

**John D. O’Bryant School of Math and Science**  
**2017 Summer Reading**

# One School, One Question

**How much power and influence should government have? What do we value more--individual rights and freedoms, or collective security and stability?**

<b>Required Book (All Students MUST read)</b>	<b>Grades 7, 8 and 9: <i>Gathering Blue</i>, Lois Lowry</b>	<b>Grades 10, 11 and 12: <i>1984</i>, George Orwell</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Choice Books</b>  <i>All students must read at LEAST one book from the list. Feel free to read more!</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Messenger</i>, Lois Lowry</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Red Scarf Girl</i>, Ji-Li Liang</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Little Brother</i>, Cory Doctorow</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Ready Player One</i>, Ernest Cline</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>An Ember in the Ashes</i>, Sabaa Tahir  <small>This Book 1 of a series--if you have read the first book, feel free to read the rest of the series.</small></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>On a Clear Day</i>, Walter Dean Myers</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>1984</i>, George Orwell</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Silenced</i>, James DeVita</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Legend</i>, Marie Lu</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Handmaid’s Tale</i>, Margaret Atwood</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Brave New World</i>, Aldous Huxley</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Without You, There is No Us</i>, Suki Kim</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Little Brother</i>, Cory Doctorow</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#"><u>The Circle</u></a>, Dave Eggers</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Ready Player One</i>, Ernest Cline</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>An Ember in the Ashes</i>, Sabaa Tahir  <small>This Book 1 of a series--if you have read the first book, feel free to read the rest of the series.</small></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>On a Clear Day</i>, Walter Dean Myers</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Matched</i>, Ally Condie</p>

**There will be a Socratic Seminar in September based on the guiding question and the books you read. Further details will be provided on the school website and when we return to school in the Fall.**

## So, what are these books about? Some Amazon.com Teasers...

### ***1984*, George Orwell**

Written in 1948, *1984* was George Orwell's chilling prophecy about the future. And while 1984 has come and gone, his dystopian vision of a government that will do anything to control the narrative is timelier than ever...

Winston Smith toes the Party line, rewriting history to satisfy the demands of the Ministry of Truth. With each lie he writes, Winston grows to hate the Party that seeks power for its own sake and persecutes those who dare to commit thought crimes. But as he starts to think for himself, Winston can't escape the fact that Big Brother is always watching.

### ***Gathering Blue*, Lois Lowry**

Lois Lowry's magnificent novel of the distant future, *The Giver*, is set in a highly technical and emotionally repressed society. This eagerly awaited companion volume, by contrast, takes place in a village with only the most rudimentary technology, where anger, greed, envy, and casual cruelty make ordinary people's lives short and brutish.

This society, like the one portrayed in *The Giver*, is controlled by merciless authorities with their own complex agendas and secrets. And at the center of both stories there is a young person who is given the responsibility of preserving the memory of the culture--and who finds the vision to transform it.

### ***Matched*, Ally Condie**

For Cassia, nothing is left to chance--not what she will eat, the job she will have, or the man she will marry. In *Matched*, the Society Officials have determined optimal outcomes for all aspects of daily life, thereby removing the "burden" of choice.

When Cassia's best friend is identified as her ideal marriage Match it confirms her belief that Society knows best, until she plugs in her Match microchip and a different boy's face flashes on the screen. This improbable mistake sets Cassia on a dangerous path to the unthinkable--rebellious against the predetermined life Society has in store for her. As author Ally Condie's unique dystopian Society takes chilling measures to maintain the status quo, *Matched* reminds readers that freedom of choice is precious, and not without sacrifice.

### ***Messenger*, Lois Lowry**

*Messenger* is the masterful third novel in the Giver Quartet, which began with the dystopian bestseller *The Giver*, now a major motion picture.

Matty has lived in Village and flourished under the guidance of Seer, a blind man known for his special sight. Village once welcomed newcomers, but something sinister has seeped into Village and the people have voted to close it to outsiders. Matty has been invaluable as a messenger. Now he must risk everything to make one last journey through the treacherous forest with his only weapon, a power he unexpectedly discovers within himself.

### ***Red Scarf Girl, Ji-Li Jiang***

Moving, honest, and deeply personal, *Red Scarf Girl* is the incredible true story of one girl's courage and determination during one of the most terrifying eras of the twentieth century.

It's 1966, and twelve-year-old Ji-li Jiang has everything a girl could want: brains, popularity, and a bright future in Communist China. But it's also the year that China's leader, Mao Ze-dong, launches the Cultural Revolution—and Ji-li's world begins to fall apart. Over the next few years, people who were once her friends and neighbors turn on her and her family, forcing them to live in constant terror of arrest. And when Ji-li's father is finally imprisoned, she faces the most difficult dilemma of her life.

### ***Little Brother, Cory Doctorow***

Marcus, a.k.a. "w1n5t0n," is only seventeen years old, but he figures he already knows how the system works—and how to work the system. Smart, fast, and wise to the ways of the networked world, he has no trouble outwitting his high school's intrusive but clumsy surveillance systems.

But his whole world changes when he and his friends find themselves caught in the aftermath of a major terrorist attack on San Francisco. In the wrong place at the wrong time, Marcus and his crew are apprehended by the Department of Homeland Security and whisked away to a secret prison where they're mercilessly interrogated for days. When the DHS finally releases them, Marcus discovers that his city has become a police state where every citizen is treated like a potential terrorist. He knows that no one will believe his story, which leaves him only one option: to take down the DHS himself.

### ***Ready Player One, Ernest Cline***

At once wildly original and stuffed with irresistible nostalgia, *Ready Player One* is a spectacularly genre-busting, ambitious, and charming debut - part quest novel, part love story, and part virtual space opera set in a universe where spell-slinging mages battle giant Japanese robots, entire planets are inspired by *Blade Runner*, and flying DeLoreans achieve light speed.

It's the year 2044, and the real world is an ugly place. Like most of humanity, Wade Watts escapes his grim surroundings by spending his waking hours jacked into the OASIS, a sprawling virtual utopia that lets you be anything you want to be, a place where you can live and play and fall in love on any of 10,000 planets. And like most of humanity, Wade dreams of being the one to discover the ultimate lottery ticket that lies concealed within this virtual world...

### ***An Ember in the Ashes, Sabaa Tahir***

If the test of a good novel is how badly you want to drop everything to finish it, then Sabaa Tahir's debut *An Ember in the Ashes* gets an A+. The world she creates is rich in fantasy, coupled with echoes of a historical saga, all vividly rendered on the page.

Tyrannical leaders and a building rebellion set the stage for dual narrators, Elias, one of the elite, trained from a young age to become a skilled assassin for the Commandant at Blackcliff Military Academy, and Laia, one of the oppressed, forced into the role of spy and saboteur in order to save her only remaining family member. Though diametrically opposed within their society, both Laia and Elias are wracked by internal conflict and driven to great lengths by shame and a desire to escape the bonds of their present lives.

### ***On a Clear Day, Walter Dean Myers***

Young heroes decide that they are not too young or too powerless to change their world in this gripping, futuristic young adult novel by the New York Times bestselling author of the Printz Award–winning *Monster*.

It is 2035. Teens, armed only with their ideals, must wage war on the power elite. Dahlia is a Low Gater: a sheep in a storm, struggling to survive completely on her own. The Gaters live in closed safe communities, protected from the Sturmers, mercenary thugs. And the C-8, a consortium of giant companies, control global access to finance, media, food, water, and energy resources—and they are only getting bigger and even more cutthroat. Dahlia, a computer whiz, joins forces with an ex-rocker, an ex-con, a chess prodigy, an ex-athlete, and a soldier wannabe. Their goal: to sabotage the C-8. But how will Sayeed, warlord and terrorist, fit into the equation?

### ***The Handmaid's Tale, Margaret Atwood***

*The Handmaid's Tale* is a novel of such power that the reader will be unable to forget its images and its forecast. Set in the near future, it describes life in what was once the United States and is now called the Republic of Gilead, a monotheocracy that has reacted to social unrest and a sharply declining birthrate by reverting to, and going beyond, the repressive intolerance of the original Puritans. The regime takes the Book of Genesis absolutely at its word, with bizarre consequences for the women and men in its population.

The story is told through the eyes of Offred, one of the unfortunate Handmaids under the new social order. In condensed but eloquent prose, by turns cool-eyed, tender, despairing, passionate, and wry, she reveals to us the dark corners behind the establishment's calm facade, as certain tendencies now in existence are carried to their logical conclusions.

### ***Brave New World, Aldous Huxley***

Aldous Huxley's profoundly important classic of world literature, *Brave New World* is a searching vision of an unequal, technologically-advanced future where humans are genetically bred, socially indoctrinated, and pharmaceutically anesthetized to passively uphold an authoritarian ruling order whose motto is "Community, Identity, Stability."—all at the cost of our freedom, humanity, and perhaps our souls.

*Brave New World*, his masterpiece, has enthralled and terrified millions of readers, and retains its urgent relevance to this day as both a warning as we head into tomorrow and as a thought-provoking, satisfying work of literature.

### ***Without You, There Is No Us, Suki Kim***

Every day, three times a day, the students march in two straight lines, singing praises to Kim Jong-il and North Korea: Without you, there is no motherland. Without you, there is no us. It is a chilling scene, but gradually Suki Kim, too, learns the tune and, without noticing, begins to hum it.

It is 2011, and all universities in North Korea have been shut down for an entire year, the students sent to construction fields—except for the 270 students at the all-male Pyongyang University of Science and Technology (PUST), a walled compound where portraits of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il look on impassively from the walls of every room, and where Suki has gone undercover as a missionary and a teacher.

### ***Legend, Marie Lu***

What was once the western United States is now home to the Republic, a nation perpetually at war with its neighbors. Born into an elite family in one of the Republic's wealthiest districts, fifteen-year-old June is a prodigy being groomed for success in the Republic's highest military circles. Born into the slums, fifteen-year-old Day is the country's most wanted criminal. But his motives may not be as malicious as they seem.

From very different worlds, June and Day have no reason to cross paths - until the day June's brother, Metias, is murdered and Day becomes the prime suspect. Caught in the ultimate game of cat and mouse, Day is in a race for his family's survival, while June seeks to avenge Metias's death. But in a shocking turn of events, the two uncover the truth of what has really brought them together, and the sinister lengths their country will go to keep its secrets. Full of nonstop action, suspense, and romance, this novel is sure to move readers as much as it thrills.

### ***The Silenced, James DeVita***

Marena struggles to remember the past: a time before the Zero Tolerance Party murdered her mother and put her father under house arrest. A time before they installed listening devices in every home and outlawed writing. A time when she was free. But it feels like the only thing the new, repressive government wants is to have Marena forget.

When the Minister of Education, Helmsley Greengrith, cracks down on Marena's youth training facility, she knows she has to fight back. In the spirit of her revolutionary mother, she forms her own resistance group—the White Rose. With nothing but words and a hunger for freedom, Marena fights for what she knows is right, only to discover the ZT Party's horrifying plans for the country. A thrilling story of resistance and the power of art, *The Silenced* draws upon the true story of Sophie Scholl and the White Rose group's resistance to the Nazi party.

### ***The Circle, Dave Eggers***

When Mae Holland is hired to work for the Circle, the world's most powerful internet company, she feels she's been given the opportunity of a lifetime. The Circle, run out of a sprawling California campus, links users' personal emails, social media, banking, and purchasing with their universal operating system, resulting in one online identity and a new age of civility and transparency.

As Mae tours the open-plan office spaces, the towering glass dining facilities, the cozy dorms for those who spend nights at work, she is thrilled with the company's modernity and activity. There are parties that last through the night, there are famous musicians playing on the lawn, there are athletic activities and clubs and brunches, and even an aquarium of rare fish retrieved from the Marianas Trench by the CEO. Mae can't believe her luck, her great fortune to work for the most influential company in the world—even as life beyond the campus grows distant, even as a strange encounter with a colleague leaves her shaken, even as her role at the Circle becomes increasingly public. What begins as the captivating story of one woman's ambition and idealism soon becomes a heart-racing novel of suspense, raising questions about memory, history, privacy, democracy, and the limits of human knowledge.