



Read Around the Subject

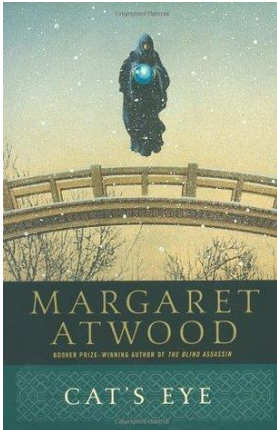
KS4 English



Recommended Reading List

Parents please note that some books contain adult content

General Drama



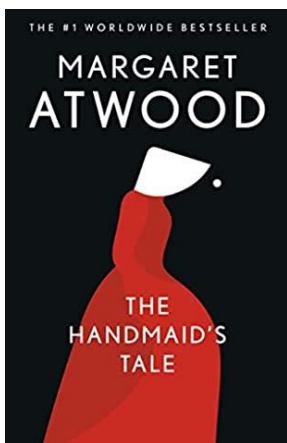
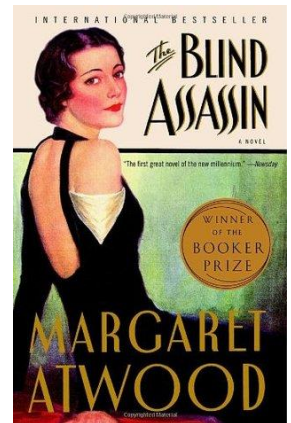
Cats Eye by Margaret Atwood - exploring the difficulties of self-esteem and bullying within teenage relationships

Cat's Eye is the story of Elaine Risley, a controversial painter who returns to Toronto, the city of her youth, for a retrospective of her art. Engulfed by vivid images of the past, she reminisces about a trio of girls who initiated her into the fierce politics of childhood and its secret world of friendship, longing, and betrayal. Elaine must come to terms with her own identity as a daughter, a lover, and artist, and woman—but above all she must seek release from her haunting memories. Disturbing, hilarious, and compassionate, *Cat's Eye* is a breath-taking novel of a woman grappling with the tangled knots of her life.

The Blind Assassin by Margaret Atwood - This Booker Prize-winner is Atwood's most structurally complex work

The Blind Assassin opens with these simple, resonant words: "Ten days after the war ended, my sister Laura drove a car off a bridge." They are spoken by Iris, whose terse account of her sister's death in 1945 is followed by an inquest report proclaiming the death accidental.

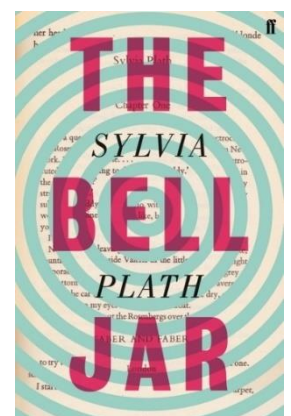
But just as the reader expects to settle into Laura's story, Atwood introduces a novel-within-a-novel. Entitled *The Blind Assassin*, it is a science fiction story told by two unnamed lovers who meet in dingy backstreet rooms. When we return to Iris, it is through a 1947 newspaper article announcing the discovery of a sailboat carrying the dead body of her husband, a distinguished industrialist. Brilliantly weaving together such seemingly disparate elements, Atwood creates a world of astonishing vision and unforgettable impact.



The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood - Its feminist themes and exploration of a truly misogynistic society are horrifyingly relevant decades after it was originally published. Offred is a Handmaid in the Republic of Gilead. She may leave the home of the Commander and his wife once a day to walk to food markets whose signs are now pictures instead of words because women are no longer allowed to read. She must lie on her back once a month and pray that the Commander makes her pregnant, because in an age of declining births, Offred and the other Handmaids are valued only if their ovaries are viable. Offred can remember the years before, when she lived and made love with her husband, Luke; when she played with and protected her daughter; when she had a job, money of her own, and access to knowledge. But all of that is gone now . . .

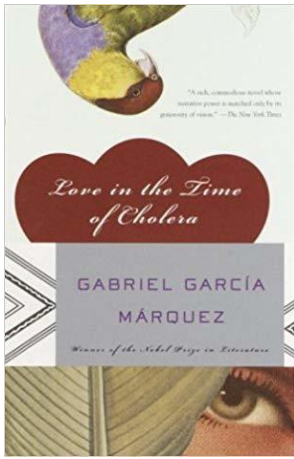
Funny, unexpected, horrifying, and altogether convincing, *The*

Handmaid's Tale is at once scathing satire, dire warning, and tour de force.



The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath - feminist poet - essential reading

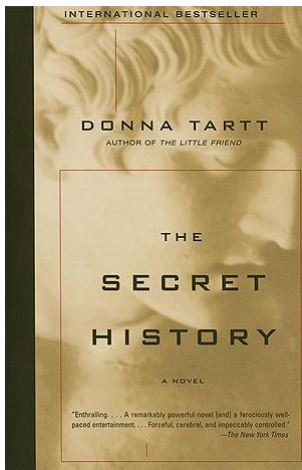
The Bell Jar chronicles the crack-up of Esther Greenwood: brilliant, beautiful, enormously talented, and successful, but slowly going under -- maybe for the last time. Sylvia Plath masterfully draws the reader into Esther's breakdown with such intensity that Esther's insanity becomes completely ...



Love in the Time of Cholera by Gabriel Garcia Marquez - for magical realism

An old man and his childhood sweetheart are united for the first time resulting in the consummation of an amor interruptus that spans half a century. This uplifting love story is set on the Colombian coast in the early 20th century. In their youth, Florentino Ariza and Fermina Daza fall passionately in love. When Fermina eventually chooses to marry a wealthy, well-born doctor, Florentino is heartbroken, but he is a romantic. As he rises in his business career, he whiles away the years in 622 affairs—yet he reserves his heart for Fermina. Her husband dies at last, and Florentino purposefully attends the funeral. Fifty years, nine months, and four days after he first declared his love for Fermina, he will do so again.

The Secret History or The Little Friend by Donna Tartt because her writing is absorbing



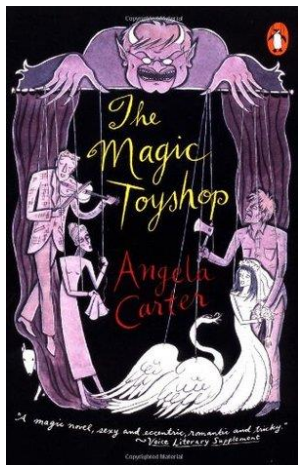
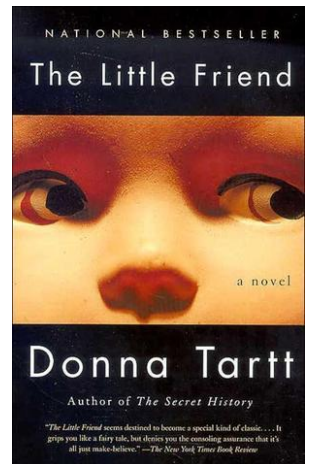
The Secret History Under the influence of their charismatic classic's professor, a group of clever, eccentric misfits at an elite New England college discover a way of thinking and living that is a world away from the humdrum existence of their contemporaries. But when they go beyond the boundaries of normal morality they slip gradually from obsession to corruption and betrayal, and at last - inexorably - into evil.

The Little Friend Bestselling author Donna Tartt returns with a grandly ambitious and utterly riveting novel of childhood, innocence and evil.

The setting is Alexandria, Mississippi, where one Mother's Day a little boy named Robin Cleve Dufresnes was found hanging from a tree in his parents' yard. Twelve years later Robin's

murder is still unsolved, and his family remains devastated. So it is that Robin's sister Harriet - unnervingly bright, insufferably determined, and unduly influenced by the fiction of Kipling and Robert Louis Stevenson--sets out to unmask his killer. Aided only by her worshipful friend Hely, Harriet crosses her town's rigid lines of race and caste and burrows

deep into her family's history of loss.

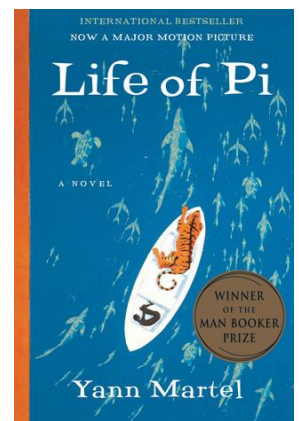


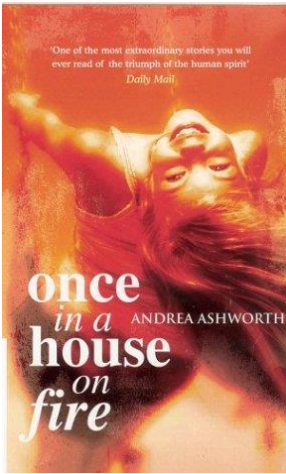
The Magic Toyshop by Angela Carter - English writer, 1980's magical realism, very significant female writer.

One-night Melanie walks through the garden in her mother's wedding dress. The next morning her world is shattered. Forced to leave the comfortable home of her childhood, she is sent to London to live with relatives she never met: Aunt Margaret, beautiful and speechless, and her brothers, Francie, whose graceful music belies his clumsy nature, and the volatile Finn, who kisses Melanie in the ruins of the pleasure garden. And brooding Uncle Philip loves only the life-sized wooden puppets he creates in his toyshops. The classic gothic novel established Angela Carter as one of our most imaginative writers and augurs the themes of her later creative works.

The Life of Pi by Yann Martel - excellent twist.

Life of Pi is a fantasy adventure novel by Yann Martel published in 2001. The protagonist, Piscine Molitor "Pi" Patel, a Tamil boy from Pondicherry, explores issues of spirituality and practicality from an early age. He survives 227 days after a shipwreck while stranded on a boat in the Pacific Ocean with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker.





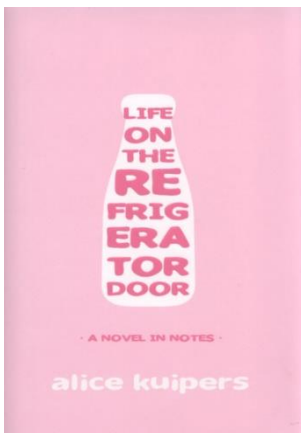
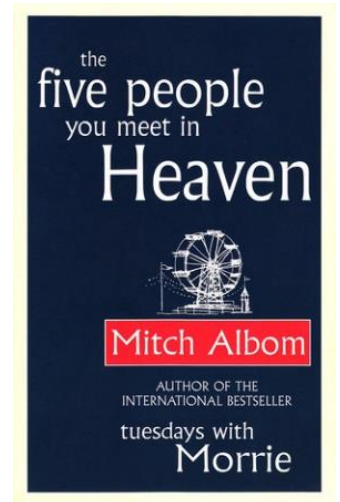
Once in a House on Fire by Andrea Ashworth - dysfunctional families and closeted skeletons galore!

Andrea Ashworth's father died when she was five leaving her, her three-year-old sister and mother to fend for themselves. A succession of stepfathers, some violent and an itinerant life of poverty were her lot, but reading was her escape route out of misery. Ashworth tells the true story of three sisters and their mother, a close-knit and loving family forced to battle with poverty, abuse and the effects of depression. Originally published in 1998 as an adult title, this book is aimed at a new young adult readership

The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom - thought provoking

A novel that explores the unexpected connections of our lives, and the idea that heaven is more than a place; it's an answer.

Eddie is a wounded war veteran, an old man who has lived, in his mind, an uninspired life. His job is fixing rides at a seaside amusement park. On his 83rd birthday, a tragic accident kills him as he tries to save a little girl from a falling cart. He awakes in the afterlife, where he learns that heaven is not a destination. It's a place where your life is explained to you by five people, some of whom you knew, others who may have been strangers. One by one, from childhood to soldier to old age, Eddie's five people revisit their connections to him on earth, illuminating the mysteries of his "meaningless" life, and revealing the haunting secret behind the eternal question: "Why was I here?"

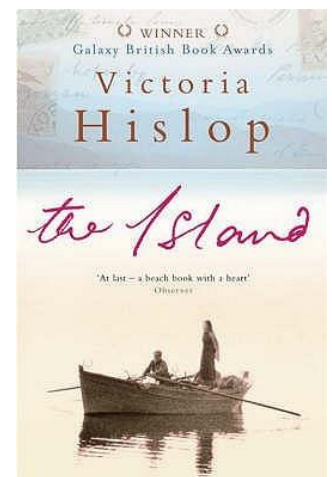


Life on the Refrigerator Door by Alice Kuipers - written as mother/daughter conversation messages taped to a fridge – SO sad!

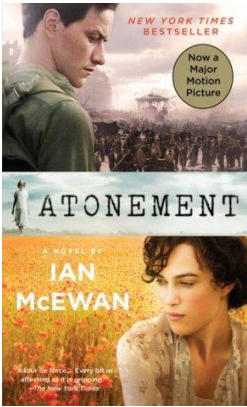
Mom, I went to the store. See inside the fridge. I watered the plants. I cleaned out Peter's cage. I tidied the sitting room. And the kitchen. And I did the washing up. I'm going to bed. Your live-in servant, Claire 'Life on the Refrigerator Door' is told exclusively through notes exchanged by Claire and her mother, Elizabeth, during the course of a life-altering year. Their story builds to an emotional crescendo when Elizabeth is diagnosed with breast cancer. Stunningly sad but ultimately uplifting, this is a clever, moving, and original portrait of the relationship between a daughter and mother. It is about how we live our lives constantly rushing, and never making time for those we love. It is also an elegy to how much can be said in so few words, if only we made the time to say them.

The Island by Victoria Hislop – atmospheric and emotional

A dramatic tale of four generations, rent by war, illicit love, violence and leprosy, from the thirties, through the war, to the present day. On the brink of a life-changing decision, Alexis Fielding longs to find out about her mother's past. But Sofia has never spoken of it. All she admits to is growing up in a small Cretan village before moving to London. When Alexis decides to visit Crete, however, Sofia gives her daughter a letter to take to an old friend and promises that through her she will learn more. Arriving in Plaka, Alexis is astonished to see that it lies a stone's throw from the tiny, deserted island of Spinalonga - Greece's former leper colony. Then she finds Fotini, and at last hears the story that Sofia has buried all her life: the tale of her great-grandmother Eleni and her daughters and a family rent by tragedy, war and passion. She discovers how intimately she is connected with the island, and how secrecy holds them all in its powerful grip...

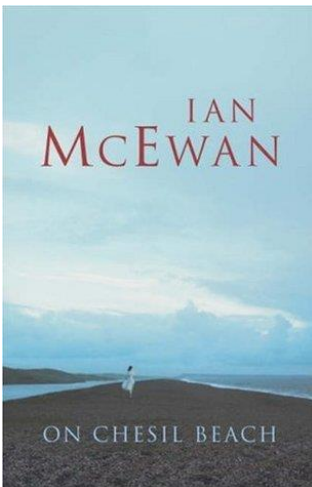
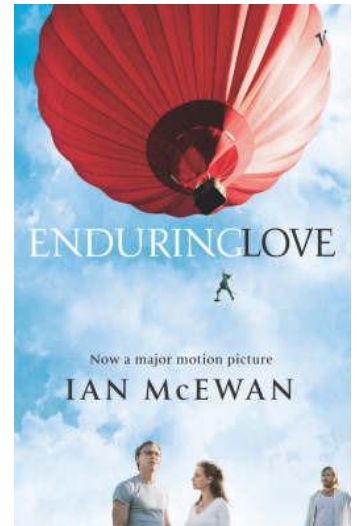


Atonement or Enduring Love or On Chesil Beach by Ian McEwan - dramatic texts.



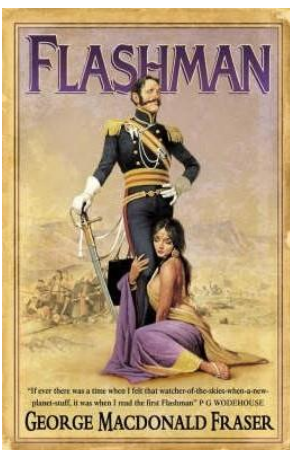
Atonement On the hottest day of the summer of 1934, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis sees her sister Cecilia strip off her clothes and plunge into the fountain in the garden of their country house. Watching her is Robbie Turner, her childhood friend who, like Cecilia, has recently come down from Cambridge. By the end of that day, the lives of all three will have been changed for ever. Robbie and Cecilia will have crossed a boundary they had not even imagined at its start and will have become victims of the younger girl's imagination. Briony will have witnessed mysteries and committed a crime for which she will spend the rest of her life trying to atone.

Enduring Love Joe planned a postcard-perfect afternoon in the English countryside to celebrate his lover's return after 6 weeks in the States. The perfect day turns to nightmare however, when they are involved in freak ballooning accident in which a boy is saved but a man is killed. In itself, the accident would change the couple and the survivors' lives, filling them with an uneasy combination of shame, happiness, and endless self-reproach. But fate has far more unpleasant things in store for Joe. Meeting the eye of fellow rescuer Jed Parry, for example, turns out to be a very bad move. For Jed is instantly obsessed, making the first of many calls to Joe and Clarissa's London flat that same night. Soon he's openly shadowing Joe and writing him endless letters. (One insane epistle begins, "I feel happiness running through me like an electrical current. I close my eyes and see you as you were last night in the rain, across the road from me, with the unspoken love between us as strong as steel cable.") Worst of all, Jed's version of love comes to seem a distortion of Joe's feelings for Clarissa.



On Chesil Beach It is July 1962. Florence is a talented musician who dreams of a career on the concert stage and of the perfect life she will create with Edward, an earnest young history student at University College of London, who unexpectedly wooed and won her heart. Newly married that morning, both virgins, Edward and Florence arrive at a hotel on the Dorset coast. At dinner in their rooms they struggle to suppress their worries about the wedding night to come. Edward, eager for rapture, frets over Florence's response to his advances and nurses a private fear of failure, while Florence's anxieties run deeper: she is overcome by sheer disgust at the idea of physical contact, but dreads disappointing her husband when they finally lie down together in the honeymoon suite.

Conflict



Flashman series by George MacDonald Fraser - If you like war/history then this cad who appears at every single failed battle attempt/lucky escape is for you

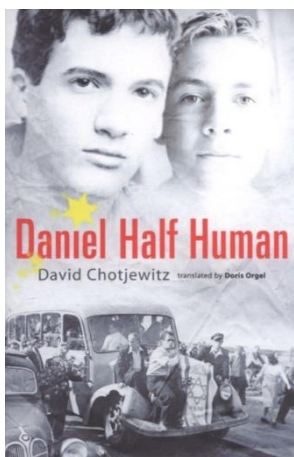
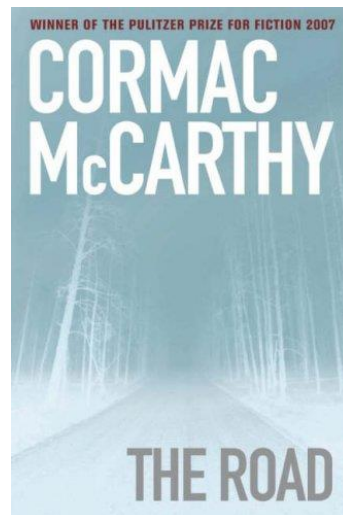
Flashman Coward, scoundrel, lover and cheat, but there is no better man to go into the jungle with. Join Flashman in his adventures as he survives fearful ordeals and outlandish perils across the four corners of the world.

Can a man be all bad? When Harry Flashman's adventures as the reluctant secret agent in Afghanistan lead him to join the exclusive company of Lord Cardigan's Hussars and play a part in the disastrous Retreat from Kabul, it culminates in the rascal's finest – and most dishonest – turn.

The Road by Cormac McCarthy - A searing, postapocalyptic novel destined to become Cormac McCarthy's masterpiece.

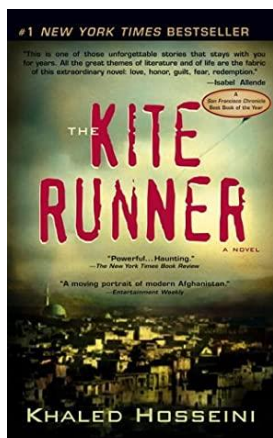
A father and his son walk alone through burned America. Nothing moves in the ravaged landscape save the ash on the wind. It is cold enough to crack stones, and when the snow falls it is gray. The sky is dark. Their destination is the coast, although they don't know what, if anything, awaits them there. They have nothing; just a pistol to defend themselves against the lawless bands that stalk the road, the clothes they are wearing, a cart of scavenged food—and each other.

The Road is the profoundly moving story of a journey. It boldly imagines a future in which no hope remains, but in which the father and his son, "each the other's world entire," are sustained by love. Awesome in the totality of its vision, it is an unflinching meditation on the worst and the best that we are capable of ultimate destructiveness, desperate tenacity, and the tenderness that keeps two people alive in the face of total devastation.



Daniel Half Human by David Chotjewitz - for its depiction of friendship and racial tension. Daniel and Armin are best friends. They are from well-to-do families and enjoy football and school. But they also admire Hitler as an underdog and revolutionary hero. The boys talk about joining the Hitler Youth - until Daniel learns to his horror that his mother is Jewish, that he is himself half-Jewish and therefore, in Aryan eyes, half human. So Daniel attempts to keep this fearsome secret to himself ...

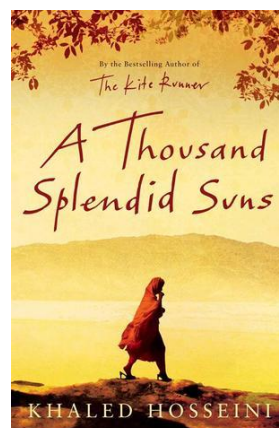
The Kite Runner or A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini - for understanding the plight of women and children in conflict



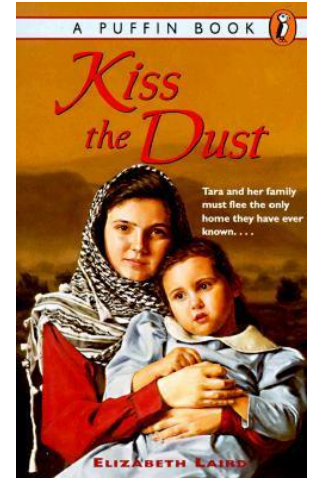
The Kite Runner Twelve-year-old Amir is desperate to win the approval of his father and resolves to win the local kite-fighting tournament, to prove that he has the makings of a man. His loyal friend Hassan promises to help him - for he always helps Amir - but this is 1970s Afghanistan and Hassan is merely a low-caste servant who is jeered at in the street, although Amir still feels jealous of his natural courage and the place he holds in his father's heart. But neither of the boys could foresee what would happen to Hassan on the afternoon of the tournament, which was to shatter their lives. After the Russians invade and the family is forced to flee to America, Amir realises that one day he must return, to find the one thing that his new world cannot grant him: redemption.

The book, which spans a period of over 40 years, from the 1960s to 2003, focuses on the tumultuous lives and relationship of Mariam and Laila, two Afghan women. Mariam, an illegitimate child, suffers from the stigma surrounding her birth and the abuse she faces throughout her marriage. Laila, born a generation later, is comparatively privileged during her youth until their lives intersect and she is also forced to accept a marriage proposal from Rasheed, Mariam's husband.

A Thousand Splendid Suns



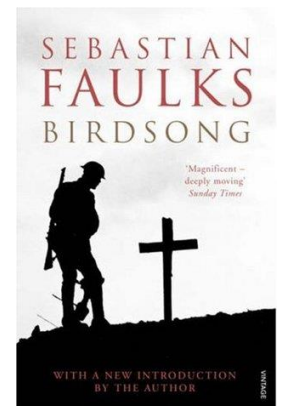
Kiss the Dust by Elizabeth Laird - has good links to the poem 'At the Border' as it charts the struggles of Kurds being forced to flee Iraq. The secret police are closing in. Tara and her family must flee to the mountains with only a few things they can carry. But their journey is only just beginning. Will anywhere feel like home again. For Tara, the world is turned upside down when her father's involvement in the Kurdish resistance movement forces the family to flee Iraq and eventually seek asylum in Britain. This book is written by the award-winning writer Elizabeth Laird, author of 'Red Sky in Morning'.



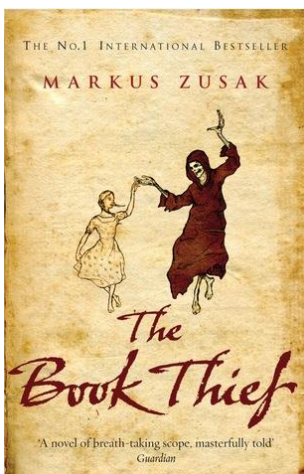
Maus I and II by Art Spiegelman - great graphic novels that chart the tale of an Auschwitz survivor

Combined for the first time here are *Maus I: A Survivor's Tale* and *Maus II* - the complete story of Vladek Spiegelman and his wife, living and surviving in Hitler's Europe. By addressing the horror of the Holocaust through cartoons, the author captures the everyday reality of fear and is able to explore the guilt, relief and extraordinary sensation of survival - and how the children of survivors are in their own way affected by the trials of their parents. A contemporary classic of immeasurable significance.

Birdsong by Sebastian Faulks - for its depiction of the 1st World War Published to international critical and popular acclaim, this intensely romantic yet stunningly realistic novel spans three generations and the unimaginable gulf between the First World War and the present. As the young Englishman Stephen Wraysford passes through a tempestuous love affair with Isabelle Azaire in France and enters the dark, surreal world beneath the trenches of No Man's Land, Sebastian Faulks creates a world of fiction that is as tragic as *A Farewell to Arms* and as sensuous as *The English Patient*. Crafted from the ruins of war and the indestructibility of love, *Birdsong* is a novel that will be read and marvelled at for years to come.



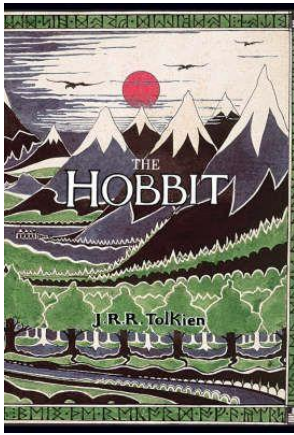
Fantasy/Science Fiction



The Book Thief by Markus Zusack - for its imaginative angle on death

It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier and will be busier still. By her brother's graveside, Liesel's life is changed when she picks up a single object, partially hidden in the snow. It is The Gravedigger's Handbook, left behind there by accident, and it is her first act of book thievery. So begins a love affair with books and words, as Liesel, with the help of her accordion-playing foster father, learns to read. Soon she is stealing books from Nazi book-burnings, the mayor's wife's library, wherever there are books to be found. But these are dangerous times. When Liesel's foster family hides a Jew in their basement, Liesel's world is both opened up, and closed down. In superbly crafted writing that burns with intensity, award-winning author Markus Zusak has given us one of the most enduring stories of our time.

The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit by J R R Tolkien - for fantasy worlds



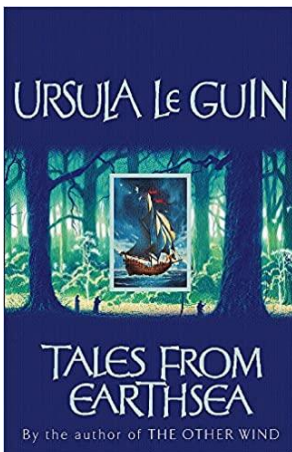
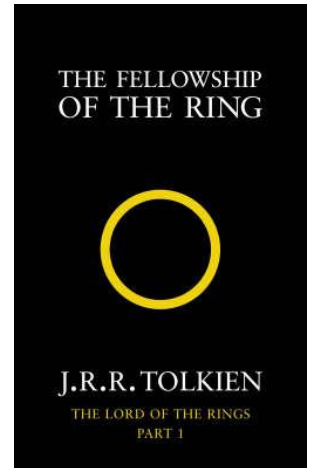
The Hobbit Smaug certainly looked fast asleep, when Bilbo peeped once more from the entrance. He was just about to step out onto the floor when he caught a sudden thin ray of red from under the drooping lid of Smaug's left eye. He was only pretending to be sleep! He was watching the tunnel entrance! Whisked from his comfortable hobbit-hole by Gandalf the wizard and a band of dwarves, Bilbo Baggins finds himself caught up in a plot to raid the treasure hoard of Smaug the Magnificent, a large and very dangerous dragon.

The Lord of the Rings series by J R R Tolkien

One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them, One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them In ancient times

the Rings of Power were crafted by the Elven-smiths, and Sauron, The Dark Lord, forged the One Ring, filling it with his own power so that he could rule all others. But the One Ring was taken from him, and though he sought it throughout Middle-earth, it remained lost to him.

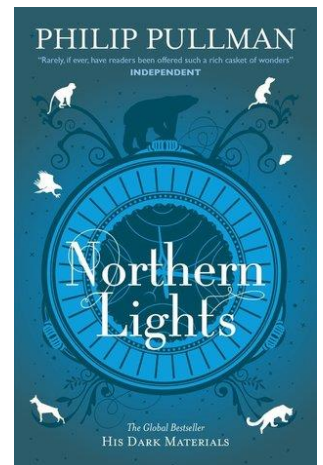
After many ages it fell into the hands of Bilbo Baggins, as told in *The Hobbit*. In a sleepy village in the Shire, young Frodo Baggins finds himself faced with an immense task, as his elderly cousin Bilbo entrusts the Ring to his care. Frodo must leave his home and make a perilous journey across Middle-Earth to the Cracks of Doom, there to destroy the Ring and foil the Dark Lord in his evil purpose.



Tales of Earthsea by Ursula Le Guin - strong characters and underlying themes of race and gender These five superlative, evocative and enchanting stories range from a few hundred years before *A Wizard of Earthsea* to just before *The Other Wind*, and feature some of Le Guin's most popular characters, including the Wizard Ged himself. The stories are rounded off with an essay about Earthsea's history and people. No Earthsea fan will want to be without this magical collection.

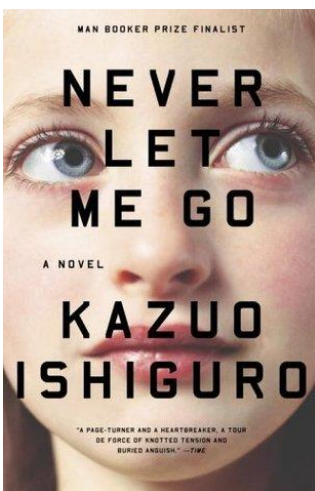
His Dark Materials trilogy by Philip Pullman - can be read on different levels from action adventure to philosophical debate.

Lyra Belacqua and her animal daemon live half-wild and carefree among scholars of Jordan College, Oxford. The destiny that awaits her will take her to the frozen lands of the Arctic, where witch-clans reign and ice-bears fight. Her extraordinary journey will have immeasurable consequences far beyond her own world...



Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro - provoking Sci-Fi and friendship exploration

From the Booker Prize-winning author of *The Remains of the Day* and *When We Were Orphans*, comes an unforgettable edge-of-your-seat mystery that is at once heartbreakingly tender and morally courageous about what it means to be human. Hailsham seems like a pleasant English boarding school, far from the influences of the city. Its students are well tended and supported, trained in art and literature, and become just the sort of people the world wants them to be. But, curiously, they are taught nothing of the outside world and are allowed little contact with it. Within the grounds of Hailsham, Kathy grows from schoolgirl to young woman, but it's only when she and her friends Ruth and Tommy leave the safe grounds of the school (as they always knew they would) that they realize the full truth of what Hailsham is. *Never Let Me Go* breaks through the boundaries of

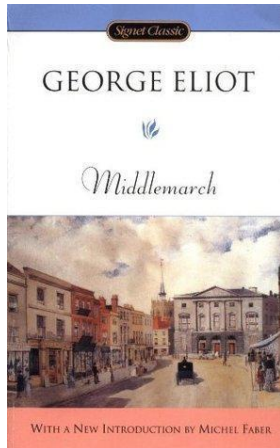
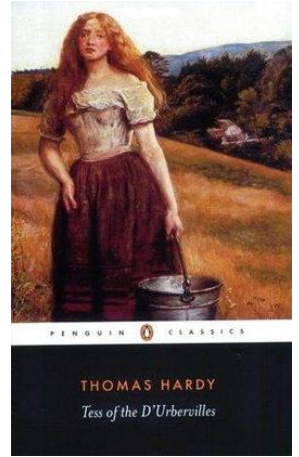


the literary novel. It is a gripping mystery, a beautiful love story, and also a scathing critique of human arrogance and a moral examination of how we treat the vulnerable and different in our society. In exploring the themes of memory and the impact of the past, Ishiguro takes on the idea of a possible future to create his most moving and powerful book to date.

Classic

Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy - a tragedy

When Tess Durbeyfield is driven by family poverty to claim kinship with the wealthy D'Urbervilles and seek a portion of their family fortune, meeting her 'cousin' Alec proves to be her downfall. A very different man, Angel Clare, seems to offer her love and salvation, but Tess must choose whether to reveal her past or remain silent in the hope of a peaceful future

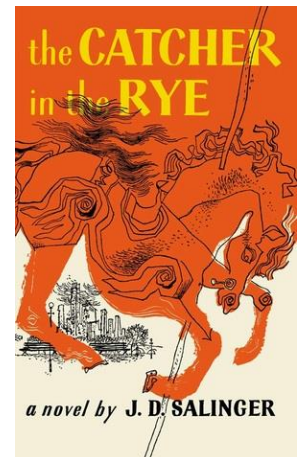


Middlemarch by George Eliott - a range of characters and attitudes in a small town (like Petersfield!) with a strong female lead character.

Taking place in the years leading up to the First Reform Bill of 1832, *Middlemarch* explores nearly every subject of concern to modern life: art, religion, science, politics, self, society, human relationships. Among her characters are some of the most remarkable portraits in English literature: Dorothea Brooke, the heroine, idealistic but naive; Rosamond Vincy, beautiful and egoistic; Edward Casaubon, the dry-as-dust scholar; Tertius Lydgate, the brilliant but morally-flawed physician; the passionate artist Will Ladislaw; and Fred Vincey and Mary Garth, childhood sweethearts whose charming courtship is one of the many humorous elements in the novel's rich comic vein.

The Catcher in the Rye by JD Salinger - the original story from the teenager's point of view.

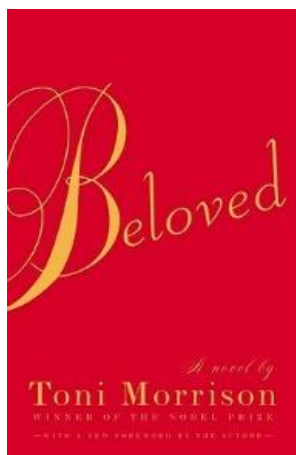
The hero-narrator of *The Catcher in the Rye* is an ancient child of sixteen, a native New Yorker named Holden Caulfield. Through circumstances that tend to preclude adult, second-hand description, he leaves his prep school in Pennsylvania and goes underground in New York City for three days. The boy himself is at once too simple and too complex for us to make any final comment about him or his story. Perhaps the safest thing we can say about Holden is that he was born in the world not just strongly attracted to beauty but, almost, hopelessly impaled on it. There are many voices in this novel: children's voices, adult voices, underground voices-but Holden's voice is the most eloquent of all. Transcending his own vernacular, yet remaining marvellously faithful to it, he issues a perfectly articulated cry of mixed pain and pleasure. However, like most lovers and clowns and poets of the higher orders, he keeps most of the pain to, and for, himself. The pleasure he gives away, or sets aside, with all his heart. It is there for the reader who can handle it to keep.



J.D. Salinger's classic novel of teenage angst and rebellion was first published in 1951. It has been frequently challenged in the court for its liberal use of profanity and portrayal of sexuality and in the 1950's and 60's it was the novel that every teenage boy wanted to read.

Beloved by Toni Morrison - sad look at slavery

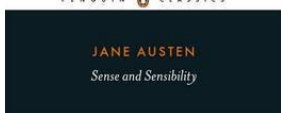
Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is a spellbinding and dazzlingly innovative portrait of a woman haunted by the past. Sethe was born a slave and escaped to Ohio, but eighteen years later she is still not free. She has borne the unthinkable and not gone mad, yet she is still held captive by memories of Sweet Home, the beautiful farm where so many hideous things happened. Meanwhile Sethe's house has long been troubled by the angry, destructive ghost of her baby, who died nameless and whose tombstone is engraved with a single word: *Beloved*. Sethe works at beating back the past, but it makes itself heard and felt incessantly in her memory and in the lives of those around her. When a mysterious teenage girl arrives, calling herself *Beloved*, Sethe's terrible secret explodes into the present. Combining the visionary power of legend with the unassailable truth of history, Morrison's unforgettable novel is one of the great and enduring works of American literature.



Anything by **Jane Austen** - Through her heroines' parallel experiences of love, loss, and hope, Jane Austen offers a powerful analysis of the ways in which women's lives were shaped by the claustrophobic society in which they had to survive.

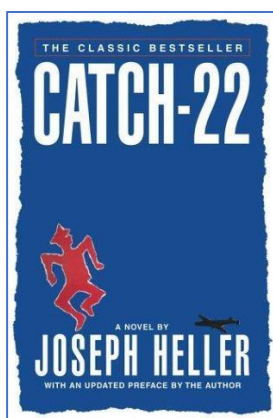
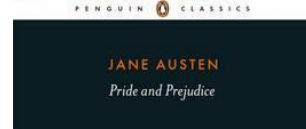


Sense and Sensibility In her first published novel, Jane Austen presents us with the subtle portraits of two contrasting but equally compelling heroines. For sensible Elinor Dashwood and her impetuous younger sister Marianne the prospect of marrying the men they love appears remote. In a world ruled by money and self-interest, the Dashwood sisters have neither fortune nor connections. Concerned for others and for social proprieties, Elinor is ill-equipped to compete with self-centred fortune-hunters like Lucy Steele, while Marianne's unswerving belief in the truth of her own feelings makes her more dangerously susceptible to the designs of unscrupulous men.



Pride and Prejudice Since its immediate success in 1813, this has remained one of the most popular novels in the English language.

Jane Austen called this brilliant work "her own darling child" and its vivacious heroine, Elizabeth Bennet, "as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print." The romantic clash between the opinionated Elizabeth and her proud beau, Mr. Darcy, is a splendid performance of civilized sparring. And Jane Austen's radiant wit sparkles as her characters dance a delicate quadrille of flirtation and intrigue, making this book the most superb comedy of manners of Regency England.

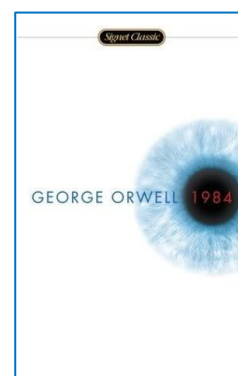


Catch 22 by Joseph Heller - a satirical war novel

Catch-22 is set during World War II, from 1942 to 1944. It mainly follows the life of Captain John Yossarian, a U.S. Army Air Forces B-25 bombardier. Most of the events in the book occur while the fictional 256th Squadron is based on the island of Pianosa, in the Mediterranean Sea, west of Italy. The novel looks into the experiences of Yossarian and the other airmen in the camp, who attempt to maintain their sanity while fulfilling their service requirements so that they may return home.

Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell - a dystopian future where critical thought is suppressed under a totalitarian regime.

The year 1984 has come and gone, but George Orwell's prophetic, nightmarish vision in 1949 of the world we were becoming is timelier than ever. *1984* is still the great modern classic of "negative utopia"—a startlingly original and haunting novel that creates an imaginary world that is completely convincing, from the first sentence to the last four words. No one can deny the novel's hold on the imaginations of whole generations, or the power of its admonitions—a power that seems to grow, not lessen, with the passage of time

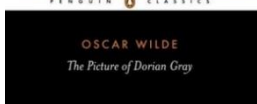


Short stories by **Oscar Wilde** including **The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde** - has a fascinating concept

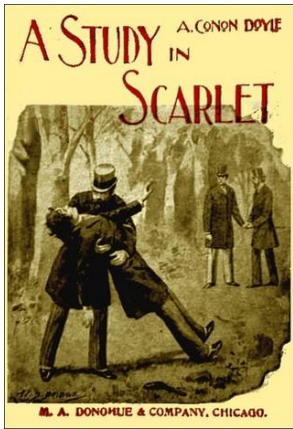


'The horror, whatever it was, had not yet entirely spoiled that marvellous beauty'

Enthralled by his own exquisite portrait, Dorian Gray exchanges his soul for eternal youth and beauty. Influenced by his friend Lord Henry Wotton, he is drawn into a corrupt double life, indulging his desires in secret while remaining a gentleman in the eyes of polite society. Only his portrait bears the traces of his decadence. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* was a *succès de scandale*. Early readers were shocked by its hints at unspeakable sins, and the book was later used as evidence against Wilde at the Old Bailey in 1895.



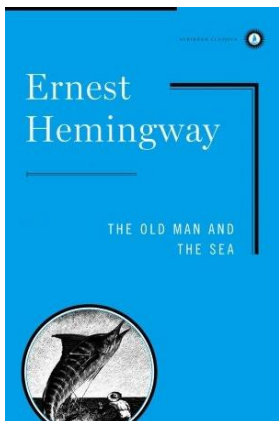
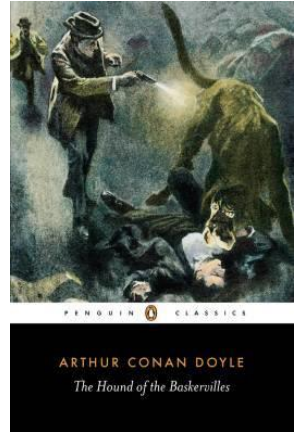
Any of the **Sherlock Holmes** mysteries by **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**.



A Study in Scarlet is the first published story of one of the most famous literary detectives of all time, Sherlock Holmes. Here Dr. Watson, who has just returned from a war in Afghanistan, meets Sherlock Holmes for the first time when they become flat mates at the famous 221 B Baker Street. In "A Study in Scarlet" Sherlock Holmes investigates a murder at Lauriston Gardens as Dr. Watson tags along with Holmes while narratively detailing his amazing deductive abilities

The Hound of the Baskervilles 'The barren scene, the sense of loneliness, and the mystery and urgency of my task all struck a chill into my heart'

Could the sudden death of Sir Charles Baskerville have been caused by the gigantic ghostly hound that is said to have haunted his family for generations? Arch-rationalist Sherlock Holmes characteristically dismisses the theory as nonsense. And immersed in another case, he sends Watson to Devon to protect the Baskerville heir and observe the suspects close at hand. With its atmospheric setting on the ancient, wild moorland and its savage apparition, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is one of the greatest crime novels ever written. Rationalism is pitted against the supernatural, good against evil, as Sherlock Holmes seeks to defeat a foe almost his equal.

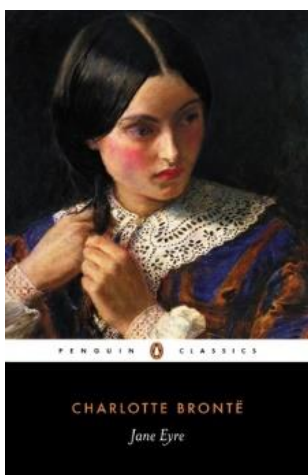
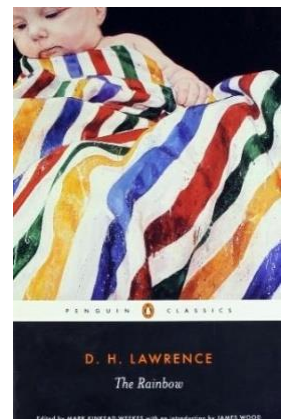


The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway - short, simple, very powerful

This short novel, already a modern classic, is the superbly told, tragic story of a Cuban fisherman in the Gulf Stream and the giant Marlin he kills and loses — specifically referred to in the citation accompanying the author's Nobel Prize for literature in 1954

The Rainbow by D H Lawrence - a beautiful, profound book about the struggle to find meaning and fulfilment in life.

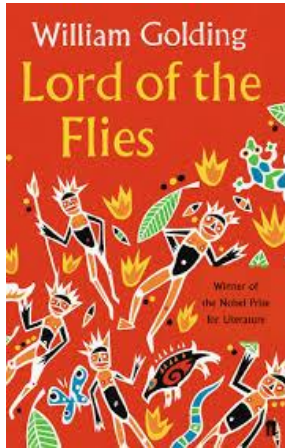
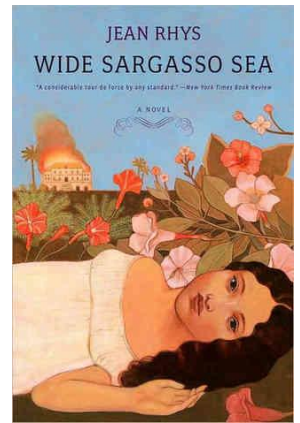
Set in the rural Midlands of England, *The Rainbow* (1915) revolves around three generations of the Brangwens, a strong, vigorous family, deeply involved with the land. When Tom Brangwen marries a Polish widow, Lydia Lensky, and adopts her daughter Anna as his own, he is unprepared for the conflict and passion that erupts between them. All are seeking individual fulfilment, but it is Ursula, Anna's spirited daughter, who, in search for self-knowledge, rejects the conventional role of womanhood.



Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë - a much-loved classic charting a young woman's experiences.

A gothic masterpiece of tempestuous passions and dark secrets Charlotte Brontë tells the story of orphaned Jane Eyre, who grows up in the home of her heartless aunt, enduring loneliness and cruelty. This troubled childhood strengthens Jane's natural independence and spirit - which prove necessary when she finds employment as a governess to the young ward of Byronic, brooding Mr Rochester. As her feelings for Rochester develop, Jane gradually uncovers Thornfield Hall's terrible secret, forcing her to make a choice. Should she stay with Rochester and live with the consequences, or follow her convictions - even if it means leaving the man she loves? A novel of intense power and intrigue, *Jane Eyre* dazzled readers with its passionate depiction of a woman's search for equality and freedom.

Wide Sargasso Sea by Jean Rhys - will make you see *Jane Eyre* in a whole new light. Prequel to *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë. Born into an oppressive, colonialist society, Creole heiress Antoinette Cosway meets a young Englishman who is drawn to her innocent sensuality and beauty, but soon after their marriage, rumours of madness in her family poison his mind against her. He forces Antoinette to conform to his rigid Victorian ideals.



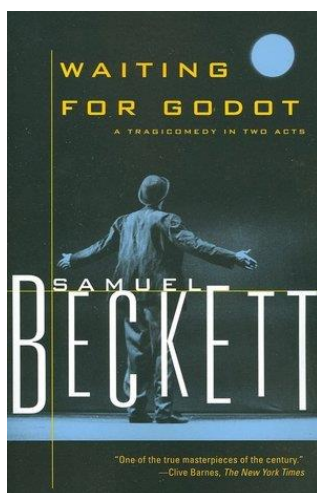
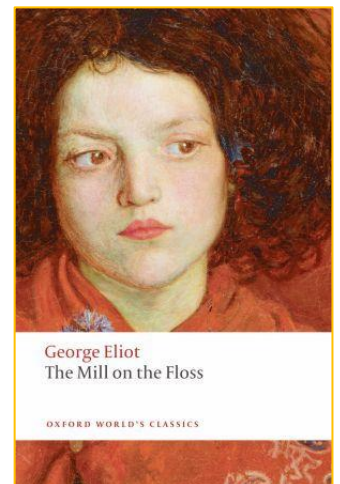
Lord of the Flies by William Golding - a group of schoolboys are stranded on an island with no adults to supervise them and little hope of rescue. Violent and provocative.

At the dawn of the next world war, a plane crashes on an uncharted island, stranding a group of schoolboys. At first, with no adult supervision, their freedom is something to celebrate; this far from civilization the boys can do anything they want. Anything. They attempt to forge their own society, failing, however, in the face of terror, sin and evil. And as order collapses, as strange howls echo in the night, as terror begins its reign, the hope of adventure seems as far from reality as the hope of being rescued. Labelled a parable, an allegory, a myth, a morality tale, a parody, a political treatise, even a vision of the apocalypse, *Lord of the Flies* is perhaps our most memorable novel about “the end of innocence, the darkness of man’s heart.”

The Mill on the Floss by George Eliot – a tragic and moving story about a brother and sister growing up in challenging circumstances.

'If life had no love in it, what else was there for Maggie?'

Brought up at Dorlcote Mill, Maggie Tulliver worships her brother Tom and is desperate to win the approval of her parents, but her passionate, wayward nature and her fierce intelligence bring her into constant conflict with her family. As she reaches adulthood, the clash between their expectations and her desires is painfully played out as she finds herself torn between her relationships with three very different men: her proud and stubborn brother, a close friend who is also the son of her family's worst enemy, and a charismatic but dangerous suitor. With its poignant portrayal of sibling relationships, *The Mill on the Floss* is considered George Eliot's most autobiographical novel; it is also one of her most powerful and moving.

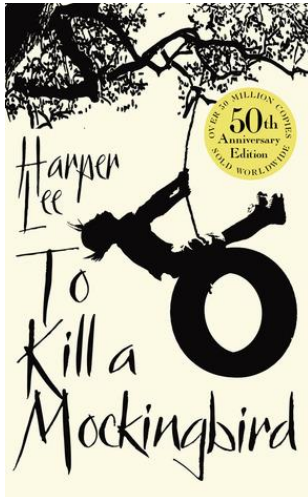
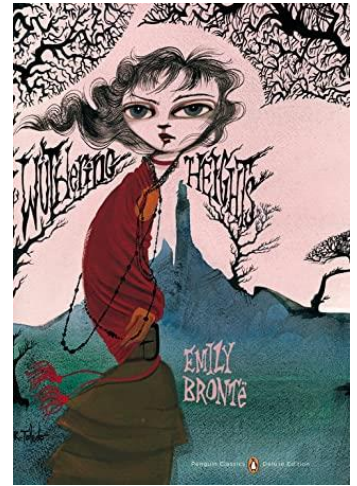


Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett - a ground-breaking play.

Two tramps sit by a roadside waiting for the mysterious Godot to come by and help them. The story revolves around two seemingly homeless men simply waiting for someone—or something—named Godot. Vladimir and Estragon wait near a tree, inhabiting a drama spun of their own consciousness. The result is a comical wordplay of poetry, dreamscapes, and nonsense, which has been interpreted as mankind’s inexhaustible search for meaning. Beckett’s language pioneered an expressionistic minimalism that captured the existential post-World War II Europe. His play remains one of the most magical and beautiful allegories of our time

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte - a twisted love story

Wuthering Heights is a wild, passionate story of the intense and almost demonic love between Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, a foundling adopted by Catherine's father. After Mr Earnshaw's death, Heathcliff is bullied and humiliated by Catherine's brother Hindley, and wrongly believing that his love for Catherine is not reciprocated, leaves *Wuthering Heights*. Returning years later as a wealthy and polished man, he proceeds to exact a terrible revenge for his former miseries. The action of the story is chaotic and unrelentingly violent, but the accomplished handling of a complex structure, the evocative descriptions of the lonely moorland setting, and the poetic grandeur of vision combine to make this unique novel a masterpiece of English literature.



To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee - looking at racial inequality.

'Shoot all the blue jays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.'

A lawyer's advice to his children as he defends the real mockingbird of Harper Lee's classic novel - a black man charged with the rape of a white girl. Through the young eyes of Scout and Jem Finch, Harper Lee explores the irrationality of adult attitudes to race and class in the Deep South of the thirties. The conscience of a town steeped in prejudice, violence and hypocrisy is pricked by the stamina of one man's struggle for justice. But the weight of history will only tolerate so much.

To Kill a Mockingbird is a coming-of-age story, an anti-racist novel, a historical drama of the Great Depression and a sublime example of the Southern writing tradition.