Ms. Cross’s Recommendations
2019
Every quarter (8 weeks), you will be required to read
- Honors: 350 pages

Books must be:
- At reading level
- Not required school reading
- Something you enjoy

Assignment:
- Informal meeting with Ms. Cross about book
- Answer questions about book on a 4x6 index card

Book Reports

Read, read, read. Read everything – trash, classics, good and bad, and see how they do it. Just like a carpenter who works as an apprentice and studies the master. - Faulkner

Krashen 1993

Free reading leads to better reading comprehension, a more mature writing style, increased vocabulary, improvement in spelling, and a greater sense of language forms and conventions.
Set over the course of one school year in 1986, this is the story of two star-crossed misfits—smart enough to know that first love almost never lasts, but brave and desperate enough to try. When Eleanor meets Park, you'll remember your own first love—and just how hard it pulled you under.
Sixteen-year-old Starr lives in two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she was born and raised and her posh high school in the suburbs. The uneasy balance between them is shattered when Starr is the only witness to the fatal shooting of her unarmed best friend, Khalil, by a police officer. Now what Starr says could destroy her community. It could also get her killed.
Marie-Laure lives in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where her father works. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure’s reclusive great uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum’s most valuable and dangerous jewel.

In a mining town in Germany, Werner Pfennig, an orphan, grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find that brings them news and stories from places they have never seen or imagined. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments and is enlisted to use his talent to track down the resistance. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another.
In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is meticulously planned – from the layout of the winding roads, to the colors of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules.

Enter Mia Warren – an enigmatic artist and single mother – who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenage daughter Pearl, and rents a house from the Richardsons. Soon Mia and Pearl become more than just tenants: all four Richardson children are drawn to the alluring mother-daughter pair. But Mia carries with her a mysterious past, and a disregard for the rules that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community.

When the Richardsons' friends attempt to adopt a Chinese-American baby, a custody battle erupts that dramatically divides the town and puts Mia and Mrs. Richardson on opposing sides. Suspicious of Mia and her motives, Mrs. Richardson becomes determined to uncover the secrets in Mia's past. But her obsession will come at unexpected and devastating costs to her own family – and Mia's.
Red Queen (383 pages)

This is a world divided by blood - red or silver. The Reds are commoners, ruled by a Silver elite in possession of god-like superpowers. And to Mare Barrow, a seventeen-year-old Red girl from the poverty-stricken Stilts, it seems like nothing will ever change. That is, until she finds herself working in the Silver Palace. Here, surrounded by the people she hates the most, Mare discovers that, despite her red blood, she possesses a deadly power of her own. One that threatens to destroy the balance of power. Fearful of Mare's potential, the Silvers hide her in plain view, declaring her a long-lost Silver princess, now engaged to a Silver prince. Despite knowing that one misstep would mean her death, Mare works silently to help the Red Guard, a militant resistance group, and bring down the Silver regime. But this is a world of betrayal and lies, and Mare has entered a dangerous dance - Reds against Silvers, prince against prince, and Mare against her own heart.

It’s a series...so there are 3 more!
In the quiet village of Carriveau, Vianne Mauriac says goodbye to her husband, Antoine, as he heads for the Front. She doesn’t believe that the Nazis will invade France...but invade they do, in droves of marching soldiers, in caravans of trucks and tanks, in planes that fill the skies and drop bombs upon the innocent.

Vianne’s sister, Isabelle, is a rebellious eighteen-year-old girl, searching for purpose with all the reckless passion of youth. While thousands of Parisians march into the unknown terrors of war, she meets the compelling and mysterious Gàetan, a partisan who believes the French can fight the Nazis from within France, and she falls in love as only the young can...completely. When he betrays her, Isabelle races headlong into danger and joins the Resistance, never looking back or giving a thought to the real-and deadly-consequences.
After the 1st wave, only darkness remains. After the 2nd, only the lucky escape. And after the 3rd, only the unlucky survive. After the 4th wave, only one rule applies: trust no one.

Now, it's the dawn of the 5th wave, and on a lonely stretch of highway, Cassie runs from Them. The beings who only look human, who roam the countryside killing anyone they see. Who have scattered Earth's last survivors. To stay alone is to stay alive, Cassie believes, until she meets Evan Walker. Beguiling and mysterious, Evan Walker may be Cassie's only hope for rescuing her brother—or even saving herself. But Cassie must choose: between trust and despair, between defiance and surrender, between life and death. To give up or to get up.

It’s a series...so there are 2 more!
In order to develop a secure defense against a hostile alien race's next attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. A brilliant young boy, Andrew "Ender" Wiggin lives with his kind but distant parents, his sadistic brother Peter, and the person he loves more than anyone else, his sister Valentine. Ender is the Wiggin drafted to the orbiting Battle School for rigorous military training. Ender's skills make him a leader in school and respected in the Battle Room. The war with the Buggers has been raging for a hundred years, and the quest for the perfect general has been underway for almost as long. Will Ender be the general to beat the Buggers?
Mitch Albom had a second chance to spend time with his mentor. He rediscovered Morrie in the last months of the older man's life. Knowing he was dying, Morrie visited with Mitch in his study every Tuesday, just as they used to back in college. Their rekindled relationship turned into one final "class": lessons in how to live.

Perfect short and easy read to make up some pages.
Like many ambitious New York City teenagers, Craig Gilner sees entry into Manhattan's Executive Pre-Professional High School as the ticket to his future. Craig studies night and day to ace the entrance exam, and does. That's when things start to get crazy. At his new school, Craig realizes that he isn't brilliant compared to the other kids; he's just average, and maybe not even that. The stress becomes unbearable and Craig stops eating and sleeping—until, one night, he nearly kills himself. Craig's suicidal episode gets him checked into a mental hospital, There, isolated from the crushing pressures of school and friends, Craig is finally able to confront the sources of his anxiety.
Crazy Rich Asians (527 pages)

When New Yorker Rachel Chu agrees to spend the summer in Singapore with her boyfriend, Nicholas Young, she envisions a humble family home and quality time with the man she hopes to marry. But Nick has failed to give his girlfriend a few key details. One, that his childhood home looks like a palace; two, that he grew up riding in more private planes than cars; and three, that he just happens to be the country’s most eligible bachelor.

On Nick’s arm, Rachel may as well have a target on her back the second she steps off the plane, and soon, her relaxed vacation turns into an obstacle course of old money, new money, nosy relatives, and scheming social climbers.

It’s a series...so there are 2 more!
Scarlett Dragna has never left the tiny island where she and her sister, Tella, live with their powerful, and cruel, father. Now Scarlett’s father has arranged a marriage for her, and Scarlett thinks her dreams of seeing Caraval—the faraway, once-a-year performance where the audience participates in the show—are over. But this year, Scarlett’s long-dreamt-of invitation finally arrives. With the help of a mysterious sailor, Tella whisks Scarlett away to the show. Only, as soon as they arrive, Tella is kidnapped by Caraval’s mastermind organizer, Legend. It turns out that this season’s Caraval revolves around Tella, and whoever finds her first is the winner. Scarlett has been told that everything that happens during Caraval is only an elaborate performance. Nevertheless she becomes enmeshed in a game of love, heartbreak, and magic. And whether Caraval is real or not, Scarlett must find Tella before the five nights of the game are over or a dangerous domino effect of consequences will be set off, and her beloved sister will disappear forever.

It’s a Series! The 2nd book just came out!
The Kite Runner (384 pages)
Also known for A Thousand Splendid Suns

The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, The Kite Runner is a beautifully crafted novel set in a country that is in the process of being destroyed. It is about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies. (for mature readers)
At first, Jude and her twin brother Noah, are inseparable. Noah draws constantly and is falling in love with the charismatic boy next door, while daredevil Jude wears red lipstick, cliff-dives, and does all the talking for both of them. Years later, they are barely speaking. Something has happened to change the twins in different yet equally devastating ways . . . but then Jude meets an intriguing, irresistible boy and a mysterious new mentor. The early years are Noah’s to tell; the later years are Jude’s. But they each have only half the story, and if they can only find their way back to one another, they’ll have a chance to remake their world. This radiant, award-winning novel from the acclaimed author of The Sky Is Everywhere will leave you breathless and teary and laughing—often all at once.
Natasha: I’m a girl who believes in science and facts. Not fate. Not destiny. Or dreams that will never come true. I’m definitely not the kind of girl who meets a cute boy on a crowded New York City street and falls in love with him. Not when my family is twelve hours away from being deported to Jamaica. Falling in love with him won’t be my story.

Daniel: I’ve always been the good son, the good student, living up to my parents’ high expectations. Never the poet. Or the dreamer. But when I see her, I forget about all that. Something about Natasha makes me think that fate has something much more extraordinary in store—for both of us.

The Universe: Every moment in our lives has brought us to this single moment. A million futures lie before us. Which one will come true?
“Are you happy with your life?”

Those are the last words Jason Dessen hears before the masked abductor knocks him unconscious.

Before he awakens to find himself strapped to a gurney, surrounded by strangers in hazmat suits.

Before a man Jason’s never met smiles down at him and says, “Welcome back, my friend.”

In this world he’s woken up to, Jason’s life is not the one he knows. His wife is not his wife. His son was never born. And Jason is not an ordinary college physics professor, but a celebrated genius who has achieved something remarkable. Something impossible.

Is it this world or the other that’s the dream? And even if the home he remembers is real, how can Jason possibly make it back to the family he loves? The answers lie in a journey more wondrous and horrifying than anything he could’ve imagined—one that will force him to confront the darkest parts of himself even as he battles a terrifying, seemingly unbeatable foe.
There is a secret organization that cultivates teenage spies. The agents are called Love Interests because getting close to people destined for great power means getting valuable secrets.

Caden is a Nice: the boy next door, sculpted to physical perfection. Dylan is a Bad: the brooding, dark-souled guy who is dangerously handsome. The girl they are competing for is important to the organization, and each boy will pursue her. Will she choose the Nice or the Bad?

Both Caden and Dylan are living in the outside world for the first time. They are well-trained and at the top of their games. They have to be— whoever the girl doesn’t choose will die.

What the boys don’t expect are feelings that are outside of their training. Feelings that could kill them both.
Andy Barber has been an assistant district attorney for two decades. He is respected. Admired in the courtroom. Happy at home with the loves of his life, his wife, Laurie, and teenage son, Jacob.

Then Andy’s quiet suburb is stunned by a shocking crime: a young boy stabbed to death in a leafy park. And an even greater shock: The accused is Andy’s own son—shy, awkward, mysterious Jacob.


It is the ultimate test for any parent: How far would you go to protect your child? It is a test of devotion. A test of how well a parent can know a child. For Andy Barber, a man with an iron will and a dark secret, it is a test of guilt and innocence in the deepest sense.

How far would you go?
Alex Myers is a quarterback, but from the first day of football practice, it’s clear that that position is very much filled by the coach’s son, Matt.

Alex has the better arm, but Matt has more experience—and the coach’s loyalty. Alex finally gets a chance to show what he can do when Matt is injured, and he helps win a key game to keep the Lions’ bid for the state championship alive. But just when his star is rising, Alex gets blindsided—the state has started drug testing, and Alex’s test comes back positive for steroids. Alex knows that’s not right. But he doesn’t know if it’s a mistake—or if someone wants to make sure he can’t play...
In the year 2044, 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 80s and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them. But when Wade stumbles upon the first clue and other players are 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.
Maze Runner (375 pages)

When Thomas wakes up in the lift, the only thing he can remember is his name. He's surrounded by strangers—boys whose memories are also gone. Outside the towering stone walls that surround the Glade is a limitless, ever-changing maze. It's the only way out—and no one's ever made it through alive. Then a girl arrives. The first girl ever. And the message she delivers is terrifying.

It’s a series....so there are 4 books total!
In Beatrice Prior’s dystopian Chicago world, society is divided into five factions, each dedicated to the cultivation of a particular virtue. On an appointed day of every year, all sixteen-year-olds must select the faction to which they will devote the rest of their lives. For Beatrice, the decision is between staying with her family and being who she really is—she can’t have both. So she makes a choice that surprises everyone, including herself.

It’s also a series....so there are 4 books total!
The Fault in Our Stars (313 pages)

Or anything by John Green is popular – my favorite: Turtles All the Way Down 😊

Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten.

Doesn’t quite meet the 350 pg limit so you’ll have to start another book to make your pages.
Author: Cecelia Ahern

Mostly popular for *P.S. I Love you*, Cecelia Ahern writes contemporary fiction set in Ireland with magical twists. Ms. Cross’s favorites are *A Place Called Here* and *If You Could See Me Now*. 
Author: Nicholas Sparks

Nicholas Sparks writes heartbreaking dramas that have mostly been turned into movies. Easy to read and highly intriguing, but make sure you see the movie too ☺ Ms. Cross’s favorites are The Lucky One and The Guardian.
More recommendations...

- Mysteries: Agatha Christie or James Patterson
- Suspense: Dan Brown or John Grisham
- Fantasy: Cassandra Clare or J.R.R Tolkien
- Sports: Blindside or Seabiscuit
- Historical Fiction: The Book Thief, The Help, or anything by Philippa Gregory

Still can’t find something...
How to Pick a Book...

- Find a book you are interested in. If you pick a boring book, you won’t want to read it.
- Talk to your friends about books they have read.
- Ask Ms. Cross for a recommendation.
- Look at the Best Sellers lists online
- Walk around Barnes and Noble
- Use Good Reads: http://www.goodreads.com/list