

A selective list of some of the best and most important works of world literature, including fiction, poetry and drama.

## Twentieth Century



[Place hold](#)

### THINGS FALL APART

By Chinua Achebe

F Achebe

A chronicle of Nigeria at the beginning of colonialism



[Place hold](#)

### THE PLAGUE

By Albert Camus

F Camus

A modern French allegory in which the bubonic plague ravages a North African coastal town.



[Place hold](#)

### HEART OF DARKNESS

By Joseph Conrad

F Conrad

In this English novel, Marlow recounts his journey through Africa in search of the enigmatic Kurtz who has seized control over the local people.



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### THE SOUND AND THE FURY

By William Faulkner

F Faulkner

The fall of the Compson family is told through the points of view of four different family members in this groundbreaking American stream-of-consciousness novel.



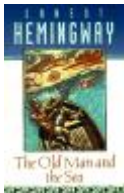
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### THE GREAT GATSBY

By F. Scott Fitzgerald

F Fitzgerald

The tragic story of Jay Gatsby's social rise and fall that is set in motion through his attraction to the wealthy southern belle, Daisy Buchanan.



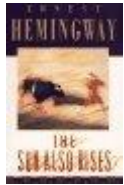
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## THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

By Ernest Hemingway

F Hemingway

A Nobel prize-winning tale of an elderly Cuban fisherman's relentless battle with a giant marlin.



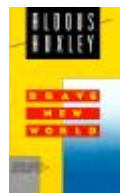
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## THE SUN ALSO RISES

By Ernest Hemingway

F Hemingway

This novel that encapsulated the disillusionment of the post-WWI Lost Generation depicts American and English expatriates in Paris.



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## BRAVE NEW WORLD

By Aldous Huxley

F Huxley

The original portrait of a dystopia.



[Place hold](#)

## THE PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

By James Joyce

F Joyce

One of the most controversial works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this Irish novel portrays Stephen Dedalus's development as an artist.



[Place hold](#)

## ULYSSES

By James Joyce

F Joyce

A stream-of-consciousness narrative of everyday life in Dublin, Ireland; also considered one of the most revolutionary novels of the century.



[Place hold](#)

## THE METAMORPHOSIS

By Franz Kafka

F Kafka

Gregor Samsa is transformed overnight into a giant insect and is shunned by society in this modern German allegory of the human condition.



[Place hold](#)

## SONS AND LOVERS

By D. H. Lawrence

F Lawrence

In this English novel, young Paul Morel is torn between his passion for two women and his attachment to his mother.



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## TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

By Harper Lee

F Lee

The Pulitzer-prize winning coming-of-age story of two children's first exposure to racial strife in the American South.



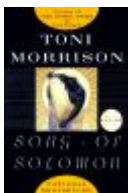
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## DEATH IN VENICE

By Thomas Mann

F Mann

In this German novel, a man is undone by forbidden love in decaying Venice.



[Place hold](#)

## THE SONG OF SOLOMON

By Toni Morrison

F Morrison

This saga of the African American experience tells of the birth of Milkman and his subsequent discovery of his identity.



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## ANIMAL FARM

By George Orwell

F Orwell

A 20<sup>th</sup> century political allegory in which a group of barnyard animals revolt against their vicious human master only to submit to tyranny.



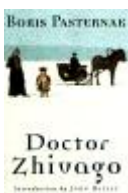
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## 1984

By George Orwell

F Orwell

A nightmarish vision of a modern totalitarian state.



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## DOCTOR ZHIVAGO

By Boris Pasternak

F Pasternak

A sweeping Russian saga of a poet's life and love affair during the turmoil of the Bolshevik Revolution.



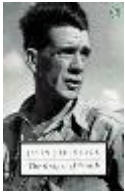
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## ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT

By Erich Maria Remarque

F Remarque

Set during World War I, this German anti-war novel portrays the horrors of the war.



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## THE GRAPES OF WRATH

By John Steinbeck

F Steinbeck

The story of the Joad family who, during the depression, is driven from Oklahoma to the promised land of California.



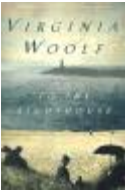
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## THE LORD OF THE RINGS

By J. R. R. Tolkien

YF Tolkien

An epic fantasy of a ring's evil influence over the future of the world and humanity.



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## TO THE LIGHTHOUSE

By Virginia Woolf

F Woolf

A summer in the life of one family is recalled from multiple points of view in this stream-of-consciousness English novel.



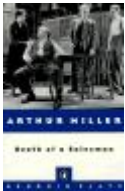
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## NATIVE SON

By Richard Wright

F Wright

The powerful story of a young African American man caught in a downward spiral after he kills a young white woman in a brief moment of panic.



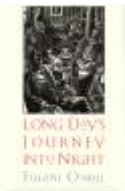
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## THE DEATH OF A SALESMAN

By Arthur Miller

812.52 Mil

A Pulitzer Prize-winning American play about the emotional crisis of a middle-aged salesman who realizes his life may have been a sham.



[Place hold](#)

## LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT

By Eugene O'Neill

812.52 ONe

An American Pulitzer Prize-winning autobiographical play about the playwright's family's psychological tensions.



[Place hold](#)

## A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

By Tennessee Williams

812.52 Wil

This play, set in New Orleans, explores the tension between the sophisticated Blanche DuBois and her brother-in-law, Stanley Kowalski.



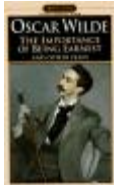
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## THE WASTELAND AND OTHER POEMS

By T. S. Eliot

821.912 Eli

Breaking with the conventions of 19<sup>th</sup> century poetry, this landmark English poem explores the desolation of modern life.



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## THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

By Oscar Wilde

822.8 Wil

Wilde's witty play of mistaken identities mocks the social conventions of turn-of-the-century British society.



[Place hold](#)

## PYGMALION

By George Bernard Shaw

822.912 Sha

The British play that is the basis for the musical, "My Fair Lady."



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## WAITING FOR GODOT

By Samuel Beckett

842.914 Bek

The 20<sup>th</sup> century's first and most famous piece of theatre of the absurd.



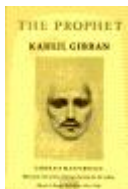
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## THE CHERRY ORCHARD

By Anton Chekhov

891.723 Che

A Russian play in which an old aristocratic family must dispose of the family estate, with its beautiful cherry orchard, and the despair that ensues.



[Place hold](#)

## THE PROPHET

By Kahlil Gibran

F Gibran

A philosophical reflection on love, marriage, joy and sorrow, time, and friendship.

## 19<sup>th</sup> Century



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## PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

By Jane Austen

F Austen

A 19<sup>th</sup> century English comedy of manners about the spirited courtship between the proud Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet.





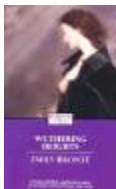
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## JANE EYRE

By Charlotte Brontë

F Brontë

An impoverished English governess, Jane Eyre, is torn between fear of and love for the mysterious Mr. Rochester.



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## WUTHERING HEIGHTS

By Emily Brontë

F Brontë

Set in the English moors, this novel relates the tempestuous affair between Catherine and Heathcliff, the tragic effects of which span the generations.



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## THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE

By Stephen Crane

F Crane

This American novel of the Civil War depicts a young soldier's struggle with the physical and psychological horrors of war.



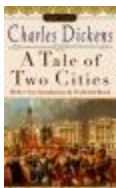
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## GREAT EXPECTATIONS

By Charles Dickens

F Dickens

In this English novel, an impoverished orphan, Pip, finds himself in possession of “great expectations,” yet is still tormented by love for the beautiful, haughty Estella.



[Place hold](#)

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

By Charles Dickens

F Dickens

A timeless English novel of love and sacrifice during the French Revolution.



[Place hold](#)

## THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV

By Fedor Dostoevski

F Dostoevski

This Russian novel of family rivalry chronicles the murder of a depraved landowner and the subsequent investigation and trial.



[Place hold](#)

## CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

By Fedor Dostoevski

F Dostoevski

After murdering his landlord in a moment of desperation, Raskolnikov, an impoverished student living in Tsarist Russia, undergoes a transformation from guilt to redemption.



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## MIDDLEMARCH

By George Eliot

F Eliot

The tragic English novel of Dorothea Brooke, an idealistic young woman who faces resistance from her society as she devotes her life to social change.



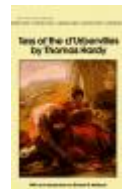
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## MADAME BOVARY

By Gustave Flaubert

F Flaubert

In this ground-breaking French novel, Madame Bovary, bored with her life, flouts bourgeois social mores when she becomes involved in an affair.



[Place hold](#)

## TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

By Thomas Hardy

F Hardy

A tragic English novel about a beautiful woman torn between two men: Angel whom she loves, and the scheming aristocratic Alec who seduces her.



[Place hold](#)

## THE SCARLET LETTER

By Nathaniel Hawthorne

F Hawthorne

An American novel of a Puritan adulteress, Hester Prynne, whose punishment is to wear the scarlet initial of her sin on her chest.



[Place hold](#)

## LES MISÉRABLES

By Victor Hugo

F Hawthorne

A French saga set in post-Napoleonic France of the ex-convict Jean Valjean and his struggle to redeem himself in a world of poverty and social injustice.



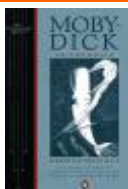
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## THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY

By Henry James

F James

Isabel Archer, a vivacious young American, is true to her principles as she chooses between suitors but at the cost of her own happiness.



[Place hold](#)

## MOBY DICK

By Herman Melville

F Melville

The monumental American epic story of Captain Ahab's obsessive hunt for the great white whale that maimed him.



[Place hold](#)

## COMPLETE STORIES AND POEMS

By Edgar Allen Poe

F Poe

This volume brings together all of the American master of terror's stories and poems.



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## FRANKENSTEIN

By Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

F Shelley

The English story of Victor Frankenstein's fatal obsession with creating life, and the monster he dooms as a result.



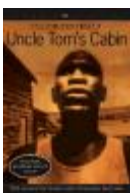
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## THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

By Robert Louis Stevenson

F Stevenson

This British novel explores the case of a split personality, one a doctor and the other an evil murderer.



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## UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

By Harriet Beecher Stowe

F Stowe

This powerful American novel about slavery helped solidify the anti-slavery movement before the Civil War.



[Place hold](#)

## ANNA KARENINA

By Leo Tolstoy

F Tolstoy

In this Russian novel, Anna, who languishes in a passionless marriage, is ruined by a doomed love affair with the dashing officer Count Vronsky.



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## WAR AND PEACE

By Leo Tolstoy

F Tolstoy

This sweeping Russian epic of the Napoleonic Wars is widely considered one of the world's greatest novels.



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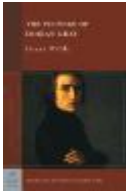
## THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

By Mark Twain

F Twain

This novel about a young boy's journey down the Mississippi is considered the first novel to speak in a truly American voice.





[Place hold](#)

## THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

By Oscar Wilde

F Wilde

As a handsome young Londoner sinks into a life of depravity, his body retains perfect youth while his portrait reflects the effects of his lifestyle.



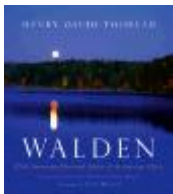
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## LEAVES OF GRASS

By Walt Whitman

811.3 Whi

Whitman's masterpiece that gave a new voice and style to poetry is considered the first uniquely American poem.



[Place hold](#)

## WALDEN

By Henry David Thoreau

818.303 Tho

An account of an experiment in which the American philosopher Thoreau lived off the land in the woods for two years.



[Place hold](#)

## THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

0821.7 Col

In this English poem, a sailor recounts the terrible fate that befell his ship when he shot an albatross.



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## HEDDA GABLER

By Henrik Ibsen

839.822 lbs

This Norwegian psychological drama depicts the evil machinations of a ruthless, nihilistic heroine.

## 18<sup>th</sup> Century and Earlier



[Place hold](#)

## DON QUIXOTE

By Miguel De Cervantes Saavedra

F Cervantes

This Spanish classic recounts the adventures of the idealistic knight, Don Quixote de la Mancha, and his faithful squire, Sancho Panza.



[Place hold](#)

## ROBINSON CRUSOE

By Daniel Defoe

F Defoe

The 18<sup>th</sup> century English story of a seafarer's survival on a deserted island after a shipwreck leaves him marooned.





[Place hold](#)

## THE HISTORY OF TOM JONES: A FOUNDLING

By Henry Fielding

F Fielding

The comic English novel of how, through his raucous misadventures, the foundling Tom Jones discovers his true birthright.



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## GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

By Jonathan Swift

F Swift

In this 18<sup>th</sup> century English satire, shipwrecked Gulliver journeys through the lands of 6-inch Lilliputians, giants, wise Houyhnhnms, and brutish Yahoos.



[Place hold](#)

## CANDIDE

By Voltaire

F Voltaire

This French Enlightenment satire traces a young man's adventures in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, and satirizes the hypocrisies of religion, government, philosophy and other institutions.



[Place hold](#)

## THE CANTERBURY TALES

By Geoffrey Chaucer

821.1 Cha

A variety of medieval tales told by members of all sections of English society on a pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Canterbury.



[Place hold](#)

## PARADISE LOST

By John Milton

821.4 Mil

This epic 17<sup>th</sup> century English poem tells of the revolt of the demons in heaven against God and the fall of man.



[Place hold](#)

## HAMLET

By William Shakespeare

822.33 Sha

The tragic play of a Danish prince who must avenge his father's murder.



[Place hold](#)

## A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

By William Shakespeare

822.33 Sha

A comedy of mismatched love and mistaken identities.



[Place hold](#)

## ROMEO AND JULIET

By William Shakespeare

822.33 Sha

Classic tale of star-crossed lovers in Renaissance Verona.



[Place hold](#)

## BEOWULF

829.3 Beo

An Old English saga of a young man's heroic battle to slay the monster Grendel.



[Place hold](#)

## TARTUFFE

By Moliere

842 Mol

An 18<sup>th</sup> century French neoclassical satirical play about religious hypocrisy.



[Place hold](#)

## THE DIVINE COMEDY

By Dante Alighieri

851.15 Dan

The Italian Renaissance poem about a poet's visionary journey through the tortures of Hell to the divinity of Paradise.



[Place hold](#)

## FAUST

By Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

832.6 Goe

In this German tragedy, the audacious Faust makes a pact with the devil, Mephistopheles.



[Place hold](#)

## THE AENEID

By Virgil

873.01 Vir

Written in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, this Roman epic tells the story of the Trojan Aeneas who traveled to Italy and founded the Roman empire.



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## OEDIPUS REX

By Sophocles

882.01 Sop

In this ancient Greek tragedy, which is one of the most famous, King Oedipus discovers that in the past, he inadvertently killed his father and married his mother.



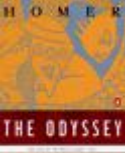
## THE ILIAD

By Homer

883.01 Hom

An ancient Greek poem of the decade long Trojan War.

[Place hold](#)



## THE ODYSSEY

By Homer

883.01 Hom

An ancient Greek poem of the warrior Odysseus's journey home from the Trojan War.

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