albom, Mitch. *The Five People You Meet In Heaven*. (F Alb)

*Summary: Eddie's life is explained to him after his death by the five people he meets in heaven.*

Anouilh, Jean *Antigone*. Trans. by Lewis Galantieri. (842.91 Ano)

*Summary: A 1940's adaptation of the Greek story where Antigone is imprisoned for burying her brothers against royal decree. Which is more important, your obligation to your god(s) or to your government?*

Barr, Nevada. *Anna Pigeon Series*. (F Bar)

*Summary: This mystery series features Anna Pigeon, a park ranger with the National Park Service. Barr has experience as a park ranger and draws on the unique ecology and geography of the different parks in her stories. (Note: some of the crimes can get a little gruesome.)*

Blacker, Terence. *Boy 2 Girl*. (F Bla)

*Summary: After the death of his mother, thirteen-year-old Sam comes to live with his cousin and as a prank, he dresses up as a girl for school, but it soon gets out of hand.*

Bradley, Marion Zimmer. *The Mists of Avalon*. (F Bra)

*Summary: The Arthurian story told from the perspective of the women. (Suggested for older readers)*

Brian, Kate. *Megan Meade's Guide to the McGowan Boys*. (F Bri)

*Summary: While her military parents are stationed in South Korea, high school junior Megan learns a great deal about boys and herself when she moves to Massachusetts to live with family friends who have seven sons.*

Bryson, Bill. *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. (500 Bry)

*Summary: In his humorous fashion, Bryson attempts to tell us how we got from there being nothing at all, all to being "us."*

Chevalier, Tracy. *Girl With a Pearl Earring*. (F Che)

*Summary: (from the author's website) Girl With a Pearl Earring tells the story of Griet, a 16-year-old Dutch girl who becomes a maid in the house of the painter Johannes Vermeer. Her calm and perceptive manner not only helps her in her household duties, but also attracts the painter's attention. Though different in upbringing, education and social standing, they have a similar way of looking at things. Vermeer slowly draws her into the world of his paintings - the still, luminous images of solitary women in domestic settings.*

Clark, Carol Higgins. *Popped*. (F Cla)

*Summary: Private Investigator Regan Reilly knows that helping her friend with a reality TV show is a bad idea, but she can't refuse an old friend. Lighter than her mother's thrillers (Mary Higgins Clark), the cast of reoccurring characters produce a light and fun series.*

Codell, Esmle Raji. *Educating Esmle : Diary of a Teacher's First Year*. (921 Codell)  
Summary: *First-year teacher Codell's diary of the joys and challenges of teaching.*

Crutcher, Chris. *King of the Mild Frontier : An Ill-Advised Autobiography*. (921 Crutcher)  
Summary: *Chris Crutcher, author of young adult novels such as "Ironman" and "Whale Talk," as well as short stories, tells of growing up in Cascade, Idaho, and becoming a writer.*

Crutcher, Chris. *Whale Talk*. (F Cru)  
Summary: *Intellectually and athletically gifted, TJ, a multiracial, adopted teenager, shuns organized sports and the gung-ho athletes at his high school until he agrees to form a swimming team and recruits some of the school's less popular students.*

Cussler, Clive. *The Dirk Pitt Series*. (F Cus)  
Summary: *Technology, adventure, treachery and treasure as hero Dirk Pitt travels the world. Fast paced adventure stories.*

Deaver, Jeff. *The Blue Nowhere*. (F Dea)  
Summary: *When an anonymous computer hacker begins stealing identities and murdering the victims the investigators begin to realize he could already be working from inside their circle – no one can be trusted. Deaver's style of psychological thriller at its best.*

Doctorow, E. L. *Ragtime*. (F Doc)  
Summary:

Eberhart, Mark. *Why Things Break : Understanding the World By the Way It Comes Apart*. (620.1 Ebe)

Ehrenhaft, Daniel. *Ten Things to Do Before I Die*. (F Ehr)  
Summary: *Just after his best friends make a list of things sixteen-year-old Ted should do to live it up, he learns that he has ingested poison and will be dead in twenty-four hours--which might be enough time to do everything on the list.*

Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Nickel and Dimed: On Not Getting By in America*. (305.569 Ehr)  
Summary: *Barbara Ehrenreich, a journalist decided to test the rhetoric revolving around welfare reform which promises that any job equals a better life. But can a person survive on minimum wage? She tries three different types of jobs in three different parts of the country. Her experiences are chronicled in the fascinating non-fiction book.*

Fforde, Jasper. *The Eyre Affair*. (F Ffo)  
Summary: *Special Agent, Tuesday Next, of the Literary Crimes division usually deals with thing like forged books. But when the evil Hades Acheron starts stealing characters out of book, Tuesday has to rescue Jane Eyre and step into the story herself to set things right. Very British humor.*

Gaiman, Neil. *Anansi Boys*. (F Gai)

Gantos, Jack. *Hole In My Life*. (921 Gantos)

*Summary: The author relates how, as a young adult, he became a drug user and smuggler, was arrested, did time in prison, and eventually got out and went to college, all the while hoping to become a writer.*

Geras, Adele. *Ithaka*. (F Ger)

*Summary: The island of Ithaka is overrun with uncouth suitors demanding that Penelope choose a new husband, as she patiently awaits the return of Odysseus from the Trojan War.*

Giles, Gail. *Dead Girls Don't Write Letters*. (F Gil)

*Summary: Fourteen-year-old Sunny is stunned when a total stranger shows up at her house posing as her older sister Jazz, who supposedly died out of town in a fire months earlier.*

Golden, Christopher and Rick Hautala. *Body of Evidence Series*. (F Gol)

*Summary: Jenna Blake, working in the coroners office, gets involved with forensics to solve crimes.*

Halpin, Brendan. *Donorboy*. (F Hal)

*Summary: Rosalind had two mommies. Now, thanks to a tragic accident involving foodstuffs, she has none. And Sean, the sperm donor responsible for half her DNA (and nothing else), is taking custody. Rosalind finds herself adjusting to a new life that seems both hateful and surreal-she's an orphan with a new father, surrounded by friends she is beginning to despise and well-meaning adults who succeed only in annoying her. Sean made a donation fifteen years ago, and his life since has not gone according to plan. Thirty-five, single, and still grieving the loss of his own mother twenty-seven years ago, he decides to take on the overwhelming task of caring for an unhappy teenager he doesn't know. Told entirely through e-mail, instant messaging, journal entries, and other random communications, Donorboy is the comic, compellingly readable novel of how these two people learn to converse, cook, write heavy-metal songs, and nail windows shut on their way to becoming a family*

Herbert, Frank. *Dune*. (F Her)

Herriot, James. *All Creatures Great and Small*. (636.089 Her)

Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. (F Hos)

Hurwin, Davida. *A Time For Dancing*. (F Hur)

*Summary: Seventeen-year-old best friends Samantha and Juliana tell their stories in alternating chapters after Juliana is diagnosed with cancer.*

Johnson, Maureen. *13 Little Blue Envelopes*. (F Joh)

*Summary: When seventeen-year-old Ginny receives a packet of mysterious envelopes from her favorite aunt, she leaves New Jersey to criss-cross Europe on a sort of scavenger hunt that transforms her life.*

Kantor, Melissa. *If I Have a Wicked Stepmother, Where's My Prince?* (F Kan)

*Summary: When Lucy Norton's father remarries, she feels like Cinderella because she now has a stepmother, two bratty stepsisters, but where is her prince?*

Levithan, David. *Are We There Yet?*. (F Lev)

*Summary: Tricked by their parents into taking a trip to Italy together, two brothers--one in high school and the other recently graduated from college--reflect on the directions of their own lives and on the distance that has grown between them.*

Mazer, Harry. *Snow Bound*. (F Maz)

*Summary: Two teenagers caught in a snowstorm face a fight for survival in a desolate area.*

McBride, James. *The Color of Water : A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother*. (921 McBride)

*Summary: James McBride grew up knowing his mother was different. His mother was a white Jewish woman, his father, black. His mother raised 12 children mostly by herself and sent them all to college and many to graduate school. The Color of Water tells the story of this remarkable woman who was embraced by the African American community when she was rejected by her own.*

Meno, Joe. *Hairstyles of the Damned*. (F Men)

*Summary: This is the story of Brian, a Catholic school boy, and his punk rock friend, Gretchen. Gretchen is loud, she fights, she swears and her hair is pink – and Brian thinks he loves her. The problem is – she's in love with someone else.*

Meyer, Stephenie. *Twilight*. (F Mey)

*Summary: When seventeen-year-old Bella leaves Phoenix to live with her father in Forks, Washington, she meets an exquisitely handsome boy at school for whom she feels an overwhelming attraction and who she comes to realize is not wholly human.*

Moore, Christopher. *Lamb*. (F Moo)

*Summary: Moore attempts to imagine Christ's youth and young adulthood for us in this comic novel as Levi, known as Biff, writes the fifth Gospel of his childhood pal, Christ.*

Oates, Joyce Carol. *Sexy*. (F Oat)

*Summary: Sixteen-year-old Darren Flynn, a popular, good-looking high school athlete who lacks self-confidence, learns that his jock friends are hatching a revenge act against their English teacher for failing a member of the swim team.*

O'Connell, Tyne. *Pulling Princes*. (F Oco)

*Summary: Hoping to become more popular at her elegant English boarding school, fifteen-year-old Californian Calypso Kelly invents a fake handsome boyfriend, until she realizes that her wit and skill at fencing may be enough to attract the attention of a real-life handsome prince.*

Reichs, Kathleen J. *Temperance Brennan Series* (F Rei)

*Summary: Forensic expert Temperance Brennan uses science to solve (sometimes gruesome) crimes. These are the stories that the Fox series Bones is based on, but expect some big differences.*

Schwarcz, Joseph A. *That's the Way the Cookie Crumbles : 62 All-New Commentaries On the Fascinating Chemistry of Everyday Life*. (540 Sch)

Sebold, Alice. *Lucky*. (346.15 Seb)

Shreve, Anita. *Light On Snow*. (F Shr)

*Summary: When a father and his daughter find an abandoned infant in the snow, the event forever alters the 11-year-old's understanding of the world.*

Simmons, Rachel. *Odd Girl Speaks Out : Girls Write About Bullies, Cliques, Popularity, and Jealousy*. (305.23 Odd)

Sones, Sonya. *Stop Pretending : What Happened When My Big Sister Went Crazy*. (F Son)

*Summary: A younger sister has a difficult time adjusting to life after her older sister has a mental breakdown. Told in free verse and somewhat autobiographical.*

Strauss, Darin. *Chang & Eng : A Novel*. (F Str)

Tarbox, Katherine. *A Girls Life On-line*. (364.153 Tar)

*Summary: True story – 13-year old Katie Tarbox meets a guy in a chat room and runs away to meet him. (Previously published as Katie.com)*

Whitcomb, Laura. *A Certain Slant of Light*. (F Whi)

*Summary: After benignly haunting a series of people for 130 years, Helen meets a teenage boy who can see her and together they unlock the mysteries of their pasts.*

Wintle, Edwin John. *Breakfast With Tiffany : A Memoir*. (649 Win)

Zimmerman, Keith and Kent Zimmerman. *Mythbusters : The Explosive Truth Behind 30 of the Most Perplexing Urban Legends of All Time*. (398.2 Zim)

*Summary: The guys from Mythbusters, Jamie Hyneman and Adam Savage, blow things up, set things on fire and torture Buster the crash-test dummy in their quest to prove or disprove urban legends. You've seen them on Discovery Channel – catch the stories you missed.*

Zusak, Markus. *The Book Thief*. (F Zus)

*Summary: Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel--a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.*