Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians:

We hope that you enjoy the December winter break and February ski week. Wherever you may be, it will be a great location to spend time continuing to develop your skills by reading at least one book. Attached you will find a list of suggested titles that you can enjoy during our winter breaks. This will help prevent “vacation slide” and keep your vocabulary and English language abilities growing during school recesses. As always, our goal is to develop your skills as lifelong readers and thinkers.

Continuous reading is an important part of maintaining--and enhancing--English skills. As you enjoy your time away from school, we encourage you to read as much as possible both in English and in other languages. As you read, consider themes of your books by asking yourself these questions:

- What problem did [character] want to solve?
- What did [character] do to solve the problem?
- What happened as a result?
- What did [character] learn?
- What does the author want me to learn?

If you are reading a more complex novel, pay close attention to deeper symbolism and subtext in the book. This includes literary techniques such as:

- Similes (ex. as busy as a bee)
- Metaphors (ex. He drowned in a sea of grief.)
- Personification (ex. a talking tree)
- Allusions (ex. Greek and Roman mythology, folktales, Bible, history, etc.)

These more advanced literary skills will be a topic of study in January as we begin reading a more symbolic novel called Animal Farm by George Orwell.

We hope that you will find a book that is both thought-provoking and enjoyable. The attached list of suggested books represents a variety of cultural issues, author perspectives, and a combination of classic and modern writing. This includes books awarded the Golden Cowbell by librarians from the Swiss Group of International Schools (SGIS). Additionally, some of the books address mature topics. Before you select a book, do a bit of research by visiting the school library or reading about the book online to make sure it is appropriate for you both in terms of content and vocabulary.

If you have any questions, please Email your English teacher. We look forward to hearing about your reading in January!

Sincerely,

English 8 Faculty
### Realistic Fiction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Lexile Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Long Way Down</em></td>
<td>Jason Reynolds</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>720L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Remembrance</em></td>
<td>Theresa Breslin</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>870L</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Bud, Not Buddy</em></td>
<td>Christopher Paul</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>950L</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Boy in the Striped Pajamas</em></td>
<td>John Boyne</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1080L</td>
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### Fantasy Fiction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Akata Witch</em></td>
<td>Nnedi Okorafor</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>590L</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Scythe</em></td>
<td>Neal Shusterman</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>830L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Marrow Thieves</em></td>
<td>Cherie Dimaline</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy</em></td>
<td>Douglas Adams</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1000L</td>
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</tbody>
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**Biography / Autobiography**
(Mature Topics)

**Kids of Kabul: Living Bravely Through Never-Ending War**, 2012
By Deborah Ellis
(800L)

**Taking Flight: From War Orphan to Star Ballerina**, 2014
By Michaela DePrince
(940L)

**Good-bye to All That**, 1929
By Robert Graves
(Adult)

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**Non-Fiction**

**Primates: The Fearless Science of Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, and Biruté Galdikas**, 2015
By Jim Ottaviani
(Graphic Novel)

**Terrible Typhoid Mary**, 2015
By Susan Campbell Bartoletti
(980L)

**Girl Rising: Changing the World One Girl at a Time**, 2017
By Tanya Lee Stone
(1050L)

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Librarians of the Swiss Group of International Schools (SGIS) annually award the **Golden Cowbell** as a means of promoting great literature and cross-cultural ties within the international school community of Switzerland.