

MANHATTAN BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT – MIRA COSTA HIGH SCHOOL

**2009 SUMMER READING for INCOMING College Prep JUNIORS
(English 5-6 CP)**

- Please select ONE of the texts below and read it in its entirety before school starts in the fall.
- Be prepared to bring in a marked-up text and to write a paper analyzing the book during the first week of school.

• **A LESSON BEFORE DYING** by Ernest J. Gaines ISBN: 0375702709

Genre: Fiction

"From the author of *A Gathering of Old Men* and *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* comes a deep and compassionate novel. A young man who returns to 1940s Cajun country to teach visits a black youth on death row for a crime he didn't commit. Together they come to understand the heroism of resisting." (Barnesandnoble.com)

• **A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANY** by John Irving ISBN: 0345361792

Genre: Fiction

"Owen Meany, the only child of a New Hampshire granite quarrier, believes he is God's instrument; he is. This is John Irving's most comic novel, yet Owen Meany is Mr. Irving's most heartbreaking character." (Barnesandnoble.com)

• **BURRO GENIUS** by Victor Villaseñor ISBN: 0060526130

Genre: Non-Fiction

"Highly gifted and imaginative as a child, Victor Villaseñor coped with an untreated learning disability and the frustration of growing up Latino in an English-only American school in the 1940s. Despite teachers who beat him because he could not speak English, Villaseñor clung to his dream of one day becoming a writer. He is now considered one of the premier writers of our time." (Barnesandnoble.com)

• **THE HA-HA** by Dave King ISBN: 0641785208

Genre: Fiction

"A debut novel of extraordinary emotional power: When a mute war veteran opens his home to a young boy, he gets a glimpse of life outside his shell--with all its exuberant joys and crushing sorrows. By midsummer, their once-cold home is alive with the happiness, disappointment, and love of a real family. [Our veteran] is obliged to wonder if the change is only temporary--and to reconsider, in the process, just what the war cost him." (Barnesandnoble.com)

• **MY LOSING SEASON: A MEMOIR** by Pat Conroy ISBN: 0553381903

Genre: Non-Fiction

"So begins Pat Conroy's journey back to 1967 and his startling realization 'that this season had been seminal and easily the most consequential of my life.' The place is the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina, that now famous military college, and in memory Conroy gathers around him his team to relive their few triumphs and humiliating defeats. In a narrative that moves seamlessly between the action of the season and flashbacks into his childhood, we see the author's love of basketball and how crucial the role of athlete is to all these young men who are struggling to find their own identity and their place in the world." (Powells.com)

• **NATIVE SON** by Richard Wright ISBN: 006083756X*

Genre: Fiction

"Widely acclaimed as one of the finest books ever written on race and class divisions in America, this powerful novel reflects the forces of poverty, injustice, and hopelessness that continue to shape our society." (Barnesandnoble.com)

• **NATIVE SPEAKER** by Chang-Rae Lee ISBN: 1573225312

Genre: Fiction

"Narrator Henry Park, son of a Korean-American grocer, is an undercover operative for a vaguely sinister private intelligence agency. When he is assigned to spy on a rising Korean-American politician, Park finds his family, culture, and identity endangered by the secrets he uncovers. Swirled into the turbulent background of New York City politics and growing ethnic tensions, Park must come to terms with his American wife, Lelia, and the recent death of his young son while fighting an emotional attachment to the people he is investigating." (Barnesandnoble.com)

• **RICH IN LOVE** by Josephine Humphreys ISBN: 0140296107

Genre: Fiction

"At the age of seventeen, Lucille Odom finds herself in the middle of an unexpected domestic crisis. As she helps guide her family through its discontent, Lucille discovers in herself a woman rich in wisdom, rich in humor, and rich in love." (Barnesandnoble.com)

• **THAT NIGHT** by Alice McDermott ISBN: 0385333307

Genre:

"On a warm suburban night, the sound of lawn sprinklers is drowned out by the rumble of hot rods. Suddenly a car careens onto a family's neat front yard, teenage boys spill out brandishing chains and leather, and a young man cries out for the girl he loves. Tonight fathers will pick up snow shovels and rakes to defend their turf, and children will witness a battle fueled by fierce, true love. This is the night they will talk about and remember as the moment everything changed forever." (Barnesandnoble.com)

• THE TINY ONE by Eliza Minot ISBN: 037570633X

Genre: Fiction

"In *The Tiny One* Eliza Minot takes over what used to be her sister Susan's territory--just the way a younger sibling should. Territory in this case means a large, happy, Catholic family--the Reveres--that lives in Massachusetts, spends summers in Maine, and is lucky enough to have love to spare. All of this normality and stability, however, is changed by the death of Mrs. Revere--'Mum' as she is called throughout. What makes [*The Tiny One*] more than just another novel about a death in the family is the fact that it's written entirely from the perspective of the youngest Revere, Via." (Barnesandnoble.com)

• A WALK ACROSS AMERICA by Peter Jenkins ISBN: 006095955X

Genre: Non-Fiction

"Twenty-five years ago, a disillusioned young man set out on a walk across America. His experiences remain as sharp and telling today as they were twenty-five years ago -- from the timeless secrets of life, learned from a mountain-dwelling hermit, to the stir he caused by staying with a black family in North Carolina, to his hours of intense labor in Southern mills. This is the book he wrote about that journey-- a classic account of the reawakening of his faith in himself and his country." (Barnesandnoble.com)

** Attention Parents: This list represents a diversity of reading levels and interest areas. Some books, especially those published after 1960, may contain profanity and/or sexual material. Please work closely with your child to make the appropriate selections.*