English 9 Summer Reading 2019: Young Adult Dystopian Novels

As the English 9 teaching team, we have developed a summer reading assignment that prioritizes student choice and engagement and exposes you to some of the central themes we will explore in our classes throughout the year. All rising ninth grade students are required to read one YA dystopian novel over the summer. You will need your book for the first couple weeks of school, so we highly recommend that you buy your own copy so that you can highlight and write notes in the text as you read. As you are reading, you should annotate for characterization and theme in addition to considering how this novel offers relevant criticism in the society in which we currently live.

While we have selected these books because of their literary merit and thematic connections, we also invite you to expand beyond this list if you find a different dystopian book. We also encourage you to do some research before selecting the books you will read this summer. For guidance and information on book selection, visit www.commonsensemedia.org, www.goodreads.com, or email the English Department Chair, Lisa Beskenis, at ltbeskenis@fcps.edu.

*Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline

In the year 2045, reality is an ugly place. The only time teenage Wade Watts really feels alive is when he’s jacked into the virtual utopia known as the OASIS. Wade’s devoted his life to studying the puzzles hidden within this world’s digital confines—puzzles that are based on their creator’s obsession with the pop culture of decades past and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them.

But when Wade stumbles upon the first clue, he finds himself beset by players willing to kill to take this ultimate prize. The race is on, and if Wade’s going to survive, he’ll have to win—and confront the real world he’s always been so desperate to escape.

*Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld

In Tally Youngblood’s world, looks matter. She lives in a society created to function with perfect-looking people who never have a chance to think for themselves. And she’s tired of it. First as an ugly, then a pretty, and finally a special, Tally takes down the social infrastructure. And then, a generation later, a world obsessed with fame and instant celebrity—and filled with extras—will reap the consequences.
The Feed by Nick Clark Windo

The Feed is accessible everywhere, by everyone, at any time. It instantaneously links us to all information and global events as they break. Every interaction, every emotion, every image can be shared through it; it is the essential tool everyone relies on to know and understand the thoughts and feelings of partners, parents, friends, children, colleagues, bosses, employees . . . in fact, of anyone and everyone else in the world.

Tom and Kate use the Feed, but Tom has resisted its addiction, which makes him suspect to his family. After all, his father created it. But that opposition to constant connection serves Tom and Kate well when the Feed collapses after a horrific tragedy shatters the world as they know it. The Feed’s collapse, taking modern society with it, leaves people scavenging to survive. Finding food is truly a matter of life and death. Minor ailments, previously treatable, now kill. And while the collapse has demolished the trappings of the modern world, it has also eroded trust. In a world where survival of the fittest is a way of life, there is no one to depend upon except yourself . . . and maybe even that is no longer true.

Feed by M.T. Anderson

In a future where most people have computer implants in their heads to control their environment, a boy meets an unusual girl who is in serious trouble.

Unwind by Neal Shusterman

In futuristic America, between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, a parent may choose to retroactively get rid of a child through a process called "unwinding." Unwinding ensures that the child’s life doesn’t “technically” end by transplanting all the organs in the child's body to various recipients. Now a common and accepted practice in society, troublesome or unwanted teens are able to easily be unwound. With breathtaking suspense, this book follows three teens who all become runaway Unwinds: Connor, a rebel whose parents have ordered his unwinding; Risa, a ward of the state who is to be unwound due to cost-cutting; and Lev, his parents' tenth child whose unwinding has been planned since birth as a religious tithing. As their paths intersect and lives hang in the balance, Shusterman examines serious moral issues in a way that will keep readers turning the pages to see if Connor, Risa, and Lev avoid meeting their untimely ends.
**Matched** by Ally Condie

For Cassia, nothing is left to chance--not what she will eat, the job she will have, or the man she will marry. In Matched, the Society Officials have determined optimal outcomes for all aspects of daily life, thereby removing the "burden" of choice. When Cassia's best friend is identified as her ideal marriage Match it confirms her belief that Society knows best, until she plugs in her Match microchip and a different boy's face flashes on the screen. This improbable mistake sets Cassia on a dangerous path to the unthinkable--rebelling against the predetermined life Society has in store for her. As author Ally Condie's unique dystopian Society takes chilling measures to maintain the status quo, *Matched* reminds readers that freedom of choice is precious, and not without sacrifice.

**Under the Never Sky** by Veronica Rossi

Fighting to survive in a ravaged world, a Dweller and a Savage form an unlikely alliance in *New York Times* bestselling author Veronica Rossi's "unforgettable dystopian masterpiece" ([Examiner.com](http://www.examiner.com)).

Exiled from her home, the enclosed city of Reverie, Aria knows her chances of surviving in the outer wasteland—known as The Death Shop—are slim. Then Aria meets an Outsider named Perry. He's wild—a savage—and her only hope of staying alive. A hunter for his tribe in a merciless landscape, Perry views Aria as sheltered and fragile—everything he would expect from a Dweller. But he needs Aria's help too; she alone holds the key to his redemption.

**How I Live Now** by Meg Rosoff

Fifteen-year-old Daisy is sent from Manhattan to England to visit her aunt and cousins she’s never met: three boys near her age, and their little sister. Her aunt goes away on business soon after Daisy arrives. The next day bombs go off as London is attacked and occupied by an unnamed enemy.

As power fails, and systems fail, the farm becomes more isolated. Despite the war, it's a kind of Eden, with no adults in charge and no rules, a place where Daisy’s uncanny bond with her cousins grows into something rare and extraordinary. But the war is everywhere, and Daisy and her cousins must lead each other into a world that is unknown in the scariest, most elemental way.

*All book summaries were taken from goodreads.com*