

High School Recommended Readings and Podcasts



The following sections can be found throughout this guide:

CPS Virtual Library	1
Chicago Public Library eBooks and Audiobooks	1
Recommended Reading Lists	1
Project Lit Collection	2
Recommended Podcasts and Paired Texts	7
General Podcasts	9
Writing Resources and Contests	10

CPS Virtual Library

The following titles are available for free using our [CPS Virtual Library](#). Directions to access the CPS Virtual Library can be found on the [SOAR Virtual Library Instructions document](#).

Chicago Public Library eBooks and Audiobooks

Some titles are also available as ebooks or audiobooks through the Chicago Public Library. You can access ebooks and audiobooks through the [Chicago Public Library website](#).

Recommended Reading Lists

In addition to the resources below, please check out these recommended reading lists:

- [Chicago Public Schools' Recommended Reading List - Grades PreK-12](#)
- [2020 Culturally Relevant Booklist Grades PreK-12](#)
- [Chicago Public Schools' Spanish Language Reading List - Grades PreK-12](#)

High School Recommended Readings and Podcasts



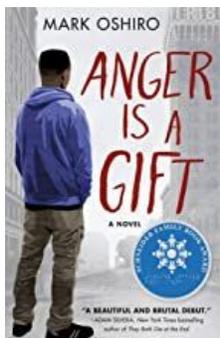
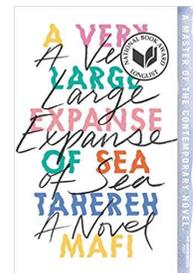
- Chicago Public Schools' Great Graphic Novels List PreK-12
- Chicago Public Schools Diversity List - Grades PreK-12
- Illinois Reading Council - A Reading State of Mind Illinois Reads Lists 2019 - Grades PreK-Adult
- AISLE Lincoln Award: Illinois Teen Readers' Choice 2020 Master List Grades 9-12
- Chicago Public library "Best of the Best" List - Grades PreK-12
- Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students - Grades K-12
- Immigrants & Refugees Booklist: Grades 9-12
- African American Racial Justice Booklist: Grades 9-12

Project Lit Collection

Check out this list for a variety of great reads recommended by the Project Lit Community, a national network of students and teachers committed to increasing access to culturally relevant books and promoting a love of reading in our schools and communities.

A Very Large Expanse of Sea by Tahereh Mafi

It's 2002, a year after 9/11, and Shirin has just started at yet another school. It's an extremely turbulent time for the world, but also for someone like Shirin, a sixteen-year-old Muslim girl who's tired of being stereotyped.



Anger Is a Gift by Mark Oshiro

Moss Jeffries is many things—considerate student, devoted son, loyal friend and affectionate boyfriend, enthusiastic nerd.

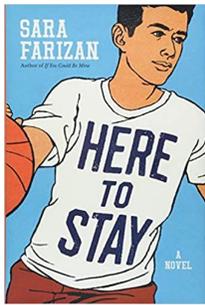
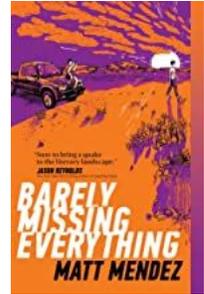
But sometimes Moss still wishes he could be someone else—someone without panic attacks, someone whose father was still alive, someone who hadn't become a rallying point for a community because of one horrible night.

High School Recommended Readings and Podcasts



Barely Missing Everything by Matt Mendez

In the tradition of Jason Reynolds and Matt de la Peña, this heartbreaking, no-holds-barred debut novel told from three points of view explores how difficult it is to make it in life when you—your life, brown lives—don't matter.

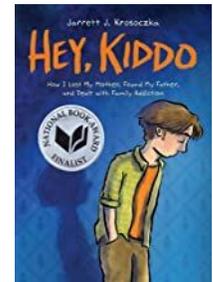


Here to Stay by Sara Farizan

Bijan, who is Iranian Jordanian and a nonpracticing Muslim, becomes the victim of Islamophobia when classmates circulate an edited photo of him depicted as a terrorist. With the support of his friends, Bijan identifies those classmates and fights hate with peace. A compelling look at what it means to be the target of blind hate.

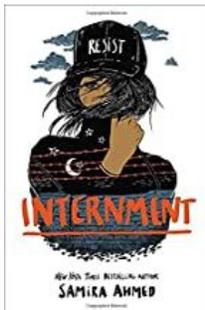
Hey, Kiddo by Jarrett J. Krosoczka

Hey, Kiddo is a profoundly important memoir about growing up in a family grappling with addiction and finding the art that helps you survive.



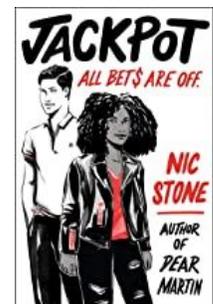
Internment by Samira Ahmed

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 by leading a revolution against the camp's Director and his guards.



Jackpot by Nic Stone

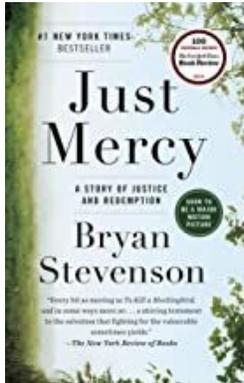
Meet Rico: high school senior and afternoon-shift cashier at the Gas 'n' Go, who after school and work races home to take care of her younger brother. Every. Single. Day. When Rico sells a



High School Recommended Readings and Podcasts



jackpot-winning lotto ticket, she thinks maybe her luck will finally change, but only if she—with some assistance from her popular and wildly rich classmate Zan—can find the ticket holder who hasn't claimed the prize. But what happens when have and have-nots collide? Will this investigative duo unite...or divide?



Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson

Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship - and

transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

Monday's Not Coming by Tiffany D. Jackson

As Claudia digs deeper into her friend's disappearance, she discovers that no one seems to remember the last time they saw Monday. How can a teenage girl just vanish without anyone noticing that she's gone?



Nyxia by Scott Reintgen

Emmett discovers that he is one of ten recruits, all of whom have troubled pasts and are a long way from home. Now each recruit must earn the right to travel down to the planet of Eden—a planet that Babel has kept hidden—where they will mine a substance called Nyxia that has quietly become the most valuable material in the universe. But Babel's ship is full of secrets, and Emmett will face the ultimate choice: win the

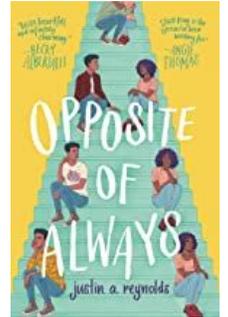
fortune at any cost, or find a way to fight that won't forever compromise what it means to be human.

High School Recommended Readings and Podcasts



***Opposite of Always* by Justin A. Reynolds**

A razor-sharp, hilarious, and heartfelt novel about the choices we make, the people we choose, and the moments that make life worth reliving.

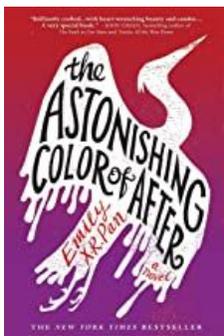
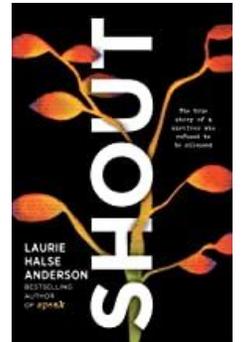


***Scythe* by Neil Shusterman**

A world with no hunger, no disease, no war, no misery: Humanity has conquered all those things and has even conquered death. Now Scythes are the only ones who can end life—and they are commanded to do so in order to keep the size of the population under control. Citra and Rowan are chosen to apprentice to a scythe—a role that neither of them wants. These teens must master the "art" of taking life, knowing that the consequence of failure could mean losing their own.

***Shout* by Laurie Halse Anderson**

Laurie Halse Anderson is known for the unflinching way she writes about, and advocates for, survivors of sexual assault. Now, inspired by her fans and enraged by how little in our culture has changed since her groundbreaking novel *Speak* was first published twenty years ago, she has written a poetry memoir that is as vulnerable as it is rallying, as timely as it is timeless.



***The Astonishing Color of After* by Emily X.R. Pan**

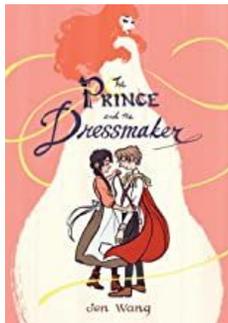
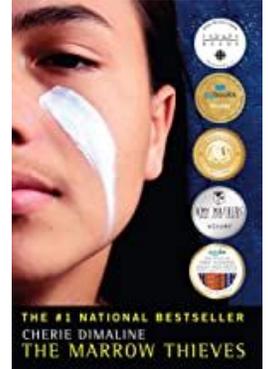
Alternating between real and magic, past and present, friendship and romance, hope and despair, *The Astonishing Color of After* is a stunning and heartbreaking novel about finding oneself through family history, art, grief, and love.

High School Recommended Readings and Podcasts



***The Marrow Thieves* by Cherie Dimaline**

Humanity has nearly destroyed its world through global warming, but now an even greater evil lurks. The indigenous people of North America are being hunted and harvested for their bone marrow, which carries the key to recovering something the rest of the population has lost: the ability to dream. In this dark world, Frenchie and his companions struggle to survive as they make their way up north to the old lands. For now, survival means staying hidden—but what they don't know is that one of them holds the secret to defeating the marrow thieves.

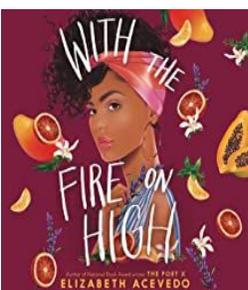
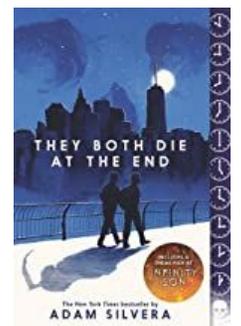


***The Prince and the Dressmaker* by Jen Wang**

Prince Sebastian is looking for a bride—or rather, his parents are looking for one for him. Sebastian is too busy hiding his secret life from everyone. At night he puts on daring dresses and takes Paris by storm as the fabulous Lady Crystallia. Sebastian's secret weapon (and best friend) is the brilliant dressmaker Frances—one of only two people who knows the truth: sometimes this boy wears dresses. But Frances' dreams of greatness, and being someone's secret weapon, means being a secret. Forever. How long can Frances defer her dreams to protect a friend?

***They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera**

On September 5, a little after midnight, Death-Cast calls Mateo Torrez and Rufus Emeterio to give them some bad news: they're going to die today. Mateo and Rufus are total strangers, but, for different reasons, they're both looking to make a new friend on their End Day. The good news: there's an app for that. It's called the Last Friend, and through it, Rufus and Mateo are about to meet up for one last great adventure—to live a lifetime in a single day.



***With the Fire on High* by Elizabeth Acevedo**

Ever since she got pregnant freshman year, Emoni Santiago's life has been about making the tough decisions—doing what has to be done for her daughter and her abuela. The one

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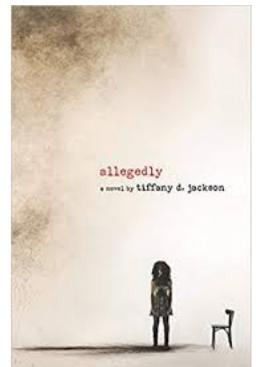


place she can let all that go is in the kitchen, where she adds a little something magical to everything she cooks, turning her food into straight-up goodness. Even though she dreams of working as a chef after she graduates, Emoni knows that it's not worth her time to pursue the impossible. Yet despite the rules she thinks she has to play by, once Emoni starts cooking, her only choice is to let her talent break free.

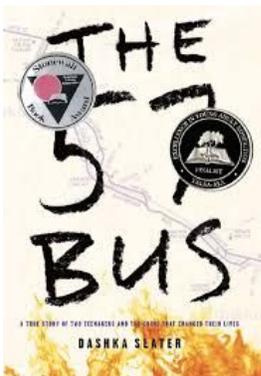
Recommended Podcasts and Paired Texts

On The Knife's Edge: Using Therapy To Address Violence Among Teens

What would drive someone to take another person's life? When researchers at the University of Chicago asked that question, the answer was a laundry list of slights: a stolen jacket, or a carelessly lobbed insult. It made them wonder whether crime rates could be driven down by teaching young men to pause, take a deep breath, and think before they act. In this 2017 episode, we go inside a program that teaches Chicago teens to do just that. We also explore what research has found about whether this approach actually works.



Paired Text: *Allegedly*



Screaming into the Void: How Outrage Is Hijacking Our Culture, and Our Minds

Turn on the news or look at Twitter, and it's likely you'll be bombarded by outrage. Many people have come to believe that the only way to spark change is to incite anger. This week on Hidden Brain, how outrage is hijacking our conversations, our communities, and our minds.

Paired Text: *The 57 Bus*

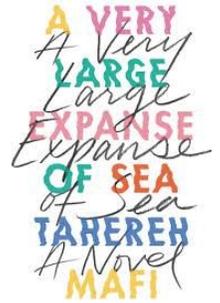
High School Recommended Readings and Podcasts



The Day That Never Happened

In the early 2000s, an Iranian American family's home was searched unexpectedly. Afterward, the family questioned their place in the U.S. but didn't talk about the incident for more than a decade.

Paired text: [*A Very Large Expanse of Sea*](#)



Missing Children: Families of Missing Black Americans Fight for Media, Police to Focus on Their Loved Ones' Cases

Paula Hill says police didn't search for her daughter, Shemika, when she went missing because law enforcement believed she ran away—a common complaint from families of missing black Americans.



Gentrification

Sarah spoke to Jose Requena and Loreen Targos of Pilsen Alliance about what gentrification is and what their organization is doing to push it back. We discuss the Illinois ban on rent control, affordable housing and what needs to shift in politics to make Chicago a city where people can thrive.

Paired text: [*Monday's Not Coming*](#)

Listen to Tiffany Jackson (author) explain why she wrote *Monday's Not Coming*!

Missing Children, Gentrification, & Mental Health: Tiffany D. Jackson on Monday's Not Coming

Online Behavior, Real-Life Consequences: The Unfolding of a Social Media Scandal

Social media sites offer quick and easy ways to share ideas, crack jokes, and find old friends. They can make us feel part of something big and wonderful and fast-moving. But the things we post don't go away. And they can come back to

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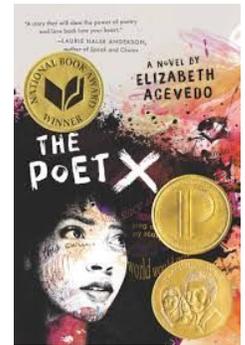


haunt us. This week, we explore how one teenager's social media posts destroyed a golden opportunity he'd worked for all his life.

A Bouquet of Poets for National Poetry Month

Looks like this year April showers brought April flowers, as in, a bouquet of outstanding poets. So stop and smell the roses, my friends.

Paired text: *The Poet X*



The Cruel Story Behind the 'Reverse Freedom Rides'

Southern segregationists resented the Freedom Riders who came by bus to protest Jim Crow laws, so in 1962 they tricked black Southerners into migrating north and transformed families' lives forever.

When Xenophobia Spreads Like a Virus

As international health agencies warn that COVID-19 could become a pandemic, fears over the new coronavirus' spread have activated old, racist suspicions toward Asians and Asian Americans. It's part of a longer history in the United States, in which xenophobia has often been camouflaged as a concern for public health and hygiene.

General Podcasts

Code Switch

Ever find yourself in a conversation about race and identity where you just get...stuck? Code Switch can help. We're all journalists of color, and this isn't just the work we do. It's the lives we lead. Sometimes we'll make you laugh; other times you'll get uncomfortable. But we'll always be unflinchingly honest and empathetic. Come mix it up with us.

High School Recommended Readings and Podcasts



1619 by The New York Times

Award-winning journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones hosts a five-part podcast series commemorating the 400th anniversary of the arrival of enslaved Africans in the United States. Each episode is an audio documentary that complements the New York Times Magazine's 1619 Project. Hannah-Jones and other scholars share history and personal experiences to argue slavery's connection to modern American life. Best for: teens

Making Beyoncé by WBEZ Chicago

The Making series looks at how some of our most successful cultural icons, such as Oprah Winfrey and former president Barack Obama, became iconic. This season of Making is hosted by Jill Hopkins, a singer herself, who examines the start of [Beyoncé's](#) career. In three episodes, we hear Knowles family archival recordings of a young Beyoncé singing, the start of Destiny's Child, and how her father, Matthew Knowles, helped the group land its first record deal.

The Right Time with Bomani Jones

Twice a week, Bomani Jones shares commentary on the major sports news of the day with a pinch of pop culture. He discusses the rise of Baltimore Ravens quarterback, Lamar Jackson, in the NFL in one episode and then effortlessly switches to examine the recent tension between hip-hop heavyweights Kanye West and Jay-Z at Diddy's 50th birthday.

Writing Resources and Contests

All of these resources are accessible for free via the New York Times Learning Network. Students can also log in to the New York Times for full access to all the paper's resources via the [CPS SOAR database](#).

NYTimes Editorial Contest

Write an editorial on an issue that matters to you. View the [rules and guidelines](#). February 23 - March 31, 2020

NYTimes Podcast Challenge

Make an original podcast of five minutes or less that informs and entertains listeners. View the [rules and guidelines](#). April 9 - May 19, 2020

High School Recommended Readings and Podcasts



Picture Prompts

Accessible, image-driven prompts that invite a variety of kinds of writing. Updated daily.

Student Opinion

Students thirteen and older can post their opinion pieces to the comments section to publish. All prompts are text-based.

What's Going on in This Graph?

Graphs, maps, and charts from The Times—and an invitation to students to discuss them live. Updated weekly.