

RMHS Summer Enrichment Ideas for 2021

Grades 11 & 12

This summer, RMHS students are encouraged to relax and recharge, but also to take advantage of the next two months to learn about a new subject or skill or to broaden your horizons with a good story. Our recent experience with the pandemic tells us that an opportunity for some self-guided learning can be very powerful. Identify some topics of interest and use this summer to learn more about them!

Reading Options

Reading, of course, is a wonderful way to increase your knowledge or heighten your awareness of the world around you. Let your own interests and tastes guide you, but here are some titles to consider, organized by topic. Remember, preview a book by reading online reviews — or even reading a few pages — before making a selection.

Note: audiobooks are a great way to experience books. Listen while exercising, crafting, or before you go to sleep! Audible, iTunes, Google Books, and Amazon are all places to find these and other great audiobooks. You can check audio- and e-books out from thousands of libraries using the **Libby** app (iTunes and Google Play).

FICTION

- *Girl in Translation*, by Jean Kwok
- *Jane Eyre*, by Charlotte Bronte
- *Remote Control*, by Nnendi Okorafor
- *The Joy Luck Club*, by Amy Tan
- *Things Fall Apart*, by Chinua Achebe

SCIENCE AND MATH

- *Lost Discoveries: The Ancient Roots of Modern Science*, by Dick Teresi
- *Soul of a New Machine*, Tracy Kidder
- *The Code Break*, by Walter Isaacson
- *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, by Rebecca Skloot

LIFE BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

- *Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *How To Read Literature Like a Professor*, by Thomas C. Foster
- *The Last Lecture*, by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow

SPORTS

- *The Assist*, by Neil Swidey
- *The Boys on the Boat*, by Daniel James Brown
- *Dust Bowl Girls*, by Lydia Reeder
- *I Never Had It Made: An Autobiography of Jackie Robinson*

HISTORY & CULTURE

- *Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania*, by Erik Larson
- *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*, by Richard Rothstein
- *The Story of America: Essays on Origins*, by Jill Lepore

Other Learning Options

Consider keeping your mind engaged with other learning activities beyond reading. Internet access at home or at a local library gives you entry to a wealth of learning opportunities. Here are some suggestions:

PODCASTS

Podcasts are growing in popularity, and you can find one for just about any subject you are interested in. An excellent free app to listen to them (if you don't have iTunes) is Podcast Addict, available on Google Play or Apple Store.

Here are some popular podcasts you might enjoy:

- **Dear Hank and John:** Well-known YA author John Greene and his brother Hank answer oddball questions in their typically humorous and zany fashion.
- **Science Friday:** From WNYC studios in New York, Ira Flatow discusses current issues in science and sometimes answers listeners' questions.
- **The Moth:** This popular radio program and touring show features everyday people telling stories from their lives.
- **Stuff You Missed In History Class:** The hosts explore obscure figures and events from history.
- **Aaron Mahnke's Cabinet of Curiosities:** each episode features two short tales of the unbelievable and bizarre.
- **Lore:** also from Aaron Mehnke, this series explores folklore and legends from around the world — a must-listen if you're interested in the Horror elective!

LEARN A SKILL

LANGUAGES

- **Duolingo:** a free app (with an enhanced paid version) that makes learning another language into a game with real-life expressions and vocabulary aimed at conversational fluency. Buff up your skills in Spanish or French, or learn an entirely new language.
- **Mango:** our school gives you access to this fun language-learning web program through your student account.

COOKING

Check with your parents or guardians before using your kitchen.

- **Gordon Ramsey's Cooking Class:** The famous chef provides hours of free basic lessons on his YouTube [channel](#).
- **Recipes for Teens:** This [website](#) compiles a varied set of recipes suitable for those new to the kitchen.
- **Just One Cookbook:** Japanese cooking is easier than you'd expect. Make lunch delicious and cute with this [website](#).
- **The Reading Public Library:** you can not only check out cookbooks, but also pans and baking sheets!

CRAFTS

Many of these require an initial investment of money into tools or patterns, so check with your parents first before spending money. Find tutorials and ideas on YouTube, Pinterest, Ravelry, Etsy and around the internet.

- **yarn crafts:** cross-stitch, embroidery, crochet, and knitting — no longer relegated to grandmas, needle arts are enjoying a resurgence with fun pop culture patterns and snarky sayings.
- **paper crafts: quilling** is the art of paper-rolling can be extremely calming and produce beautiful artwork. **Calligraphy** and **hand lettering** are fun ways to express yourself, and even brighten someone's day with some elaborate mail art. Tutorials abound online, and the website [The Postman's Knock](#) has both free and paid tutorial worksheets and resources — even ones to improve your handwriting or learn cursive! Print out some of those thousands of pictures you take of your pet or your friends and make yourself a **scrapbook** to treasure.
- **painting:** Amazon Prime has every episode of Bob Ross' *The Joy of Painting*. Even without paints and brushes, watching these shows will give you ideas for creating landscapes with markers, watercolors, colored pencils, or crayons. Bob teaches basic art theory and demonstrates his love of nature in every show.
- **building:** woodworking, model building, and dioramas are great for all skill levels. Check out YouTube for tutorials and Amazon for kits.

STAY CURRENT

If you want to stay more up-to-date with current events or the trends in a field you are interested in, there are some great “news aggregator” apps and websites that can help you with this.

- **Feedly** (app and [web](#)): You can start a Feedly account with your RPS email address if you choose to login through google. Once you start an account you can start up to three “feeds”. A feed is a constantly updated list of fresh articles related to the topic of your feed. For example, you could have a feed that gathers the latest sports news, another that gathers arts and entertainment news, and a third that gathers business news. Check your feeds daily for an easy way to stay informed.
- **Flipboard** (app): choose from a number of sources or add your own favorite sites to create a “magazine” of aggregated posts. You can “flip” any post into a magazine of your own of saved links and stories to access any time.

WATCH

Once you’re done binge-watching your favorite summer series, try some of these recommendations!

- **Shakespeare** (live play): This summer the [Commonwealth Shakespeare Company](#) returns to Boston Common with a free production. From July 21 through August 8, they will be staging Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Check the website for exact dates and times.
- **My Octopus Teacher** (Netflix): uplifting and gorgeous nature documentary.
- **High Score** (Netflix): an in-depth look at the origin story of video games as we know them, as told by the people who made them.
- **The Last Dance** (Netflix): over the course of 10 hours, the story of Michael Jordan’s final season with the Chicago Bulls is juxtaposed with the story of his earlier life and career, and the careers of Bulls teammates like Scottie Pippen and Dennis Rodman.
- **The Speed Cubers** (Netflix): only 40 minutes long, the story follows competitive Rubix Cube solvers Feliks Zemdegs from Australia, who was the uncontested world champion until the arrival of American Max Park. What could be the premise for a story about serious rivalry in a niche sport instead becomes a beautiful tale of friendship and heroism.
- **American Factory** (Netflix): the award-winning look at a defunct General Motors plant in Dayton, Ohio which is given a new lease on life when a Chinese billionaire invests in it as a new American glass-making facility for his company, Fuyao. American Factory tells of the plight of the skilled labor force, be they American or Chinese, as easy victims of the rich and powerful, be they American or Chinese. And it's also the story of the American Dream, and whether that's a fact or a fallacy.
- **The Great Hack** (Netflix): for the paranoid among us, this documentary takes a deep dive into the Facebook-Cambridge Analytica scandal, and how, despite Facebook's denials, the social media giant used personal data harvested by its users.