



INDEPENDENT NOVEL UNIT

Book Choices

Requirements

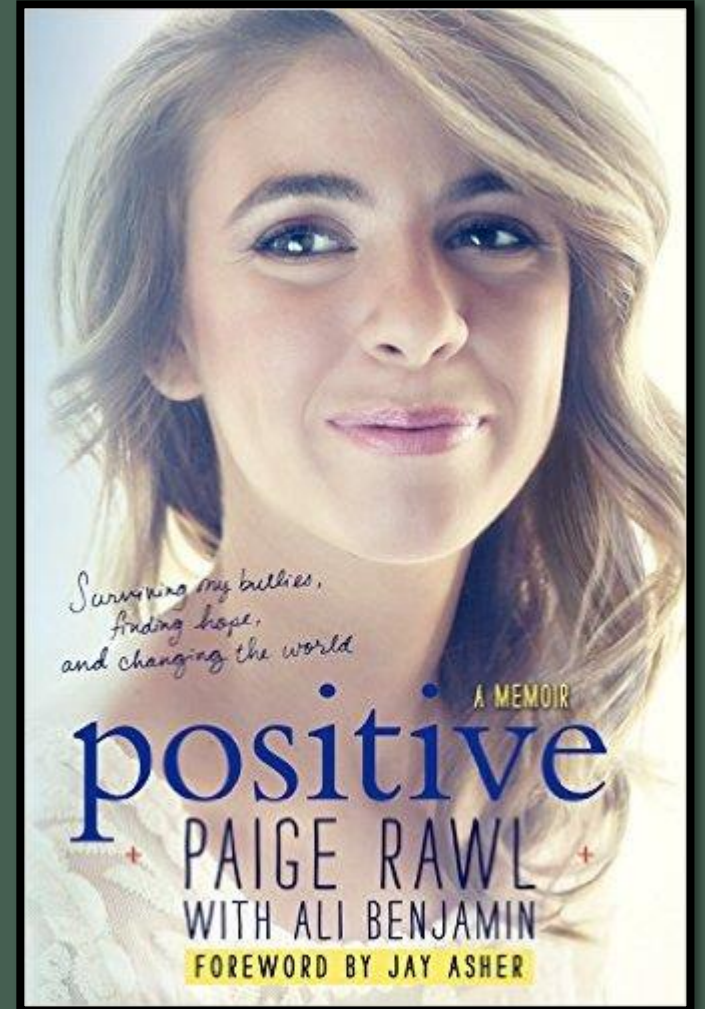
- Students were introduced to the novel choices on Friday, 12/8.
- Students will select the novel of their choice on Tuesday, 12/19.
- Student must have their novel with them when we return from winter break. Novels will be checked in for a class preparation grade on Friday, 1/8.
- Student *may* read their novel over Winter Break if they wish, however, this is NOT being assigned as homework for winter break.
- If a student has not selected a novel or purchased a novel by Friday, 1/8, we will loan them a copy of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou, and this will be his/her assigned novel for the unit.

Positive

An astonishing memoir for the untold number of children whose lives have been touched by bullying. *Positive* is a must-read for teens, their parents, educators, and administrators—a brave, visceral work that will save lives and resonate deeply.

Paige Rawl has been HIV positive since birth, but growing up, she never felt like her illness defined her. On an unremarkable day in middle school, she disclosed to a friend her HIV-positive status—and within hours the bullying began. From that moment forward, every day was like walking through a minefield. Paige was never sure when or from where the next text, taunt, or hateful message would come. Then one night, desperate for escape, fifteen-year-old Paige found herself in her bathroom staring at a bottle of sleeping pills.

That could have been the end of her story. Instead, it was only the beginning. Paige's memoir calls for readers to choose action over complacency, compassion over cruelty—and above all, to be *Positive*.



Retrieved on 12/13/16 from: www.amazon.com

The Secret Side of Empty

As a straight-A student with a budding romance and loyal best friend, M.T.'s life seems as apple-pie American as her blondish hair and pale skin. But M.T. hides two facts to the contrary: her full name of Monserrat Thalia and her status as an undocumented immigrant.

With senior year of high school kicking into full swing, M.T. sees her hopes for a "normal" future unraveling. And it will take discovering a sense of trust in herself and others for M.T. to stake a claim in the life that she wants.

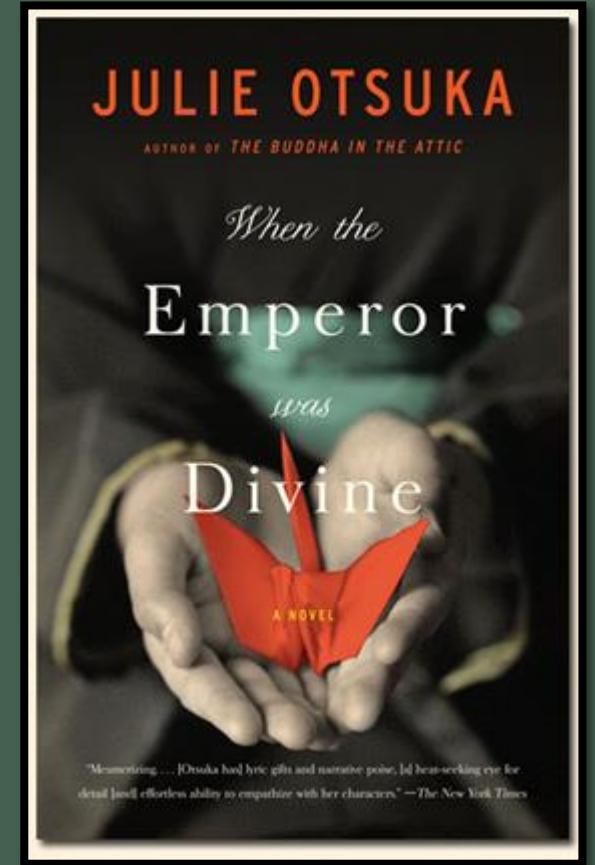


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When the Emperor Was Divine

On a sunny day in Berkeley, California, in 1942, a woman sees a sign in a post office window, returns to her home, and matter-of-factly begins to pack her family's possessions. Like thousands of other Japanese Americans they have been reclassified, virtually overnight, as enemy aliens and are about to be uprooted from their home and sent to a dusty internment camp in the Utah desert.

In this lean and devastatingly evocative first novel, Julie Otsuka tells their story from five flawlessly realized points of view and conveys the exact emotional texture of their experience: the thin-walled barracks and barbed-wire fences, the omnipresent fear and loneliness, the unheralded feats of heroism. *When the Emperor Was Divine* is a work of enormous power that makes a shameful episode of our history as immediate as today's headlines.



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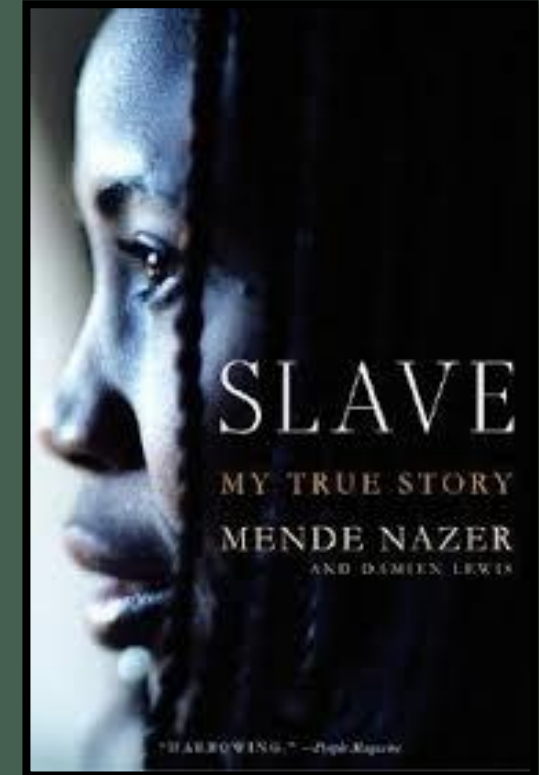
Slave: My True Story

Mende Nazer lost her childhood at age twelve, when she was sold into slavery. It all began one horrific night in 1993, when Arab raiders swept through her Nuba village, murdering the adults and rounding up thirty-one children, including Mende.

Mende was sold to a wealthy Arab family who lived in Sudan's capital city, Khartoum. So began her dark years of enslavement. Her Arab owners called her "Yebit," or "black slave." She called them "master." She was subjected to appalling physical, sexual, and mental abuse. She slept in a shed and ate the family leftovers like a dog. She had no rights, no freedom, and no life of her own.

Normally, Mende's story never would have come to light. But seven years after she was seized and sold into slavery, she was sent to work for another master—a diplomat working in the United Kingdom. In London, she managed to make contact with other Sudanese, who took pity on her. In September 2000, she made a dramatic break for freedom.

Slave is a story almost beyond belief. It depicts the strength and dignity of the Nuba tribe. It recounts the savage way in which the Nuba and their ancient culture are being destroyed by a secret modern-day trade in slaves. Most of all, it is a remarkable testimony to one young woman's unbreakable spirit and tremendous courage.



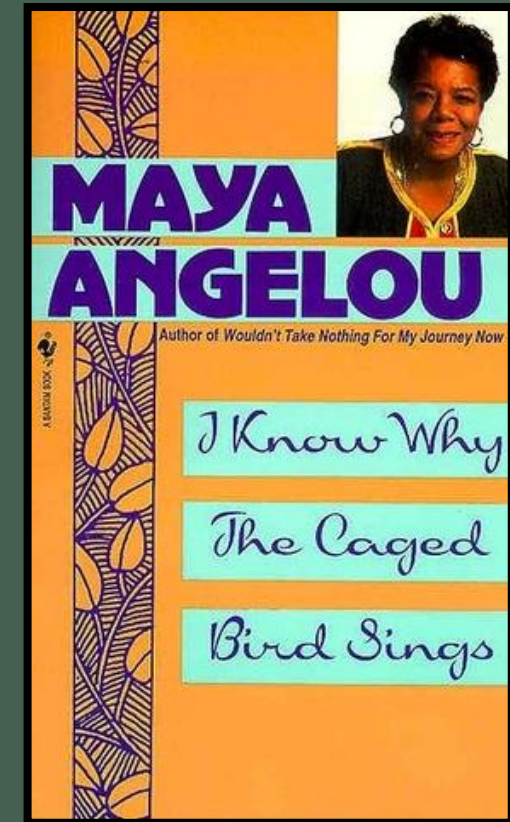
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I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Here is a book as joyous and painful, as mysterious and memorable, as childhood itself. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* 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.

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 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.

Poetic and powerful, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* will touch hearts and change minds for as long as people read.



Retrieved on 12/13/16 from: www.amazon.com

Long Way Gone

This is how wars are fought now: by children, hopped-up on drugs and wielding AK-47s. Children have become soldiers of choice. In the more than fifty conflicts going on worldwide, it is estimated that there are some 300,000 child soldiers. Ishmael Beah used to be one of them.

What is war like through the eyes of a child soldier? How does one become a killer? How does one stop? Child soldiers have been profiled by journalists, and novelists have struggled to imagine their lives. But until now, there has not been a first-person account from someone who came through this hell and survived.

In *A Long Way Gone*, Beah, now twenty-five years old, tells a riveting story: how at the age of twelve, he fled attacking rebels and wandered a land rendered unrecognizable by violence. By thirteen, he'd been picked up by the government army, and Beah, at heart a gentle boy, found that he was capable of truly terrible acts.

"My new friends have begun to suspect I haven't told them the full story of my life.

'Why did you leave Sierra Leone?'

'Because there is a war.'

'You mean, you saw people running around with guns and shooting each other?'

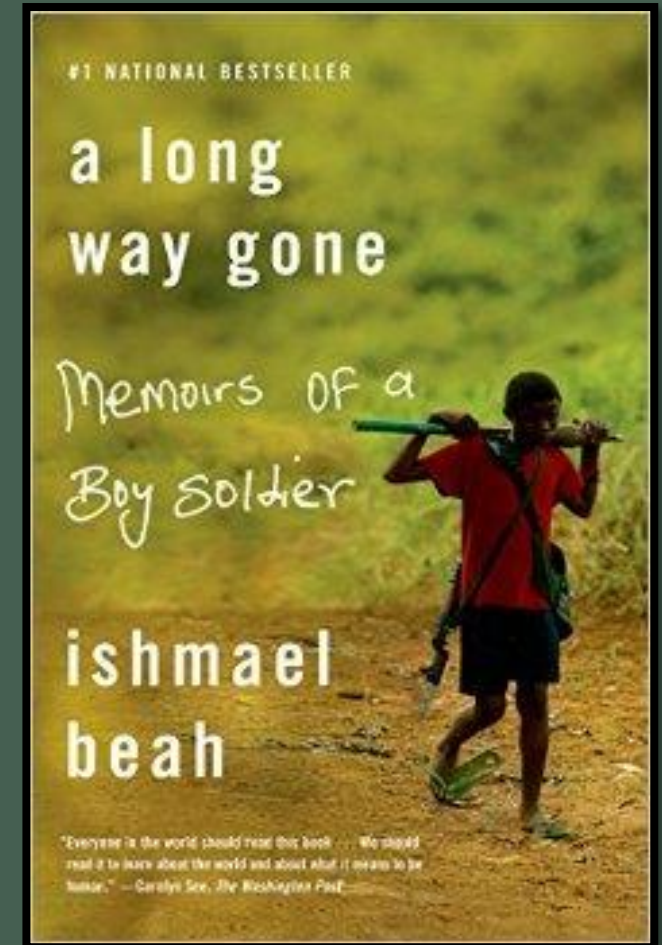
'Yes, all the time.'

'Cool.'

I smile a little.

'You should tell us about it sometime.'

'Yes, sometime.'"



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