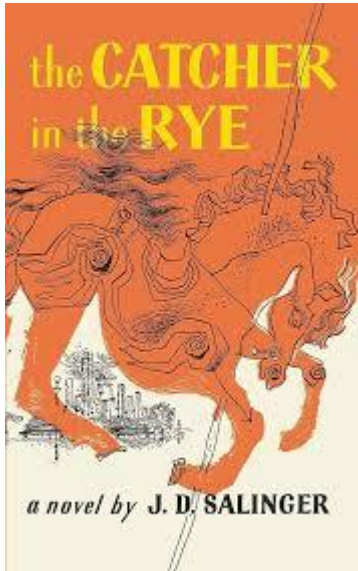


**The Pingry School  
Summer Reading 2026  
Entering Form III (Grade 9)**

**All students entering Form III are required to read the following text:**



**ISBN # 978-0-31676948-8 (This version of the text is required!)**

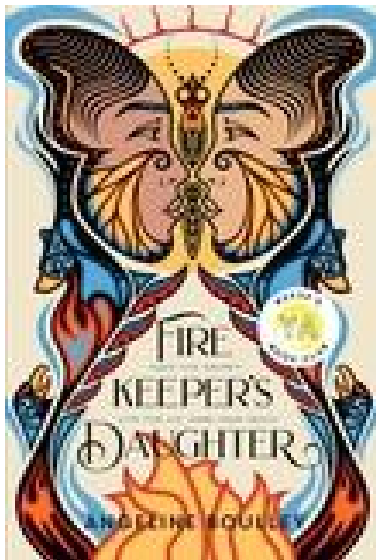
***The Catcher in the Rye*, by J.D. Salinger**

The hero-narrator of *The Catcher in the Rye* is Holden Caulfield, a sixteen-year-old who leaves his prep school in Pennsylvania and goes underground in New York City for three days. As we spend time in his head, we see him experience the pain and pleasure of adolescence, and the particular ache of finding one's place in the world.\*

You might find this [supplemental information](#) about *Catcher*, compiled by Pingry's English 9 teachers, helpful for understanding the historical context and vocabulary of this 1951 bildungsroman.

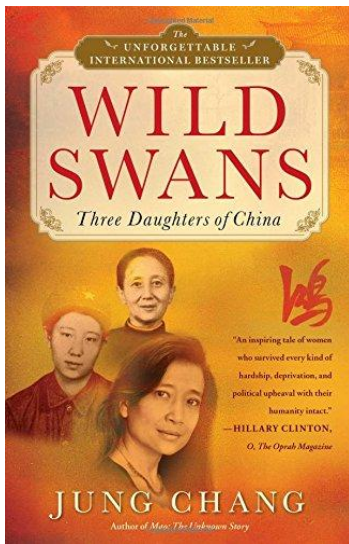
\*Book synopsis from [Modern Library](#)

**In addition to reading *Catcher in the Rye*, select ONE of the eleven books below to read before classes begin in September:**



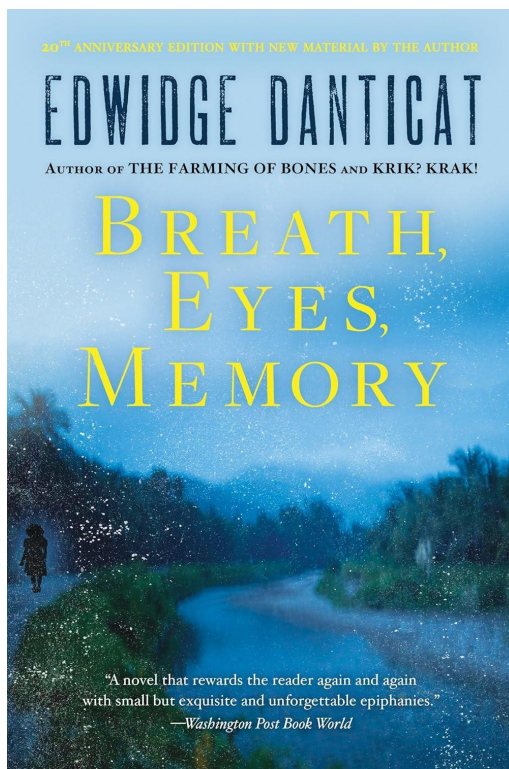
***The Fire Keeper's Daughter*, Angeline Boulley**

In Boulley's debut novel, eighteen-year-old Daunis Fontaine struggles to fit in, both in her hometown and on the nearby Ojibwe reservation. She hopes for a fresh start in college, but family tragedy strikes and Daunis puts her future on hold to look after her fragile mother. The only bright spot is meeting Jamie, the charming new recruit on her brother Levi's hockey team. Yet even as Daunis falls for Jamie, she senses the dashing hockey star is hiding something. Everything comes to light when Daunis witnesses a shocking murder, thrusting her into an FBI investigation of a lethal new drug. Daunis learns through this coming-of-age story what it means to be an Ojibwe woman and how far she will go for her community, even if it tears apart the only world she's ever known.



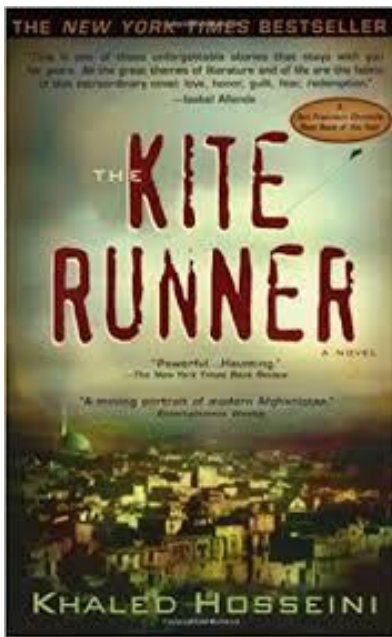
### ***Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China, Jung Chang***

*Wild Swans* is a historically-based memoir that focuses on three generations of Chinese women before, during, and after the Cultural Revolution. Chang tells the stories of her grandmother, who was a warlord's concubine, and of her mother, who was a member of the Communist party under Mao. She then shares her own story, from being a member of the Red Guard to becoming a working-class peasant. Through each story, Chang exposes the extraordinary strength of each woman in the face of unimaginable hardship and injustice. This title is recommended for more mature readers.



### ***Breath, Eyes, Memory, Edwidge Danticat***

At the age of twelve, Sophie Caco is sent from her impoverished Haitian village to New York to be reunited with a mother she barely remembers. There she discovers secrets that no child should ever know, and a legacy of shame that can be healed only when she returns to Haiti—to the women who first reared her. What ensues is a passionate journey through a landscape charged with the supernatural and scarred by political violence. In her stunning literary debut, Danticat evokes the wonder, terror, and heartache of her native Haiti – and the enduring strength of Haiti's women –with vibrant imagery and narrative grace that bear witness to her people's suffering and courage.

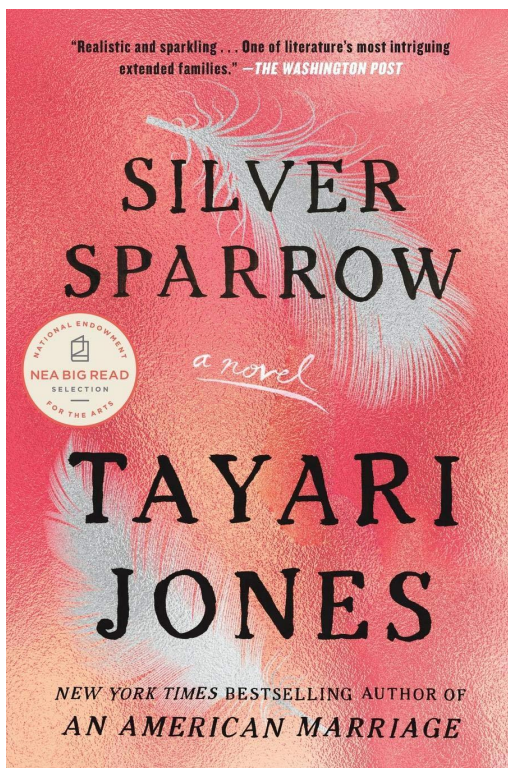


### ***The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini**

Amir is the son of a wealthy Kabul merchant, a member of the ruling caste of Pashtuns. Hassan, his servant and constant companion, is a Hazara, a despised and impoverished caste. Their uncommon bond is torn by Amir's choice to abandon his friend amidst the increasing ethnic, religious, and political tensions of the dying years of the Afghan monarchy, wrenching them far apart. But so strong is the bond between the two boys that Amir journeys back to a distant world, to try to right past wrongs against the only true friend he ever had.

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.

A sweeping story of family, love, and friendship told against the devastating backdrop of the history of Afghanistan over the last thirty years, *The Kite Runner* is an unusual and powerful novel that has become a beloved, one-of-a-kind classic.



### ***Silver Sparrow*, Tayari Jones**

Oprah Book Club- selected author, Tayari Jones, narrates an unconventional story about a man's bigamy, two wives betrayed, and the two teenage girls caught in the middle. Set in a middle-class neighborhood in Atlanta in the 1980s, the novel revolves around James Witherspoon's two families—the public one and the secret one. The tension mounts as we fear that the girls will find out about each other. Will they ever meet, and if so, will the situation explode? Narrated by the two girls in alternation, the novel is characterized by Jones's humanity, insight, and beautiful style. This novel is recommended for mature readers.

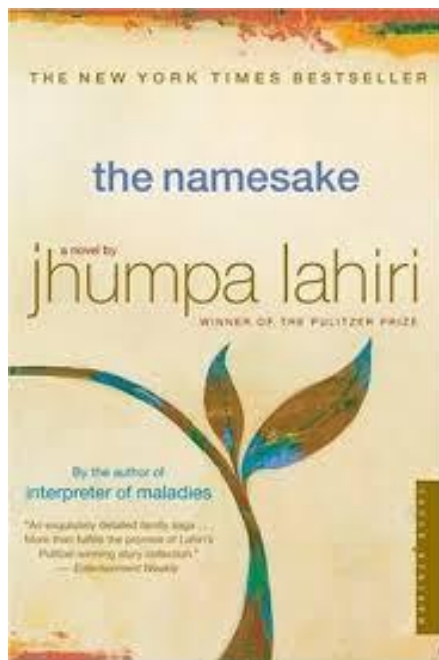


### ***Orphan Train*, Christina Baker Kline**

A captivating story of two very different women who build an unexpected friendship: a 91-year-old woman with a hidden past as an orphan-train rider and the teenage girl whose own troubled adolescence leads her to seek answers to questions no one has ever thought to ask.

Nearly eighteen, Molly Ayer knows she has one last chance. Just months from "aging out" of the child welfare system, and close to being kicked out of her foster home, a community service position helping an elderly woman clean out her home is the only thing keeping her out of juvie and worse.

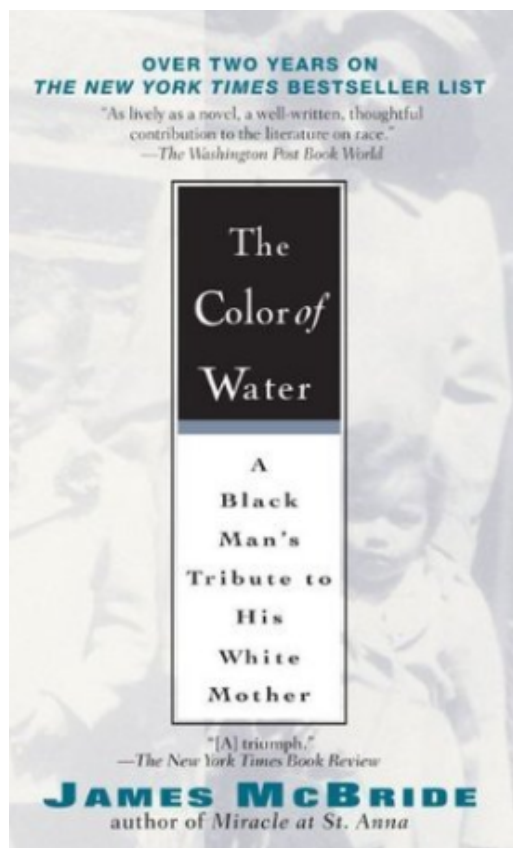
Vivian Daly has lived a quiet life on the coast of Maine. But in her attic, hidden in trunks, are vestiges of a turbulent past. As she helps Vivian sort through her possessions and memories, Molly discovers that she and Vivian aren't as different as they seem to be. A young Irish immigrant orphaned in New York City, Vivian was put on a train to the Midwest with hundreds of other children whose destinies would be determined by luck and chance.



### ***The Namesake*, Jhumpa Lahiri**

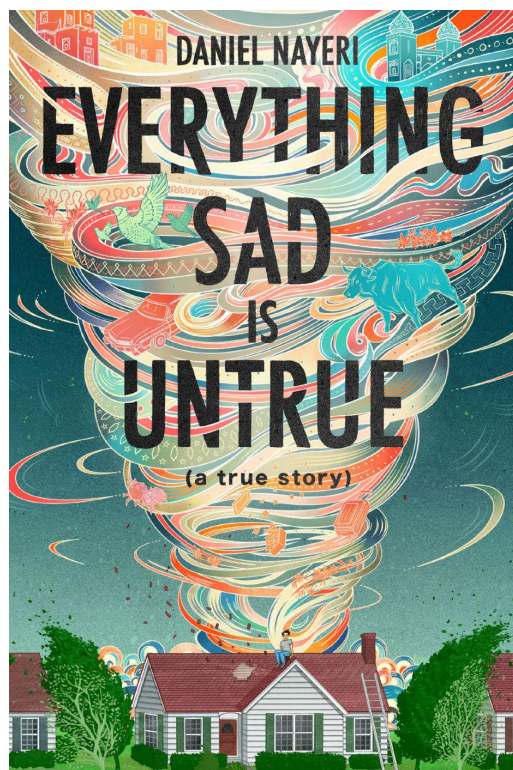
*The Namesake* takes the Ganguli family from their tradition-bound life in Calcutta through their fraught transformation into Americans. On the heels of their arranged wedding, Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli settle together in Cambridge, Massachusetts. An engineer by training, Ashoke adapts far less warily than his wife, who resists all things American and pines for her family. When their son is born, the task of naming him betrays the vexed results of bringing old ways to the new world. Named for a Russian writer by his Indian parents in memory of a catastrophe years before, Gogol Ganguli knows only that he suffers the burden of his heritage as well as his odd, antic name.

Lahiri brings great empathy to Gogol as he stumbles along the first-generation path, strewn with conflicting loyalties, comic detours, and wrenching love affairs. With penetrating insight, she reveals not only the defining power of the names and expectations bestowed upon us by our parents, but also the means by which we slowly, sometimes painfully, come to define ourselves.



## ***The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother, James McBride***

*The Color of Water* tells the remarkable story of Ruth McBride Jordan, the two good men she married, and the 12 good children she raised. Jordan, born Rachel Shilsky, a Polish Jew, immigrated to America soon after birth; as an adult she moved to New York City, leaving her family and faith behind in Virginia. Jordan met and married a Black man, making her isolation even more profound. The book is a success story, a testament to one woman's true heart, solid values, and indomitable will. Ruth Jordan battled not only racism but also poverty to raise her children and, despite being sorely tested, never wavered. In telling her story--along with her son's--*The Color of Water* addresses racial identity with compassion, insight, and realism. It is, in a word, inspiring, and you will finish it with unalloyed admiration for a flawed but remarkable individual. And, perhaps, a little more faith in us all.



## ***Everything Sad is Untrue, Daniel Nayeri***

At the front of a middle school classroom in Oklahoma, a boy named Khosrou (whom everyone calls "Daniel") stands, trying to tell a story. His story. But no one believes a word he says. To them he is a dark-skinned, hairy-armed boy with a big butt whose lunch smells funny; who makes things up and talks about poop too much. But Khosrou's stories, stretching back years, and decades, and centuries, are beautiful, and terrifying, from the moment his family fled Iran in the middle of the night with the secret police moments behind them, back to the sad, cement refugee camps of Italy...and further back to the fields near the river Aras, where rain-soaked flowers bled red like the yolk of the sunset had burst over everything, and further back still to the jasmine-scented city of Isfahan. Like Scheherazade in a hostile classroom, Daniel weaves a tale to save his own life: to stake his claim to the truth. And it is (a true story).

#1 New York Times Bestseller  
**ANGIE THOMAS**



### ***The Hate U Give, Angie Thomas***

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed.

Soon afterward, his death becomes a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr.

But what Starr does or does not say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

THE #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

## **THE GLASS CASTLE**



**JEANNETTE  
WALLS**

AUTHOR OF HALF BROKE HORSES  
AND THE SILVER STAR

"Walls has joined the company of writers such as Mary Karr  
and Friedrich Schlegel who have been able to  
transform their own memories into literature." —*People*

A MEMOIR

### ***The Glass Castle, Jeannette Walls***

Jeannette Walls grew up with parents whose ideals and stubborn nonconformity were both their curse and their salvation. Rex and Rose Mary Walls had four children. In the beginning, they lived like nomads, moving among Southwest desert towns, camping in the mountains. Rex was a charismatic, brilliant man who, when sober, captured his children's imagination, teaching them physics, geology, and above all, how to embrace life fearlessly. Rose Mary, who painted and wrote and couldn't stand the responsibility of providing for her family, called herself an "excitement addict." Cooking a meal that would be consumed in fifteen minutes had no appeal when she could make a painting that might last forever.

Later, when the money ran out, or the romance of the wandering life faded, the Walls retreated to the dismal West Virginia mining town -- and the family -- Rex Walls had done everything he could to escape. He drank. He stole the grocery money and disappeared for days. As the dysfunction of the family escalated, Jeannette and her brother and sisters had to fend for themselves, supporting one another as they weathered their parents' betrayals and, finally, found the resources and will to leave home.

\*All book synopses are provided by the individual publishing houses

## Supplemental Reading

If you would like to do some additional reading for your own pleasure, you might consider one of the suggested books from the list below. Please note that these books do NOT count as one of your required summer reading books; rather, they are suggestions for additional reading that you may want to do on your own. Enjoy!

**(Texts marked with a star are helpful preparation for the AP English exams.)**

**THE CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR** by Jean Auel

**THE GOOD EARTH** by Pearl S. Buck

**THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET** by Sandra Cisneros

**THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO** by Alexandre Dumas\*

**THE RIVER WAY** by David J. Duncan

**THE PILLARS OF THE EARTH** by Ken Follett

**THE DAY OF THE JACKAL** by Frederick Forsyth

**DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL** by Anne Frank

**THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X** as told to Alex Haley

**DUNE** by Frank Herbert

**ABOUT A BOY** by Nick Hornby

**LES MISERABLES** by Victor Hugo

**ANNIE JOHN** by Jamaica Kincaid

**SPRING MOON** by Bette Bao Lord

**ANGELA'S ASHES** by Frank McCourt

**THE HEART IS A LONELY HUNTER** by Carson McCullers\*

**THE SOURCE** by James Michener

**THE CENTER OF EVERYTHING** by Laura Moriarty

**CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY** by Alan Paton\*

**THE KING MUST DIE, THE BULL FROM THE SEA, and THE PRAISE SINGER** by Mary Renault

**ALL AMERICAN BOYS** by Jason Reynolds

**PREP** by Curtis Sittenfeld

**THE GRAPES OF WRATH** and **EAST OF EDEN** by John Steinbeck\*

THE HOLLOW HILLS and THE CRYSTAL CAVE by Mary Stewart

THE JOY LUCK CLUB by Amy Tan

THE LORD OF THE RINGS TRILOGY by J. R. R. Tolkien\*

CAT'S CRADLE and SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE by Kurt Vonnegut

THE MARTIAN by Andy Weir

THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING by T. H. White