**Mrs. Melville’s Top 10 reads from what she read in 2013-2014**

1. ***Will Grayson, Will Grayson* by John Green and David Levithan**

One cold night, in a most unlikely corner of Chicago, Will Grayson crosses paths with . . . Will Grayson. Two teens with the same name, running in two very different circles, suddenly find their lives going in new and unexpected directions, and culminating in epic turns-of-heart and the most fabulous musical ever to grace the high school stage. Told in alternating voices from two YA superstars, this collaborative novel features a double helping of the heart and humor that have won them both legions of fans.

1. ***Eleanor and Park* by Rainbow Rowell**

*Bono met his wife in high school*, Park says.
*So did Jerry Lee Lewis*, Eleanor answers.
*I’m not kidding*, he says.
*You should be*, she says, *we’re 16*.
*What about Romeo and Juliet?
Shallow, confused, then dead.*
*I love you*, Park says.
*Wherefore art thou,*Eleanor answers.
*I’m not kidding,* he says.
*You should be.*

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.

1. ***L’il Gotham* by Derek Fridolfs and Dustin Nguyen**

These gorgeously drawn and painted all-ages tales feature all of your favorite Gotham City characters: Batman, Robin, Nightwing, Catwoman, The Joker, The Penguin and many others!

First up, Robin needs Batman's help to learn the true meaning of Halloween. Then, on Thanksgiving, Batman and Robin join the families of Gotham City around the table for a holiday feast--and birds of a feather flock together to stage a march against the city...led by The Penguin!  As Christmas time approaches, the search for a missing holiday choir leads Batman and Nightwing into a confrontation with Mr. Freeze! But in this heartfelt Christmas tale, the frozen fiend's motives aren't as nefarious as they seem...
And on a festive New Year's Eve, Catwoman thinks she'll be spending a quiet night at home, contemplating her New Year's resolutions--until Poison Ivy and Harley Quinn show up, that is!

This volume collects stories from Detective Comics Annual #11, Batman Annual #27, Batman: Li'l Gotham Digital chapters 1-11.

1. ***National Geographic* Magazine**

National Geographic magazine offers you an inside look at the most interesting people and places from all over the world. Many stories contain detailed maps and images that take you along for the incredible journey. National Geographic magazine is designed to inspire, inform, and entertain a vast audience through compelling editorials and breathtaking photography. It also hosts a variety of written composition, artistic, and photography contests for potential future contributors.

1. ***Inferno* by Dan Brown**

Harvard professor of symbology Robert Langdon awakens in an Italian hospital, disoriented and with no recollection of the past thirty-six hours, including the origin of the macabre object hidden in his belongings. With a relentless female assassin trailing them through Florence, he and his resourceful doctor, Sienna Brooks, are forced to flee. Embarking on a harrowing journey, they must unravel a series of codes, which are the work of a brilliant scientist whose obsession with the end of the world is matched only by his passion for one of the most influential masterpieces ever written, Dante Alighieri's*The Inferno*.

1. ***The Illusion of Separateness* by Simon Van Booy**

In The Illusion of Separateness, award-winning author Simon Van Booy tells a harrowing and enchanting story of how one man’s act of mercy during World War II changed the lives of strangers, and how they each discover the astonishing truth of their connection.

Whether they are pursued by Nazi soldiers, old age, shame, deformity, disease, or regret, the characters in this utterly compelling novel discover in their, darkest moments of fear and isolation that they are not alone, that they were never alone, that every human being is a link in an unseen chain.

1. ***The Absolutely True Diary of A Part Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie**

Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, which is based on the author's own experiences, coupled with poignant drawings that reflect the character's art, chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he thought he was destined to live.

1. ***Batman: Court of Owls* by Scott Snyder and Greg Capullo**

After a series of brutal murders rocks Gotham City, Batman begins to realize that perhaps these crimes go far deeper than appearances suggest. As the Caped Crusader begins to unravel this deadly mystery, he discovers a conspiracy going back to his youth and beyond to the origins of the city he's sworn to protect. Could the Court of Owls, once thought to be nothing more than an urban legend, be behind the crime and corruption? Or is Bruce Wayne losing his grip on sanity and falling prey to the pressures of his war on crime?

1. ***The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd**

Hetty “Handful” Grimke, an urban slave in early nineteenth century Charleston, yearns for life beyond the suffocating walls that enclose her within the wealthy Grimke household. The Grimke’s daughter, Sarah, has known from an early age she is meant to do something large in the world, but she is hemmed in by the limits imposed on women.

Kidd’s sweeping novel is set in motion on Sarah’s eleventh birthday, when she is given ownership of ten year old Handful, who is to be her handmaid. We follow their remarkable journeys over the next thirty five years, as both strive for a life of their own, dramatically shaping each other’s destinies and forming a complex relationship marked by guilt, defiance, estrangement and the uneasy ways of love.

1. ***Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson**

"Speak up for yourself--we want to know what you have to say." From the first moment of her freshman year at Merryweather High, Melinda knows this is a big fat lie, part of the nonsense of high school. She is friendless, outcast, because she busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops, so now nobody will talk to her, let alone listen to her. As time passes, she becomes increasingly isolated and practically stops talking altogether. Only her art class offers any solace, and it is through her work on an art project that she is finally able to face what really happened at that terrible party: she was raped by an upperclassman, a guy who still attends Merryweather and is still a threat to her. Her healing process has just begun when she has another violent encounter with him. But this time Melinda fights back, refuses to be silent, and thereby achieves a measure of vindication. In Laurie Halse Anderson's powerful novel, an utterly believable heroine with a bitterly ironic voice delivers a blow to the hypocritical world of high school. She speaks for many a disenfranchised teenager while demonstrating the importance of speaking up for oneself.

**Mrs. Melville’s First 10 Reads(hopefully!) for 2014-2015**

1. ***The Moth* edited by Catherine Burns**

For the first time in print, celebrated storytelling phenomenon The Moth presents fifty spellbinding, soul-bearing stories selected from their extensive archive (fifteen-plus years and 10,000-plus stories strong). Inspired by friends telling stories on a porch, The Moth was born in small-town Georgia, garnered a cult following in New York City, and then rose to national acclaim with the wildly popular podcast and Peabody Award-winning weekly public radio show*The Moth Radio Hour*.

1. ***Nineteen Minutes* by Jodi Picoult**

Sterling is an ordinary New Hampshire town where nothing ever happens--until the day its complacency is shattered by an act of violence. Josie Cormier, the daughter of the judge sitting on the case, should be the state's best witness, but she can't remember what happened before her very own eyes--or can she? As the trial progresses, fault lines between the high school and the adult community begin to show--destroying the closest of friendships and families. *Nineteen Minutes* asks what it means to be different in our society, who has the right to judge someone else, and whether anyone is ever really who they seem to be.

1. ***Justice League: The New 52* by Geoff Johns and Jim Lee**

In a world where inexperienced superheroes operate under a cloud of suspicion from the public, loner vigilante Batman has stumbled upon a dark evil that threatens to destroy the earth as we know it. Now, faced with a threat far beyond anything he can handle on his own, the Dark Knight must trust an alien, a scarlet speedster, an accidental teenage hero, a space cop, an Amazon Princess and an undersea monarch. Will this combination of Superman, The Flash, Cyborg, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman and Aquaman be able to put aside their differences and come together to save the world? Or will they destroy each other first?

1. ***Lockwood and Co. :The Screaming Staircase* by Jonathan Stroud**

A sinister Problem has occurred in London: all nature of ghosts, haunts, spirits, and specters are appearing throughout the city, and they aren't exactly friendly. Only young people have the psychic abilities required to see-and eradicate-these supernatural foes. Many different Psychic Detection Agencies have cropped up to handle the dangerous work, and they are in fierce competition for business.

In *The Screaming Staircase*, the plucky and talented Lucy Carlyle teams up with Anthony Lockwood, the charismatic leader of Lockwood & Co, a small agency that runs independent of any adult supervision. After an assignment leads to both a grisly discovery and a disastrous end, Lucy, Anthony, and their sarcastic colleague, George, are forced to take part in the perilous investigation of Combe Carey Hall, one of the most haunted houses in England. Will Lockwood & Co. survive the Hall's legendary Screaming Staircase and Red Room to see another day?

1. ***Paper Towns* by John Green**

When Margo Roth Spiegelman beckons Quentin Jacobsen in the middle of the night—dressed like a ninja and plotting an ingenious campaign of revenge—he follows her. Margo’s always planned extravagantly, and, until now, she’s always planned solo. After a lifetime of loving Margo from afar, things are finally looking up for Q . . . until day breaks and she has vanished. Always an enigma, Margo has now become a mystery. But there are clues. And they’re for Q.

1. ***The Shade of The Moon* by Susan Beth Pfeffer**

It's been more than two years since Jon Evans and his family left Pennsylvania, hoping to find a safe place to live, yet Jon remains haunted by the deaths of those he loved. His prowess on a soccer field has guaranteed him a home in a well-protected enclave. But Jon is painfully aware that a missed goal, a careless word, even falling in love, can put his life and the lives of his mother, his sister Miranda, and her husband, Alex, in jeopardy. Can Jon risk doing what is right in a world gone so terribly wrong?

1. ***The Mortal Instruments* series by Cassandra Clare**

***Book1: City of Bones***: When fifteen-year-old Clary Fray heads out to the Pandemonium Club in New York City, she hardly expects to witness a murder—much less a murder committed by three teenagers covered with strange tattoos and brandishing bizarre weapons. Then the body disappears into thin air. It’s hard to call the police when the murderers are invisible to everyone else and when there is nothing—not even a smear of blood—to show that a boy has died. Or was he a boy?

This is Clary’s first meeting with the Shadowhunters, warriors dedicated to ridding the earth of demons. It’s also her first encounter with Jace, a Shadowhunter who looks a little like an angel and acts a lot like a jerk. Within twenty-four hours Clary is pulled into Jace’s world with a vengeance, when her mother disappears and Clary herself is attacked by a demon. But why would demons be interested in ordinary mundanes like Clary and her mother? And how did Clary suddenly get the Sight? The Shadowhunters would like to know...

1. ***Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes* by Chris Crutcher**

Sarah Byrnes and Eric have been friends for years. When they were children, his fat and her terrible scars made them both outcasts. Later, although swimming slimmed Eric, she stayed his closest friend.

Now Sarah Byrnes -- the smartest, toughest person Eric has ever known -- sits silent in a hospital. Eric must uncover the terrible secret she's hiding, before its dark currents pull them both under.

1. ***Fangirl*  by Rainbow Rowell**

In Rainbow Rowell's *Fangirl*, Cath is a Simon Snow fan. Okay, the whole world is a Simon Snow fan, but for Cath, being a fan is her life--and she's really good at it. She and her twin sister, Wren, ensconced themselves in the Simon Snow series when they were just kids; it's what got them through their mother leaving.

Reading. Rereading. Hanging out in Simon Snow forums, writing Simon Snow fan fiction, dressing up like the characters for every movie premiere.

Cath's sister has mostly grown away from fandom, but Cath can't let go. She doesn't want to.
Now that they're going to college, Wren has told Cath she doesn't want to be roommates. Cath is on her own, completely outside of her comfort zone. She's got a surly roommate with a charming, always-around boyfriend, a fiction-writing professor who thinks fan fiction is the end of the civilized world, a handsome classmate who only wants to talk about words . . . And she can't stop worrying about her dad, who's loving and fragile and has never really been alone.

For Cath, the question is: Can she do this?

Can she make it without Wren holding her hand? Is she ready to start living her own life? Writing her own stories?

And does she even want to move on if it means leaving Simon Snow behind?

1. ***Girl With A Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier**

Tracy Chevalier transports readers to a bygone time and place in this richly-imagined portrait of the young woman who inspired one of Vermeer's most celebrated paintings.

History and fiction merge seamlessly in this luminous novel about artistic vision and sensual awakening. **Girl with a Pearl Earring** tells the story of sixteen-year-old Griet, whose life is transformed by her brief encounter with genius . . . even as she herself is immortalized in canvas and oil.