Select one of these three books to read. The second week of school, you will take a multiple-choice test over the book. If you pass the test with 80% or better, you will receive a 100 for a major grade. If your score is below 80%, the grade will not be recorded in the gradebook.

**A Thousand Splendid Suns** by Khaled Hosseini - 432 pages

This novel follows the lives of two Afghani women, Mariam and Laila, as they move from children to adults. The book spans 30 years, beginning with the Soviet invasion and ending with the overthrow of the Taliban. These two women go from being enemies to unlikely friends. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is a moving story about the power of love, the bonds of friendship, the love of country, and the struggle to survive.

*Many former students have read this book, and they have ALL loved it! You’ll learn a lot about a different culture, which is always a great thing, and if you really read the book, you’ll probably do very well on the test!*

**The Kite Runner** by Khaled Hosseini - 384 pages - *Parental permission requested*

The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father’s servant, caught in the tragic sweep of history, *The Kite Runner* transports readers to Afghanistan at a tense and crucial moment of change and destruction. A powerful story of friendship, it is also about the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies.

**Snow Falling on Cedars** by David Guterson - 460 pages - *Parental permission requested*

In 1954, a local fisherman is found suspiciously drowned, and a Japanese American named Kabuo Miyamoto is charged with his murder. In the course of the ensuing trial, it becomes clear that what is at stake is more than a man’s guilt. For on San Piedro, memory grows as thickly as cedar trees and the fields of ripe strawberries—memories of a charmed love affair between a white boy and the Japanese girl who grew up to become Kabuo’s wife; memories of land desired, paid for, and lost. Above all, San Piedro is haunted by the memory of what happened to its Japanese residents during World War II, when an entire community was sent into exile while its neighbors watched.

*Until I read this book, I never knew that 120,000 Japanese Americans were imprisoned during World War II; there were five of these “concentration camps” in Texas!*