

HAISLN RECOMMENDED READING LIST 2025
Grade 9 and Grade 10

All book summaries are provided by the publisher or written by committee members.

Any available unabridged edition of a title is acceptable.

- Abawi, Atia. ***A Land of Permanent Goodbyes***. Penguin, 2019. After their home in Syria is bombed, Tareq, his father, and his younger sister seek refuge, first with extended family in Raqqa and then abroad. *Realistic fiction*
- Adeyemi, Tomi. ***Children of Blood and Bone***. Holt, 2018. Seventeen-year-old Zolie, her older brother Tzain, and rogue princess Amari fight to restore magic to the land and activate a new generation of magi, but they are ruthlessly pursued by the crown prince, who believes the return of magic will mean the end of the monarchy. *Fantasy, Series*
- Ahdieh, Renée. ***Flame in the Mist***. Putnam's, 2017. While journeying to meet her betrothed, the son of the emperor's favorite consort, Mariko barely escapes a sudden and shocking assassination attempt. Disguising herself as a boy, Mariko sets out to discover who tried to kill her and why. Once accepted into the notorious Black Clan, however, Mariko finds herself appreciated and respected for her intellect and alchemical abilities, leading her to question everything she's ever known about her family and destiny. *Fantasy, Series*
- Barnes, Jennifer. ***The Inheritance Games***. Little, Brown, 2020. Avery Grambs' fortunes change instantly when billionaire Tobias Hawthorne dies and leaves Avery virtually his entire fortune, but Avery has no idea why -- or even who Tobias Hawthorne is. *Mystery, Series*
- Biles, Simone, with Michelle Burford. ***Courage to Soar: A Body in Motion, A Life in Balance***. Zondervan, 2016. Olympic gold medalist Simone Biles describes how she overcame early difficulties through the help of her family and God to realize her dream of becoming an elite gymnast. *Nonfiction*
- Brody, Jessica. ***The Chaos of Standing Still***. Simon Pulse, 2017. Ryn, eighteen, trapped by a massive blizzard in the Denver airport, meets some unique characters who help her cope with survivor's guilt on the first anniversary of her best friend's death. *Realistic fiction*
- Chokshi, Roshani. ***The Gilded Wolves***. Wednesday Books, 2019. Paris, 1889: In this city, no one keeps tabs on secrets better than treasure hunter and wealthy hotelier, Séverin Montagnet-Alarie. But when the all-powerful society, the Order of Babel, seeks him out for help, Séverin is offered a treasure that he never imagined: his true inheritance. *Fantasy, Series*
- Crews, James, ed. ***How to Love the World: Poems of Gratitude and Hope***. Storey, 2021. This poetry collection invites you to be still for a moment and reflect on the beauty and joy found no matter what is going on in your life. *Poetry*
- Crouch, Blake. ***Recursion: A Novel***. Crown, 2019. When investigating a suicide, New York City police officer Barry Sutton discovers an outbreak of a memory-altering disease caused by a new technology created to preserve treasured memories. *Science fiction*
- Crowley, Cath. ***Words in Deep Blue***. Alfred A. Knopf, 2016. Rachel and her brother always loved the ocean, but after he drowns, she cannot bear to be around it. She returns to the city and finds a job working in a bookstore whose part-owner is a young man she had a crush on years before. The job, school, friends, and emotional ups and downs lead Rachel to heal. *Realistic fiction*

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- Dass, Sarah. *Where the Rhythm Takes You*. Balzer + Bray, 2021. Set in Trinidad and Tobago and loosely based on Jane Austen's *Persuasion*, it is a story about second-chance love, loss, and finding one's way. *Romance*
- Dayton, Arwen Elys. *Stronger, Faster, and More Beautiful*. Delacorte, 2018. Six interconnected stories in near-future and far-future settings explore how far humans will go to stand out while continuing to fit in on the path to perfection. *Science fiction*
- Doty, James R. *Into the Magic Shop: A Neurosurgeon's Quest to Discover the Mysteries of the Brain and the Secrets of the Heart*. Penguin, 2016. James Doty, a distinguished neurosurgeon, reflects on his impoverished childhood, his alcoholic father, and his career in medicine to show readers how it is fundamentally possible to change the thinking patterns in one's brain. *Nonfiction*
- Ewing, Eve L. *Electric Arches*. Haymarket, 2017. A visually explosive collection of poetry and narrative prose that explores black girlhood and womanhood. *Alex Award 2018, poetry*
- Forna, Namina. *The Gilded Ones*. Delacorte 2021. When sixteen-year-old Deka undergoes the Ritual of Purity, everything goes disastrously wrong as her blood runs gold—the mark of impurity. Forced to choose between certain death or joining the emperor's army of elite alaki warriors, who defend the empire from the terrifying death shrieks, Deka soon discovers that nothing is as it appears. *Fantasy, Series*
- Garber, Stephanie. *Once upon a Broken Heart*. Flatiron Books, 2021. Desperate to stop her beloved from marrying another, sixteen-year-old Evangeline Fox strikes a deal with the mythic Prince of Hearts, leading her down a dangerous path that may ultimately end in her destruction. *Fantasy, Series*
- Gervais, Alison. *The Silence Between Us*. Blink, 2019. Deaf teen Maya Harris must navigate a new life and love in this #Own Voices novel. When Maya is forced to attend a hearing school, she sets out to prove that her lack of hearing will not stop her from chasing her dreams. *Realistic fiction*
- Grace, Adalyn. *All the Stars and Teeth*. Imprint, 2020. Princess Amora Montara has spent her entire life training to be High Animancer—the master of souls. To secure her place as heir to the throne, she must prove her mastery of the monarchy's dangerous soul magic. She strikes a deal with Bastian, a mysterious pirate: he'll help her prove she's fit to rule if she'll help him reclaim his stolen magic. But sailing the kingdom holds more wonder—and more peril—than Amora anticipated. *Fantasy*
- Gray, Ayana. *Beasts of Prey*. Putnam's, 2021. Sixteen-year-old indentured Beastkeeper Koffi and seventeen-year-old warrior candidate Ekon forge an unusual alliance and venture into the Greater Jungle to hunt down a monster that has been menacing their city for a century. *Fantasy, Series*
- Grolleau, Fabien. *Audubon: On the Wings of the World*. Nobrow, 2017. In the early 1800s, John James Audubon, an ornithologist, traversed America studying birds. Despite challenging weather and wildlife along the way, he persevered to create beautiful illustrations still admired today. *Graphic novel*
- Harrow, Alix E. *The Ten Thousand Doors of January*. Orbit, 2019. A young woman embarks on a fantastical journey of self-discovery with the help of a mysterious book, good friends, and a bad dog. *Fantasy, historical fiction*

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- Hesse, Monica. *The Girl in the Blue Coat*. Little, Brown, 2016. In 1943 Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, teenage Hanneke--a 'finder' of black-market goods--is tasked with finding a Jewish girl who has seemingly vanished into thin air, and she is pulled into a web of resistance activities and secrets as she attempts to solve the mystery and save the missing girl. *Historical fiction*
- Hitchcock, Bonnie-Sue. *The Smell of Other People's Houses*. Wendy Lamb, 2016. In quite possibly the best-titled novel in recent years, this redemptive coming-of-age story is told by four unique teen voices living in 1970s Alaska. *Historical fiction*
- Hunter, C. C. *This Heart of Mine: A Novel*. Wednesday Books, 2018. After a heart transplant, seventeen year-old Leah is plagued with dreams of the donor's suicide . . . or was it murder? Leah sets out to unravel the secret with the help of the donor's twin brother. *Realistic fiction*
- Katz, Jon. *Saving Simon: How a Rescue Donkey Taught Me the Meaning of Compassion*. Random House, 2015. In this heartfelt, thoughtful, and inspiring memoir, the author tells the story of his beloved rescue donkey, Simon, and the wondrous ways that animals make us wiser and kinder people. *Nonfiction*
- Klune, T.J. *The House in the Cerulean Sea*. Tor Books, 2020. A magical island. A dangerous task. A burning secret. Linus Baker lives in a tiny house with a devious cat and his old records. As a Case Worker at the Department in Charge of Magical Youth, he spends his days overseeing the well being of children in orphanages. He is unexpectedly given a curious and highly classified assignment: travel to Marsyas Island Orphanage, where six dangerous children reside. *Alex Award 2021, fantasy*
- Kooser, Ted. *Delights & Shadows: Poems*. Copper Canyon Press, 2004. This collection of poems by a former Poet Laureate of the United States describes the habits and struggles of daily life. *Winner Pulitzer Prize for Poetry 2005, poetry*
- Krosoczka, Jarrett. *Hey, Kiddo*. Graphix, 2018. In his deeply personal graphic novel memoir, Krosoczka illustrates the devastating impact his mother's addiction had on his childhood and how his supportive grandparents and his love of art ultimately saved his life. *Harvey Award, Black-Eyed Susan Award, graphic novel*
- Lee, Stacey. *The Downstairs Girl*. Putnam's, 2019. Set in 1890, seventeen-year-old Jo Kuan serves as a lady's maid to the harsh Caroline Payne, the daughter of one of Atlanta's wealthiest men. In secret, she writes an advice column for high-society women under the pen name "Miss Sweetie." *Historical fiction*
- Lim, Elizabeth. *Six Crimson Cranes*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2021. The exiled Princess Shiori must unravel the curse that turned her six brothers into cranes. She is assisted by her spurned betrothed, a capricious dragon, and a paper bird brought to life by her own magic. *Fantasy*
- Limón, Ada. *The Hurting Kind: Poems*. Milkweed Editions, 2022. Beautiful, simple language brings to life profound thoughts about life and our connections to self, others, and the world of nature we live within. *Poetry*

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- Little Badger, Darcie. *A Snake Falls to Earth*. Levine Querido, 2021. Fifteen-year-olds Nina and Oli come from different worlds--she is a Lipan Apache living in Texas, and he is a cottonmouth from the Reflecting World--but their lives intersect when Oli journeys to Earth to find a cure for his ailing friend, and they end up helping each other save their families. *Newbery Honor Book 2022, fantasy*
- Lucier, Makiia. *Dragonfruit*. Clarion, 2024. Exiled after her father steals a legendary seadragon egg, Hanalei returns home years later, crossing paths with Prince Sam, who seeks a cure for his ailing mother. As they battle enemies and search for redemption, they discover the greatest danger may be the dragonfruit itself. *Fantasy*
- Marquis, Kristen. *The Davenports*. Dial Books, 2023. The Davenports are one of the few Black families of immense wealth and status in 1910 Chicago, and the two daughters, Olivia and Helen, are finding their way and finding love--even where they are not supposed to. *Historical fiction*
- McGee, Katharine. *American Royals*. Random House, 2019. An exciting glimpse into a speculative future where the heirs of George Washington reign in a court filled with intrigue, drama, and romance. *Romance, Series*
- McNamee, Graham. *Defender*. Wendy Lamb, 2016. Seventeen-year-old Tyne and her boyfriend Stick investigate a decades-old murder after she finds the body of a girl in the basement wall of her apartment building. *Mystery*
- McStay, Moriah. *Everything That Makes You*. Katherine Tegen, 2015. In alternating voices, Fiona "Fi" Doyle experiences her teen years in two ways, with and without a disfiguring accident that occurred at the age of six. Fiona deals with its effects on her brother and parents, her friendships, her dating life, her involvement in sports and hobbies, her plans, and especially her self-image. *Realistic fiction*
- McWilliams, Kelly. *Mirror Girls*. Little, Brown, 2022. Biracial twin girls are separated at birth, one is white-passing. They reunite as teenagers in the 1950s in the state of Georgia and must navigate the horrors and ghosts of the past to end the family curse. *Historical fiction*
- Menon, Sandhya. *When Dimple Met Rishi*. Simon Pulse, 2017. When Dimple Shah and Rishi Patel meet at a Stanford University summer program, Dimple is avoiding her parents' obsession with "marriage prospects," but Rishi hopes to woo her into accepting an arranged marriage with him. *Realistic fiction*
- Meyer, Marissa. *Gilded*. Feiwel and Friends, 2021. After saving two magical maidens from the hellhounds of Erlking, Serilda, a poor miller's daughter with a talent for storytelling, is abducted by the demon and whisked away to his castle where she is ordered to spin straw into gold, which she cannot do until a mysterious young man offers to help for a price. *Fantasy, Series*
- Montgomery, Sy. *The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness*. Atria Books, 2015. Explores the emotional and physical world of the octopus a surprisingly complex, intelligent, and spirited creature -- and the remarkable connections it makes with humans, revealing what octopuses can teach us about consciousness. *Nonfiction*
- Moulite, Maika, and Maritza Moulite. *Dear Haiti, Love Elaine*. Inkyard Press, 2019. After an incident at school, seventeen-year-old Elaine is spending spring break in a "volunteer immersion project," toiling away under the ever-watchful eyes of Tati Estelle and her eagle-eyed mother at a new nonprofit in Haiti. *Realistic fiction*

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- Nazemian, Abdi. *The Authentics*. HarperCollins, 2017. Daria, an Iranian-American teenager, is tired of the sameness of the school cliques, so she and her friends form the Authentics because they are unique and real. When a school project forces her to trace her family roots, unexpected secrets emerge. *Realistic fiction*
- Otis, Cindy L. *True or False: A CIA Analyst's Guide to Spotting Fake News*. Feiwel and Friends 2020. In *True or False*, former CIA analyst Cindy Otis takes readers through the history and impact of fake news over the centuries, sharing stories from the past and insights that readers today can gain from them. *Nonfiction*
- Pandian, Gigi. *Under Lock & Skeleton Key*. Minotaur, 2022. Following an accident, Tempest Raj returns home seeking the comfort and familiarity of family. While visiting a project for her family's renovation business, the body of Tempest's former stage double is discovered. Believing she was the intended target, Tempest is determined to unravel the mystery of this unsolvable crime. *Mystery, Series*
- Padian, Maria. *How to Build a Heart*. Algonquin, 2020. When Izzy Crawford's father, a marine, dies in Iraq, her family moves to Virginia where she attends a private school on a scholarship. Fortunately, her family is selected for a new home by Habitat for Humanity, near where the very attractive Sam lives. Izzy grapples with accepting this new opportunity without leaving behind her old neighbor and best friend just when she's needed most. *Realistic fiction*
- Park, Patricia. *What's Eating Jackie Oh?* Crown, 2024. A Korean American teen defies her family's cultural expectations and immerses herself in the competitive cooking world. Read along for a story set in NYC with a feast of tv drama and side of domestic discoveries. *Realistic fiction*
- Perkins, Mitali, ed. *Open Mic: Riffs on Life Between Cultures in Ten Voices*. Candlewick, 2013. Using a mix of diverse styles and perspectives, ten authors of non-Caucasian backgrounds share their personal views on how race and discrimination affect children and teenagers. *Short story collection*
- Pessl, Marisha. *Darkly*. Delacorte, 2024. "Dia" Gannon has long admired Louisiana Veda, the genius behind Darkly, a game company with a loyal fanbase. So when Dia is unexpectedly selected for a highly competitive internship alongside six other teens from around the world, she's taken aback. She has never been the type of person who wins anything. Could it be too good to be true? *Mystery*
- Raasch, Sara. *Snow Like Ashes*. Balzar + Bray, 2014. Sixteen years ago, the Kingdom of Winter was attacked by King Angra from the Kingdom of Spring. Most of the Winterians were killed or enslaved. Meira and a group of Winterians journey to find the magical conduit that will restore their Kingdom, not realizing that she is the key to their future. *Fantasy, Series*
- Revis, Beth. *A World Without You*. Penguin, 2016. Seventeen-year-old Bo knows that he can time travel. His parents send him to a special school where he meets and falls in love with Sofia, a tragic, quiet girl. Is this school for troubled teens or for those with superpowers? *Realistic fiction, Series*
- Reynolds, Jason. *Ain't Burned All the Bright*. Atheneum, 2022. A smash-up of Jason Reynold's poetry and Jason Griffin's art that reflects upon our need for oxygen and what it means to breathe post pandemic. *Caldecott Honor Book 2023, Poetry and Art*

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- Reynolds, Justin A. *Opposite of Always*. Katherine Tegen, 2019. Jack King, a high school senior, is determined to save Kate, a girl he fell hard for at a party, even though he is caught in a time loop wherein she dies, and he wakes up the moment they first met. *Realistic fiction*
- Roat, Sharon Huss. *How to Disappear*. HarperTeen, 2017. When Vicki's best friend moves away, she is consumed by loneliness and anxiety until, on a whim, she invents an Instagram account that forces her out of the shadows. *Realistic fiction*
- Saedi, Sara. *Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2018. In this memoir set in the 1990s, teenage Sara keeps a diary of life as an Iranian American and her discovery that she and her family entered the United States as undocumented immigrants. *Nonfiction*
- Sedoti, Chelsea. *The Hundred Lies of Lizzie Lovett*. Sourcebooks, 2017. Seventeen-year-old Hawthorn, an endearing and awkward loner, becomes obsessed with the mysterious disappearance of the beautiful and popular Lizzie Lovett. *Mystery*
- Sepetys, Ruta. *The Fountains of Silence*. Philomel, 2019. At the Castellana Hilton in 1957 Madrid, eighteen-year-old Daniel Matheson connects with Ana Moreno through photography - and fate as Daniel discovers the incredibly dark side of the city under Generalissimo Franco's rule. *Historical fiction*
- Sharma, Nisha. *Radha & Jai's Recipe for Romance*. Crown, 2021. While attending the Princeton Academy of the Arts, dancer Radha is determined to invent herself from scratch and, after much convincing, helps Jai, the captain of the Bollywood Beats dance team, have a show-stopping senior year. *Realistic fiction*
- Shepherd, Peng. *The Cartographers*. William Morrow, 2022. When Nell's father is found dead in the New York Public Library, she sets out on a dangerous journey to uncover dark family secrets with the help of a mysterious, magical map. *Thriller, magical realism*
- Shusterman, Neal. *Scythe*. Simon & Schuster, 2016. In a Utopian world where there is no war, no unhappiness, and the creation of nanites has eliminated death, overpopulation is the only challenge facing the world. Scythes have been given the power to selectively kill or "glean" the population to keep growth in check. Rowan and Ciria, the newly selected apprentice scythes, internally struggle with "gleaning" and find that the world is no utopia. *Science fiction, Series*
- Smith, Colby Cedar. *Call Me Athena: Girl from Detroit*. Andrews McMeel, 2021. This enchanting novel in verse captures one woman's struggle for equality, independence, and identity as a Greek immigrant in troubled 1930s America. *Historical fiction, novel in verse*
- Stevenson, Noelle. *Nimona*. HarperTeen, 2015. Nimona, a young shapeshifter with a knack for villainy, and Lord Ballister Blackheart, a villain with a vendetta, set out to prove that Sir Ambrosius Goldenloin and his friends are not the heroes everyone thinks they are. But Lord Blackheart soon realizes that Nimona's powers are as murky and mysterious as her past, and her unpredictable wild side might be more dangerous than he is willing to admit. *Eisner Award for Best Graphic Album 2016, graphic novel*
- Stone, Nic. *Dear Martin*. Crown, 2017. Writing letters to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., seventeen year-old college-bound Justyce McAllister struggles to face the reality of race relations today and how they are shaping him. *William C. Morris Award Finalist, realistic fiction, Series*

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- Suma, Nova Ren. *The Walls Around Us*. Algonquin, 2015. Orianna and Violet are ballet dancers and best friends, but when the ballerinas who have been harassing Violet are murdered, Orianna is accused of the crime and sent to a juvenile detention center, where she meets Amber, and they experience supernatural events linking the girls together. *Magical realism, mystery*
- Takei, George. *They Called Us Enemy*. Top Shelf Productions, 2019. Actor George Takei, best known for his role as Hikaru Sulu on *Star Trek*, reveals how at the age of five his family was forced into Japanese-American internment camps after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. *Asian/Pacific American Award for Young Adult Literature 2020, graphic memoir*
- Tamani, Liara. *All the Things We Never Knew*. Greenwillow, 2020. Carli and Rex have an immediate connection and an understanding that must mean first love, but family secrets, disappointments and basketball, which holds center stage in both their lives--all create complications. *Realistic fiction*
- Taylor, Laini. *Strange the Dreamer*. Little, Brown, 2017. In the aftermath of a war between gods and men, a hero, a librarian, and a girl must battle the fantastical elements of a mysterious city stripped of its name. *Fantasy, Series*
- West, Jacqueline. *Last Things*. Greenwillow, 2019. Anders Thorson, frontman of his metal band, Last Things, is unusually gifted, but strange things in the Minnesota woods near his hometown are threatening him, and then Thea, the new girl in town, shows up to protect him. *Horror, fantasy*
- Yang, Gene Luen. *Dragon Hoops*. First Second, 2020. At the high school where Gene now teaches, the men's varsity basketball team, the Dragons, is having a phenomenal season that's been decades in the making. Each victory brings them closer to their ultimate goal: the California State Championships. Once Gene gets to know these young all-stars, he realizes that their story is just as thrilling as anything he's seen on a comic book page. *Graphic novel*
- Yang, Gene Luen. *Superman Smashes the Klan*. D.C. Comics, 2020. When Dr. Lee moves his family to Metropolis, his son Tommy adjusts to the new neighborhood while daughter Roberta feels out of place, so when the evil Klan of the Fiery Cross begins a string of terrorist attacks on the city, Superman fights them, and Roberta and Tommy soon learn to embrace the unique features that set them apart. *Graphic novel*
- Yoon, Nicola. *Instructions for Dancing*. Delacorte, 2021. After picking up a book from the library, Evie, who has given up on love--gains the ability to see how other people's romantic relationships will end. *Realistic fiction, romance*
- Zentner, Jeff. *In the Wild Light*. Crown, 2021. Attending an elite prep school in Connecticut on scholarship with his best friend from their small town in East Tennessee, (and secret love) science genius Delaney Doyle, sixteen-year-old Cash Pruitt, deals with emotional pain and loss by writing poetry. *Realistic fiction*
- Zoboi, Ibi, and Yusef Salaam. *Punching the Air*. HarperCollins, 2020. Amal Shahid has always been an artist and a poet. But even in a diverse art school, he's seen as disruptive and unmotivated because of a biased system. Then, one fateful night, an altercation in a gentrifying neighborhood escalates into tragedy. "Boys just being boys" turns out to be true only when those boys are white. *Walter Award, Novel in verse*

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