

English 4 Honors

Summer Reading 2026

Choose one of the following books, which you must obtain on your own from a local library or bookseller, and read it over the summer. The books are divided into fiction and nonfiction, but you only need to choose one book overall.

You will be assessed on the reading when you return to school in the fall. Since you will be allowed to refer to your notes during the assessment, you should take detailed notes on your book of choice. As you read, take notes on the themes and significant aspects of the book. Notes should refer to specific passages in the book that illustrate those themes and significant aspects. The writing prompt will be generic enough to accommodate any of the book choices on this list.

If you are interested in reading any of the following titles but are unable to obtain a copy, please email Dr. Basumatary at mbasumatary@bhpsnj.org, prior to June 12th. She will arrange for you to borrow a copy.

Fiction

The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto by Mitch Albom - At nine years old, Frankie Presto, a Spanish war orphan raised by a blind music teacher, is sent to America in the bottom of a boat. His only possession is an old guitar and six magical strings.

The Memory Keeper's Daughter by Kim Edwards - This novel follows the lives of Dr. David Henry, his wife, Norah, and their twin children who are secretly separated at birth. The story begins in March 1964 when an unexpected blizzard hits the small Kentucky town where the young couple lives.

47 by Walter Mosley - 47 is a young slave boy living under the watchful eye of a brutal slave master. His life seems doomed until he meets a mysterious runaway slave, Tall John.

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison - The narrator of *Invisible Man* is a nameless young black man who moves in 20th-century United States where reality is surreal and people can survive only through pretense. Because the people he encounters "see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination," he is effectively invisible.

Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro - This novel is set in a dystopian world in which human clones are created so that they can donate their organs as young adults. The novel follows the life story of Kathy, a clone who is raised at a boarding school for future "donors."

The Vanishing Half by Britt Bennett - "The Vignes twin sisters will always be identical. But after growing up together in a small, southern black community and running away at age sixteen, it's not just the shape of their daily lives that is different as adults, it's everything: their families, their communities, their racial identities. Many years later, one sister lives with her black daughter in the same southern town she once tried to escape. The other passes for white, and her white husband knows nothing of her past. Still, even separated by so many miles and just as many lies, the fates of the twins remain intertwined. What will happen to the next generation, when their own daughters' storylines intersect?"

(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/51791252-the-vanishing-half?ac=1&from_search=true&qid=nyBrpinkVp&rank=1)?

Nonfiction

***The Red Bandanna* by Tom Rinaldi** - On Sept. 11, 2001, in the South Tower of the World Trade Center, a man wearing a red bandanna lost his life leading others to safety. This is his story.

***Into the Wild* by John Krakauer** - Christopher McCandless graduates from Emory University as a top student and athlete. However, instead of embarking on a prestigious and profitable career, he chooses to give his savings to charity, rid himself of his possessions, and set out on a journey to the Alaskan wilderness.

***Eight Men Out* by Eliot Asinof** - A group of professional gamblers offers the Sox's best athletes a fortune to throw the series, and the players agree. However, their reputations and careers are ruined when the dark secret, dubbed the "Black Sox Scandal," reaches the public consciousness.

***Kabul Beauty School* by Deborah Rodriguez** - Deborah Rodriguez went to Afghanistan as part of a group offering humanitarian aid to this war-torn nation. Rodriguez, a hairdresser, soon found she had a gift for befriending Afghans. Once her profession became known, she was eagerly sought out by both Westerners desperate for a good haircut and also by Afghan women, who have a long and proud tradition of running their own beauty salons.