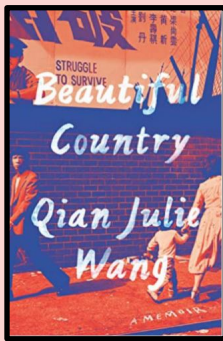


# Teacher Book Club SY 22-23

June



Beautiful Country: A Memoir

By Qian Julie Wang

July



All the Light We Cannot See

By Anthony Doerr

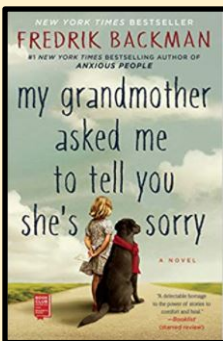
August



The Forgotten Garden

By Kate Morton

September



My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry

By Fredrik Backman

October



The Second Life of Mirielle West

By Amanda Skenandore

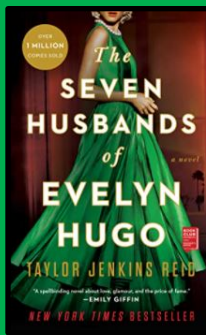
November



The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek

By Kim Michele Richardson

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The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo

By Meryl Gordon

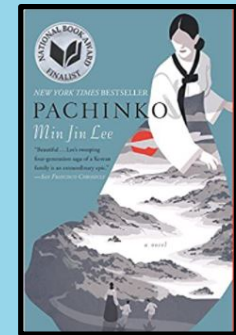
January



The Four Winds

By Kristin Hannah

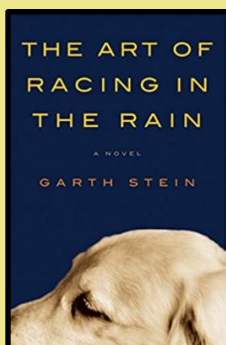
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Pachinko

By Min Jin Lee

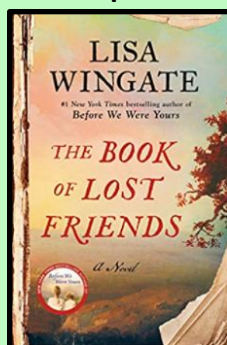
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The Art of Racing in the Rain

By Garth Stein

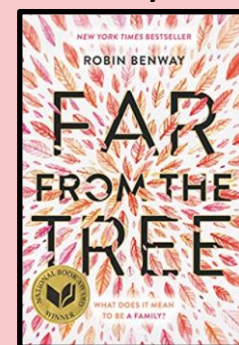
April



The Book of Lost Friends

By Lisa Wingate

May



Far from the Tree

By Robin Benway

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**June:** [Beautiful Country](#) by Qian Julie Wang (320 pages)

Goodreads says...

*The moving story of an undocumented child living in poverty in the richest country in the world — an incandescent debut from an astonishing new talent*

*In Chinese, the word for America, Mei Guo, translates directly to "beautiful country." Yet when seven-year-old Qian arrives in New York City in 1994 full of curiosity, she is overwhelmed by crushing fear and scarcity. In China, Qian's parents were professors; in America, her family is "illegal" and it will require all the determination and small joys they can muster to survive.*

*In Chinatown, Qian's parents labor in sweatshops. Instead of laughing at her jokes, they fight constantly, taking out the stress of their new life on one another. Shunned by her classmates and teachers for her limited English, Qian takes refuge in the library and masters the language through books, coming to think of *The Berenstain Bears* as her first American friends. And where there is delight to be found, Qian relishes it: her first bite of gloriously greasy pizza, weekly "shopping days," when Qian finds small treasures in the trash lining Brooklyn's streets, and a magical Christmas visit to Rockefeller Center — confirmation that the New York City she saw in movies does exist after all.*

*But then Qian's headstrong Ma Ma collapses, revealing an illness that she has kept secret for months for fear of the cost and scrutiny of a doctor's visit. As Ba Ba retreats further inward, Qian has little to hold onto beyond his constant refrain: Whatever happens, say that you were born here, that you've always lived here.*

*Inhabiting her childhood perspective with exquisite lyric clarity and unforgettable charm and strength, Qian Julie Wang has penned an essential American story about a family fracturing under the weight of invisibility, and a girl coming of age in the shadows, who never stops seeking the light.*

**July:** [All the Light We Cannot See](#) by Anthony Doerr (552 pages)

Goodreads says...

*Marie-Laure lives in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where her father works. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel.*

*In a mining town in Germany, Werner Pfennig, an orphan, grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find that brings them news and stories from places they have never seen or imagined. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments and is enlisted to use his talent to track down the resistance. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another.*

*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.*

**August:** [The Forgotten Garden](#) by Kate Morton (560 pages)

Goodreads says...

*A foundling, an old book of dark fairy tales, a secret garden, an aristocratic family, a love denied, and a mystery. *The Forgotten Garden* is a captivating, atmospheric and compulsively readable story of the past, secrets, family and memory from the international best-selling author Kate Morton.*

*Cassandra is lost, alone and grieving. Her much loved grandmother, Nell, has just died and Cassandra, her life*

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*already shaken by a tragic accident ten years ago, feels like she has lost everything dear to her. But an unexpected and mysterious bequest from Nell turns Cassandra's life upside down and ends up challenging everything she thought she knew about herself and her family.*

*Inheriting a book of dark and intriguing fairytales written by Eliza Makepeace—the Victorian authoress who disappeared mysteriously in the early twentieth century—Cassandra takes her courage in both hands to follow in the footsteps of Nell on a quest to find out the truth about their history, their family and their past; little knowing that in the process, she will also discover a new life for herself.*

**September:** [My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry](#) by Fredrik Backman (400 pages)

Goodreads says...

*Elsa is seven years old and different. Her grandmother is seventy-seven years old and crazy, standing-on-the-balcony-firing-paintball-guns-at-men-who-want-to-talk-about-Jesus-crazy. She is also Elsa's best, and only, friend. At night Elsa takes refuge in her grandmother's stories, in the Land of Almost-Awake and the Kingdom of Miamas where everybody is different and nobody needs to be normal.*

*When Elsa's grandmother dies and leaves behind a series of letters apologizing to people she has wronged, Elsa's greatest adventure begins. Her grandmother's letters lead her to an apartment building full of drunks, monsters, attack dogs, and totally ordinary old crones, but also to the truth about fairytales and kingdoms and a grandmother like no other.*

**October:** [The Second Life of Mirielle West](#) by Amanda Skenandore (386 pages)

Goodreads says...

*The glamorous world of a silent film star's wife abruptly crumbles when she's forcibly quarantined at the Carville Lepers Home in this page-turning story of courage, resilience, and reinvention set in 1920s Louisiana and Los Angeles. Based on little-known history, this timely book will strike a chord with readers of Fiona Davis, Tracey Lange, and Marie Benedict.*

*Based on the true story of America's only leper colony, The Second Life of Mirielle West brings vividly to life the Louisiana institution known as Carville, where thousands of people were stripped of their civil rights, branded as lepers, and forcibly quarantined throughout the entire 20th century.*

*For Mirielle West, a 1920's socialite married to a silent film star, the isolation and powerlessness of the Louisiana Leper Home is an unimaginable fall from her intoxicatingly chic life of bootlegged champagne and the star-studded parties of Hollywood's Golden Age. When a doctor notices a pale patch of skin on her hand, she's immediately branded a leper and carted hundreds of miles from home to Carville, taking a new name to spare her family and famous husband the shame that accompanies the disease.*

*At first she hopes her exile will be brief, but those sent to Carville are more prisoners than patients and their disease has no cure. Instead she must find community and purpose within its walls, struggling to redefine her self-worth while fighting an unchosen fate.*

*As a registered nurse, Amanda Skenandore's medical background adds layers of detail and authenticity to the experiences of patients and medical professionals at Carville – the isolation, stigma, experimental treatments, and disparate community. A tale of repulsion, resilience, and the Roaring '20s, The Second Life of Mirielle West is also the story of a health crisis in America's past, made all the more poignant by the author's experiences during another, all-too-recent crisis.*

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**November:** [The book Woman of Troublesome Creek](#) by Kim Michele Richardson (322 pages)

Goodreads says...

*In 1936, tucked deep into the woods of Troublesome Creek, KY, lives blue-skinned 19-year-old Cussy Carter, the last living female of the rare Blue People ancestry.*

*The lonely young Appalachian woman joins the historical Pack Horse Library Project of Kentucky and becomes a librarian, riding across slippery creek beds and up treacherous mountains on her faithful mule to deliver books and other reading material to the impoverished hill people of Eastern Kentucky.*

*Along her dangerous route, Cussy, known to the mountain folk as Bluet, confronts those suspicious of her damselfly-blue skin and the government's new book program. She befriends hardscrabble and complex fellow Kentuckians, and is fiercely determined to bring comfort and joy, instill literacy, and give to those who have nothing, a bookly respite, a fleeting retreat to faraway lands.*

**December:** [The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo](#) by Taylor Jenkins Reid (398 pages)

Goodreads says...

*Aging and reclusive Hollywood movie icon Evelyn Hugo is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life. But when she chooses unknown magazine reporter Monique Grant for the job, no one is more astounded than Monique herself. Why her? Why now?*

*Monique is not exactly on top of the world. Her husband has left her, and her professional life is going nowhere. Regardless of why Evelyn has selected her to write her biography, Monique is determined to use this opportunity to jumpstart her career.*

*Summoned to Evelyn's luxurious apartment, Monique listens in fascination as the actress tells her story. From making her way to Los Angeles in the 1950s to her decision to leave show business in the '80s, and, of course, the seven husbands along the way, Evelyn unspools a tale of ruthless ambition, unexpected friendship, and a great forbidden love. Monique begins to feel a very real connection to the legendary star, but as Evelyn's story near its conclusion, it becomes clear that her life intersects with Monique's own in tragic and irreversible ways.*

**January:** [The Four Winds](#) by Kristin Hannah (450 pages)

Goodreads says...

*Texas, 1934. Millions are out of work and a drought has broken the Great Plains. Farmers are fighting to keep their land and their livelihoods as the crops are failing, the water is drying up, and dust threatens to bury them all. One of the darkest periods of the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl era, has arrived with a vengeance.*

*In this uncertain and dangerous time, Elsa Martinelli—like so many of her neighbors—must make an agonizing choice: fight for the land she loves or go west, to California, in search of a better life. The Four Winds is an indelible portrait of America and the American Dream, as seen through the eyes of one indomitable woman whose courage and sacrifice will come to define a generation.*

**February:** [Pachinko](#) by Min Jin Lee (512 pages)

Goodreads says...

*In the early 1900s, teenaged Sunja, the adored daughter of a crippled fisherman, falls for a wealthy stranger at the seashore near her home in Korea. He promises her the world, but when she discovers she is pregnant — and that her lover is married — she refuses to be bought. Instead, she accepts an offer of marriage from a*



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*gentle, sickly minister passing through on his way to Japan. But her decision to abandon her home, and to reject her son's powerful father, sets off a dramatic saga that will echo down through the generations.*

*Richly told and profoundly moving, Pachinko is a story of love, sacrifice, ambition, and loyalty. From bustling street markets to the halls of Japan's finest universities to the pachinko parlors of the criminal underworld, Lee's complex and passionate characters — strong, stubborn women, devoted sisters and sons, fathers shaken by moral crisis — survive and thrive against the indifferent arc of history.*

**March:** [The Art of Racing in the Rain](#) by Garth Stein (321 pages)

Goodreads says...

*Enzo knows he is different from other dogs: a philosopher with a nearly human soul (and an obsession with opposable thumbs), he has educated himself by watching television extensively, and by listening very closely to the words of his master, Denny Swift, an up-and-coming race car driver.*

*Through Denny, Enzo has gained tremendous insight into the human condition, and he sees that life, like racing, isn't simply about going fast. On the eve of his death, Enzo takes stock of his life, recalling all that he and his family have been through.*

*A heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of family, love, loyalty, and hope, The Art of Racing in the Rain is a beautifully crafted and captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life ... as only a dog could tell it.*

**April:** [The Book of Lost Friends](#) by Lisa Wingate (400 pages)

Goodreads says...

*Lisa Wingate brings to life stories from actual "Lost Friends" advertisements that appeared in Southern newspapers after the Civil War, as freed slaves desperately searched for loved ones who had been sold off.*

*Louisiana, 1875. In the tumultuous aftermath of Reconstruction, three young women set off as unwilling companions on a perilous quest: Lavinia, the pampered heir to a now-destitute plantation; Juneau Jane, her illegitimate free-born Creole half-sister; and Hannie, Lavinia's former slave. Each carries private wounds and powerful secrets as they head for Texas, following dangerous roads rife with ruthless vigilantes and soldiers still fighting a war lost a decade before. For Lavinia and Juneau Jane, the journey is one of inheritance and financial desperation, but for Hannie, torn from her mother and eight siblings before slavery's end, the pilgrimage westward reignites an agonizing question: Could her long-lost family still be out there? Beyond the swamps lie the seemingly limitless frontiers of Texas and, improbably, hope.*

*Louisiana, 1987. For first-year teacher Benedetta Silva, a subsidized job at a poor rural school seems like the ticket to canceling her hefty student debt--until she lands in a tiny, out-of-step Mississippi River town. Augustine, Louisiana, seems suspicious of new ideas and new people, and Benny can scarcely comprehend the lives of her poverty-stricken students. But amid the gnarled oaks and run-down plantation homes lies the century-old history of three young women, a long-ago journey, and a hidden book that could change everything.*

**May:** [Far From the Tree](#) by Robin Benway (400 pages)

Goodreads says...

*Being the middle child has its ups and downs.*

*But for Grace, an only child who was adopted at birth, discovering that she is a middle child is a different ride*

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*altogether. After putting her own baby up for adoption, she goes looking for her biological family, including—*

*Maya, her loudmouthed younger bio sister, who has a lot to say about their newfound family ties. Having grown up the snarky brunette in a house full of chipper redheads, she's quick to search for traces of herself among these not-quite-strangers. And when her adopted family's long-buried problems begin to explode to the surface, Maya can't help but wonder where exactly it is that she belongs.*

*And Joaquin, their stoic older bio brother, who has no interest in bonding over their shared biological mother. After seventeen years in the foster care system, he's learned that there are no heroes, and secrets and fears are best kept close to the vest, where they can't hurt anyone but him.*