

***Animal Farm* by George Orwell 1945**

"A political satire in which the animals take over running the farm but find their utopian state turning into a dictatorship" (Follett)

Awards: Chosen by *Time Magazine* as one of the 100 best English-language novels, Retrospective Hugo award

***Antigone* by Sophocles ~441 BC**

A tragic Greek play in which Antigone defies her king and buries her brother. *Antigone* is one of the three Theban plays by Sophocles; the others are *Oedipus the King* and *Oedipus at Colonus*.

***Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley 1932**

A dystopian novel about a futuristic world that is controlled by science and efficiency.

Awards: Ranked 5th by the [Modern Library](#) on its list of the 100 Best English-Language Novels of the 20th century, named an ALA Notable Children's Book in 1995

***The Call of the Wild* by Jack London 1903**

Set in Canada during the 1890s, this short novel tells the story of a sled dog named Buck.

Awards: Number 35 on *The Guardian's* list of 100 Best Novels in English

***A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens 1843**

Short novel in which Ebenezer Scrooge learns the meaning of Christmas when he is visited by the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future.

***The Crucible* by Arthur Miller 1953**

A dramatization of the Salem witch trials by Pulitzer Prize winning author Arthur Miller.

Awards: Tony Award for Best Play in 1953

***Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury 1953**

A dystopian novel about a futuristic society in which books are outlawed.

Awards: Retrospective Hugo award, Prometheus "Hall of Fame" award

***Fences* by August Wilson 1985**

A play set in 1950's Pittsburgh about a man who struggles to provide for his family.

Awards: Pulitzer Prize for Drama, Tony Award for Best Play

***The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald 1925**

"Tells the tragic love story of Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan, a dashing, enigmatic millionaire obsessed with an elusive, spoiled young woman" (Follett)

Awards: Nominated as one of America's best-loved novels by PBS's *The Great American Read*

***Hamlet* by William Shakespeare ~1600**

Tells the story of Prince Hamlet, who seeks revenge against his uncle for killing his father and marrying his mother.

***Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad 1899**

Tells the story of Charles Marlow's experience as the captain of an ivory trading company's steamboat traveling up the Congo River in central Africa.

Awards: Number 32 on *The Guardian's* list of 100 Best Novels

***Lord of the Flies* by William Golding 1954**

Tells about a group of boys stranded on a tropical island.

Awards: Included in the *Modern Library 100 Best Novels*; Golding was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1983.

***Macbeth* by William Shakespeare 1606**

Tells of the Scottish general Macbeth who murders the king of Scotland in order to seize his throne.

***Night* by Elie Wiesel 1960**

Autobiographical account of Wiesel's experience in a Nazi concentration camp.

Wiesel was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986.

***Oedipus the King* by Sophocles ~429 BC**

Tragic Greek play in which Oedipus searches for the murderer of the previous king. *Oedipus the King* is one of the three Theban plays by Sophocles; the others are *Antigone* and *Oedipus at Colonus*.

***Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck 1937**

Set during the Great Depression, this short novel tells the story of migrant workers George and Lenny.

Steinbeck was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962 and the U.S. Medal of Freedom in 1964.

***Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare 1597**

Tragic story of "star-crossed lovers."

***The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd 2001**

Set in South Carolina in 1964, "tells the tale of a 14-year-old white girl named Lily Owen who is raised by the elderly African American Rosaleen after the accidental death of Lily's mother" (*Library Journal*)

Awards: 2004 Book Sense Book of the Year

***Sula* by Toni Morrison 1973**

Tells the story of Sula and Nel, childhood friends who grow up to be enemies.

Awards: Morrison received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993.

***The Awakening* by Kate Chopin 1899**

Tells the story of a young Southern woman after the Civil War who struggles with her feelings about her marriage.

***The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka 1915**

“tells the story of traveling salesman Samsa, who wakes up one day to find out he has turned into a giant insect” (Follett). Originally published in German.

Awards: Won the Theodor Fontane prize, a German-language literary award.

***The Odyssey* by Homer ~700 BC**

Tells the story of Odysseus’s perilous ten-year journey home from the Trojan War.

***Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe 1958**

Set in Nigeria, the novel portrays pre-colonial tribal life and life after the arrival of Europeans.

Awards: *Things Fall Apart* was listed by [Encyclopædia Britannica](#) as one of "12 Novels Considered the 'Greatest Book Ever Written.'"

***To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee 1960**

Tells the story of Scout Finch, a little girl growing up in Alabama in the 1930s.

Awards: Pulitzer Prize for Fiction; Harper Lee won the Presidential Medal of Freedom for *To Kill a Mockingbird* in 2007.

***Touching Spirit Bear* Ben Mikaelson 2001**

“After beating a classmate into a coma, a fifteen-year-old boy from an abusive home is banished to a remote Alaskan island as part of a Native American sentencing alternative” (Follett).

Awards: YALSA Best Book for Young Adults 2002; Nautilus Award 2002

***Trifles* by Susan Glaspell 1916**

A one-act play that tells about the aftermath of the murder of a farmer named John Wright.

Awards: Glaspell won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1931.

***We Have Always Lived in the Castle* Shirley Jackson 1962**

“The quiet, isolated life of the Blackwoods--eighteen-year-old Merricat; her older sister, Constance, who may have poisoned their parents six years ago; and their wheelchair-bound uncle--is disrupted by the arrival of a cousin pursuing the family fortune” (Follett).

Awards: Shirley Jackson won the O. Henry Prize for Best Short Story award in 1949 and the Best American Short Story award in 1944, 1951, 1956, and 1964.

***Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte 1847**

Set on the moors of Yorkshire, England, this book tells the story of the ill-fated love between Heathcliff and Cathy, whose father adopted Heathcliff as a lad.

Awards: Number 13 on *The Guardian’s* list of 100 Best Novels