9 Books To Help Jump-Start the Holidays

November is the month that kicks off the Holidays. There is Thanksgiving, family gatherings, parties to attend, decorating the halls, and lots of cooking to do. What about shopping and Black Friday (gasp!)? Skip the trip to the mall and try making some gifts this year. Your loved ones will love you even more, and you’ll save some cash. Let our list of books inspire you to get crafty. All books featured here are available for checkout.

Modern DIY Upholstery by Vicky Grubb
Upcycle an old chair with some fresh fabric. This step-by-step guide makes it easier than it sounds.

The Wreath Recipe by Alethea Harampolis
 Beautify your door! Create seasonal and decorative wreaths, wall-hangings, and centerpieces.

Handmade Personalized Photo Gifts by Carla Visser
Photography lovers can create over 75 projects with photo images on a variety of surfaces.

Making Artisan Chocolates by Andrew G. Shotts
Who doesn’t like chocolate? This colorful book features over forty types of gourmet, flavor-infused chocolates, truffles, and specialized confections.

Simply Handmade edited by Carol Field Dahlstrom
With 365 projects to choose from, you are sure to find something wonderful to make for your favorite person.

62 Projects To Make With A Dead Computer by Randy Sarafan
Repurpose old computers and other electronic devices into unique gifts.

Soap Crafting by Anne-Marie Faïola
Artisan soap makes a beautiful gift. With easy to follow instructions and splashy photographs, it seems easy to make your own.

Candles by Gloria Nicol
Make the gift of light! This guide features forty hands-on candlemaking projects.

DIY Solar Projects by Eric Smith
Give the gift of sustainable energy. There are a few ideas in this edition on how to make portable solar panels.
In a reading rut? Not too sure what to read next? Want to make reading a habit, but not sure where to start? Try our Fall Reading Challenge. From the list below, pick at least three categories. If you need help finding a book from your chosen category, stop by the library. The reading challenge ends January 2018.

1. A classic
2. Philosophy
3. Short stories
4. A series
5. A biography or autobiography
6. A romance
7. A mystery or detective novel
8. Poetry or prose
9. History (nonfiction) or historical fiction
10. Science fiction

11. An epic
12. Graphic novel
13. Folktales and fairy tales
14. Magical realism
15. Horror or gothic
16. Nonfiction book about a foreign country
17. Self-improvement
18. A magazine
19. A book that was written last year
20. Any book that was a best seller on your birthday

Have a suggestion for a reading challenge? Email Ms. Sopczak at bsopczak@stcharles.k12.la.us, or stop by the library

We have eBooks!
Stop by the library to learn how to access our ebook collection
**Eleanor and Park** is unlike most classic love stories, written by Rainbow Rowell. It takes place in the 1980's and is about two high schoolers, who, despite all of their problems, manage to find love in each other. This book is relatable, especially to the kids who might not be as “popular” as other people at their school and who might be seen as outcasts. This romance novel touches upon the topics of bullying, abuse, poverty, and gender roles. *Eleanor and Park* has so many levels to it and although this book is a mere 329 pages, Rowell manages to make it seem like 1,000. I would recommend this book to anyone who likes a love story that is not at all like the typical high school romance. It’s definitely an amazing book to read if you get a chance to. (Review by T. C.)

One of my favorite books of all time is **Heart of Darkness** by Joseph Conrad. It is a classic novel that takes place in an Imperialistic Belgian colony along the Congo River in Africa. While it is a rather short, it is dense. I have read it three times now, and I still did not catch all of the motifs, themes, and symbolism. That’s why I love it; it’s not a boring read once you figure out what it’s talking about. (Review by E. H.)

The story follows Liesel Meminger in Germany during World War II as an adopted orphan in Munich. The story follows the rest of her life as she learns about her passion for books and reading. My favorite aspect of the book is the narrator, who happens to be death itself. This adds an arresting perspective and interesting commentary to the story. I recommend this book if you would like an interesting take on the World War II genre. The different perspective provides an interesting story. (Review by D. M.)

**Watchmen**, written by Alan Moore is a dark, deep, gritty, philosophical take on the theme of super heroes. The plot revolves around figuring who murdered the main character. This murder is shown on the first page and foreshadows what is to come. My favorite part of the book is the flashback into the main character’s past. This is one of the many shocking moments that I enjoyed in this novel. I love this book and would recommend it if you are willing to be shocked or unsettled. (Review by E. D.)

**The Red Queen** takes place in the dystopian future. But it’s not your average corrupted-president-or-evil-warlord-in-charge-kind of a dystopian society. This story is ruled by a king and a queen—both who are corrupted but they are part of a monarch, not a “democracy.” The citizens are also split into two groups: Red Bloods and Silvers Bloods. The Reds are the commoners, nothing special. However, the Silvers all have specific abilities based on what family he or she belongs to. There is also a war going on, one that seems will never end. In this world is Mare Barrow. Her family is poor. Her eldest brothers are fighting in the war. She is part of a regular Red family, but she is nowhere near regular. Because of her family’s economic state, she has to go work at the castle as a servant. While there, she discovers something about herself that is unheard of as a Red. My favorite parts of this book all involve Cal and Mare, especially when they dance. I would absolutely recommend this book to everyone because this is the epitome of dystopian society novels. Readers RISE RED AS THE DAWN! (Review by I.T.)

**Red Queen** is a La.Teen Readers’ Choice book and is Book 1 in the *Red Queen* Series.
**Student Book Reviews**

*The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde was written in 1890. It is about a man named Dorian Gray who is overly obsessed with his looks and is afraid of growing old because he believes he will become ugly. Gray is so obsessed with his looks that he is willing to do almost anything to preserve his youth. My favorite part of this book is the reoccurring theme of the value of youth. Everyone should read this book because it has an intense plot that teaches you some valuable lessons. (Review by L.M.)

*Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs is a spine-tingling fantasy novel with chilling photos. The story is about Jacob journeying to a remote island off the coast of Wales where he discovers the remains of *Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children*. As Jacob explores throughout the home, it becomes clear that the children were more than just peculiar. One of the many things I love about the book is the pictures integrated into the novel, which gives this idea of realness to the text even though the story isn’t true. I recommend this story to anyone who likes the supernatural, or about finding yourself; this book does a good job at demonstrating that. (Review by M. C.)

You’re reading aloud to a younger sibling or to yourself, and all of a sudden a character from the book appears next to you. This is what happens in *Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke. Meggie Folchart’s father, Mo, can make characters appear from books just by reading aloud. He had done this when Meggie was a baby, making his wife and two cats disappear into the book and making three characters from the book appear in the real world. These characters take off because they think that Mo is a wizard and don’t bother him again until one night, ten years later. The next morning Mo announces that he and Meggie are going to her Aunt Elinor’s house to repair some books, and this is where the adventure starts: an adventure where plots are twisted and characters have more depth than you might think; an adventure that threatens Meggie’s family and entire existence.

I absolutely love this book. It started kinda slow, but towards the middle of the book, I was having a hard time putting it down. My favorite part about it is how well written it is, and that the characters are continually developing—so well that you feel like you’ve known them forever. (Review by M. F.)

Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief*
**Student Book Reviews**

The Bible is the best book in the world. It is filled with wisdom and miracles, but also consequences for the actions of people in it. It is the type of book to forever be studied. I recommend this book to everyone in the world or anyone with an open mind and willing to receive what it gives. (Review by B.T.)

*The Giver* by Lois Lowry is about a utopian society. Jonas, the protagonist, tries to rebel against it and journeys across his hometown in hope of finding some answers. My favorite part is when Jonas stands up for himself for the good of his society. This is a great book for anyone who loves futuristic novels. (Review by E. C.)

*To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. Set in the 1930s, a single father and his children face challenges and stand up for what they believe is right. The story is told through Scout, the main character, who learns about her mysterious neighbor, Arthur. I loved this book because it gives a good account of how life was in the 1930s. I think everyone should read it at least once. (Review by J. G.)

*City of Bones* (Book 1 of the Mortal Instrument series) by Cassandra Clare. A girl named Clary meets the Shadowhunters who kidnapped her mother. Clary now must devise a way to get her mother back. I recommend this book to anyone who likes fantasy and adventure. (Review by J. D.)

"Today is declared an unscheduled holiday." — Lois Lowry, *The Giver"

“Everything you’ve heard about monsters, about nightmares, legends whispered around campfires...all the stories are true.” — Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*
**Student Book Reviews**

*Wonder* by R.J. Palacio is about a boy named Auggie who was born with a facial deformity that has made it difficult for him to make friends. He has been homeschooled until the 5th grade. Once in a "real school" Auggie must overcome some of the challenges he faces for being different. Thanks to his sister, he learns to overcome many of the prejudices he faces. I recommend this book because it teaches a lesson about how it's okay to be different. (Review by A.R.)

*The Maze Runner* by James Dashner is the first novel in the series. Thomas finds himself waking up in an eerie box, soaking wet, with no memory except his name. A group of boys finds him when the box finishes its ascent toward a glade with four towering walls surrounding it. Thomas and the other "runners" must find a way out of the glade before the monster finds them. If the monster stings them, they will become infected. My favorite part of the book is when Thomas begins to run as soon as he escapes from the box, but instead of reaching the opening in the walls, he tumbles into the grass. Thomas's clumsy trait cause a downfall of chaos. He must work with the other runners if they are to survive. (Review by H. M.)

"no, no, it's not all random, if it really was all random, the universe would abandon us completely. and the universe doesn't. it takes care of its most fragile creations in ways we can't see."

*Wonder* by RJ Palacio

"Can't take a chance that one day, in one spot, somewhere, an exit might appear. We can't give up. Ever."

*The Maze Runner, James Dashner*
**The Accidental City** by Lawrence N. Powell is a very engaging history of New Orleans. The book starts with Bienville turning back British Forces (1690) and covers everything up to the Battle of New Orleans (1815). Powell is an excellent storyteller and brings to life the planning of the city and its growth under French and Spanish rule. He especially focuses on the way different cultures (European, Native American, African) combine to form the gumbo that the city is today. Anyone that enjoys history or wants to learn more about one of the most unique cities in the United States will love this book. (John Konevich, English) 
*Available for check-out from the HHS Library*

Neil Gaiman’s retelling of Norse mythical gods in his latest book **Norse Mythology** is an exciting new collection of the Norse gods, their stories, and the beginnings of the Nine Worlds. The book focuses on stories of Thor, Odin, and Loki (secretly one of my favorite bad guys). Fans of the Thor films and comic books and Rick Riordan alike will love this updated and easily readable version of Norse Mythology. (Holley Johnson, Librarian)

**Villette** by Charlotte Brontë, according to George Eliot, "...is a still more wonderful book than *Jane Eyre*. There is something almost preternatural in its power." I can’t agree completely with Eliot’s comment, for I adore *Jane Eyre*, but I back-up her comment about it being preternatural. Published in 1853, this was Brontë’s final novel. The story is considered autobiographical, reflecting an earlier time in the author's life when she worked as a governess in Belgium and fell in love with the unattainable. It also reflects Brontë’s isolation and loneliness after the deaths of her three siblings. The novel's protagonist, Lucy Snowe, flees from England to Villette after a family tragedy. The novel explores Lucy's mental landscape as she deals with her profound sadness while remaining fiercely independent and determined to find solace in a life filled with complications, none of which are her own doing. Lucy's wit, sarcasm, and humor are gutsy rays of sunshine dispersed throughout the novel. I recommend this book to anyone who loves a strong female character that lives beyond social constraints. (Belinda Sopczak, Librarian)
Off The Shelf

NEW ARRIVALS Nonfiction

**AMAZING FANTASTIC INCREDIBLE**
Stan Lee - A MARVELOUS MEMOIR

**CLOCKWORK FUTURES**
Brandy Schillace - The Science of Steampunk and the Illumination of the Modern World

**THE GLASS UNIVERSE**
Dava Sobel - How the Ladies of the Harvard Observatory Took the Measure of the Stars

**RISE OF THE ROCKET GIRLS**
Nathalia Holt - The Women Who Propelled Us, From Missiles to the Moon to Mars

**THE WAY THINGS WORK**
David Macaulay - From Levers to Lasers, Windmills to Whirls, A Visual Guide to the World of Machines

**The Family That Couldn’t Sleep**
D. T. Max

WE HAVE MORE NEW nonfiction BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR CHECK-OUT. VISIT THE HHS LIBRARY TO SEE THE COMPLETE LIST.

"Only the very weak-minded refuse to be influenced by literature and poetry."
~ Cassandra Clare
WRITING CONTESTS &
OTHER PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITIES

Young Authors Contest
Deadline:
December 11, 2017

Share The Dream
Essay Contest
Deadline:
December 1, 2017

V. O. Y. A. Essay Contest
If I were mayor of my town..
Deadline:
November 30, 2017

V.O.Y. A. Poetry Contest
Deadline:
December 15, 2017

For more information about the contests, please visit
the HHS Library webpage or email
bsopczak@stcharles.kl2.la.us

Public Library & Other Literary Events

Barnes & Noble has a full calendar of
events during the holiday season.
Educators have their own special
shopping day on December 2. Click
on the link below to see the full
calendar of events:

https://goo.gl/VxVt4p

You can also contact Holley Johnson
hjohnson@stcharles.kl2.la.us for
more info.

St. Charles Parish
Public Library

SCPPL Outreach will visit HHS
November 30 & December 14
during all three lunches!

SCPPL has a calendar
overflowing with activities. The
link below provides a full view
of what is offered.

https://goo.gl/0JB9EW
The Last Word

OFF THE SHELF
Hahnville High School Library
200 Tiger Drive
Boutte, La 70039
Phone: 985-758-7537

Librarians:
Belinda Sopczak
bsopczak@stcharles.k12.la.us

Holley Johnson
hjohnson1@stcharles.k12.la.us

Book Review Submissions

Have you read a book that is worthy of your praise? We need book reviews from our students, teachers, parents, and staff.

Please submit your stellar review to Belinda Sopczak at bsopczak@stcharles.k12.la.us.

You can also stop by the library!

If you no longer wish to be on our mailing list, we'll be sad to see you go!

Please email bsopczak@stcharles.k12.la.us
You will be promptly removed from the mailing list!