

**MERCYHURST PREPARATORY SCHOOL**  
**2010 SENIOR REQUIRED SUMMER READING PROGRAM**

Below is a list of books recommended by the faculty for the Mercyhurst Prep summer reading program. Students are **required** to read at least **two** selections from the list below if registered for college prep level and **three** selections if registered for honors level English courses. Parents are requested to monitor their son's or daughter's progress and sign the Summer Reading Verification form upon completion of the readings.\* Studies and the experience of the guidance staff have indicated a strong correlation between consistent reading habits and high verbal scores on college entrance exams such as the SAT.

**Black Boy** Wright Being a black boy in the thirties gave Richard Wright the fury to write this now-classic account of what hunger, fear, and hatred can do.

**Colors of the Mountain** Chen Rich with scenes of rural life in China at the time of Mao Tse Tung's Cultural Revolution, this memoir of a boyhood full of mischief and love is an exhilarating account of success in the face of adversity.

**The Alchemist** Paul Coelho Pure joy and enchantment are the best ways to describe Paul Coelho's mystical novel of a Spanish shepherd boy seeking his destiny. The marvelous tale of exotic adventure takes us from the countryside of Spain to the glittering oasis of the Egyptian desert and along the way we meet gypsies, old men, kings, warriors, desert-dwellers, and an alchemist, who describes Santiago's fate if he decides to settle for less than his dream.

**The Good Earth**, Pearl Buck Modern classic of life in China as revealed through the life of one peasant family.

**Lust for Life** Irving Stone This is a fictionalized biography of the Dutch painter, Vincent Van Gogh and is based primarily on Van Gogh's three volumes of letters to his brother, Theo. Van Gogh was a violent, clumsy and passionate man who was driven to the extremity of exhaustion by his fervor to get life -- the essence of it -- into paint. Irving Stone treats the artist with great compassion and gives us a portrait that is sympathetic but fair.

**Isaac's Storm**, Larson Larson tells the story of one man's heroic struggle and fatal miscalculation in the face of a storm of unimaginable magnitude -- the monster hurricane that submerged Houston, Texas. 323pp.

**Strapless: John Singer Sargent and the Fall of Madame X** Deborah Davis The story behind the famous portrait that rocked Parisian society in 1884.

**Where Rivers Change Direction** Mark Spragg Wyoming, land of wind and dust, of suicides and loneliness, of uninterrupted vistas stretching 20 miles in every direction, of hard-drinking men and fighting women, forms the backdrop to Spragg's brave and beautiful coming-of-age memoir.

**The Help** Kathryn Stockett What perfect timing for this optimistic, uplifting debut novel set during the nascent civil rights movement in Jackson, Miss., where black women were trusted to raise white children but not to polish the household silver. Eugenia Skeeter Phelan is just home from college in 1962, and, anxious to become a writer, is advised to hone her chops by writing about what disturbs her.

**Siddhartha** Herman Hesse This classic novel of self-discovery has inspired generations of seekers. With parallels to the enlightenment of the Buddha, it is the story of a young Brahmin's quest for the ultimate reality, taking him from the extremes of indulgent sensuality to the rigors of ascetism and self-denial. At last Siddhartha learns the wisdom cannot be taught, it must come from one's own experience and inner struggle.

**Light Thickens** Ngaio Marsh Just like the ambitious Macbeth, someone is planning an evil deed in this classic whodunit set during a run of William Shakespeare's Macbeth.

**Any novel by Patricia Cornwell**

**\*Verification sheets must be returned to homeroom teachers by September 10, 2010.**

**CHOOSE....READ....ENJOY!**