

Please select **one** of the following books to read over the summer.

Book Title and Author	Description
<i>Falling Leaves: The Memoir of an Unwanted Chinese Daughter</i> by Adeline Yen Mah	The account of a childhood growing up in a wealthy but emotionally abusive Chinese family, set against the backdrop of 20th-century China's political upheaval. This memoir explores themes of family rejection, resilience, cultural identity, and the pursuit of personal dignity and belonging.
<i>Perfect Spy: The Incredible Double Life of Pham Zuan An, Time Magazine Reporter & Vietnamese Communist Agent</i> By Larry Berman	The true story of a journalist who secretly worked as a communist spy during the Vietnam War. This biography examines identity, loyalty, and the moral complexities of living a double life. It also reveals how he navigated deep personal relationships with Americans while secretly reporting to the North Vietnamese, highlighting the tension between trust, deception, and survival in a time of intense political conflict.
<i>"Socialism Is Great!" A Worker's Memoir of the New China</i> By Lijia Zhang	A personal narrative that traces Lijia Zhang's life growing up in post-Mao China, the memoir explores her experiences as a factory worker during a time of rapid economic reform and shifting social values. Through humor, honesty, and political insight, it reflects on the promises and realities of socialism while offering a ground-level view of China's transformation and its human impact.
<i>Solito</i> by Javier Zamora	The account of the author's harrowing journey traveling alone from El Salvador to the United States to reunite with his parents. Faced with danger, fear, and unexpected kindness, the book explores the topics of immigration, family, and belonging.
<i>They Poured Fire on Us From the Sky</i> by Benson Deng, Alephonsion Deng, and Benjamin Ajak	This book shares the true story of three young Sudanese boys—known as Lost Boys—who were forced to flee their homes during Sudan's brutal civil war. It follows their journey across deserts, refugee camps, and eventually to America, revealing the horrors of war, the strength of family, and the enduring hope for a better future.

Important Note for Parents/Guardians: Please research accordingly before your child selects his/her

book. You may wish to use resources such as Good Reads Reviews and Common–Sense Media to ensure your and your child’s comfort with the material in the chosen book.

What Do I Do? Read attentively, annotate, and enjoy the book you select. Your annotations will help you on a writing assessment after the first two weeks of the semester, in which you will explore “coming of age”: the journey from youth to adulthood, marked by key moments of growth, self-discovery, and understanding of the world around you. As you read your selected text this summer, pay attention to how the author changes over time—what challenges they face, what lessons they learn, and how their identity or understanding of the world shifts. While you read, annotate for the following:

- **Turning Points:** Identify key events or decisions that mark growth or transformation.
- **Personal Reflection:** Notice moments where the author reflects on past experiences—what do they realize or learn?
- **Relationships:** How do family, friendships, mentors, or culture influence their development?
- **Voice and Tone:** Consider how the author’s voice and tone reflect their maturity over time.
- **Themes of Identity, Responsibility, or Independence:** Where do you see these themes emerge in their story?
- **Connections:** How does the author’s real-life coming-of-age experience connect to your own life or other stories you’ve read?