

Memoirs for Incoming 11th Grade Students

<p><i>A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius: A Memoir Based on a True Story</i> by Dave Eggers</p>	<p>The literary sensation of the year, a book that redefines both family and narrative for the twenty-first century. <i>A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius</i> is the moving memoir of a college senior who, in the space of five weeks, loses both of his parents to cancer and inherits his eight-year-old brother. Here is an exhilarating debut that manages to be simultaneously hilarious and wildly inventive as well as a deeply heartfelt story of the love that holds a family together.</p>
<p><i>All Creatures Great and Small</i> by James Herriot</p>	<p>In <i>All Creatures Great and Small</i>, we meet the young Herriot as he takes up his calling and discovers that the realities of veterinary practice in rural Yorkshire are very different from the sterile setting of veterinary school. Some visits are heart-wrenchingly difficult, such as one to an old man in the village whose very ill dog is his only friend and companion, some are lighthearted and fun, such as Herriot's periodic visits to the overfed and pampered Pekinese Tricki Woo who throws parties and has his own stationery, and yet others are inspirational and enlightening, such as Herriot's recollections of poor farmers who will scrape their meager earnings together to be able to get proper care for their working animals. From seeing to his patients in the depths of winter on the remotest homesteads to dealing with uncooperative owners and critically ill animals, Herriot discovers the wondrous variety and never-ending challenges of veterinary practice as his humor, compassion, and love of the animal world shine forth.</p>
<p><i>Between a Rock and a Hard Place</i> by Aron Ralston</p>	<p>In late April 2003, hiker Aron Ralston was trekking through a canyon in southeast Utah when an 800-pound boulder shifted and pinned his right arm. Inextricably stuck, alone for five and a half days, armed only with a bottle of water and a few burritos, he became hypothermic and dehydrated and slipped into visions and despair. Finally, in a last desperate attempt, he severed his own arm. Then, dripping blood all the way, he rappelled 60 feet and walked eight miles to rescue. "Hero" is too weak a word.</p>
<p><i>Black Like Me</i> by John Howard Griffin</p>	<p>In the Deep South of the 1950s, journalist John Howard Griffin decided to cross the color line. Using medication that darkened his skin to deep brown, he exchanged his privileged life as a Southern white man for the disenfranchised world of an unemployed black man. His audacious, still chillingly relevant eyewitness history is a work about race and humanity-that in this new millennium still has something important to say to every American.</p> <p>He trudged southern streets searching for a place where he could eat or rest, looking vainly for a job other than menial labor, feeling the "hate stare." He was John Griffin, a white man who darkened the color of his skin and crossed the line into a country of hate, fear, and hopelessness--the country of the American Black man.</p>
<p><i>Bossypants</i> by Tina Fey</p>	<p>Before Liz Lemon, before "Weekend Update," before "Sarah Palin," Tina Fey was just a young girl with a dream: a recurring stress dream that she was being chased through a local airport by her middle-school gym teacher. She also had a dream that one day she would be a comedian on TV. She has seen both these dreams come true.</p> <p>At last, Tina Fey's story can be told. From her youthful days as a vicious nerd to her tour of duty on Saturday Night Live; from her passionately halfhearted pursuit of</p>

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	<p>physical beauty to her life as a mother eating things off the floor; from her one-sided college romance to her nearly fatal honeymoon — from the beginning of this paragraph to this final sentence.</p> <p>Tina Fey reveals all, and proves what we've all suspected: you're no one until someone calls you bossy.</p>
<p><i>Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science</i> by Atul Gawande</p>	<p>“No one writes about medicine as a human subject as well as Atul Gawande,” says Adam Gopnik of this Boston surgeon whose articles appear regularly in <i>The New Yorker</i>. Gawande’s descriptions of everything from clumsy surgical mishaps to new cutting-edge operating room techniques are rendered with grace and wonder. Reading his accounts of pain experiments (in which female dancers excel) and medical-convention huckstering, one gains a sense of his stately, sometimes surrealistic profession.</p>
<p><i>Eleven Seconds: A Story of Tragedy, Courage, and Triumph</i> by Travis Roy</p>	<p>In this heartfelt testament to the power of love and the strength of the human spirit, Travis Roy, who suffered a devastating injury eleven seconds into his first college hockey game, reveals how he has managed to cope after the accident and, with the help of family and friends, overcome tremendous barriers to begin a new life.</p>
<p><i>Forgotten Fire</i> by Adam Bagdasarian</p>	<p>In 1915 Vahan Kenderian is living a life of privilege as the youngest son of a wealthy Armenian family in Turkey. This secure world is shattered when some family members are whisked away while others are murdered before his eyes.</p> <p>Vahan loses his home and family, and is forced to live a life he would never have dreamed of in order to survive. Somehow Vahan’s incredible strength and spirit help him endure, even knowing that each day could be his last.</p>
<p><i>Funny in Farsi</i> by Firoozeh Dumas</p>	<p>When seven-year-old Firoozeh Dumas's family moved to Whittier, California, from Iran in 1972, they didn't plan to stay. A former graduate student in Texas, Dumas's father had strong memories of America and wanted his children to spend some time growing up in the land of spotless freeway rest stops and grocery store sample trays laden with pigs-in-blanket. After several years, they returned to their homeland, only to be swept up in the Iranian Revolution. With so much uncertainty about life in Iran, the family moved back to Southern California for good, and aunts, uncles, and cousins soon followed. Dumas depicts her and her relatives' encounters with American culture in comic vignettes that reveal a wonderful storytelling talent. From her uncle's discovery of fast food (and then, predictably, fad diets) to her father's insistence on performing his own imperfect home repairs to her own adoption of the first name Julie, Dumas turns anecdotes into amusing episodes that also illustrate the challenges of assimilating while trying to retain the unique cultural characteristics that make us all different. <i>Katherine Hottinger</i></p>
<p><i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i> by Maya Angelou</p>	<p>Here is a book as joyous and painful, as mysterious and memorable, as childhood itself. <i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i> captures the longing of lonely children, the brute insult of bigotry, and the wonder of words that can make the world right. Maya Angelou’s debut memoir is a modern American classic beloved worldwide.</p> <p>Sent by their mother to live with their devout, self-sufficient grandmother in a small Southern town, Maya and her brother, Bailey, endure the ache of abandonment and the prejudice of the local “powhitetrash.” At eight years old and</p>

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	<p>back at her mother’s side in St. Louis, Maya is attacked by a man many times her age—and has to live with the consequences for a lifetime. Years later, in San Francisco, Maya learns that love for herself, the kindness of others, her own strong spirit, and the ideas of great authors (“I met and fell in love with William Shakespeare”) will allow her to be free instead of imprisoned.</p> <p>Poetic and powerful, <i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i> will touch hearts and change minds for as long as people read.</p>
<p><i>In These Girls, Hope is a Muscle</i> by Madeleine Blair</p>	<p>They Were a Talented Team with a Near-Perfect Record. But for Five Straight Years, When it Came to The Crunch of the Playoffs, the Amherst Lady Hurricanes- A "Finesse" High-School Girls' Basketball Team of Nice Girls from A Nice Town- Somehow Lacked the Scrappy, Hard-Driving Desire to Go all the Way. Now, Led by the Strong Back-Court of All-American Jamila Wideman and Three-Point Specialist Jen Pariseau, and Playing beyond Their Personal Best, this is Their Year to Prove Themselves in the State Championships. Their Season to Test Their Passion for the Sport and Their loyalty to Each Other. Their Time to Discover Who they Really are. In These Girls, Hope is a Muscle is the Fierce, Funny, and Intimate look into the Minds and Hearts of one Group of Girls and Their Quest for Success and, Most Important of all, Respect.</p> <p>A Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist tells the story of a high school girls' basketball team's championship season and their fierce, funny, sisterhood-is-powerful quest for excellence. Reminiscent of A Sense of Where You Are and Friday Night Lights, Blais's book takes readers through an incredible season of the Lady Hurricanes of Massachusetts.</p>
<p><i>Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust</i> by Immaculee Ilibagiza</p>	<p>Immaculee Ilibagiza grew up in a country she loved, surrounded by a family she cherished. But in 1994 her idyllic world was ripped apart as Rwanda descended into a bloody genocide. Immaculee’s family was brutally murdered during a killing spree that lasted three months and claimed the lives of nearly a million Rwandans. Incredibly, Immaculee survived the slaughter. For 91 days, she and seven other women huddled silently together in the cramped bathroom of a local pastor while hundreds of machete-wielding killers hunted for them. It was during those endless hours of unspeakable terror that Immaculee discovered the power of prayer, eventually shedding her fear of death and forging a profound and lasting relationship with God. She emerged from her bathroom hideout having discovered the meaning of truly unconditional love—a love so strong she was able seek out and forgive her family’s killers. The triumphant story of this remarkable young woman’s journey through the darkness of genocide will inspire anyone whose life has been touched by fear, suffering, and loss.</p>
<p><i>Med Head</i> by James Patterson</p>	<p>How it FEELS to have a body that won't stop moving, to be really different from everyone else, to be made fun of every day, to be totally reckless, to never relax, to be shut out of everything, to break FREE and TAKE CONTROL.</p> <p>James Patterson's <i>Against Medical Advice</i> riveted adults with the page-turning drama of one teenager's courage, sacrifice, and triumph in confronting an agonizing medical condition. Now this deeply personal account of Cory Friedman's intense</p>

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	<p>struggles with Tourette's Syndrome and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder--as well as depression, anxiety, and alcohol addiction--is available for teen readers.</p>
<p><i>Out of the Blue</i> by Victor Cruz</p>	<p>Victor Cruz, the Super Bowl-winning and record-breaking wide receiver, is best known for his explosive plays and salsa touchdown celebrations. While his meteoric rise in the NFL looked like the result of a magical year, it was actually a lifetime in the making.</p> <p>Raised in Paterson, New Jersey's gritty Fourth Ward, Cruz overcame numerous setbacks through hard work, perseverance, and the support of his loving family—from his grandmother who gave him his signature dance moves; to his late father, a former firefighter, who introduced him to football and taught him how to play; to his hard-working, single mother who never let him give up in the face of a challenge.</p> <p>In this inspiring and candid account, Cruz pays tribute to the people and places that made him the man he is today, recounts his most defining moments, and illustrates how his hardships ultimately unleashed his impenetrable will to win.</p>
<p><i>Seriously, I'm Kidding</i> by Ellen DeGeneres</p>	<p>I've experienced a whole lot the last few years and I have a lot to share. So I hope that you'll take a moment to sit back, relax and enjoy the words I've put together for you in this book. I think you'll find I've left no stone unturned, no door unopened, no window unbroken, no rug unvacuumed, no ivories untickled. What I'm saying is, let us begin, shall we?</p>
<p><i>Stick Figure: A Diary of My Former Self</i> by Lori Gottlieb</p>	<p>Growing up in Beverly Hills in the 1970s, Lori Gottlieb learned the lessons her culture had to teach her—for example, that “no one could ever like a girl with thunder thighs.” Lori took those lessons seriously, and saw her world fall slowly apart as she developed a fierce reluctance to eat—winding up hospitalized when her “diet” took over her life. Fortunately, she recorded the journey in her diary, and her story is funny, slyly insightful, and surprisingly universal.</p>
<p><i>The Freedom Writers Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them</i> by Freedom Writers and Zlata Filipovic</p>	<p>As an idealistic twenty-three-year-old English teacher at Wilson High School in Long beach, California, Erin Gruwell confronted a room of “unteachable, at-risk” students. One day she intercepted a note with an ugly racial caricature, and angrily declared that this was precisely the sort of thing that led to the Holocaust—only to be met by uncomprehending looks. So she and her students, using the treasured books <i>Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl</i> and <i>Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo</i> as their guides, undertook a life-changing, eye-opening, spirit-raising odyssey against intolerance and misunderstanding. They learned to see the parallels in these books to their own lives, recording their thoughts and feelings in diaries and dubbing themselves the “Freedom Writers” in homage to the civil rights activists “The Freedom Riders.”</p>
<p><i>The Glass Castle</i> by Jeannette Walls</p>	<p>Gossip columnist Jeanette Walls dishes the dirt on her own troubled youth in this remarkable story of survival against overwhelming odds. The child of charismatic vagabonds who left their offspring to raise themselves, Walls spent decades hiding an excruciating childhood filled with poverty and shocking neglect. But this is no pity party. What shines through on every page of this beautifully written family</p>

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	<p>memoir is Walls's love for her deeply flawed parents and her recollection of occasionally wonderful times.</p>
<p><i>The Zookeeper's Wife: A War Story</i> by Diane Ackerman</p>	<p>When Germany invaded Poland, Stuka bombers devastated Warsaw—and the city's zoo along with it. With most of their animals dead, zookeepers Jan and Antonina Zabinski began smuggling Jews into empty cages. Another dozen "guests" hid inside the Zabinskis' villa, emerging after dark for dinner, socializing, and, during rare moments of calm, piano concerts. Jan, active in the Polish resistance, kept ammunition buried in the elephant enclosure and stashed explosives in the animal hospital. Meanwhile, Antonina kept her unusual household afloat, caring for both its human and its animal inhabitants—otters, a badger, hyena pups, lynxes.</p> <p>With her exuberant prose and exquisite sensitivity to the natural world, Diane Ackerman engages us viscerally in the lives of the zoo animals, their keepers, and their hidden visitors. She shows us how Antonina refused to give in to the penetrating fear of discovery, keeping alive an atmosphere of play and innocence even as Europe crumbled around her. 8 pages of illustrations.</p>
<p><i>Three Little Words: A Memoir</i> by Ashley Rhodes-Courter</p>	<p>"Sunshine, you're my baby and I'm your only mother. You must mind the one taking care of you, but she's not your mama." Ashley Rhodes-Courter spent nine years of her life in fourteen different foster homes, living by those words. As her mother spirals out of control, Ashley is left clinging to an unpredictable, dissolving relationship, all the while getting pulled deeper and deeper into the foster care system.</p> <p>Painful memories of being taken away from her home quickly become consumed by real-life horrors, where Ashley is juggled between caseworkers, shuffled from school to school, and forced to endure manipulative, humiliating treatment from a very abusive foster family. In this inspiring, unforgettable memoir, Ashley finds the courage to succeed - and in doing so, discovers the power of her own voice.</p>
<p><i>Three Weeks With My Brother</i> by Nicholas Sparks</p>	<p>As moving as his bestselling works of fiction, Nicholas Sparks' unique memoir, written with his brother, chronicles the life-affirming journey of two brothers bound by memories, both humorous and tragic. In January 2003, Nicholas Sparks and his brother Micah set off on a three-week trip around the world. It was to mark a milestone in their lives, for at 37 and 38 respectively, they were now the only surviving members of their family. As Nicholas and Micah travel the globe, the intimate story of their family unfolds in the details of the untimely deaths of their parents and only sister. Against the backdrop of the wonders of the world, the Sparks brothers band together to heal, to remember, and to learn to live life to the fullest.</p>
<p><i>Throw Like a Girl: How to Dream Big and Believe in Yourself</i> by Jennie Finch</p>	<p>The evidence is overwhelming: sports help girls grow into strong women. Both scientific studies and anecdotal evidence confirm that athletic girls not only grow up to be healthier; they learn teamwork, gain inner confidence, and grow into society's leaders. Sports help preteen and teenage girls make the right choices in a society that is sending them incredibly mixed messages about who they are supposed to be. Yet no one is speaking directly to these girls. Jennie fills the role of</p>

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	<p>girlfriend, big sister, team captain, and mentor. A smart, credible, and accomplished voice from an athlete who is strong and feminine, fiercely competitive, and fashionably cool, Jennie is someone young women will listen to and take to heart. Jennie's message: Believe in yourself. Go for it, girls.</p>
<p><i>Twelve Years a Slave</i> by Solomon Northup</p>	<p><i>Twelve Years a Slave</i> is the memoir of Solomon Northup, a black man that was born free in New York state. Kidnapped by two circus promoters in Washington in 1841 and sold into slavery he was finally rescued in 1853 from a cotton plantation on the Red River in Louisiana. This timeless story provides the details of the slave markets in Washington, D. C. and New Orleans along with the working conditions of cotton and sugar cultivations on the major plantations in Louisiana.</p>
<p><i>Wooden: A Lifetime of Observations and Reflections On and Off the Court</i> by John Wooden</p>	<p>"I am just a common man who is true to his beliefs."--John Wooden</p> <p>Evoking days gone by when coaches were respected as much for their off-court performances as for their success on the court, <i>Wooden</i> presents the timeless wisdom of legendary basketball coach John Wooden.</p> <p>In honest and telling passages about virtually every aspect of life, Coach shares his personal philosophy on family, achievement, success, and excellence. Raised on a small farm in south-central Indiana, he offers lessons and wisdom learned throughout his career at UCLA, and life as a dedicated husband, father, and teacher.</p> <p>These lessons, along with personal letters from Bill Walton, Denny Crum, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, and Bob Costas, among others, have made <i>Wooden: A Lifetime of Observations and Reflections on and off the Court</i> an inspirational classic.</p>