Cohasset High School Grade 12 Summer Reading 2026

Accelerated and College Preparatory:

Read Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime: Stories From a South African Childhood* ISBN# 978-0399588198 version (adult). It is suggested that you include handwritten annotations in the margins of the text or in a notebook for the book as you read: include comments, questions, highlight striking passages and reasons why you found such passages interesting.

And

Read one selection from the choice list below*
(*chapter notes- requirements mentioned at end of the reading choice list)

Grade 12 Choices

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*: "From one of the world's great contemporary writers comes the story of two Nigerians making their way in the U.S. and the UK, raising universal questions of race and belonging, the overseas experience for the African diaspora, and the search for identity and a home." **—Barack Obama**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*: Fifteen-year-old Kambili and her older brother Jaja lead a privileged life in Enugu, Nigeria. They live in a beautiful house, with a caring family, and attend an exclusive missionary school. They're completely shielded from the troubles of the world. Yet, as Kambili reveals in her tender-voiced account, things are less perfect than they appear. Although her Papa is generous and well respected, he is fanatically religious and tyrannical at home—a home that is silent and suffocating. *Purple Hibiscus* is an exquisite novel about the emotional turmoil of adolescence, the powerful bonds of family, and the bright promise of freedom. **Amazon.com**

Dave Egger's *What Is the What*: What Is the What is the epic novel based on the life of Valentino Achak Deng who, along with thousands of other children —the so called Lost Boys—was forced to leave his village in Sudan at the age of seven and trek hundreds of miles by foot, pursued by militias, government bombers, and wild animals, crossing the deserts of three countries to find freedom. When he finally is resettled in the United States, he finds a life full of promise, but also heartache and myriad new challenges. Moving, suspenseful, and unexpectedly funny, *What Is the What* is an astonishing novel that illuminates the lives of millions through one extraordinary man. **Amazon.com**

Anthony Doerr's *All the Light We Cannot See*: From the highly acclaimed, multiple award-winning Anthony Doerr, the stunningly beautiful instant *New York Times* bestseller about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II. **Amazon.com product description**

David Gilmour's *The Film Club: A Memoir*: Canadian film critic Gilmour tells of the deal he struck with his son Jessie, allowing him to drop out of school if he would agree to watch three movies a week with his dad. Over the course of three years, as they dissect movies, Jesse deals with serious heartbreak while his father struggles to find work and worries whether he made the right decision for his son. **Booklist**

William Goldman's *Which Lie Did I Tell?: More Adventures in the Screen Trade*: If you want to know why an unknown like Kathy Bates was cast in Misery or why Linda Hunt's brilliant work in Maverick didn't make the final cut, why Clint Eastwood loves working with Gene Hackman or how MTV has changed movies – this book is indispensable reading, a must for anyone interested in the process of how a movie gets made. **Amazon.com product description**

Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns:* Born a generation apart and with very different ideas about love and family, Mariam and Laila are two women brought jarringly together by war, by loss and by fate. As they endure the ever escalating dangers around them-in their home as well as in the streets of Kabul-they come to form a bond that makes them both sisters and mother-daughter to each other, and that will ultimately alter the course not just of their own lives but of the next generation. With heart-wrenching power and suspense, Hosseini shows how a woman's love for her family can move her to shocking and heroic acts of self-sacrifice, and that in the end it is love, or even the memory of love, that is often the key to survival. **Amazon.com product description**

Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible*: The Poisonwood Bible is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it -- from garden seeds to Scripture -- is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa. **Amazon.com product description**

Pete McCarthy's *McCarthy's Bar: A Journey of Discovery in Ireland*: While most travel writers seek out opportunities to meet the famous or infamous, McCarthy has a knack for bumping into them, which is how he met a former member of Jimi Hendrix's band and the author Frank McCourt. He discovers that "In Ireland, the unexpected happens more than you expect," which makes for a hilarious tour through one of the most beautiful, friendly, and quirky places on earth. **Amazon.com Review**

Wes Moore's *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates*: Two kids with the same name lived in the same decaying city. One went on to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated combat veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader. The other is serving a life sentence in prison. Here is the story of two boys and the journey of a generation. **Goodreads.com product description**

Jodi Picoult's *Small Great Things*: When a newborn baby dies after a routine hospital procedure, there is no doubt about who will be held responsible: the nurse who had been banned from looking after him by his father. What the nurse, her lawyer and the father of the child cannot know is how this death will irrevocably change all of their lives, in ways both expected and not. Small Great Things is about prejudice and power; it is about that which divides and unites us. It is about opening your eyes. **Amazon.com review**

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*: Mary Shelley's timeless gothic novel presents the epic battle between man and monster at its greatest literary pitch. In trying to create life, the young student Victor Frankenstein unleashes forces beyond his control, setting into motion a long and tragic chain of events that brings Victor to the very brink of madness. **Amazon.com product description**

Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*: *Slaughterhouse-Five*, an American classic, is one of the world's great antiwar books. Centering on the infamous firebombing of Dresden, Billy Pilgrim's odyssey through time reflects the mythic journey of our own fractured lives as we search for meaning in what we fear most. **Amazon.com product description**

Kurt Vonnegut's *Mother Night*: *Mother Night* is a daring challenge to our moral sense. American Howard W. Campbell, Jr., a spy during World War II, is now on trial in Israel as a Nazi war criminal. But is he really guilty? In this brilliant book rife with true gallows humor, Vonnegut turns black and white into a chilling shade of gray with a verdict that will haunt us all. **Amazon.com product description**

Jeannette Walls's *The Glass Castle*: Walls opens her memoir with a recollection of riding in a taxi and spotting her mother "rooting through a dumpster." Walls' parents were eccentric, and raising four children didn't conventionalize either of them. Living with a mom who thought that "being homeless is an adventure," the Walls children learned to support themselves in a variety of creative ways. **Publishers Weekly**

Michelle Obama's *The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times*: #1 *NEW YORK TIMES* AND *USA TODAY* BESTSELLER • In an inspiring follow-up to her acclaimed memoir *Becoming,* former First Lady Michelle Obama shares practical wisdom and powerful strategies for staying hopeful and balanced in today's highly uncertain world. **Amazon.com**

*Chapter Notes Requirement for Accelerated and College Preparatory students: For each chapter of your choice book, please write annotations about characters that have a significant role in the text; major plot events; literary techniques; conflicts and their resolutions. These notes should be handwritten in a notebook.