Suggested Summer Reading

Did you know that reading is a great work-out for your brain? People who read for pleasure improve their memory and concentration, expand their vocabulary and build their self-esteem. Here are some suggested titles to help you keep your brain in tip-top shape this summer.

Grade 10
The American Dream

*Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom (192 pages)
Mitch Albom recounts the life lessons learned from his professor and mentor, Morrie Schwartz, whom he visits every Tuesday while the older man struggles with terminal illness.

*Before We Were Free* by Julia Alvarez (192 pages)
During the year after Anita’s twelfth birthday, her entire life changes as members of her family participate in the attempts to overthrow the dictator, Trujillo, and they are forced to flee from their home in the Dominican Republic.

*Friday Night Lights* by H.G. Bissinger (416 pages)
Everyone in the west Texas town of Odessa is convinced that Permian High School will win the coveted football State Championship, but then the star player is injured.

*Dandelion Wine* by Ray Bradbury (239 pages)
A nostalgic look at one magical summer in the life of 12-year-old Douglas Spaulding who is coming of age in the year 1928.

*The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (144 pages)
Growing up in the Latino section of Chicago, Esperanza Cordero longs to leave her neighborhood and find a new life.

*Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich (256 pages)
Investigative reporter, Barbara Ehrenreich studies the plight of the low-skilled workers in America in a compelling and eye-opening undercover assignment.

*A Lesson before Dying* by Ernest Gaines (256 pages)
Jefferson is in the wrong place at the wrong time and becomes involved in a liquor store shoot-out. Grant Wiggins returns to his small Southern town to teach at the plantation school. The two young black men forge a bond when Grant visits his aunt’s godson, Jefferson on death row.

*Pigs in Heaven* by Barbara Kingsolver (384 pages)
Turtle Greer and her adoptive mother, Taylor, play an instrumental role in saving a man’s life while visiting the Hoover Dam. Mother and daughter are thrown into the media spotlight, unaware of how their experience at the dam will change their lives.

*The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri (291 pages)
Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli are wed in an arranged marriage in India and then leave the old traditions behind to begin their life together in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Their son, Gogol,
struggles with the issues faced by first generation Americans.

**China Boy** by Gus Lee (336 pages)
Kai Ting grows up in the Panhandle District of San Francisco in the 1950s in this fairy-tale-like coming-of-age story.

**To Kill a Mockingbird** by Harper Lee (384 pages)
Growing up in the deep South during the 1930s, Scout Finch learns about prejudice, heroism and justice one summer when her attorney father becomes involved in a scandalous rape trial.

**The Color of Water** by James McBride (295 pages)
Ruth McBride Jordan, a Polish Jew who marries a black man after moving to New York, struggles against racism and poverty as she raises her 12 good children.

**Death of a Salesman** by Arthur Miller (144 pages)
A moralistic play in which Willy Loman tries to come to terms with the materialism of society and his own self-image.

**Things They Carried** by Tim O'Brien (256 pages)
A powerful Vietnam memoir.

**When the Emperor was Divine** by Julie Otsuka (160 pages)
A Japanese-American woman and her children are relocated from their home in Berkeley, California to an internment camp in Utah during World War II.

**Anywhere but Here** by Mona Simpson (544 pages)
Ann and her mother, Adele, leave their Wisconsin home for a new life in California in this entertaining mother-daughter story.

**A Tree Grows in Brooklyn** by Betty Smith (528 pages)
A coming-of-age story set in turn-of-the-century Brooklyn, featuring a memorable heroine, Francie Nolan, who is romantic dreamer and a keen observer of human nature.

**The Warmth of Other Suns** by Isabel Wilkerson (640 pages)
A chronicle of previously untold stories of poor black families who migrated to the northern cities between World War I and World War II searching for a better life.

**The Piano Lesson** by August Wilson (128 pages)
Boy Willie and Berniece Charles fight over a family heirloom, an ornately carved upright piano. Berniece wants to hang onto their family legacy, but her brother needs cash to buy land in Mississippi where their ancestors worked as slaves.