

## Honors English 9

### 2025 Summer Reading Requirement

Dear Honors English 9 Students:

Summer is a critical time to continue the literacy skills acquired during the school year. Summer reading is important not only for intellectual growth and development, but it also provides an opportunity for students to develop a lifelong love of reading. Moreover, as you have chosen to take a more advanced English course next year, you need to be able to grapple with themes and texts that challenge you.

#### **Research to support reading over the summer:**

- According to the State Library of Iowa, students “who don’t read over the summer lose literacy skills while [those] who do read improve their reading ability. Summer learning losses accumulate over several years and are an important contributor to the achievement gap.”
- The State Library of North Carolina states, “The number of books read during the summer is consistently related to academic gains. Students in every income group who read six or more books over the summer gained more in reading achievement than those who did not.”

You will need to read the equivalent of at least **TWO BOOKS** (about 600 pages total) during the summer to keep your skills sharp. **ONE** of these **MUST** be from the Honors English book list located on the back of this sheet. The other book is your choice, but it must be one you have not read before. For your challenge book, you are also required to answer a few reflective questions, which are listed below the booklist.

**Fill out the information below and have a parent/guardian sign it after you finish each book. You are required to turn this in to your Honors ELA teacher this fall. If you happen to lose this slip, feel free to record the same information on loose-leaf paper.**

1. Book Title:

Author:

Number of Pages:

Parent Signature:

2. Book Title:

Author:

Number of Pages:

Parent Signature:

## Honors English 9 Book List

CHOOSE ONE OF YOUR BOOKS FROM THIS LIST

There's something for everyone! We encourage students to research a few options before selecting a book to ensure it's a good fit. One helpful resource is [www.thestorygraph.com](http://www.thestorygraph.com).

- *1984* – George Orwell
- *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* - Junot Diaz
- *Life of Pi* - Yann Martel
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* - Mark Haddon
- *Lord of the Rings* - J.R.R. Tolkien
- *Klara and the Sun* – Kazuo Ishiguro
- *The Chosen* - Chaim Potok
- *All Quiet on the Western Front* - Erich Maria Remarque
- *Every Day* – David Levithan
- *Black Like Me* - John Howard Griffin
- *Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee* - Dee Brown
- *The Good Earth* - Pearl S. Buck
- *Great Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* - Edgar Allan Poe
- *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* - Carson McCullers
- *Hound of the Baskervilles* - Arthur Conan Doyle
- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* - Maya Angelou
- *Iliad* - Homer
- *The Alchemist* – Paulo Coelho
- *The House on Mango Street* – Sandra Cisneros
- *Little Women* - Louisa May Alcott
- *Lord of the Flies* - William Golding
- *Of Mice and Men* - John Steinbeck
- *The Old Man and the Sea* - Ernest Hemingway
- *A Separate Peace* - John Knowles
- *Slaughterhouse-Five* - Kurt Vonnegut
- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* - Betty Smith
- *The Yearling* - Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

## Honors English 10

### 2025 Summer Reading Requirement

Dear Honors English 10 Students:

Summer is a critical time to continue the literacy skills acquired during the school year. Summer reading is important not only for intellectual growth and development, but it also provides an opportunity for students to develop a lifelong love of reading. Moreover, as you have chosen to take a more advanced English course next year, you need to be able to grapple with themes and texts that challenge you.

#### **Research to support reading over the summer:**

- According to the State Library of Iowa, students “who don’t read over the summer lose literacy skills while [those] who do read improve their reading ability. Summer learning losses accumulate over several years and are an important contributor to the achievement gap.”
- The State Library of North Carolina states, “The number of books read during the summer is consistently related to academic gains. Students in every income group who read six or more books over the summer gained more in reading achievement than those who did not.”

You will need to read the equivalent of at least **TWO BOOKS** (about 600 pages total) during the summer to keep your skills sharp. **ONE** of these **MUST** be from the Honors English book list located on the back of this sheet. The other book is your choice, but it must be one you have not read before. For your challenge book, you are also required to answer a few reflective questions, which are listed below the booklist.

**Fill out the information below and have a parent/guardian sign it after you finish each book. You are required to turn this in to your Honors ELA teacher this fall. If you happen to lose this slip, feel free to record the same information on loose-leaf paper.**

1. Book Title:

Author:

Number of Pages:

Parent Signature:

2. Book Title:

Author:

Number of Pages:

Parent Signature:

# Honors English 10 Book List

2025-2026 School Year

## CHOOSE ONE OF YOUR BOOKS FROM THIS LIST

There's something for everyone! We encourage students to research a few options before selecting a book to ensure it's a good fit. One helpful resource is [www.thestorygraph.com](http://www.thestorygraph.com).

Victorian Classics	Contemporary Classics
<i>Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i> - Robert Louis Stevenson <i>Hound of the Baskervilles</i> - Arthur Conan Doyle <i>Little Women</i> - Louisa May Alcott <i>Great Expectations</i> - Charles Dickens <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> - Jane Austen <i>Jane Eyre</i> - Charlotte Brontë	<i>All the Light We Cannot See</i> - Anthony Doerr <i>Remarkably Bright Creatures</i> - Shelby Van Pelt <i>Never Let Me Go</i> - Kazuo Ishiguro <i>The Goldfinch</i> - Donna Tartt <i>The Invention of Wings</i> - Sue Monk Kidd <i>The Midnight Library</i> - Matt Haig
20th Century Classics	Diverse Voices
<i>Lord of the Rings</i> - J.R.R. Tolkien (choose one!) <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> - John Steinbeck <i>The Alchemist</i> - Paulo Coelho <i>Lord of the Flies</i> - William Golding <i>Of Mice and Men</i> - John Steinbeck <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> - Ernest Hemingway <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> - Kurt Vonnegut <i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i> - Betty Smith <i>A Prayer for Owen Meany</i> - John Irving	<i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i> - Junot Diaz <i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time</i> - Mark Haddon <i>The Chosen</i> - Chaim Potok <i>Sing, Unburied, Sing</i> - Jesmyn Ward <i>Firekeeper's Daughter</i> - Angeline Boulley <i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i> - Maya Angelou <i>The House on Mango Street</i> - Sandra Cisneros <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> - Amy Tan

## Reading Reflection

While reading your challenge book, please respond to **three** of the following reflective questions. Each response should be at least one paragraph. This is your opportunity to demonstrate your thoughtful engagement with the book. Each of your three entries should record your reflections on **different sections** of the book.

- I don't understand why [this character]...
- I felt sorry for... when...
- [This character] reminds me of myself sometimes because...
- I think what [this character] really wants is...
- I was so [angry, puzzled, etc.] when I read that...
- The character I most admire in this section is... because...
- This section makes me think of...
- I wonder why the author has [this character] do [this action]...
- I think...is so ironic because...

**These responses will be submitted along with your parent signatures at the beginning of the school year.**

# AP LANGUAGE + COMPOSITION: SUMMER READING + WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Welcome to AP Lang! Our course focuses on non-fiction: analyzing the perspectives of others and crafting our own arguments. Your summer assignment asks you to engage with these topics and give us a sense of how you think and write.

1. Choose ONE listed book **and** at least ONE related media option (documentary or podcast episodes) from the same theme. Finish both of these over the summer.
  - a. Books can be borrowed from public libraries or purchased from any book distributor. Ebooks and audiobook versions would also work (and many are available for free through KDL's Libby or Hoopla apps.)
  - b. Most of these documentaries are available on common streaming services like Netflix, Amazon Prime, or Hulu, though some can also be found free online. Podcasts can typically be found via Apple Podcasts or Spotify, or by streaming directly from the podcast's website.
  - c. Do you struggle with procrastination? Try reading the book in a book club with friends, or set up a movie night to watch one of the documentaries.
2. Prepare notes on both the book AND the media piece. Focus on key ideas and facts that could help us understand our world or society better.
  - a. 2-4 pages of **hand-written** notes on the book AND 2-4 pages of hand-written notes on the documentary. Each side of a paper counts as a page. Your notes should not be exactly the same as your friend's notes; they should be your own thinking and writing.
  - b. Bring all materials to class as we will be doing an in-class writing on these in the first week of class.

*\*If you are not willing to complete this summer work, **please contact your counselor about switching classes** as soon as possible, preferably before summer break begins.*

THEME	BOOKS	MEDIA
Personal Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Atomic Habits</li> <li>Maybe You Should Talk to Someone</li> <li>Can't Hurt Me</li> <li>The Gifts of Imperfection</li> <li>Braving the Wilderness</li> <li>The Body is Not an Apology</li> <li>The Good Life: Lessons from the World's Longest Scientific Study of Happiness</li> <li>The Happiness Advantage</li> <li>Essentialism</li> </ul>	<p><b>Documentaries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resurface</li> <li>Minimalism</li> <li>The Playbook</li> <li>Happy</li> <li>The Mind, Explained</li> </ul> <p><b>Podcasts</b> (choose a relevant episode or two)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to Be a Better Human</li> <li>We Can Do Hard Things</li> <li>The Happiness Lab</li> <li>Life Kit</li> <li>Unlocking Us</li> <li>How to Build a Happy Life</li> <li>How to Fail</li> <li>How to Talk to People</li> <li>The Minimalists</li> </ul>
Equity + Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Savage Inequalities</li> <li>The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down</li> <li>Waking Up White</li> <li>Just Mercy</li> <li>Stamped from the Beginning</li> <li>So You Want to Talk About Race</li> <li>The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee</li> <li>Caste</li> </ul>	<p><b>Documentaries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coded Bias</li> <li>13th</li> <li>All In: The Fight for Democracy</li> <li>Free Chol Soo Lee</li> <li>The Central Park Five</li> </ul> <p><b>Podcasts</b> (choose a relevant episode or two)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Code Switch</li> <li>Black History for White People</li> <li>The Diversity Gap</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● #impact podcast</li> <li>● Immigrantly</li> <li>● Asian America</li> <li>● Building Justice</li> </ul>
Nature + Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Walk in the Woods</li> <li>● All We Can Save</li> <li>● How to Avoid a Climate Disaster</li> <li>● A Sand County Almanac</li> <li>● The Hidden Life of Trees</li> <li>● An Immense World</li> <li>● Beyond Words</li> <li>● The Creative Lives of Animals</li> <li>● The Story of Stuff</li> </ul>	<p><b>Documentaries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● My Octopus Teacher</li> <li>● Seaspiracy</li> <li>● David Attenborough: A Life on Our Planet</li> <li>● Chasing Coral</li> <li>● Life Off Grid</li> <li>● Blackfish</li> <li>● Racing Extinction</li> <li>● Waste Land</li> </ul> <p><b>Podcasts</b> (choose a relevant episode or two)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Radiolab</li> <li>● In Defense of Plants</li> <li>● The Science of Everything</li> <li>● Ologies with Alie Ward</li> <li>● Drilled</li> <li>● Science for the People</li> <li>● TED Climate</li> <li>● The Rise of the Ecopreneur</li> </ul>
Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Devil in the White City</li> <li>● In Cold Blood</li> <li>● Columbine</li> <li>● I'll Be Gone in the Dark</li> <li>● Killing the Mob</li> <li>● Killers of the Flower Moon</li> <li>● Mindhunter</li> <li>● Darker than Night</li> </ul>	<p><b>Documentaries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Time</li> <li>● The Witness</li> <li>● Operation Varsity Blues: The College Admissions Scandal</li> <li>● Icarus</li> </ul> <p><b>Podcasts</b> (choose a relevant episode or two)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Persona</li> <li>● Bone Valley</li> <li>● Criminal</li> <li>● The Dropout</li> <li>● Kuper Island</li> <li>● Swindled</li> <li>● National Park After Dark</li> </ul>
Modern America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Anthropocene Reviewed</li> <li>● Our Towns</li> <li>● Tribes</li> <li>● Evicted</li> <li>● Hillbilly Elegy</li> <li>● Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age</li> <li>● South to America</li> </ul>	<p><b>Documentaries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Social Dilemma</li> <li>● A Place at the Table</li> <li>● The Last Blockbuster</li> <li>● Crip Camp</li> <li>● American Factory</li> <li>● Boys State</li> <li>● LulaRich</li> <li>● The True Cost</li> <li>● Behind the Curve</li> <li>● Ivory Tower</li> <li>● King Corn</li> </ul> <p><b>Podcasts</b> (choose a relevant episode or two)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Invisibilia</li> <li>● This American Life</li> <li>● More Perfect</li> <li>● Tech Won't Save Us</li> <li>● The Sociology of Everything</li> </ul>

## AP ENGLISH LITERATURE SUMMER LITERACY

Welcome to AP Lit! AP English Literature & Composition is a course for thoughtful, curious, and driven students who enjoy reading and discussing **imaginative** and **creative** literature: great novels, plays, stories, and poetry. From the perspective of college admissions officers, following through on the AP track will give you a competitive edge over students who take a general English class.

### Did you Know?

Many colleges and universities, such as U of M, MSU and many others offer course credit and/or course waivers for both AP English Language and AP English Literature. I'm proud of you for committing to working and growing at a high level through your senior year!

This year, there are TWO elements to your summer literacy assignment.

### 1) DRAFT YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY(S)

First, something very practical. Summer is usually a time of slower paces with time for reflection and goal setting. What a perfect time to start working on your college essays! *Please have a DRAFT of your college essay(s) ready for the first week of school. We will hold some college essay workshops during FLEX at the beginning of the year.* This is not for a grade; this is for your future.

Some resources:

Click [HERE](#) for the Common Application essay prompts. [HERE](#) is a list of Michigan colleges that use the Common App.

Check out these [essays that worked from Johns Hopkins University](#). And for fun, check out these [college essay prompts from the University of Chicago](#)!

[The College Essay Guy](#) is a great resource for developing your essay. He offers many free resources as well as some paid options if you would like greater support this summer. It's absolutely *NOT required* that you pay for any support for this task. Use the [free resources](#) to get started.

### FAQs

Q: How long should my college essay be?

A: As a general rule, it should be somewhere between 250 - 650 words. Some colleges may have specific guidelines, so check the admissions website of colleges you're interested in.

Q: Do I need to answer ALL of these prompts?

A: No. For the Common App, only one essay is necessary. However, you should also consult the admissions websites of colleges and programs you're interested in to determine which essays they would most like to see and to determine any other requirements they may have.

## 2) SUMMER READING

a. Choose one novel from this list (see book descriptions later in this packet):

*1984* by George Orwell  
*All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr  
*Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy  
*Atonement* by Ian McEwan  
*Beloved* by Toni Morrison  
*The Blind Assassin* by Margaret Atwood  
*The Bonesetter's Daughter* by Amy Tan  
*Catch-22* by Joseph Heller  
*The Color Purple* by Alice Walker  
*Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky  
*Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng  
*Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*  
by Jonathan Safran Foer  
*In the Lake of the Woods* by Tim O'Brien

*Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison (not HG Wells)  
*The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini  
*Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert  
*The Memory Keeper's Daughter* by Kim Edwards  
*Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides  
*Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro  
*The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead  
*The Portrait of a Lady* by Henry James  
*Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen  
*Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* by Lisa See  
*There, There* by Tommy Orange  
*Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens  
*Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte  
*A Yellow Raft in Blue Water* by Michael Dorris

You will be writing a diagnostic AP essay on your novel after we start class in late August, so your book needs to be from this list. Not only will this help to inform instruction in the class, but it will also keep your brain sharp as you enter a productive school year.

You may either borrow the book from a library or elsewhere, or buy your own copy at places such as Barnes and Noble, Amazon.com, or Bargain Books.

### b. The Reading Journal

As you read the novel, you should **record a short journal of your thoughts and reactions** (details on next page). Note that you should NOT write plot summaries – this is all about your interaction with the book.

Although optional, I recommend that you also buy sticky notes to quickly jot down thoughts as they come to you while you are reading, and then, after reading a few chapters, look at the sticky notes to remind you of things that you can write about.

The sticky notes could contain notes such as:

- Questions you have about the chapter
- Things you just don't "get" and your thoughts/speculation about what's going on
- Comments and insights about events or characters or their goals/motives
- Predictions of what could happen
- Comments on cool passages that are especially thought-provoking or meaningful to you
- Things that may be symbolic or have "deeper" meaning

**Divide your book into six sections of approximately equal lengths for your journal entries.** You will need to write your thoughts after each section. Your six entries altogether should cover the whole book.

The journal must be typed (single-spaced (or 1.15 spaced), 11 or 12 size font--Times New Roman or Arial) and must include:

- ✓ **SIX reaction paragraphs** that together cover the range of the whole book  
(Each reaction piece may be longer than one paragraph if you choose.)

**Label each section with the chapters that it covers.**

If you're having a hard time wondering what to write about, here are a few examples of starters for reaction paragraphs: (**No plot summaries**)

- (You could expand your thoughts on some of your sticky notes)



- I don't understand why [this character]...
- I felt sorry for... when...
- [This character] reminds me of myself sometimes because...
- I think what [this character] really wants is...
- I was so [angry, puzzled, etc.] when I read that...
- The character I most admire in this section is... because...
- This section makes me think of...
- I wonder why the author has [this character] do [this action]...
- I think...is so ironic because...
- Etc.—these are just a few to get you started!

- ✓ **OVERALL RESPONSE:** Approximately one typed page (400-600 words) of your overall response to the book as a whole after you've completed it to the end. Your response could be about questions like these: What ideas/insights/lessons did this book make you think about? How can this book be relevant to people today? What did you find intriguing about it? What seems to be important about this book? Why would you recommend it?

Your response should **NOT** be a "review" (where you judge or rate the book); it should **NOT** be a summary of the book. Instead, it's a chance for you to **explore the impact of the ideas of the work as a whole, and to determine what's really important about the book.**

- ✓ **NOTABLE QUOTES:** A list of at least 3 sentences or *short* passages (**quote them from the book**) that you felt were especially remarkable or meaningful with an explanation of why they made such an impression on you. Important! Include the page numbers of the book where you found them.

Clearly Label the top of the first page Summer Reading Journal: [title of book] by [author's name] with your name on the upper left corner. **Be ready to submit it to Turnitin.com on the first day of school in the fall.**

If you would find it helpful, you can also briefly summarize the sections or plot events of the book in your own notebook. You will be writing about it, so if this would help you remember things, you can do this—but it is not required, and it is up to you if you want to do that.

As always, I also encourage you to read more than just one book this summer. Read whatever you enjoy, whether that be YA books, genre fiction, or nonfiction. I also encourage you to read more critically acclaimed novels. One of the three essay questions on the AP test is an "open question" that asks you to explore how a certain idea or element contributes to meaning in a work of literary merit that you've recently read. The more critically acclaimed books that you read, the more "ammunition" you will have for the AP test. Certain themes will fit some books better than others, so it's good to have enough books from which to choose for that important AP test essay question.

Read the ones that you find especially intriguing! Or read the same books as your friends so you can have an informal book club and talk about them!

On the first day of class in the fall, please bring to class:

- ✓ three different-colored highlighters
- ✓ one regular (#2) pencil and one blue or black pen
- ✓ Your Summer Reading Response Journal ready to submit to Turnitin.com

Have a relaxing, safe summer! See you in late August!

Here are brief descriptions of the books to help you choose what to read this summer:

### *1984* by George Orwell

George Orwell depicts a gray, totalitarian world dominated by Big Brother and its vast network of agents, including the Thought Police, a world in which news is manufactured according to the authorities' will and people live tepid lives by rote. Winston Smith, the hero with no heroic qualities, longs only for truth and decency. But living in a social system in which privacy does not exist and where those with unorthodox ideas are brainwashed or put to death, he knows there is no hope for him. He knows even as he continues to pursue his forbidden love affair that eventually he will come to destruction.

### *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr

From the highly acclaimed, multiple award-winning Anthony Doerr, a stunningly ambitious and beautiful novel about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II. Doerr's gorgeous combination of soaring imagination with observation is electric. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another. Ten years in the writing, *All the Light We Cannot See* is his most ambitious and dazzling work.

### *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy

Considered by some to be the greatest novel ever written, *Anna Karenina* is Tolstoy's classic tale of love and adultery set against the backdrop of high society in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. A rich and complex masterpiece, the novel charts the disastrous course of a love affair between Anna, a beautiful married woman, and Count Vronsky, a wealthy army officer. Tolstoy seamlessly weaves together the lives of dozens of characters, and in doing so captures a breathtaking tapestry of late-nineteenth-century Russian society.

### *Atonement* by Ian McEwan

On a hot summer day in 1935, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis witnesses a moment's flirtation between her older sister, Cecilia, and Robbie Turner, the son of a servant and Cecilia's childhood friend. But Briony's incomplete grasp of adult motives—together with her precocious literary gifts—brings about a crime that will change all their lives. As it follows that crime's repercussions through the chaos and carnage of World War II and into the close of the twentieth century, *Atonement* engages the reader on every conceivable level, with an ease and authority that mark it as a genuine masterpiece.

### *Beloved* by Toni Morrison

In the troubled years following the Civil War, the spirit of a murdered child haunts the Ohio home of a former slave. This angry, destructive ghost breaks mirrors, leaves its fingerprints in cake icing, and generally makes life difficult for Sethe and her family; nevertheless, the woman finds the haunting oddly comforting for the spirit is that of her own dead baby, never named, thought of only as Beloved.

### *The Blind Assassin* by Margaret Atwood

In *The Blind Assassin*, Margaret Atwood weaves together strands of gothic suspense, romance, and science fiction into one utterly spellbinding narrative. The novel begins with the mysterious death—a possible suicide—of a young woman named Laura Chase in 1945. Decades later, Laura's sister Iris recounts her memories of their childhood, and of the dramatic deaths that have punctuated their wealthy, eccentric family's history. Intertwined with Iris's account are chapters from the scandalous novel that made Laura famous, in which two illicit lovers amuse each other by spinning a tale of a blind killer on a distant planet. These richly layered stories-within-stories gradually illuminate the secrets that have long haunted the Chase family, coming together in a brilliant and astonishing final twist.

### *The Burgess Boys* by Elizabeth Sprout

Haunted by the freak accident that killed their father when they were children, Jim and Bob Burgess escaped from their Maine hometown of Shirley Falls for New York City as soon as they possibly could. Jim, a sleek, successful corporate lawyer, has belittled his big-hearted brother their whole lives, and Bob, a Legal Aid attorney who idolizes Jim, has always taken it in stride. But their long-standing dynamic is upended when their sister, Susan—the Burgess sibling who stayed behind—urgently calls them home. Her lonely teenage son, Zach, has gotten himself into a world of trouble, and Susan desperately needs their help.

And so the Burgess brothers return to the landscape of their childhood, where the long-buried tensions that have shaped and shadowed their relationship begin to surface in unexpected ways that will change them forever.

### *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller

Set in Italy during World War II, this is the story of the incomparable, malingering bombardier, Yossarian, a hero who is furious because thousands of people he has never met are trying to kill him. But his real problem is not the enemy—it is his own army, which keeps increasing the number of missions the men must fly to complete their service. Yet if Yossarian makes any attempt to excuse himself from the perilous missions he's assigned, he'll be in violation of Catch-22, a hilariously sinister bureaucratic rule: a man is considered insane if he willingly continues to fly dangerous combat missions, but if he makes a formal request to be removed from duty, he is proven sane and therefore ineligible to be relieved.

### *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker

Set in the deep American South between the wars, it is the tale of Celie, a young black girl born into poverty and segregation. Abused by the man she calls 'father', she has two children taken away from her, is separated from her beloved sister Nettie and is trapped into an ugly marriage. But then she meets the glamorous Shug Avery, singer and magic-maker - a woman who has taken charge of her own destiny. Gradually, Celie discovers the power and joy of her own spirit, freeing her from her past and reuniting her with those she loves.

### *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky

Mired in poverty, the student Raskolnikov nevertheless thinks highly of himself. Of his pawnbroker, he takes a different view, and in deciding to murder her, he sets in motion his own tragic downfall. Dostoyevsky's penetrating novel of an intellectual whose moral compass goes haywire, and the detective who hunts him down for his terrible crime, is a stunning psychological portrait, a thriller and a profound meditation on guilt and retribution.

### *Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng

"Lydia is dead. But they don't know this yet." So begins this exquisite novel about a Chinese American family living in 1970s small-town Ohio. Lydia is the favorite child of Marilyn and James Lee, and her parents are determined that she will fulfill the dreams they were unable to pursue. But when Lydia's body is found in the local lake, the delicate balancing act that has been keeping the Lee family together is destroyed, tumbling them into chaos. A profoundly moving story of family, secrets, and longing, *Everything I Never Told You* is both a gripping story and a sensitive family portrait, uncovering the ways in which mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, and husbands and wives struggle, all their lives, to understand one another.

### *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer

Nine-year-old Oskar Schell has embarked on an urgent, secret mission that will take him through the five boroughs of New York. His goal is to find the lock that matches a mysterious key that belonged to his father, who died in the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11. This seemingly impossible task will bring Oskar into contact with survivors of all sorts on an exhilarating, affecting, often hilarious, and ultimately healing journey.

### *In the Lake of the Woods* by Tim O'Brien

This riveting novel of love and mystery from the author of *The Things They Carried* examines the lasting impact of the twentieth century's legacy of violence and warfare, both at home and abroad. When long-hidden secrets about the atrocities he committed in Vietnam come to light, a candidate for the U.S. Senate retreats with his wife to a lakeside cabin in northern Minnesota. Within days of their arrival, his wife mysteriously vanishes into the watery wilderness.

### *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison

A classic from the moment it first appeared in 1952, *Invisible Man* chronicles the travels of its narrator, a young, nameless black man, as he moves through the hellish levels of American intolerance and cultural blindness. Searching for a context in which to know himself, he exists in a very peculiar state. "I am an invisible man," he says in his prologue, "when they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination--indeed, everything and anything except me." *Invisible Man* is the story of a young, college-educated black man struggling to survive and succeed in a racially divided society that refuses to see him as a human being.

### *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

A sweeping story of family, love, and friendship told against the devastating backdrop of the history of Afghanistan over the last thirty years, *The Kite Runner* follows the story of Amir, the privileged son of a wealthy businessman in Kabul, and Hassan, the son of Amir's father's servant. As children in the relatively stable Afghanistan of the early 1970s, the boys are inseparable. They spend idyllic days running kites and telling stories of mystical places and powerful warriors until an unspeakable event changes the nature of their relationship forever. *The Kite Runner* is a beautifully crafted novel set in a country that is in the process of being destroyed. It is about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies.

### *Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert

When Emma marries Charles Bovary, she imagines she will pass into the life of luxury and passion that she reads about in sentimental novels and women's magazines. But Charles is an ordinary country doctor, and provincial life is very different from the romantic excitement for which she yearns. In her quest to realize her dreams she takes a lover, Rodolphe, and begins a devastating spiral into deceit and despair. And Flaubert captures every step of this catastrophe with sharp-eyed detail and a wonderfully subtle understanding of human emotions.

### *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* by Kim Edwards

Award-winning writer Kim Edwards' *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* is a brilliantly crafted family drama that explores every mother's silent fear: what would happen if you lost your child and she grew up without you?

On a winter night in 1964, Dr. David Henry is forced by a blizzard to deliver his own twins. His son, born first, is perfectly healthy. Yet when his daughter is born, he sees immediately that she has Down's syndrome. Rationalizing it as a need to protect Norah, his wife, he makes a split second decision that will alter all of their lives forever. He asks his nurse to take the baby away to an institution and never to reveal the secret. But Caroline, the nurse, cannot leave the infant. Instead, she disappears into another city to raise the child herself. So begins this beautifully told story that unfolds over a quarter of a century in which these two families, ignorant of each other, are yet bound by David Henry's fateful decision that long-ago winter night. A rich and deeply moving page-turner, *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* captures the way life takes unexpected turns and how the mysterious ties that hold a family together help us survive the heartache that occurs when long-buried secrets burst into the open. It is an astonishing tale of redemptive love.

### *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides

*"I was born twice: first, as a baby girl, on a remarkably smogless Detroit day of January 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan, in August of 1974. . . My birth certificate lists my name as Calliope Helen Stephanides. My most recent driver's license...records my first name simply as Cal."*

So begins the story of Calliope Stephanides and three generations of the Greek-American Stephanides family who travel from a tiny village overlooking Mount Olympus in Asia Minor to Prohibition-era Detroit, witnessing its glory days as the Motor City, and the race riots of 1967, before they move out to the tree-lined streets of suburban Grosse Pointe, Michigan. To understand why Calliope is not like other girls, she has to uncover a guilty family secret and the astonishing genetic history that turns Callie into Cal, one of the most audacious and wondrous narrators in contemporary fiction.

### *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro

All children should believe they are special. But the students of Hailsham, an elite school in the English countryside, are so special that visitors shun them, and only by rumor and the occasional fleeting remark by a teacher do they discover their unconventional origins and strange destiny. As children Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy were students at Hailsham, an exclusive boarding school secluded in the English countryside. It was a place of mercurial cliques and mysterious rules where teachers were constantly reminding their charges of how special they were.

Now, years later, Kathy is a young woman. Ruth and Tommy have re-entered her life. And for the first time she is beginning to look back at their shared past and understand just what it is that makes them special—and how that gift will shape the rest of their time together.

### *The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead

When Elwood Curtis, a Black boy growing up in 1960s Tallahassee, is unfairly sentenced to a juvenile reformatory called the Nickel Academy, he finds himself trapped in a grotesque chamber of horrors. Elwood's only salvation is his friendship with fellow "delinquent" Turner, which deepens despite Turner's conviction that Elwood is hopelessly naive, that the world is crooked, and that the only way to survive is to scheme and avoid trouble. As life at the Academy becomes ever more perilous, the tension between Elwood's ideals and Turner's skepticism leads to a decision whose repercussions will echo down the decades.

### *The Portrait of a Lady* by Henry James

When Isabel Archer, a beautiful, spirited American, is brought to Europe by her wealthy aunt, it is expected that she will soon marry. But Isabel, resolved to enjoy her freedom, does not hesitate to turn down two eligible suitors. Then she finds herself irresistibly drawn to the charming and cultivated Gilbert Osmond. Isabel, however, soon discovers the cruelty and stifling darkness beneath Gilbert's civilized veneer.

### *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen

In a remote Hertfordshire village, far off the good coach roads of George III's England, a country squire of no great means must marry off his five vivacious daughters. At the heart of this all-consuming enterprise are his second daughter Elizabeth Bennet and the aristocratic Fitzwilliam Darcy — two headstrong individuals whose pride must be humbled and prejudices dissolved before the novel can come to its splendid conclusion.

### *Snow Flower and Secret Fan* by Lisa See

In nineteenth-century China, in a remote Hunan county, a girl named Lily, at the tender age of seven, is paired with a laotong, an "old same," in an emotional match that will last a lifetime. The laotong, Snow Flower, introduces herself by sending Lily a silk fan on which she's written a poem in nu shu, a unique language that Chinese women created in order to communicate in secret, away from the influence of men. As the years pass, Lily and Snow Flower send messages on the fan and compose stories on handkerchiefs, reaching out of isolation to share their hopes, dreams, and accomplishments. Together they endure the agony of footbinding and reflect upon their arranged marriages, their loneliness, and the joys and tragedies of motherhood. The two find solace in their friendship, developing a bond that keeps their spirits alive. But when a misunderstanding arises, their relationship suddenly threatens to tear apart.

### *There There* by Tommy Orange

As we learn the reasons that each person is attending the Big Oakland Powwow - some generous, some fearful, some joyful, some violent - momentum builds toward a shocking yet inevitable conclusion that changes everything. There will be glorious communion, and a spectacle of sacred tradition and pageantry. And there will be sacrifice, and heroism, and loss. *There There* is a wondrous and shattering portrait of an America few of us have ever seen. It's "masterful...white-hot...devastating" (*The Washington Post*) at the same time as it is fierce, funny, suspenseful, thoroughly modern, and impossible to pause. Here is a voice we have never heard - a voice full of poetry and rage, exploding onto the page with urgency and force. Tommy Orange has written a stunning novel that grapples with a complex and painful history, with an inheritance of beauty and profound spirituality, and with a plague of addiction, abuse, and suicide. This is the book that everyone is talking about right now, and it's destined to be a classic.

### *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens

For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life—until the unthinkable happens.

### *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte

*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, only to return years later as a wealthy and polished man. He proceeds to exact a terrible revenge for his former miseries.

*A Yellow Raft in Blue Water* by Michael Dorris

Michael Dorris has crafted a fierce saga of three generations of Indian women, beset by hardships and torn by angry secrets, yet inextricably joined by the bonds of kinship. Starting in the present day and moving backward, the novel is told in the voices of the three women: fifteen-year-old part-black Rayona; her American Indian mother, Christine, consumed by tenderness and resentment toward those she loves; and the fierce and mysterious Ida, mother and grandmother whose haunting secrets, betrayals, and dreams echo through the years, braiding together the strands of the shared past.