



Reads

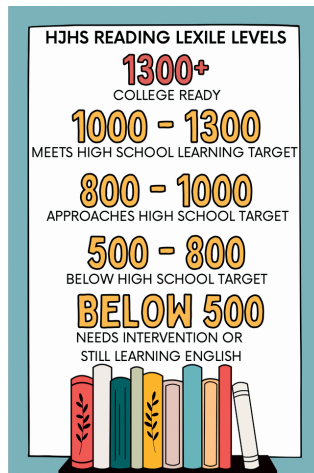
HJ STUDENTS READ DAILY

By now, your student should be coming to and from school with a book that they selected to read. Your student should have a book in their backpack inside of a gallon-sized plastic bag. Your student should also have a bookmark that states their goals for completing this book.

The most important decision your student can make to improve their academic skill is to read independently at least 30 minutes per day. Students read 10 minutes per day in their English classes, but we need your help to encourage your student to read at home for at least 20 minutes per day. You can help encourage your student by:

- Suggesting a quiet place and time that your student will be able to read, uninterrupted for at least 20 minutes
- Read at the same time as your student whenever possible
- Avoid using reading as a punishment or threat. Reading is so beneficial that focusing on the positive effects is much more effective than using it to punish students.
- Ask your student about the books they are reading. You may ask:
 - What is your book about?
 - Who are the main characters in your book? Which ones do you like or dislike?
 - What has been your favorite or the most interesting part of your book so far?

LEXILE SCREENING



Lexile screening is one way we determine students' reading levels. The Lexile screening helps students to understand their reading capabilities as well as chart their own growth as they commit to improving their reading. While a Lexile level may guide a student in their book selection, students are in no way limited by their Lexile levels when choosing books to read.

Every student at Hiram Johnson will take a Lexile screening assessment three times per year.

Students just took their first Lexile screening during the month of September and now should be aware of their score and how it relates to the reading demands in high school and beyond. Ask your student about their Lexile score!



SPOTLIGHT ON BANNED BOOK WEEK

October 1-7, 2023 is Banned Book Week, which celebrates the freedom to read. For decades, school districts have attempted to ban books for addressing topics like race, gender, sex, abuse, addiction, and mental health.

We want students and families to have the freedom to read books that address difficult topics and help them to build knowledge about the world and empathy for others. We encourage families to discuss what your student is reading to help them better understand the difficult topics that may appear in a book.



DO NOT READ BANNED BOOKS



The *Color Purple* documents the traumas and gradual triumph of Celie, an African American teenager raised in rural isolation in Georgia, as she comes to resist the paralyzing self-concept forced on her by others. Celie narrates her life through painfully honest letters to God.

Challenge reasons: Violence, sexual content, racial themes, drugs



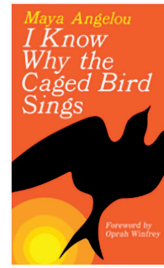
Invisible Man is the story of a young, college-educated black man struggling to survive and succeed in a racially divided society that refuses to see him as a human being.

Challenge reasons: Crude language, violence, sexual content



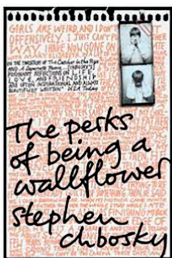
Amir, haunted by his betrayal of Hassan, the son of his father's servant and a childhood friend, returns to Kabul as an adult after he learns Hassan has been killed, in an attempt to redeem himself by rescuing Hassan's son from a life of slavery to a Taliban official.

Challenge reasons: Sexual content, LGBTQ content, religious content, crude language, violence



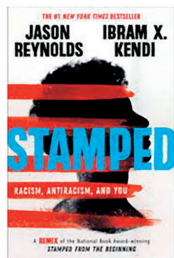
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings is a 1969 autobiography describing the young and early years of American writer and poet Maya Angelou. The first in a seven-volume series, it is a coming-of-age story that illustrates how strength of character and a love of literature can help overcome racism and trauma.

Challenge reasons: Sexual content, rape, LGBTQ content, anti-white sentiment



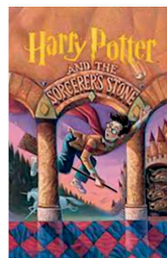
Charlie, a freshman in high school, explores the dilemmas of growing up through a collection of letters he sends to an unknown receiver.

Challenge reasons: LGBTQ content, crude language, sexual content, abuse, drugs, tobacco, alcohol, abortion



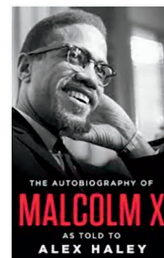
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You recounts the history of racist and antiracist ideas in America, from their roots in Europe until today. Adapted from National Book Award winner *Stamped from the Beginning*.

Challenge reasons: anti-white sentiment, political viewpoint



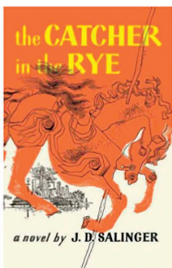
Rescued from the outrageous neglect of his aunt and uncle, a young boy with a great destiny proves his worth while attending Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Challenge reasons: Poor grammar, poor social values



In the searing pages of this classic autobiography, Malcolm X, firebrand, and anti-integrationist, tells the extraordinary story of his life and the growth of the Black Muslim movement. His fascinating perspective on the lies and limitations of the American Dream, and the inherent racism in a society, gives extraordinary insight into the most urgent issues of our own time.

Challenge reasons: Promoting criminal activity, anti-white sentiment, political viewpoint



The novel details two days in the life of 16-year-old Holden Caulfield after he has been expelled from prep school. Confused and disillusioned, Holden searches for truth and rails against the "phoniness" of the adult world.

Challenge reasons: Sexual content, crude language, violence



Starr moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The balance between these worlds is shattered when she witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline.

Challenge reasons: Crude language, anti-police views



This graphic novel tells about the Polish Jews and Holocaust by the German Nazis. Representing people are mice and each novel tells part of the story.

Challenge reasons: Profanity, nudity, violence



When high school student Clay Jenkins receives a box in the mail containing thirteen cassette tapes recorded by his classmate Hannah, who committed suicide, he spends a bewildering and heartbreaking night cross-referencing their town, listening to Hannah's voice recounting the events leading up to her death.

Challenge reasons: Suicide, sexual content, drugs, tobacco, alcohol



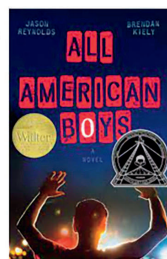
An African-American woman searches for a fulfilling relationship through two loveless marriages and finally finds it in the person of Tea Cake, an itinerant laborer and gambler.

Challenge reasons: Sexual content, crude language, murder



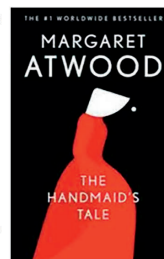
Seventeen-year-old Greg has managed to become part of every social group at his Pittsburgh high school without having any friends, but his life changes when his mother forces him to befriend Rachel, a girl he once knew in Hebrew school who has leukemia.

Challenge reasons: Sexual content, crude language



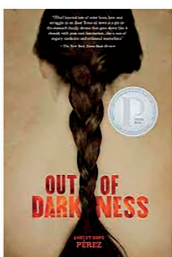
When sixteen-year-old Rashad is mistakenly accused of stealing, classmate Quinn witnesses his brutal beating at the hands of a police officer who happens to be the older brother of his best friend. Told through Rashad and Quinn's alternating viewpoints.

Challenge reasons: Profanity, drug and alcohol use, anti-police views



In the Republic of Gilead, a Handmaid named Offred lives in the home of the Commander, to the purpose that she become pregnant with his child. Offred remembers a different time, not so long ago, when she was valuable for more than her viable ovaries and she and her husband lived and loved as equals.

Challenge reasons: Sexuality, profanity, suicide, violence, anti-Christian themes



Loosely based on a school explosion that took place in New London, Texas, in 1937, this is the story of two teenagers: Naomi, who is Mexican, and Wash, who is black, and their dealings with race, segregation, love, and the forces that destroy people.

Challenge reasons: Sexual content



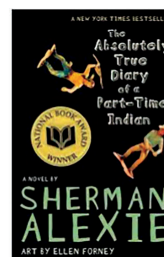
Scout Finch, the young daughter of a local attorney in the Deep South during the 1930s, tells of her father's defense of a Black man charged with the rape of a White girl.

Challenge reasons: Crude language, racial themes and slurs



Six teens tell what it is like for them to be members of the transgender community.

Challenge reasons: LGBTQ+ content



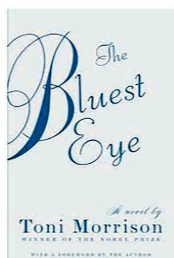
Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

Challenge reasons: Alcohol, bullying, violence, sexual references, crude language, racial slurs, sexual content, anti-Christian themes



A traumatic event near the end of the summer has a devastating effect on Melinda's freshman year in high school.

Challenge reasons: Profanity, rape, political viewpoints



An eleven-year old African-American girl in Ohio, in the early 1940s, prays for her eyes to turn blue so that she will be beautiful.

Challenge reasons: Profanity, sexual content, abuse, violence



In 19th century Chicago, a young black man works with his father to provide labor and service to a rich white family. When a father's advice proves useless, young people follow their own road. This is a story of the gruesome road.

Challenge reasons: Crude language, sex, violence



Rose and her parents go on vacation to Awago Beach like they do every year, but this year Rose's mom and dad won't stop fighting and she turns to her friend Windy for help dealing with her troubled family life.

Challenge reasons: Profanity, sexual content