World Literature

*The Aeneid* translated by Allen Mandelbaum (PLEASE NOTE TRANSLATION)

This national epic of the founding of Rome begins with the wanderings of Aeneas and his band of exiles after the fall of Troy. The second part tells of the wars and struggles in Italy to found a new nation. The poet Virgil explores the themes of destiny, leadership, and devotion to family, country, and gods.

*Anna Karenina*—Tolstoy

Although married to a powerful government official, the beautiful Anna falls in love with another man. In a shocking transgression of the code of nineteenth-century Russian society, Anna leaves her husband and son to live with her lover.

*Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress* by Dai Sijie

A “little gem of a book” set in China during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and ’70s, this is the story of two teenage boys who are sent to live in a peasant village for “re-education.” They discover a hidden stash of Western literary classics in Chinese translation and use the stories of Balzac to capture the attention of the beautiful daughter of the local tailor.

*The Bridge on the Drina*—Andric

This novel by Bosnian-born Nobel Prize winner Ivan Andric provides a vivid depiction of the suffering that history has imposed upon the people of Bosnia from the late sixteenth century to the beginning of World War I. He poignantly describes the lives of everyday people who gather on the bridge, attempt to halt the devastating waves of their conquerors on the bridge, and attempt to stay connected with life on both sides of the river. The book will provide you with many insights about the courageous and enduring people of this region.

*Don Quixote*—Cervantes

Although written over four hundred years ago, this Spanish classic still has enormous appeal. It is the story of a charming gentleman who is so obsessed with tales of knightly chivalry that he sets out to find dragons to slay and lovely damsels to defend. Although his companion, the practical Sancho Panza, knows full well that Quixote’s quest is but a fantasy, he faithfully accompanies his lord on his grand adventure.

*The English Teacher* by R. K. Narayan

Written by an Indian author who is widely read at our new sister school in Hyderabad, this is a story of a teacher who has a change of heart about the meaning of teaching after he suffers a personal tragedy.

*Faust* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

This is the classic tale of a man who sells his soul to the devil.

*July’s People* by Nadine Gordimer

The Smales, a white, middle-class family, flee Johannesburg during a black uprising and live with their servant July in his ancestral village nearly four hundred miles away. How they adapt to this primitive environment
constitutes most of the action. But the subtly changing relationship between Maureen Smales and July, her family’s servant for fifteen years, is the most intriguing element of this apocalyptic novel.

**Love in the Time of Cholera by Gabriel Garcia Marquez**

Set in an unnamed Caribbean seaport, this is a remarkable story of the different kinds of love that we experience at different ages and in different kinds of relationships. While the many subplots and Marquez’s fantastical style may provide a challenge for some readers, the journey is well worth the effort.

**Map of Love by Ahdaf Souief**

A massive family saga, this story draws its readers into two moments in the complex, troubled history of modern Egypt. It is a subtle and reflective tale of love that suggests that relations between individuals CAN make a difference.

**One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez**

It is rare that a novel emerges and is instantly given the status of myth. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* tells the story of the Buendía family, but the novel is more than a family chronicle. There is an element of mystical timelessness and the beauty of the land that belongs to its setting in Colombia. The *New York Times* said of this work, “You emerge from this marvelous novel as if from a dream, the mind on fire. . . .”

**The Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafon**

This is the story of a young boy grieving for his dead mother and his father, a book seller who introduces him to the book cemetery.

**Waiting by Ha Jin**

This is the story of Lin Kong, an officer and doctor living in China during the mid-1960s. The young Kong had followed the wishes of his parents, dutifully entering into an arranged marriage and having a daughter. When circumstances dictated by the Communist party require him to live apart from his family for long periods of time, Kong falls in love with a nursing student in the hospital where he works. After waiting eighteen years to obtain a divorce from his wife, Kong finds the love of his life within reach. Will the reality of his beloved match the dream of waiting?

**What Is the What by Dave Eggers**

This is the fictional account of a Lost Boy of the Sudan, who escapes the horrors of his homeland only to face the indignities of a menial job, a robbery, and a physical assault in his new home in America.

**The White Tiger by Aravind Adiga**

This first novel, which has spent months on the best seller list, depicts the awakening of a low-caste Indian man to the degradation of servitude. As a once impoverished village boy without prospects, Balram Halwai is at first thrilled to become the driver for a wealthy man. Growing increasingly resentful about the inequities of class and culture, Balram plots his employer’s murder. The novel is Balram’s attempt to rationalize the murder in the context of a world of staggering poverty and injustice.