Julia Machtenberg recommends Tanya Yanagihara's *A Little Life* (2015): "The novel traces the life of Jude St. Francis from childhood to middle age. While his professional career advances without difficulties, his private life is equally balanced between the traumatic aftereffects of a childhood marked by abuse and his immensely supportive relationships to friends and family. The juxtaposition of these two poles invites the reader to experience a wide range of emotions that are likely to have a lasting impact."

Connor Pitetti recommends Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974): "In this book-length journalistic essay, the poet and novelist Annie Dillard channels Thoreau, documenting minute and momentous changes in the natural world in and around a small creek in northern Virginia. Combining an exacting eye for detail with wide reading in science, philosophy, and theology, Dillard finds in the smallest of events - the hatching on an insect, the scattering of light across a frozen pool, the shadow of an unseen bird - inspiration for profound and exalted reflections. The book is provocative and eye-opening, a moving portrait of a mind both deeply literary and joyously lost in the world."