



Forest Of Reading[®]

2026 Teen Committee List

White Pine Readers
High School, Grades 9-12

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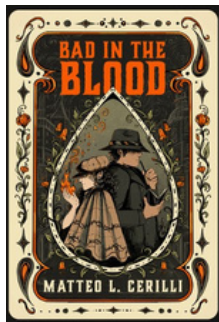
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Suggested Reading List

White Pine Readers (High School, Grades 9-12)



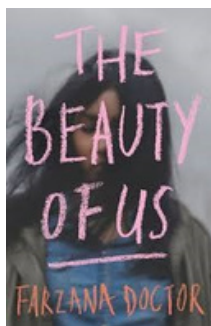
***Bad in the Blood* by Matteo L. Cerilli (Tundra Books)**

In the city of Puck's Port, where motorized vehicles fill the streets and new technological marvels abound, something rotten is lurking under the surface. A violent murder at the docks seems to point to a fey killer, igniting a powder keg of distrust between the city's humans and its fey inhabitants — folks who wield wonderful but often uncontrollable magical power.

Gristle Senan Maxim Junior finds himself caught in the middle. Forced into the reluctant role of private investigator, like his late father, he's working to solve the mystery

of this fiery murder . . . mainly because his sister, Hawthorne Stregoni, is a fey herself with an unfortunate penchant for setting things ablaze.

Hawthorne is part of an experimental study to control feyism but struggles to keep her powerful magic in check in a country that hates what she is. Can she and Gristle work together to find the true instigator of the murder before it's too late?

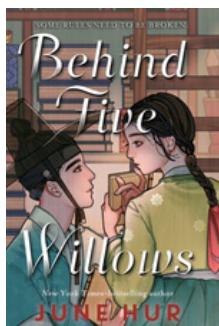


***The Beauty of Us* by Farzana Doctor (ECW Press)**

September 1984, Thornton College private school.

After 15-year-old Zahabiya's father remarries, she can't wait to leave home and convinces him to send her away to boarding school. But will she fit in? She joins a clique of smart students but isn't sure if she measures up or how to read the mixed messages from a guy she's crushing on.

Seventeen-year-old Leesa has been at Thornton since middle school after her parents' messy divorce. She's been climbing the school's social ladder with equal measures of meanness and manipulation. She's also guarding a big secret that she has to work overtime to keep from her friends. Fresh out of university, this is Nahla's first real teaching job, and she's drowning. She has her distractions though: the flirty art teacher and a cryptic notebook left behind by her deceased predecessor, Mademoiselle Leblanc. Zahabiya and her friends — all racialized girls and victims of Leesa's bullying — uncover Leesa's secret. But can they help Leesa? Nahla, too, is embroiled in her own mystery, assisted by Mademoiselle Leblanc's ghost. Each is indelibly changed by what they learn.



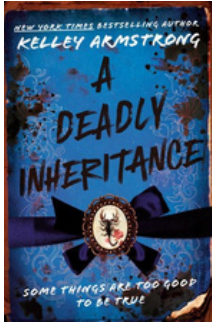
***Behind Five Willows* by June Hur (Feiwel & Friends)**

As the dutiful second-eldest daughter of a poor family, society would have Haewon believe that her only hope of a decent life is to marry well. But during a time of rampant government censorship and book banning, she instead works as an illegal book transcriber in order to make a little extra money. It's dangerous work, but she loves it—especially when she gets to transcribe the work of her favorite author, known as Black Lotus. When her older sister becomes smitten with a wealthy young gentleman, Haewon is roped into chaperoning them during their courtship. Which wouldn't be so terrible... if it weren't for the young man's uptight and annoying best friend who also accompanies them. As the only son of a noble, Seojun has a lot expected of him. Wealth. Status. Respectability. Certainly not frivolous and often illicit activities such as reading fiction. But Seojun loves to do something even more scandalous: writing. He's kept his work secret from his father and friends, but with each passing day, the pressure of being his father's son and the dispiriting actions of the government make Seojun question the purpose of it all. The only thing keeping him going are the encouraging letters he receives from his transcriber, known only as Magpie.

When his best friend falls hard for a girl of lower social status, Seojun finds himself forced to act as chaperone to the infatuated couple—along with the girl's younger sister, who is as irritating as she is judgmental. But as Haewon and Seojun spend more time together, they begin to suspect they may have judged each other too quickly...

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***A Deadly Inheritance* by Kelley Armstrong (Tundra Books)**

In the wake of her mother's death, Liliانا Chamberlain's estranged (and very wealthy) grandparents swoop in. Or their lawyer does. Her grandparents aren't ready to meet her, but they want her to have the life her mother walked away from, starting with Westdale Academy, the elite boarding school her mother attended. It should be a Cinderella dream come true, but Lili has serious misgivings. Yet she doesn't have a choice, being under eighteen and dead broke. Westdale Academy is a school of secrets as well as intriguing classmates, including Hollywood golden boy Theo Dubois and the mysterious Maddox Moreno. As she gets to know them all, Lili realizes there's more to the school than elite-level networking. Something deadly.

For the new girl at school, investigating the deaths of past students—including Maddox's own sister—is a very dangerous game. Do those deaths have something to do with why her mother fled Westdale at the cost of her inheritance? When a fun night out turns bloody, Theo is the prime suspect, and Lilianna must race against time to connect the past with the present and discover the truth behind her inheritance.



***Here for a Good Time* by Kim Spencer (Swift Water Books)**

It is 1990. Morgan has lived all her life in the small fishing town of Prince Rupert in northern British Columbia. Ever since her mom took off when she was ten, Morgan has kept an eye on her dad, a commercial fisherman who works hard and occasionally parties even harder. After struggling to keep up and find a place at a public high school, Morgan's best friend Skye convinces her to attend an alternate school. There, she meets Nate. Both cute and intelligent, Nate introduces her to a wider worldview, including music, movies and books, and becomes a lifeline after an unimaginable tragedy strikes. In the aftermath, Morgan learns hard truths about her mother's painful past and the resulting intergenerational effects of that trauma, and as she struggles to come to terms with her new reality, an unexpected development offers a chance of a fresh start, with love and forgiveness at its core.



***Like a Bird* by Becky Citra (Second Story Press)**

Up in smoke...

A year ago, Rachel Bird hated it in small-town Aspen Lake. She and her little sister, Jane, had just moved in with grandparents they never knew they had. But this summer looks very different. Rachel has a best friend, a boyfriend, and she gets to ride her horse, Magic. They are all sweltering under a heat dome, and though Rachel's heard about the dangerous wildfires, they seem very far away.

Then the grass turns yellow and Rachel smells smoke all the time. Just when she was finally letting herself settle in, her new home is in jeopardy. If the fires reach Aspen Lake, will Rachel and her family be able to make it out in time? And what will happen to everything they leave behind?

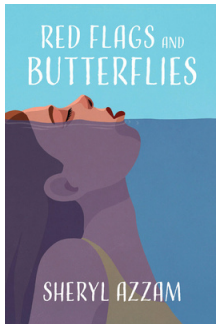
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***The Ocean Would Paint Me Blue* by Zoulfa Katouh (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers)**

Seventeen-year-old Jihad Dabbagh has always seen life with a heightened sense for colors, one of many magical blessings the women in her family possess. But Jihad's gift changes depending on her mood. When depression sets in, the world is a colorless oasis, and in the wake of her mother's sudden death, the world has become a permanent shade of grey. Broken by tragedy, Jihad's family doesn't believe her color loss. Her father sends her to the elite Braxton Academy to finish her senior year. There, Jihad's name and hijab put a target on her back. Her haven comes in the form of an old sketchbook carved from a tree in her hometown in Syria—a country she only knew through her mother's stories. Jihad hasn't picked up a brush in over a year, but finds herself channeling the colors of her hurt, pain, and grief as she paints the story of her mother's journey in Syria. When graffiti of that same mural starts magically popping up all over New York, her art goes viral and the world takes notice, the threat of legal consequences is imminent. To reclaim her voice, Jihad will have to paint a new future for herself and Braxton, guided by the resilience of her mother's story.

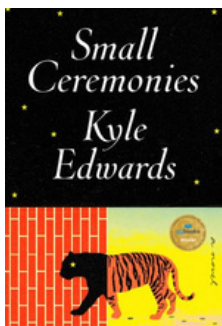


***Red Flags and Butterflies* by Sheryl Azzam (DCB Young Readers)**

Straight A student, talented artist, swim team star — tenth-grader Lexie Moore is a shoo-in for Sunridge High's prestigious fine art program, if only she can find the right words to tell her dad she wants to apply.

Lexie's dad doesn't see the point of some overpriced art school. He wants Lexie and her brother at home to help him launch his new renovation business. He says he can't do this without her, so Lexie agrees to pitch in, just for a little while. If she supports his plan, then he'll have to support hers, right? It's only fair.

But Lexie's dad has a very different definition of "fair," and as his demands increase, his means of getting his way become more and more suffocating.



***Small Ceremonies* by Kyle Edwards (McClelland & Stewart)**

Tomahawk Shields (a.k.a. Tommy) and Clinton Whiteway are on the cusp of adulthood, imagining a future rife with possibility and greatness. The two friends play for their high school's poor-performing hockey team, the Tigers, who learn at the start of the new season that the league wants them out. Their annual goal is now more important than ever: to win their first game in years and break the curse. As we follow these two Indigenous boys over the course of a year, we are given a panoptic view of Tommy and Clinton's Winnipeg, where a university student with grand ambitions chooses to bottle her anger when confronted with numerous micro- (and not so micro-) aggressions; an ex-convict must choose between protecting or exploiting his younger brother as he's dragged deeper into the city's criminal underbelly; a lonely rink attendant is haunted by the memory of a past lover and contemplates rekindling this old flame; and an aspiring journalist does everything she can to uncover why the league is threatening to remove the Tigers. These are a sampling of the chorus of voices that depicts a community filled with individuals searching for purpose, leading them all to one fateful and tragic night.

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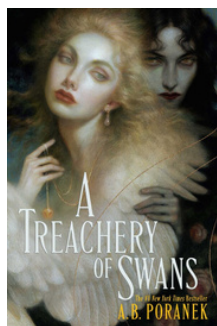


***This Place Kills Me* Written by Mariko Tamaki and illustrated by Nicole Goux (Harry N. Abrams)**

At Wilberton Academy, few students are more revered than the members of the elite Wilberton Theatrical Society—a.k.a. the WTS—and no one represents that exclusive club better than Elizabeth Woodward.

Breathtakingly beautiful, beloved by all, and a talented thespian, it's no surprise she's starring as Juliet in the WTS's performance of Shakespeare's classic tragedy. But when she's found dead the morning after opening night, the whole school is thrown into chaos.

Transfer student Abby Kita was one of the last people to see Elizabeth alive, and when local authorities deem the it-girl's death a suicide, Abby's not convinced. She's sure there's more to Wilburton and the WTS than meets the eye. As she gets tangled in prep school intrigues, Abby quickly realizes that Elizabeth was keeping secrets. Was one of those secrets worth killing for?



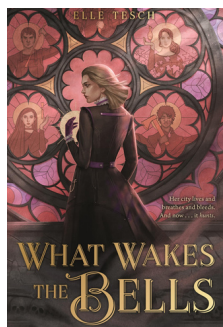
***A Treachery of Swans* by A. B. Poranek (Margaret K. McElderry Books)**

Can two girls—one enchanted, one the enchantress—save their kingdom and each other?

Two hundred years ago, a slighted deity stole the magic from Auréal and vanished without a trace. But seventeen-year-old Odile has a plan. All her life, her father, a vengeful sorcerer, has raised her for one singular task: infiltrate the royal palace and steal the king's crown, an artefact with enough power to restore magic. But to enter the palace, she must assume the identity of a noblewoman. She chooses Marie d'Odette: famed for her beauty, a rumored candidate for future queen...and Odile's childhood-friend-turned-sworn-enemy.

With her father's help, Odile transforms Marie into a swan and takes her place at court. But when the king is brutally murdered and her own brother is accused, her plans are thrown into chaos. Desperate to free her brother, Odile is forced to team up with none other than elegant, infuriating Marie, the girl she has cursed...and the girl she can't seem to stop thinking about despite her best efforts.

To make matters worse, there are whispers that the king's murder was not at the hands of man, but beast. Torn between loyalty to her father and her growing feelings for Marie, Odile becomes tangled in a web of treachery and deceit. To save her kingdom, she must find the true path to magic...and find the real killer before they—or it—strikes again.



***What Wakes the Bells* by Elle Tesch(Feiwel & Friends)**

Built by long-gone Saints, the city of Vaiwyn lives and breathes and bleeds. As a Keeper, Mina knows better than most what her care of Vaiwyn's bells means for the sentient city. It's the Strauss family's thousand-year legacy—prevent the Vespers from ringing, or they will awake a slumbering evil.

One afternoon, to Mina's horror, her bell peals thirteen times, shattering the city's tenuous peace. With so much of the city's history and lore lost in a long-ago disaster, no one knows the danger that has been unleashed—until the city begins to fight back. As the sun sets, stone gargoyles and bronze statues tear away from their buildings and plinths to hunt people through the streets. Trapped in Mina's bell, the soul of a twisted and power-hungry Saint festered. Now free of his prison, he hides behind the face of one of Vaiwyn's citizens, corrupting the city and turning it on itself. As the death toll rises, the only chance Mina has to stop the destruction and horrific killings is finding and destroying the Saint's host. Everyone is a suspect, including Mina's closest loved ones. She will have to decide how far she'll go to save her city—and who she's willing to kill to do it

The 2026 Committee

Teen Committee Members



White Pine

Brooke — Halton District School Board, **Dakshiya** — Durham Catholic District School Board, **Luxmy** — Toronto District School Board, **Manahel** — Durham District School Board, **Nicole** — Ottawa Catholic School Board, **Olivia** — York Region District School Board, **Vanya** — Toronto District School Board

Jennifer Casa-Todd, facilitator of the Teen Committee

Meredith Tutching, Director, Forest of Reading® & Logistics