



June 2013

Dear Upper School Parents and Students,

Each year we ask our students to continue their learning through the summer. Acquiring knowledge, exercising intellectual curiosity, and reading for aesthetic pleasure are activities that should not cease in the summer months. Consequently, the English Department provides a summer reading list for Upper School students.

**At the beginning of the year, students will be assessed on all required texts.**

The **required** course-specific texts are:

- Form III (Grade 9):** *The Odyssey* (Homer) – Robert Fagles’ translation only, Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition, ISBN 0-14-026886-3 or ISBN 0-14-026886-7. **Read Books 1-12 ONLY!** Please see the study guide for further details. In order to enhance each student’s understanding of the text, we are also requiring students to complete, in writing, the online study guide. Each student is expected to bring his/her completed study guide to English class on the first day of school. The study guide provides important notes, concepts, and focus questions which are intended to help the students know what to look for in the text and to aid their understanding of important themes and passages. Written responses to these focus questions must be written in complete sentences. Please note that the reading assignment begins with Book 1 on p. 77 (students are not responsible for reading Fagles’ Introduction).
- Form IV (Grade 10):** *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress* (Dai Sijie) and one book from the attached list of recommended sophomore books.
- Form V (Grade 11):** *The Scarlet Letter* (Nathaniel Hawthorne)—we recommend Penguin Classics, ISBN 0-14-243726-3—and one book from the attached list of recommended junior books. Students are not required to read the introductory section of *The Scarlet Letter* entitled “The Custom-House”; students should begin their reading with Chapter One.
- Form VI (Grade 12):** *Remains of the Day* (Kazuo Ishiguro) and one book from the attached list of recommended senior books.

Students in Form III are encouraged but not required to read additional books from the recommended freshman reading list that is attached. Students in Forms IV, V, and VI have two **required** texts: one course-specific title listed above and one additional book of their choice from the attached grade level reading lists.

Of course, our more advanced readers are welcome to choose books from grade level lists above their own.

On the suggested grade level reading lists that are attached to this letter, students can pick any book they like. The classics marked with an asterisk would be appropriate for students interested in sitting for the AP English Literature exam at the end of their junior year.

We encourage parents to join students in reading and discussing many of the books on the attached list. And, of course, we hope you all will read far beyond the list, enjoying the freedom of time to read as much as you like.

Have a wonderful summer!

Victoria Grant — English Department Chair  
Denise Brown-Allen, Ed.D. — Upper School Director

## PINGRY UPPER SCHOOL — SUMMER READING LIST 2013

### Books recommended for incoming Form III (Freshmen):

Adams, Douglas. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Arthur Dent begins his wild journey in time and space.

Adams, Richard. *Watership Down*. An epic novel about a group of rabbits journeying to and establishing a new society. A wonderful look at democratic leadership.

Alvarez, Julia. *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*. Four sisters from the Dominican Republic find in New York a very different life from the genteel existence they left behind.

Auel, Jean. *The Clan of the Cave Bear*. Prehistoric days brought to vivid life.

\*Baldwin, James. *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. A semi-autobiographical novel about a fourteen-year-old boy's moral awakening.

Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*. Life in China before the Communist Revolution.

Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*. Linked stories about a young Hispanic-American woman's growing up.

\*Dumas, Alexandre. *The Count of Monte Cristo*. The famous story of Edmond Dantes' imprisonment and revenge.

Duncan, David J. *The River Why*. Gus tries to escape his problems by setting up a solitary fishing camp but discovers that he cannot escape the past or flee from his future.

Follett, Ken. *The Pillars of the Earth*. An engrossing novel set in medieval England.

Forsyth, Frederick. *The Day of the Jackal*. A plot to assassinate DeGaulle.

Haley, Alex. *Roots*. An African-American man's search for his family's story also offers deep truths about our shared American story.

Herbert, Frank. *Dune*. A classic creation of an alternate world.

Hornby, Nick. *About a Boy*. Will Lightman inherits the money that his father earned from writing one hit song and hasn't much to do with his time until his life is interrupted by a strange boy named Marcus.

\*Hugo, Victor. *Les Miserables*. Jean Valjean, a former convict, is chased by the relentless Inspector Javert. Valjean's valiant struggle to do good in spite of his desperate circumstances highlights the plight of the poor in nineteenth century France.

Kidd, Sue Monk. *The Secret Life of Bees*. An unlikely friendship leads a southern teen to new experiences during the era of the campaign for civil rights.

Kincaid, Jamaica. *Annie John*. A childhood in the Caribbean.

Lord, Betty Bao. *Spring Moon*. A semi-autobiographical novel about life in pre-1949 China.

McBride, James. *The Color of Water*. A young bi-racial man's tribute to his Jewish mother.

McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. The autobiographical story of a boy's harsh childhood in Ireland and his quest to come to America for a better life.

McCullers, Carson. *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*. A group of lonely people find one another for a time.

Michener, James. *The Source*. A series of stories that trace the history of Israel.

Moriarty, Laura. *The Center of Everything*. Talented but poor, Evelyn succeeds in her quest to attend college.

Paton, Alan. *Cry, the Beloved Country*. A story about two fathers under apartheid in South Africa.

Renault, Mary. *The King Must Die, The Bull From the Sea, The Praise Singer*. Renault brings ancient Greece to life in these novels.

Roth, Philip. *Goodbye, Columbus*. Coming of age in the Fifties: Newark meets Short Hills.

Sittenfeld, Curtis. *Prep*. An Indiana teenager wins a scholarship to an eastern boarding school.

\*Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath, East of Eden*. Two big Depression Era novels by the author of *Of Mice and Men*.

Stewart, Mary. *The Hollow Hills, The Crystal Cave*. The story of Merlin and Arthur in early Britain.

Tan, Amy. *The Joy Luck Club*. Four Chinese mothers and their Chinese-American daughters grapple with cultural and generational conflicts.

\*Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. A fascinating mythological adventure world.

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Cat's Cradle, Slaughterhouse Five*. Two satiric novels with science fiction elements.

Walls, Jeanette. *The Glass Castle*. A memoir about a dysfunctional family with nonconformist values.

White, T.H. *The Once and Future King*. The story of King Arthur retold with humor and pathos.

\*Wright, Richard. *Native Son*. A complex story of class and race struggles in 1930's Chicago.

## **Books recommended for incoming Form IV (Sophomores):**

\*Austen, Jane. *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*. Austen presents satiric pictures of the quest for matrimony in early nineteenth-century Britain.

\*Balzac, Honoré. *Père Goriot*. Coming of age in nineteenth century Paris.

\*Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. A young governess falls in love with her employer and discovers a terrible secret.

\*Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. Meet the brooding Heathcliff and the rebellious Catherine in this famous romantic novel set in nineteenth century Yorkshire.

\*Camus, Albert. *The Stranger & The Plague*. In the former, M. Meursault is ostensibly put on trial for murder, but he is really being judged for not crying at his mother's funeral. In the latter, an outbreak of plague in Oran elicits the courage of a doctor. Both explore existentialist values.

Chevalier, Tracy. *The Girl with a Pearl Earring*. A brief, beautifully written novel about the painter Johannes Vermeer, told from the point of view of the new maid, who possesses artistic talent herself. *Remarkable Creatures* is the author's latest novel.

\*Collins, Wilkie. *The Moonstone*, *The Woman in White*. Two Victorian thrillers.

\*Dickens, Charles. *Oliver Twist*, *Bleak House*, *Hard Times*. Life in Victorian England is vividly presented. Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* is a romantic historical novel about the French Revolution.

\*Dostoevski, Feodor. *Crime and Punishment*. The famous Russian novel about a poor student who murders to test a theory and finds himself haunted by guilt.

\*Flaubert, Gustave. *Madame Bovary*. Emma Bovary's desire to escape from her boring life in the provinces comes to a tragic end.

Ford, Jamie. *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*. A middle-aged Chinese-American widower living in Seattle remembers the early forties when he and his Japanese girlfriend are separated because she is sent to an internment center.

Gaarder, Jostein. *Sophie's World*. A mystery story that is also about the history of philosophy.

Galsworthy, John. *The Forsyte Saga*. An intricate, many-charactered novel that traces three generations of a wealthy English family.

\*Heller, Joseph. *Catch 22*. The famous novel of World War II about Yossarian, a traumatized bombardier.

Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. A story of the troubled friendship between two boys in twentieth century Afghanistan.

\*Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*. Science fiction meets the savage world.

Keneally, Thomas. *Schindler's List*. A fictionalized but true story about a German factory owner who saved a group of Jews from death in the Holocaust.

Kingston, Maxine Hong. *China Men*, *Woman Warrior*, *Tripmaster Monkey*. Novels about powerful individuals in conflict with their societies.

Kinsella, W. P. *Shoeless Joe*. A magical story about the power of baseball.

LeCarré, John. *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*; *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. Two very famous spy novels about the Cold War.

Larsen, Nella. *Passing*. The story of two women's struggle with racial identity in early twentieth century America.

\*Malamud, Bernard. *The Natural* and *The Assistant*. Two classic stories about hubris and moral dilemmas.

\*Maugham, Somerset. *The Razor's Edge*. One man's spiritual journey explores the clash between Eastern and Western values.

\*Orwell, George. *1984*. England has become a totalitarian country, watched over by Big Brother.

\*Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. If you enjoyed *Jane Eyre*, this short novel retells the story from the point of view of the mad woman in the attic.

Rice, Anne. *The Vampire Chronicles*. One of a popular series.

Sebold, Alice. *The Lovely Bones*. A girl looks down at the life her murderer took from her.

Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. A short but powerful novel about a prisoner in a Russian gulag, written by the Nobel Prize novelist.

Stone, Irving. *The Agony and the Ecstasy*. A fictionalized biography of the Renaissance sculptor, Michelangelo.

\*Styron, William. *Sophie's Choice*. A young Southerner comes of age through his relationship with his neighbors, a beautiful Polish Holocaust survivor and her charismatic boyfriend.

Tan, Amy. *The Kitchen God's Wife*. A novel about the Chinese in America.

\*Tolstoy, Leo. *Anna Karenina*, *War and Peace*. Two huge family novels about life in nineteenth century Russia.

\*Turgenev, Ivan. *Fathers and Sons*. Two fathers and two sons in Russia during the nineteenth-century.

Vreeland, Susan. *The Girl in Hyacinth Blue*. Trace the history of painting through the stories of the individuals who temporarily possessed the portrait of the girl in hyacinth blue.

Whitehead, Colson. *Zone One: A Novel*. An intellectual consideration of our world in the midst of a zombie apocalypse.

## Books recommended for incoming Form V (Juniors):

Acito, Mark. *How I Paid for College*. A funny first novel about a teen who wants to go to Juilliard.

Atwood, Margaret. *Oryx and Crake*, *The Year of the Flood*, and *The Handmaid's Tale*. The two former are futuristic stories about life after genetic and climate change and human frailty have made a mess. The latter is a feminist dystopia set in the United States in the late twentieth century.

Banks, Russell. *Rule of the Bone*. A story about a contemporary Huck Finn.

Boyle, T.C. *Drop City*. Members of a California commune move to Alaska and find new challenges.

\*Cather, Willa. *O Pioneers!* A story about a courageous immigrant woman in Nebraska.

Conroy, Frank. *Body and Soul*. If you love music, you'll love this story about a young and poor musical genius befriended by a music store owner in New York in the forties and fifties.

\*Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*. A young man finds his courage during a Civil War battle.

\*Dreiser, Theodore. *Sister Carrie*. Chicago and New York at the turn of the century.

\*Doctorow, E. L. *Ragtime*. A blend of real and fictional characters conveys the many textures of American life just before the Great War.

Erdrich, Louise. *Love Medicine*. A multigenerational saga of two extended families who live on and around a Chippewa reservation in North Dakota.

\*Faulkner, William. *Intruder in the Dust*, *The Unvanquished*. Two powerful works set in America's South.

\*Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *This Side of Paradise*, *Tender Is the Night*. Two novels by the author of *The Great Gatsby*.

Frazier, Charles. *Cold Mountain*. A wounded soldier returns from the Civil War.

Gaines, Ernest J. *A Gathering of Old Men*. Someone killed a white man, and the black men of the town are all claiming responsibility for the crime.

Goldberg, Myla. *Bee Season*. An exquisite first novel in which a family is shaken apart by a small but unexpected shift when nine-year-old Eliza wins a local spelling bee.

Guterson, David. *Snow Falling on Cedars*. A murder mystery set on an island in the Puget Sound in the 1950's, this novel explores lingering racial conflict stemming from WWII internment camps.

Haruf, Kent. *Plainsong* and *Eventide*. Life in a small Colorado town, Gentle and absorbing.

\*Hemingway, Ernest. *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. An idealistic American fights in the Spanish Civil War.

\*Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Hurston's feisty heroine demands to make her own decisions about her life and love.

\*James, Henry. *Daisy Miller*. A rich young American on her first visit to Europe. *Portrait of a Lady*. A freedom-loving American woman makes a disastrous marriage.

Jiles, Paulette. *Enemy Women*. A Civil War novel focused on women's lives.

Kerouac, Jack. *On the Road*. Sal and his friends travel back and forth across the United States, wanting life, fleeing madness.

Lamb, Wally. *She's Come Undone*. Lamb is a great storyteller who makes you care about his unusual heroine.

Mailer, Norman. *The Naked and the Dead*. A famous novel of World War II.

McLain, Paula. *The Paris Wife*. Paris in the twenties through the eyes of Ernest Hemingway's first wife, Hadley.

\*Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*, *The Bluest Eye*, *Jazz*. Complex and powerful novels about the African-American experience.

Patchett, Anne. *Bel Canto*. A romantic novel about the relationships that develop during a hostage siege in a Latin American country.

Proulx, E. Annie. *The Shipping News*. A newspaperman recovers from a divorce by returning to his roots in Newfoundland.

Russo, Richard. *Empire Falls*. A family novel set in a fading factory town in Maine.

Smiley, Jane. *A Thousand Acres*. The King Lear story retold through a farming family in Iowa.

Smith, Lee. *Oral History*. A college student researching her Appalachian roots discovers more than she might have expected about her family's past.

Stegner, Wallace. *Angle of Repose*. A retired historian examines a family history spent carving out a life in the American West.

Styron, William. *The Confessions of Nat Turner*. A fictionalized account of Nat Turner's rebellion.

Tyler, Anne. *St. Maybe*. An engrossing family novel by the Baltimore novelist.

\*Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Pudd'nhead Wilson*. Novels by the creator of *Huckleberry Finn*.

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. Set in rural Georgia in the 1930s, the story focuses on female black life and won its author a Pulitzer Prize.

Wallace, David Foster. *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*. Short stories which highlight all that is quintessentially male, written in the author's brilliant and frenetic style.

\*Warren, Robert Penn. *All the King's Men*. A great political novel based on the life of Huey Long.

\*Wharton, Edith. *The Age of Innocence, The House of Mirth*. Two critical looks at life among New York City's very rich.

## Books recommended for incoming Form VI (Seniors):

**EB (EuroBrit) and WL (World Lit) mean that the novel is more relevant to one course or the other.**

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*. The Nigerian-born author's vivid descriptions of her homeland. WL

Ali, Monica. *Brick Lane*. The lives of two sisters in Bangladesh take different turns. WL

Allende, Isabel. *Paula*. A nonfiction work in which Allende shares her life story with her dying daughter. *Eva Luna* follows the adventures of Eva, who escapes oppression through storytelling. WL

Appelfeld, Aharon. *Badenheim, 1939, The Iron Track*. This Israeli novelist explores aspects of the Holocaust. EB

Atwood, Margaret. *The Robber Bride* and *Alias Grace*. This Canadian writer has created a malicious protagonist in the former novel and re-examined an infamous murder mystery set in Ontario in the latter. EB

Byatt, A. S. *Possession, Angels and Insects*. A contemporary British writer looks back at the Victorian Age and reveals its passions. EB

Cleeve, Chris. *Little Bee*. Something unimaginably horrifying happens on a Nigerian beach; thereafter, the lives of a young Nigerian girl and a British couple are forever changed. EB & WL

Coetzee, J.M. *Disgrace*. A white South African professor is forced to confront the disastrous repercussions and aftermath of the apartheid era. WL

\*Conrad, Joseph. *Lord Jim*. Jim spends the rest of his life trying to atone for an act of cowardice. WL

\*Eliot, George. *The Mill on the Floss*. An autobiographical novel about a brother and sister. EB

Eggers, Dave. *What is the What* and *Zeitoun*. The former is a fictionalized memoir about strife in the Sudan, the latter about a Syrian-born contractor dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the pain of racial profiling in a post- 9/11 world. WL

Esquivel, Laura. *Like Water for Chocolate*. An ebullient and imaginative narrative about an unusual young Mexican woman. WL

\*Forster, E.M. *A Room With a View*. A young British woman learns that passion can indeed overcome barriers of class. EB

\*Garcia Marquez, Gabriel. *The Old Gringo, One Hundred Years of Solitude, Love in the Time of Cholera*. Latin American classics. WL

Golden, Arthur. *Memoirs of a Geisha*. A fascinating look at the storied figure of the Japanese geisha and the culture that created her. WL

- \*Hardy, Thomas. *The Return of the Native, Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Hardy sets his tragic novels in southwestern England. EB
- \*Hesse, Herman. *Demian, Siddhartha, Steppenwolf*. Philosophical novels by a modern German writer. EB
- Hornby, Nick. *High Fidelity*. A humorous account of a record store owner's tumultuous relationships in central London. EB
- Hosseini, Khaled. *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Hosseini's fiction is focused on life in Afghanistan. WL
- Jin, Ha. *Waiting*. A doctor married to a Chinese peasant is kept from happiness by the Communist regime. *War Trash* is about the Korean War. WL
- \*Joyce, James. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The autobiographical first novel by the famous twentieth century Irish author. EB
- Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Poisonwood Bible*. A family of women accompany their husband and father as he ventures into the Congo as an impassioned missionary. EB & WL
- \*Kundera, Milan. *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*. Czechoslovakia under the Communists. EB
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies*. Eight unusual short stories about the lives of Indians. WL
- Larsson, Stieg. *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*. The first book of a trilogy set in modern Sweden, this novel is a thinking person's thriller. EB
- \*Lawrence, D. H. *Sons and Lovers*. A coming-of-age novel marked by a conflict between a mother and girlfriend for the allegiance of the man they both love. EB
- McEwan, Ian. *Atonement*. This recent novel's protagonist finds that the life of the imagination brings with it moral responsibilities. *Amsterdam* is a short but potent novel about a sex scandal in the upper reaches of British politics. EB
- Mistry, Rohinton. *A Fine Balance and Family Matters*. This diasporan Indian writer focuses on the ways in which life in modern India is affected by politics, economics, and religion. WL
- Mukherjee, Bharati. *Desirable Daughters, The Tiger's Daughter, Miss New India*. Cultural conflicts in the lives of Indians who have lived in America. WL
- Murakami, Haruki. *Norwegian Wood, After the Quake, Kafka on the Shore*. This Japanese author often employs elements of magical realism in his powerfully engaging stories of modern Japan. WL
- Nicholls, David. *One Day*. The episodic story of Dex and Emma told on a single day each year for two decades. EB
- Rushdie, Salman. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories, Midnight's Children*. Magical realism set in India. WL
- Sayers, Dorothy. *The Nine Tailors*. A very proper and engrossing British mystery. EB
- Simonson, Helen. *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand*. A comedy of manners about a "stiff upper lip" Englishman and Jasmina Ali, a Pakistani shopkeeper. EB & WL
- Smith, Zadie. *White Teeth*. Smith's engrossing novel spans three generations of two families in England whose stories become irrevocably and fascinatingly intertwined. EB & WL
- Tsitsi, Dangarembga. *Nervous Conditions*. Two young Rhodesian women struggle to pursue an education and a clear sense of self in the face of culturally based sexism and the effects of colonialism. WL
- \*Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse*. Two famous early twentieth century novels about family life, art, and the difficulties of making true connections. EB
- Zafón, Carlos Ruiz. *The Shadow of the Wind*. About the power of a mysterious novel, the story is set in 1950's Barcelona. EB