



June 10, 2010

Dear Upper School Students,

As you plan your summer, don't forget to plan some time to read. Enclosed are the titles of required summer reading, and two annotated lists of additional reading. Choose two from the additional lists. You may also choose any other book by the authors on these lists, or other books of literary merit. A good way to know that the book is of high quality is to read what the critics say about it. Are these critics from reputable sources (e.g., *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*)? Another good way to judge the quality of books is to find them in the "literature" section of the bookstore or library. We encourage you to make some of your own choices this summer, but be selective. Ask your friends what they like to read. Ask your parents, your teachers. Also, don't be afraid to stop reading a book if you don't like it. Find another one. There are so many good ones; you will eventually find one you like.

One of the enclosed annotated lists is compiled from the pre-college reading lists, freshman syllabi, and core programs detailed in *Reading Lists for College Bound Students* (Estell, Satchwell, and Wright). The titles represent the 100 books most frequently recommended by colleges and universities. We encourage you to read at least one from this list; the more you read from the traditional canon, the more able you will be to compete in college.

Please read actively! If you own the book, highlight as you read (e.g., underline, make notes in margins, keep a reading journal). This active reading will facilitate discussions and writing about the books when you return in the fall. You may want to wait until the final weeks of summer to read required summer reading so it is fresh in your mind when you return in the fall.

Enjoy your summer. When we return in August, be ready to write about and discuss the books you have read!

Sincerely,

Frank Nering

Scott Harford

SA T. J. S. H. B. E.

Stephanie Merrill

James A. Williams

Ann Koff

Elgin Academy is a college preparatory school in the Liberal Arts tradition. A key component of a liberal arts education is intellectual vitality. The English and Social Studies Departments are committed to upholding intellectual vitality in part through the books we ask our students to read. We believe that authentic inquiry must include new perspectives and voices. We believe that often the best books force us to question what we take for granted and always forces us to consider the world through different eyes than our own. We seek to help students understand these various perspectives although we do not expect all students to necessarily agree with them. Our ultimate goal is for Elgin Academy students to develop the capacity to make informed and discriminating ethical and aesthetic judgments.

Required Summer Reading—2010

Freshman English: *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver (2008 ed.)
The Lord of the Flies by William Golding (Perigee ed.)

Sophomore English: *The Great Santini* by Pat Conroy
A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

Junior English: *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck (Penguin)

Senior English: *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides
One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

A.P. European History: *The United States of Europe* by J.R. Reid

A.P. Psychology: *Opening Skinner's Box* by Lauren Slater

United States History: *1968: The Year that Rocked the World* by Mark Kurlansky

RECOMMENDED READING

FICTION:

All the Pretty Horses by Cormac McCarthy

A modern-day western full of horses, gunplay and romance. This is the story of John Grady Cole, the last of a long line of Texas Rangers, who sets off on an incredible adventure through the “wild west.” Great writing and often comedic.

Animal Dreams by Barbara Kingsolver

Codi Noline returns to her hometown of Grace, Arizona after many years of putting her past behind her. She finds her father aging and incapacitated, an environmental crisis in town and the love of an old friend. A suspenseful love story and a great plunge into retracing the steps of childhood. Also recommended by this author:

The Bean Trees, The Poisonwood Bible

Bless Me, Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya

Ultima, a wise old mystic, helps a young Hispanic boy resolve personal dilemmas caused by the differing backgrounds and aspirations of his parents and society.

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

Pecola Breedlove, the young black protagonist, wants blonde hair and blue eyes. She thinks people will like her for that. Anything Toni Morrison writes is excellent. This was her first book. Read all of her works this summer if you can!

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

A satirical novel set in the year 632 AF (After Ford). A grim picture of the world which Huxley thinks our scientific and social developments have begun to create.

Ceremony by Leslie Marmon Silko

Tayo, the main character, a half-white Laguna Indian, is emotionally stricken by white warfare and almost destroyed by his experiences as a WWII prisoner of the Japanese. In his quest for healing, he discovers his connection to the land and to ancient rituals with the help of a medicine man.

The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith by Thomas Keneally

Mixed-race Australian Jimmie Blacksmith is brutally betrayed by white society and embarks on a murderous rampage.

Cold Sassy Tree by Olive Anne Burns

This book is full of genuine humor and pathos as Will Tweedy tells us the story of his grandfather’s re-marriage to a much younger woman. It’s also a good portrait of small-town Southern life.

The Color Purple by Alice Walker

Set in the American south, this is the story of Celie, a fourteen-year-old who is a victim of domestic violence. It is really about Celie’s ability to cope and overcome in spite of her environment.

The Confederacy of Dunces by John Kennedy Toole

Your sides will hurt from laughing at some of the scenes that this unique and hilarious story unfolds. Ignatius J. Reilly is an obese and somewhat tragic character who exploits his day to day life through brilliant humor and comic explanations.

Crossing to Safety by Wallace Stegner

Two couples live very different lives in the college town of Madison, Wisconsin. One husband is a non-tenured professor whose family struggles throughout the educational ups and downs of life at a growing university in the 1960's. The other couple is more economically sound, yet their friendship spans three decades of humor, love and tragedy. A beautifully written novel. Also suggested by this author: *Angle of Repose*
The Elizabeth Stories by Isabel Huggins

A series of short stories about one character, Elizabeth. In each story, Elizabeth is older and wiser. Good writing.

Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card

Science fiction set in a future where the Earth is at war with an alien race looking to colonize our solar system. The main character, Ender, is a genius who is recruited into the military at age six and sent to training camp, purposely isolated from his family. Fast paced, emotionally charged, excellent story about a young man forced to grow up far before his time. One of my all time favorite authors. There are three equally good (but long) sequels: *Speaker for the Dead*, *Xenocide*, and *Children of the Mind*.

Recommended by Mrs. Ramirez. Also excellent: *The Lost Boys*, the *Alvin Maker* series, and his short stories!

The English Patient by Michael Ondaatje

A moving and haunting tale of an English pilot in WWII that finds himself terribly burned and nursed slowly back to health in a bombed-out Italian villa. Life and death come and go as easily as day into night in this eerie tale of survival.

Fade by Robert Cormier

The young protagonist in this novel discovers he has the "gift" of becoming invisible at will. By the end of the book, he is not certain it is such a gift. Sophomores in the past read this for summer reading and liked it.

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

Books are for burning in this future society where thinking and reading are crimes.

The Fixer by Bernard Malamud

Yakoz Bok fights for his life when he becomes the victim of a vicious anti-Semitic conspiracy and is unjustly sent to a Russian prison.

The General and His Labyrinth by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

This story recounts the turbulent life of Simon Bolivar, a 50-year-old political and military leader whose dream is to liberate South America from Spanish domination. This story is told in the framework of a fantastic seven months' voyage down the Magdalena River from Bogota to the sea. Like any of Marquez' works, you must keep track of his many characters! Also suggested by this author: *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *Love in the Time of Cholera*

Golf in the Kingdom by Michael Murphy

A great book for gold lovers or those who believe in elves or spirits! Set in Scotland, this magical tale takes you through 18 of the best holes in the history of golf!

The Great Santini by Pat Conroy

Told from the viewpoint of an 18-year-old male. He is in conflict with his domineering, Marine fighter-pilot father.

Goodbye, Columbus by Philip Roth

A young Jewish man meets a wealthy young woman. The central conflict deals with this man's paradoxical attraction/repulsion towards the woman's wealth and superficiality. Roth tells the story with humor and candor.

A House for Mr. Biswas by V.S. Naipaul

Set in the Caribbean, Mr. Biswas struggles for cultural and personal identity. In this book of epic proportion, Mr. Biswas just wants to own a house! Gives the reader a good understanding of colonialism.

Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard by Kiran Desai

This wonderful book is set in India. It is the story of Sampath, a teenager who is fed up with his life, so he goes to the Guava Orchard and lives in a tree! It is funny and beautifully written. Great characters, including monkeys.

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote

This book was the first of its kind: journalistic fiction. It is based on a true story of the murder of a Kansas farm family. It is especially meaningful to Ms. Merrill because the people murdered (Herb, Bonnie, Nancy, and Kenyon Clutter) were her neighbors and friends. Good writing based on interviews with the townspeople and the killers.

The King Must Die by Mary Renault

The myth of Theseus and the minotaur of Crete comes to life in the form of a novel.

Kitchen by Banana Yoshimoto

This simply written book is told from the eyes of a young woman, Mikage, in contemporary Japan. Her grandmother has just died, and Mikage is dealing with loss and change in her life. In the past few years, this book was on the required reading list for seniors. They gave it good reviews.

The Kitchen God's Wife by Amy Tan

The author of *The Joy Luck Club*, Tan's second novel is about the life of Winnie Louie which she tells or offers as a gift to her daughter, Pearl. Much happens in the telling: long-held secrets are revealed and a family's myths are transferred ceremoniously to the next generation. This is the world of California's immigrant Chinese with flashbacks and stories that dwell deep in the hearts of her characters. A story you can't put down!

Leaving Cheyenne by Larry McMurtry

A western love story that spans forty years. Two men, one a rancher who has inherited a fortune and the other, a real-life cowboy, fight for the hand of Molly, who bears each of them a son. Writing is crisp and direct and full of images of the old west.

A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest Gaines

A young black man is wrongly convicted of a murder he did not commit. He dies in jail, but learns about dignity.

Lucy by Jamaica Kincaid

This book focuses on the life of a 19-year-old West Indian girl who goes to work as an *au pair* in New York.

The Mists of Avalon by Marion Zimmer Bradley

This is the magical legend of King Arthur, vividly retold through the eyes and lives of the women who wielded power from behind the throne.

The Once and Future King by T.H. White

King Arthur learns his lessons from Merlin the Magician, creates Camelot and the Knights of the Round Table and loves and loses Guinevere.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey

A group of patients at a mental hospital are influenced by a newcomer who teaches them hope through laughter -- they gain dignity and self-respect through non-conformity.

Picturing Will by Ann Beattie

Chronicles of the life of a group of people who are linked to a five and a half year old boy, Will. Their stories are told in a way that mirrors how we learn about those around us -- in glimpses and snapshots, truths shared and truths discovered. Refreshing and down-to-earth.

Possession by A.S. Byatt

An exhilarating and somewhat difficult novel of wit, romance and mystery. It is the tale of a pair of young scholars researching the lives of two Victorian poets. As they uncover their letters, journals and poems and track their lives from London to Yorkshire - - from spiritualist seances to fairy tales -- what emerges in extraordinary passion and ideas.

The Prince of Tides by Pat Conroy

A terrifically detailed story that depicts a family's often troubled life. Set in the shrimping waters of South Carolina in the 1960's, three children struggle from their parents' rocky marriage into hectic adult lives of their own. This story is so beautifully written by Conroy that you have to almost pause at each of his descriptions to catch your breath.

The Queen's Gambit by Walter Tevis

Beth Harmon is taught to play chess by the janitor in her orphanage. She jeopardizes her achievements by personal doubts and dependence on drugs and alcohol.

Ragtime by E.L. Doctorow

The troubled lives of real and fictional people from widely different economic and ethnic groups mesh in nineteenth-century America.

Ramona by Helen Hunt Jackson

Set in Mexican California, Mexico, and Native American villages, this is a love story between a Native American and an adopted native American/Euro American. The central conflict is based on the prejudice of the young woman's adoptive Mexican parents.

Roots by Alex Haley

Haley traces his ancestry back through American slavery to its origins in Africa. Because it is a combination of history and fiction, Haley has called this genre "faction."

Saint Maybe by Anne Tyler

A very ordinary family is thrown into crisis by the death of their oldest son. The younger son feels he is somehow responsible and sets his life around making amends. This story is both tragic and humorous at times and is a great coming of age tale that deals with everything from religion to changing diapers. Also suggested by this author:

The Accidental Tourist, Breathing Lessons, Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant

The Shipping News by Annie Proulx

At 36, Quoye, a third-rate newspaperman retreats to Newfoundland, his ancestral home, where a rich cast of characters all play a part in his struggle to reclaim his life. A darkly comic tone.

Siddhartha by Herman Hesse

This is a short book of epic quality. It is the story of a young Indian man's quest for truth and understanding of the teachings of Buddha.

The Stranger by Albert Camus

A man who is virtually unknown to both himself and others commits a pointless murder for which he has no explanation.

Time and Again by Jack Finney

A sci-fi adventure, historic, love-story combination with a very interesting method of time travel. It's a novel about a man who is enlisted in a secret government program and travels back in time to 1882 where he falls in love and must decide whether to stay in this time or go back to his own. My favorite book, personally. There's also a sequel, *From Time to Time*, which happens to be my least favorite book.

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

If you missed this one in middle school, you need to read it now! The young protagonist learns some important lessons about life in the adult world.

To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf

Virginia Woolf is one of the greatest! This novel is a challenge because of its stream-of-consciousness technique. Very poetic and symbolic. Emphasis is not on plot and action, but on the psychological realm of the characters.

Turtle Moon by Alice Hoffman

Keith Rosen hates everything in Florida -- the heat, the school, and sometimes his mother. He can't wait to get away. And then he does -- when a woman is murdered and her baby is left behind! This is a murder mystery that is hard to put down. Señora recommends it!

Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe

This book relates the trials, suffering, and human dignity of Uncle Tom, an old black slave.

Winter Wheat by Mildred Walker

Set in the 1940's. The heroine, Ellen Webb, lives in the dryland wheat country of central Montana. She "grows up" in the story as she struggles to understand her immigrant parents and herself.

A Yellow Raft on Blue Water by Michael Dorris

Starting in the present and moving backward in time, this is a thrice-told tale of three women, 15-year-old Ramona, her mother, Christine, and her grandmother, Ida. Their story braids together the three strands of their lives.

NONFICTION:

Days of Grace by Arthur Ashe

This is the autobiography of one of our country's pioneer tennis players, A black man, raised in racist Richmond, Virginia, Ashe poignantly discusses issues of race in America, apartheid in South Africa, being captain of America's Davis Cup Team, his health problems, and his involvement in the corporate world.

Growing Up by Russell Baker

A New York journalist takes a humorous look at his childhood in Baltimore during the depression.

The Road from Coorain: An Autobiography by Jill K. Conway

Conway escapes the restrictive Australian society of the 1950's to achieve independence and success.

The Sound of Wings: The Biography of Amelia Earhart by Mary S. Lovell

A famous woman flier has two loves -- her husband, George Putnam and flying.

Zelda by Nancy Milford

This biography of Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald tells the story of the woman behind (and very often in front of) F. Scott Fitzgerald's life and writing. If you liked *The Great Gatsby*, this literary biography gives you behind-the-scenes information about the Jazz Age.

Woman in the Mists: The Story of Dian Fossey and the Mountain Gorillas of Africa by Farley Mowat

The turbulent life and mysterious death of a woman who dedicated her life to the study and survival of endangered mountain gorillas.

Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped to Hide the Frank Family by Miep Gies with Alison Leslie Gold

At great risk to their own lives, the Gies family hides the family of Anne Frank in their attic in Amsterdam, Holland, during World War II.

When Heaven and Earth Changed Places: A Vietnamese Woman's Journey from War to Peace by Le Ly Hayslep with Jay Wurts

Caught in her country's civil war in a family divided, Hayslep survives imprisonment, rape, starvation and torture.

John F. Kennedy by Judie Mills

Overshadowed by his older brother and plagued by ill-health, JFK became our youngest president and the symbol of a generation.

Martin Luther King, Jr.: To the Mountaintop by William R. Witherspoon

A great civil rights leader struggles to the top of the mountain and sees some of his "dream" realized before he is assassinated.

Born on the Fourth of July by Ron Kovic

An all-American boy joins the Marines, goes to Vietnam, is gravely wounded and becomes an anti-war activist.

West with the Night by Beryl Markham

Beryl Markham was the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic from east to west. In this book she recounts her adventures as a pilot in Africa in the 1930's. Ernest Hemingway said that he was "completely ashamed of [himself] as a writer" after having read this "bloody wonderful book."

Sound-Shadows of the New World by Ved Mehta

Fifteen-year-old Ved Mehta, torn from the world he knows, is thrust into an American school for the blind and manages, despite the differences in cultures, to live the life of a normal teenager.

My Place by Sally Morgan

Unraveling the mystery of her Australian heritage, Morgan discovers what it means to be an aborigine.

Georgia O’Keeffe: A Life by Roxana Robinson

A woman artist achieves success and recognition for her work.

Pablo Picasso: The Man and the Image by Richard B. Lyttle

A portrait of Picasso reveals his life as a man and an artist.

Eleanor Roosevelt: First Lady of American Liberalism by Lois Scharf

A shy, homely young woman emerges from a privileged, strict Victorian childhood to become an admired and influential woman of the world.

The Cage by Ruth M. Sender

A teenager comes of age in a Polish ghetto, suffers in a concentration camp and survives the Holocaust.

The Last Algonquin by Theodore Kazimiroff

Orphaned at thirteen, Joe Two Trees, an Algonquin Indian, chooses to live out his life alone rather than live in the white man’s world.

Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S Truman by Merle Miller

The “man from Missouri” becomes President and talks frankly about his life.

Home Before Morning: The Story of an Army Nurse in Vietnam by Lynda Van Devanter

A nurse serves her time in Vietnam and finds the horror and unpopularity of the war follows her home.

Darkness Over the Valley by Wendelgard Von Staden

A teenage German girl aids and befriends concentration camp inmates who work on her family’s estate.

This Boy’s Life: A Memoir by Tobias Wolff

A charter member of the “Bad Boy’s Club” tells his story.

Black Boy: A Record of Childhood and Youth by Richard Wright

Richard Wright survives the loss of his parents and racial conflict in the pre-World War II South by reading voraciously and rebelling against pious relatives and teachers.

THE 100 MOST-OFTEN-RECOMMENDED WORKS

This list of the 100 works most frequently recommended by colleges and universities is compiled from the pre-college reading lists, freshmen syllabi, and core programs detailed in *Reading Lists for College Bound Students* (edited by D. Estell, M. Satchwell, & P. Wright). The annotations will help you decide which books you'd like to read.

The author's nationality and the date of publication are in parentheses before each annotation. Most of these books are available in many editions. At the end of each annotation you are given a selected edition, identified by publisher, with the number of pages in that particular edition. If you are interested in other works by the same author, alternate suggestions that were consistently mentioned by colleges appear in parentheses. A key to the abbreviations for the publishers and the authors' nationalities is included at the end of the list.

NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice* (BR, 1813)

A novel about love and marriage among the English country gentry of Austen's day. The hero's pride in his social class conflicts with the heroine's prejudice against him based on first impression. WSP 464 pp. (*Emma*)

Baldwin, James. *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (AM, 1953)

This semi-autobiographical novel about a 14-year-old black youth's religious conversion is based on Baldwin's experience as a young storefront preacher in Harlem. DP 224 pp. (*Notes of a Native Son*)

Bellow, Saul. *Seize the Day* (AM, 1956)

In this novella, a son grapples with his love and hate for an unworthy father. When he won the Nobel Prize in 1976, Bellow was cited for "the human understanding and the analysis of contemporary culture that are combined in his work." VKP 107 pp. (*Henderson the Rain King*)

Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre* (BR, 1847)

This romantic novel introduced a new type of heroine to English fiction. Jane Eyre is an intelligent, passionate, and not especially beautiful young woman who falls in love with a strange moody man tormented by dark secrets. SC 461 pp.

Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights* (BR, 1847)

One of the masterpieces of English romanticism, this is a novel of love and revenge. The demonic passion of the hero-villain Heathcliff destroys his beloved Catherine, her family, and eventually himself. WSP 460 pp.

Camus, Albert. *The Stranger* (FR, 1942)

An existential novel in which a young man, observing rather than participating in life, commits a senseless murder. While in prison awaiting execution, he comes to value life. Camus won the Nobel Prize in 1957. VIN 154 pp.

Carroll, Lewis. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (BR, 1865)

A fantasy in which Alice follows the White Rabbit to a dream world. The characters she encounters (the Mad Hatter, the Queen of Hearts, and others) are part of the adult world she must deal with. Sir John Tenniel's illustrations have become as classic as Carroll's story. NAL 143 pp. with annotations. (*Through the Looking Glass*)

Cather, Willa. *My Antonia* (AM, 1918)

A realistic novel about immigrant pioneers as they strive to adapt to the Nebraska prairies. It is the story of the struggles of Antonia and other women who are strengthened by the harsh realities of life. HM 238 pp. (*Death Comes for the Archbishop*)

Cervantes, Miguel de. *Don Quixote* (SP, 1605,1617)

A novel in which an eccentric old gentleman setting out as a knight goes “tilting at windmills” to right the wrongs of the world. This work, made up of twelve stories, “has been translated into more languages than any other book except the Bible.” (L.H. Hornstein) VKP 653 pp.

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening* (AM, 1899)

This is the story of a New Orleans woman who abandons her husband and children to search for love and self-understanding. A controversial book when it was published because of the character’s extramarital affair, the book was virtually ignored for 50 years. BC 208 pp.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness* (BR, 1902)

A probing psychological novel that explores the darkness in the soul of each man. Conrad’s narrator Marlow makes a journey into the depths of the Congo where he discovers the extent to which greed can corrupt a good man. SC 93 pp. (bound with *The Secret Sharer*). (*Lord Jim*)

Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage* (AM, 1895)

This Civil War novel, which Crane called “a psychological portrayal of fear,” reveals the grim aspects of war in the life of an ordinary soldier. Henry Fleming joins the army full of romantic visions of battle which are shattered by combat. WSP 224 pp.

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe* (BR, 1719)

Based on the true story of Alexander Selkirk’s experiences, this novel is about the adventures of a man who spends 24 years on an isolated island. With the help of an islander whom he names Friday, Crusoe shows courage and ingenuity in meeting the challenges of his predicament. BC 288 pp.

Dickens, Charles. *Great Expectations* (BR, 1860-61)

A novel about Pip, a poor boy, who is made rich by a mysterious benefactor, sets out to realize his “great expectations,” and finally becomes a man of worth and character. As in all his works, Dickens populates this novel with memorable and eccentric characters. WSP 466 pp.

Dostoevski, Feodor. *Crime and Punishment* (RU, 1866)

A psychological novel about a poor student who murders an old woman pawnbroker and her sister. After the crime, his conscience bothers him until he confesses. He is sent to Siberia, and finally becomes truly repentant. BC 496 pp. (*The Brother Karamozov*)

Eliot, George. *The Mill on the Floss* (BR, 1860)

The Victorian world of male supremacy is the background for this novel of a stormy relationship between a brother and sister. Maggie Tulliver’s life is miserable because her brother Tom disapproves of her choices of romances. BC 474 pp. (*Middlemarch*)

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man* (AM, 1947)

“I am an invisible man,” begins this novel of an unnamed black man’s search for identity as an individual and as a member of his race and his society. This story goes beyond one man’s search and chronicles every man’s struggle to find himself. VIN 568 pp.

Faulkner, William. *The Sound and the Fury* (AM, 1929)

The theme for this Nobel Prize-winning author’s novel is the decline of the Southern family. Presented through four points of view, it examines the deterioration of the Compson family. VIN 371 pp. (“The Bear”)

Fielding, Henry. *Tom Jones* (BR, 1749)

A humorous novel about the adventures of an amorous young man whose impulsiveness often leads him into difficult situations. PC 874 pp. (*Joseph Andrews*)

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby* (AM, 1925)

A novel in which a young man corrupts himself and the American Dream in order to regain a lost love. *The Great Gatsby* “belongs not only to American but to world literature...to the tragic predicament of humanity as a whole.” (A.E. Dyson) S 182 pp.

Flaubert, Gustave. *Madame Bovary* (FR, 1857)

A realistic novel in which a young wife is bored with her husband. In her extramarital affairs, she seeks unsuccessfully to find the emotional experiences she has read about in romantic novels. PC 361 pp.

Forster, E.M. *A Passage to India* (BR, 1924)

A pessimistic novel about man’s inhumanity to man. A young English woman in British-ruled India accuses an Indian doctor of sexual assault; her accusation causes racial tension between the British and Indian communities and destroys the young man’s career. HBJ 322 pp.

García Marquez, Gabriel. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (CO, 1967)

This Latin American novel portrays seven generations in the lives of the Buendia family. García Marquez employs a technique called magic realism—the use of magic, myth, and religion to intensify reality. AV 383 pp.

Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies* (BR, 1954)

In this novel a group of English schoolboys who are stranded on an island without adults become savages. This moral fable implies that defects in society are caused in part by defects in individuals. PU 190 pp.

Hardy, Thomas. *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (BR, 1891)

A Victorian novel in which the happiness and marriage of Tess and her husband are destroyed because she confesses to him that she bore a child as the result of a forced sexual relationship with her employer’s son. BC 414 pp. (*The Return of the Native*)

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter* (AM, 1850)

A novel about an adulterous Puritan woman who keeps secret the identity of the father of her illegitimate child. Her sin and the secret sin of the father are dwarfed by the vengefulness of her husband. WSP 276 pp.

Hemingway, Ernest. *A Farewell to Arms* (AM, 1929)

In this semiautobiographical novel that takes place during World War I, an American lieutenant falls in love and runs away with the woman who nurses him to health. Hemingway, winner of the 1954 Nobel Prize, is known for his journalistic style. S 336 pp. (*The Sun Also Rises*)

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (AM, 1937)

A novel about a woman's search for a happy life. "The image of the black woman as the mule of the world becomes a metaphor for the roles that Janie repudiates in her quest for self-fulfillment..." (Sherley Williams) UIP 286 pp.

Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World* (BR, 1932)

In this bitter satire about the future, Nobel Prize-winner Huxley conceives a world controlled by advances in science and social changes. Individuals are no longer important and their lives are planned out for them. BC 177 pp.

James, Henry. *The Turn of the Screw* (AM, 1898)

This novella is a study of good and evil in which the children are "the arena and the victim" (Hortense Calisher). A governess in charge of two children discovers they are under the evil influence of ghosts and attempts to save them. BC 103 pp. (*Portrait of a Lady*)

Joyce, James. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (IR, 1916)

A novel about a young man growing up in Ireland and rebelling against family, country, and religion to become an artist. Joyce's uses of stream-of-consciousness has influenced many modern writers. P 253 pp.

Kafka, Franz. *The Trial* (CZ, 1925)

In this novel a man is tried for a crime he knows nothing about, yet he feels guilty and is executed. W.H. Auden described Kafka as "the author who comes nearest to bearing the same kind of relation to our age [that] Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe bore to theirs..." SCN 288 pp. (*Metamorphosis*)

Lawrence, D.H. *Sons and Lovers* (BR, 1913)

An autobiographical novel about a youth who is torn between a dominant working-class father and a possessive genteel mother. "Lawrence has been one of the most influential figures in Anglo-American literature and life of this century." (Martin Seymour-Smith) SI 406 pp.

Lewis, Sinclair. *Babbitt* (AM, 1922)

A satirical novel about a middle-class businessman in an average midwestern city. Babbitt becomes a pathetic yet comical character because of his exaggerated sense of his importance. Lewis was the first American to win the Nobel Prize. SC 319 pp. (*Main Street*)

Malamud, Bernard. *The Assistant* (AM, 1957)

A novel in which a Gentile hoodlum 'out of a compelling pity' goes to work for a Jewish grocer who he has robbed. Finally taking the grocer's place, he becomes a Jew himself and accepts all that is Jewish. AV 304 pp.

Mann, Thomas. *Death in Venice* (GE, 1912)

In this novella an author becomes aware of a darker side of himself when he visits Venice and fantasizes a love for a young boy he sees there. This story alludes frequently to Greek literature and mythology. BC 68 pp.

Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick* (AM, 1851)

A complex novel about a mad sea captain's pursuit of the White Whale. To Clifton Fadiman, "as we turn the pages, our hands close about an imaginary harpoon...in our ears rings the cry: 'There she blows!'" WSP 466 pp.

Morrison, Toni. *Sula* (AM, 1973)

A novel about the lifelong friendship of two vastly different women who become estranged when one causes the other's husband to abandon her. "Its humor is earthy and delightful, and its dialogue is especially sharp." (Jonathan Yardley) NAL 176 pp.

(*Beloved*)

O'Connor, Flannery. *A Good Man is Hard to Find* (AM, 1955)

A triad of short stories set in Georgia. The title story is about the deadly confrontation between a religious grandmother and a mad murderer. O'Connor's characters "hold their fears at bay with a rustic religiosity that is as functional as their speech or dress." (James Greene) HBJ 251 pp.

Olsen, Tillie. *Tell Me a Riddle* (AM, 1956-60)

A group of short stories including a novella about the problems of aging. An old man and woman quarrel bitterly about whether to stay in their own home or to move to the Haven, a retirement home. DP 125 pp.

Orwell, George. *Animal Farm* (BR, 1945)

The classic satire of communism in which the pigs lead the other farm animals in a revolution against the humans, setting up their own government where "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." SC 128 pp. (1984)

Paton, Alan. *Cry, the Beloved Country* (SA, 1948)

A novel about a black minister in South Africa who goes in search of his children and finds them corrupted and destroyed by white society. The roots of both the generational and racial conflicts of black South Africans are explored in this story. S 283 pp.

Poe, Edgar Allan. *Great Tales and Poems* (AM, 1839-45)

Poe is considered the father of detective stories and a master of supernatural tales. The stories most often recommended are: "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Purloined Letter," "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Pit and the Pendulum," and "The Tell-Tale Heart." WSP 373 pp.

Salinger, J.D. *The Catcher in the Rye* (AM, 1951)

A novel in which a prep school dropout rejects the "phoniness" he sees all about him. *Catcher* is "one of those rare books that influenced one generation after another, causing each to claim it as its own." (Adam Moss) BC 212 pp.

Scott, Sir Walter. *Ivanhoe* (BR, 1820)

A story of chivalry in which the Norman hero Wilfred finally wins his true love, the Saxon Rowena, with the help of the Black Knight (Richard the Lion-Hearted in disguise) and brings about a temporary peace between the Normans and the Saxons. SC 467 pp. (*Heart of Midlothian*)

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein* (BR, 1818)

A gothic tale of terror in which Frankenstein creates a monster from corpses. Because everyone who sees him fears him, the monster despairs and turns on his creator. BC 206 pp.

Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath* (AM, 1939)

A historical novel by the 1962 Nobel Prize-winner about the desperate flight of tenant farmers from the Midwest during the Depression. The Joad family struggles to retain their humanity and dignity in the face of the hostility they find in California. P 581 pp.

Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels* (BR, 1726)

A satire on mankind in which an 18th-century Englishman visits foreign lands populated by bizarre creatures who illuminate many of the vices and weaknesses of his society. BC 217 pp.

Thackeray, William Makepeace. *Vanity Fair* (BR, 1847-48)

A novel of 19th-century upper-middle-class British society that portrays 20 years in the lives of two young women very opposite in character: gentle, sentimental Amelia and lively, cunning Becky. P 797 pp.

Tolstoy, Leo. *War and Peace* (RU, 1865-69)

A historical novel of the Napoleonic Wars that celebrates the Russian spirit and shows the effect of war and peace on every social class in Russian society. SC 1,453 pp.

Turgenev, Ivan. *Fathers and Sons* (RU, 1862)

In this novel two young men experience difficulty in their relationships with their parents and with their women friends. "The aspirations of Russia's liberal youth are pitted against those of the conservative landowning gentry..." (R. Freedman) BC 203 pp.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (AM, 1886)

In this novel Huck takes a trip down the river with a runaway slave and learns the worth of life. According to Ernest Hemingway, "All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*." BC 292 pp.

Updike, John. *Rabbit, Run* (AM, 1961)

The first of the Rabbit Angstrom novels in which an immature young man still longing for the lost glory of his youth runs away from his responsibilities and abandons his wife and child. FA 284 pp.

Voltaire. *Candide* (FR, 1759)

A satire against those who complacently accept life's disasters. This bitter criticism is disguised as a rollicking travel story in which Candide is puzzled because everything bad happens to him in this "best of all possible worlds." BC 128 pp.

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse Five* (AM, 1969)

A semiautobiographical novel about the firebombing of Dresden in World War II. In the story a time traveler, Billy Pilgrim, finds peace in a future world where he is "grateful that so many of those moments are nice." DP 205 pp. (*Cat's Cradle*)

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple* (AM, 1982)

A novel that focuses on "the role of male domination in the frustration of the black woman's struggle for independence." (Mel Watkins) In this story a young black girl sees herself as property until another woman teaches her to value herself. WSP 295 pp.

Welty, Eudora. *Thirteen Stories* (AM, 1965)

A collection of short stories about people and life in the deep South. Most often mentioned by colleges are "Why I Live at the PO," "The Worn Path," and "The Petrified Man." HBJ 243 pp.

Wharton, Edith. *The Age of Innocence* (AM, 1920)

A novel about a couple condemned to a loveless marriage by the conventions of their social class. "Wharton's work formed a bridge from the 19th-century novel to the magazine fiction of the present." (Louise Brogan) S 384 pp. (*The House of Mirth*)

Woolf, Virginia. *To the Lighthouse* (BR, 1927)

Written in stream-of-consciousness, this semiautobiographical novel describes the Ramsey family's life in their country home. The lighthouse they see from the window is a symbolic goal for them all. HBJ 310 pp. (*A Room of One's Own*)

Wright, Richard. *Native Son* (AM, 1940)

In this novel Bigger Thomas, a young black man from the Chicago slums, lashes out against a hostile society by committing two murders. The book is based partly on Wright's experiences, partly on an actual murder case. H&R 398 pp.

DRAMA

Aeschylus. *Orestia* (GR, 458 BC)

A triad of plays in which a son seeks revenge against his mother for the murder of his father. In the final play he is exonerated for killing his mother by a tribunal of Athenian judges and the goddess Athena. P 182 pp.

Aristophanes. *Lysistrata* (GR, 411 BC)

In this comedy the women of warring Athens and Sparta go on a marital strike until their men end their fighting. "Aristophanes made in this play a last appeal, half farcical, half serious, for peace." (Sir Paul Harvey) BC 42 pp. (In *The Complete Works of Aristophanes*)

Beckett, Samuel. *Waiting for Godot* (IR, 1952)

A Theater of the Absurd play in which two tramps sit endlessly waiting for someone named Godot who never arrives. GRO 68 pp.

Brecht, Bertolt. *Mother Courage and Her Children* (GE, 1941)

In this antiwar play set during the Thirty Years War, Mother Courage moves her wagon from battlefield to battlefield peddling her wares. One by one her three children are killed even though she seeks to profit from war, not become personally involved in it. GRO 68 pp.

Chekhov, Anton. *The Cherry Orchard* (RU, 1904)

The members of an aristocratic family in this play are unwilling and unable to face the loss of their property. Their plight depicts the decline of the powerful Russian land-owners following the end of the feudal system in 1861. HE 67 pp. (*The Three Sisters*)

Euripides. *Medea* (GR, 431 BC)

In this tragedy of vengeance, Medea is a passionate woman whose love turns to hate when her husband deserts her. It climaxes with her killing their two sons. P 85 pp. (*The Bacchae*)

Goethe, Johann von. *Faust, Part I* (GE, 1808)

A play about the legendary scholar who sells his soul to the devil. In this poetic drama, Faust is attracted to a young peasant girl. The devil's plans for his soul are temporarily defeated because Faust's lust for her turns to love. AN 355 pp.

Ibsen, Henrik. *A Doll's House* (NO, 1879)

In this drama the main character slams the door and walks out on a marriage based on inequality. Her revolt against her marriage to a selfish, hypocritical man who treats her as a doll rather than an individual gave impetus to the fight for women's rights. P 231 pp.

Marlowe, Christopher. *Doctor Faustus* (BR, 1604)

In this play, Faust is torn between his lust for knowledge as a means to power and his awareness of the sinfulness of his desires. Because the legend of Faust appears so frequently, the term *Faustian* has come to mean a willingness to sacrifice spiritual values in return for knowledge or power. WSP 208 pp.

Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman* (AM, 1949)

A Pulitzer Prize-winning play in which a traveling salesman "riding on a smile and a shoeshine" realizes that his dreams will never be real, and, unable to cope with the failures of his life, commits suicide. P 138 pp.

Molière. *The Misanthrope* (FR, 1566)

Alceste, the leading character in this comedy, is admirable in hating the hypocrisy in his society. In his zeal for complete honesty, however, he succeeds in becoming a complete fool. P 75 pp. (*Tartuffe*)

O'Neill, Eugene. *Desire Under the Elms* (AM, 1924)

A naturalistic drama about love, lust, and greed that contrasts a sensitive, emotional son with his severe, puritanical father. VIN 55 pp. (*The Emperor Jones*)

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet* (BR, 1600)

A great tragedy in which a prince is troubled by his inability to act to avenge the "murder most foul" of his father. William Hazlett says the play "abounds most in striking reflections on human life..." WSP 174 pp. (Many colleges urge students to read as much Shakespeare as possible: at least one tragedy, one comedy, and one history.)

Shaw, George Bernard. *Pygmalion* (BR, 1913)

A play in which a professor of phonetics interferes with the social order by teaching a Cockney girl to act and speak like a duchess. WSP 176 pp. (*Saint Joan*)

Sophocles. *Oedipus Rex* (GR, 430 BC)

The tragedy of a king who unwittingly has killed his father and married his mother. When he discovers what he has done, he blinds himself for "there is nothing beautiful left to see in this world." WSP 108 pp.

Wilde, Oscar. *The Importance of Being Earnest* (BR, 1895)

A worldly and cynical farce about a confusion of identities that ends happily when the real Earnest turns out to be a long-lost infant whose nurse had absent-mindedly misplaced him. AV 83 pp. (*Lady Windermere's Fan*)

Wilder, Thornton. *Our Town* (AM, 1938)

In the Pulitzer Prize-winning play the stage manager speaks directly to the audience from a set bare of props. The play tells the story of two families as they experience daily life, love and marriage, and death. H&R 103 pp.

Williams, Tennessee. *The Glass Menagerie* (AM, 1945)

The mother in this play dwells on the past and longs to find "a gentleman caller" for her crippled daughter who has withdrawn into the world of her glass animals. As in many of Williams' plays, the characters live in a world of unfulfilled dreams. NDB 115 pp. (*A Streetcar Named Desire*)

POETRY

Allison, Alexander, Ed. *Norton Anthology of Poetry* (Shorter Edition)

A collection of poetry by American and British poets. The poets most frequently recommended by colleges are: William Blake (“Songs of Innocence and Experience”); Robert Browning; Emily Dickinson; T.S. Eliot (“The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”); Robert Frost; John Keats; William Shakespeare (the sonnets); Alfred, Lord Tennyson; William Wordsworth; and William Butler Yeats. NO 628 pp.

Anonymous. *Beowulf* (BR, c 700 AD)

In this adventurous Old English epic poem, Beowulf overcomes monsters and slays a fire-breathing dragon. The poem is based on Norse legends and historical events of the sixth century. ME 121 pp.

Anonymous. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (BR, c 1350-1400)

“The jewel of medieval English literature” (M. Gaston Paris), this Arthurian tale is about the ordeals an ideal knight undergoes to prove his courage and his virtue. The two main episodes are Gawain’s beheading of the terrible Green Knight and his efforts to resist the advances of a beautiful lady. P 176 pp.

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *Canterbury Tales* (BR, c 1387-1400)

In this poetic narrative, Chaucer presents a colorful group of medieval travelers on their way to a religious shrine. On their journey they tell each other tales: some serious, some ribald. WSP 525 pp. (Many colleges suggest reading only the prologue and one or two tales.)

Dante. *Inferno* (IT, c 1320)

In this first book of *The Divine Comedy*, Dante’s journey through Hell reveals the medieval view of sin. As he travels through the different levels of the Underworld, he witnesses the punishments for sin. BC 400 pp.

Homer. *The Odyssey* (GR, c 9th century BC)

The epic of Odysseus’ ordeals after the Trojan War as he tries for ten years to return home to Ithaca. On his journey he faces the dangers of the Cyclops, the Sirens, Circe, and others. Many other writers have used the character and the journey of Odysseus (Ulysses) in their works. WSP 352 pp. (*The Iliad*)

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost* (BR, 1667)

Considered the greatest epic in any modern language, this poem tells of Satan’s temptation of Adam and Eve, their expulsion from the Garden of Eden (Paradise), and the promise of their eventual salvation by the Son of God. ME 344 pp.

Vergil. *The Aeneid* (IT, c 18 BC)

This epic poem recounts the troubled journey of Aeneas as he leads the survivors of Troy to Italy where they become the founders of Rome. P 361 pp.

Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass* (AM, 1855)

In his use of free verse and his emphasis on the importance of the individual, Whitman was a fore-runner of modern poetry. In these twelve untitled poems he wanted to “elevate, enlarge, purify, deepen, and make happy the attributes of the body and soul of man.” BC 440 pp.

MISCELLANEOUS

Aristotle. *Poetics* (GR, 4th cent. BC)

A treatise on literary principles. The theories of tragedy in this work still influence Western drama. Called by Dante “the master of those who know,” Aristotle is one of the world’s greatest philosophers. UNC 70 pp.

Augustine, Saint. *Confessions* (IT, 397-401)

A spiritual autobiography of St. Augustine’s early life and his conversion to Christianity. His is “the only detailed account of the childhood of a great man which antiquity has left us.” (Maynard Mack) ME 350 pp.

Bible

A collection of the sacred literature of Judaism and Christianity. Much of our Western writing alludes to the language and the stories in the Bible. Many colleges suggest the King James Version for literary study. NAL 972 pp.

Darwin, Charles. *Origin of Species* (BR, 1859)

Darwin’s book on his theories of natural selection and of evolution was a sellout the day it was issued and caused a storm of controversy that still continues today. ME 476 pp. (*The Voyage of the Beagle*)

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. “The American Scholar” in *Essays* (AM, 1837)

An address at Harvard in which Emerson urged Americans to declare intellectual independence from Europe, to be thinkers and “not parrots of other men’s thought.” WSP 21 pp. (“Self-Reliance”)

Franklin, Benjamin. *Autobiography* (AM, 1867)

An account of Franklin’s life and achievements during the first 51 years of his life. In it Franklin appears “as a universal genius...the embodiment of what we like to call the American spirit.” (S.E. Morrison) COL 156 pp.

Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents* (GE, 1930)

A book about the conflict between the human desire for personal freedom and the demands of society. Freud writes that “The price we pay for our advance in civilization is a loss of happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt.” NO 109 pp. (*Dora*)

Hamilton, Edith. *Mythology* (AM, 1940)

A collection of Greek, Roman, and Norse myths and legends that are often alluded to in the language and literature of the Western world. NAL 355 pp.

Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Prince* (IT, 1532)

A treatise giving the absolute ruler practical advice on ways to maintain a strong central government. The term *Machiavellian* has for generations meant “ruthless and deceitful,” because Machiavelli theorized that politics are above moral law. OUP 99 pp.

Marx, Karl. *Communist Manifesto* (GE, 1848)

Written with Friedrich Engels as the official platform of the International Communist League, this short book expresses Marx’s belief in the inevitability of conflict between social classes and calls on the workers of the world to unite and revolt. WSP 143 pp.

Montaigne, Michel de. *Selected Essays* (FR, 1580)

The creator of the personal essay, Montaigne wrote about many subjects—cannibals, friendship, women, books, prayer. Though the entire work is a self-portrait, this book about one man is “really a book about all men.” (Walter Kerr) MUP 344 pp.

Plato. *Republic* (GR, c 370 BC)

In this dialogue Plato creates an ideal society where justice is equated with health and happiness in the state and in the individual. Echoing Omar about the Koran, Ralph Waldo Emerson said of the *Republic*, “Burn the libraries, for their value is in this book.” H 288 pp. (*Apology*)

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden* (AM, 1854)

In this book Thoreau, an extreme individualist, advised “a man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to let alone.” *Walden* is about the 26 months he spent alone in the woods to “front the essential facts of life.” SC 221 pp. (*Civil Disobedience*)

PUBLISHER ABBREVIATIONS

NATIONALITIES OF THE AUTHORS

AN	Anchor Publishing
Company	
AV	Avon Books
BC	Bantam Classics
COL	Collier Books
DP	Dell Publishing Company,
Inc.	
FA	Fawcett Crest Books
GRO	Grove Press
H	Hacket Publishing
Company, Inc.	
H&R	Harper & Row, Publishers
HBJ	Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
HE	James H. Heinemann, Inc.
HM	Houghton-Mifflin Company
ME	Mentor Books
MUP	Manchester University
Press	
NAL	New American Library
NDB	New Directions Books
NO	W.W. Norton & Company,
Inc.	
OUP	Oxford University Press
P	Penguin Books
PC	Penguin Classics
PU	G.P. Putnam’s Sons
S	Charles Scribner’s Sons
SC	Signet Classics
SCH	Schocken Books, Inc.
SI	Signet Books
UIP	University of Illinois Press
UNC	University of North
Carolina Press	
VIN	Vintage Books
VKP	Viking Paperbound
Portables	
WSP	Washington Square Press

AM	American
BR	British
CO	Colombian
CZ	Czechoslovakian
FR	French
GE	German
GR	Greek
IR	Irish
IT	Italian
NO	Norwegian
RU	Russian
SA	South African
SP	Spanish