

6th Grade

<i>Echo</i>	Pam Munoz Ryan	9780439874021
<p>Lost and alone in a forbidden forest, Otto meets three mysterious sisters and suddenly finds himself entwined in a puzzling quest involving a prophecy, a promise, and a harmonica.</p> <p>Decades later, Friedrich in Germany, Mike in Pennsylvania, and Ivy in California each, in turn, become interwoven when the very same harmonica lands in their lives. All the children face daunting challenges: rescuing a father, protecting a brother, holding a family together. And ultimately, pulled by the invisible thread of destiny, their suspenseful solo stories converge in an orchestral crescendo.</p>		

<i>When You Reach Me</i>	Rebecca Stead	
<p>By sixth grade, Miranda and her best friend, Sal, know how to navigate their New York City neighborhood. They know where it's safe to go, and they know who to avoid. Like the crazy guy on the corner.</p> <p>But things start to unravel. Sal gets punched by a kid on the street for what seems like no reason, and he shuts Miranda out of his life. The apartment key that Miranda's mom keeps hidden for emergencies is stolen. And then a mysterious note arrives, scrawled on a tiny slip of paper. The notes keep coming, and Miranda slowly realizes that whoever is leaving them knows things no one should know. Each message brings her closer to believing that only she can prevent a tragic death. Until the final note makes her think she's too late.</p>		

7th Grade

<i>Artemis Fowl</i>	Eoin Colfer	
<p>Twelve-year-old Artemis is a millionaire, a genius-and above all, a criminal mastermind. But Artemis doesn't know what he's taken on when he kidnaps a fairy, Captain Holly Short of the LEPrecon Unit. These aren't the fairies of the bedtime stories-they're dangerous!</p>		

<i>The Westing Game</i>	Ellen Raskin	
<p>A bizarre chain of events begins when sixteen unlikely people gather for the reading of Samuel W. Westing's will. And though no one knows why the eccentric, game-loving millionaire has chosen a virtual stranger—and a possible murderer—to inherit his vast fortune, one thing is for sure: Sam Westing may be dead...but that won't stop him from playing one last game!</p>		

8th Grade

<i>I Am the Cheese</i>	Robert Cormier	
<p>A boy's search for his father becomes a desperate journey to unlock a secret past. But the past must not be remembered if the boy is to survive. As he searches for the truth that hovers at the edge of his mind, the boy—and readers—arrive at a shattering conclusion.</p>		

<i>Trash</i>	Andy Mulligan	
<p>In an unnamed Third World country, in the not-so-distant future, three “dumpsite boys” make a living picking through the mountains of garbage on the outskirts of a large city. One unlucky-lucky day, Raphael finds something very special and very mysterious. So mysterious that he decides to keep it, even when the city police offer a handsome reward for its return. That decision brings with it terrifying consequences, and soon the dumpsite boys must use all of their cunning and courage to stay ahead of their pursuers. It's up to Raphael, Gardo, and Rat—boys who have no education, no parents, no homes, and no money—to solve the mystery and right a terrible wrong.</p>		

9th Grade

<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass</i>	Lewis Carroll	9780553213454
<p>In 1862 Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, a shy Oxford mathematician with a stammer, created a story about a little girl tumbling down a rabbit hole. Thus began the immortal adventures of Alice, perhaps the most popular heroine in English literature. Countless scholars have tried to define the charm of the <i>Alice</i> books—with those wonderfully eccentric characters the Queen of Hearts, Tweedledum, and Tweedledee, the Cheshire Cat, Mock Turtle, the Mad Hatter <i>et al.</i>—by proclaiming that they really comprise a satire on language, a political allegory, a parody of Victorian children's literature, even a reflection of contemporary ecclesiastical history. Perhaps, as Dodgson might have said, <i>Alice</i> is no more than a dream, a fairy tale about the trials and tribulations of growing up—or down, or all turned round—as seen through the expert eyes of a child.</p>		

<i>The Graveyard Book</i>	Neil Gaiman	9780060530945
<p>Gaiman, famous for his creepy and often scary tales, <i>Coraline</i> and <i>The Wolves in the Wall</i>, has created in this novel something that is neither creepy nor scary, despite its chilling first chapter and spectral cast of characters. This is a story about the power of family—whatever form it takes—and the potential of a child who is raised with love and a sense of duty. Nobody Owens (Bod) is adopted by a couple of ghosts after narrowly escaping death at the hands of the mysterious man who murdered the rest of his family. After much debate, he is granted the "Freedom of the Graveyard" by its long dead inhabitants. His guardian, Silas, who is neither dead nor alive, brings him food and ensures he is educated in the ways of the dead and the living. Of course, life for young Owens is not all smooth sailing. Bod must face the ghoul gate, the ancient force that waits in the oldest grave, and the mysterious man who still searches for the boy he failed to kill.</p>		

10th Grade

Mandatory

<i>A Separate Peace</i>	John Knowles	
<p>An American classic and great bestseller for over thirty years, <i>A Separate Peace</i> is timeless in its description of adolescence during a period when the entire country was losing its innocence to World War II.</p> <p>Set at a boys' boarding school in New England during the early years of World War II, <i>A Separate Peace</i> is a harrowing and luminous parable of the dark side of adolescence. Gene is a lonely, introverted intellectual. Phineas is a handsome, taunting, daredevil athlete. What happens between the two friends one summer, like the war itself, banishes the innocence of these boys and their world.</p>		

Choose one of the following:

<i>The Glass Castle</i>	Jeanette Walls	
<p>Jeanette Walls grew up with parents whose ideals and stubborn nonconformity were both their curse and their salvation. Rex and Rose Mary Walls had four children. In the beginning, they lived like nomads, moving among Southwest desert towns, camping in the mountains. Rex was a charismatic, brilliant man who, when sober, captured his children's imagination, teaching them physics, geology, and above all, how to embrace life fearlessly. Rose Mary, who painted and wrote and couldn't stand the responsibility of providing for her family, called herself an "excitement addict." Cooking a meal that would be consumed in fifteen minutes had no appeal when she could make a painting that might last forever.</p>		

<i>All Over But the Shoutin'</i>	Rick Bragg	
<p>This haunting, harrowing, gloriously moving recollection of a life on the American margin is the story of Rick Bragg, who grew up dirt-poor in northeastern Alabama, seemingly destined for either the cotton mills or the penitentiary, and instead became a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for <i>The New York Times</i>. It is the story of Bragg's father, a hard-drinking man with a murderous temper and the habit of running out on the people who needed him most.</p> <p>But at the center of this soaring memoir is Bragg's mother, who went eighteen years without a new dress so that her sons could have school clothes and picked other people's cotton so that her children wouldn't have to live on welfare alone. Evoking these lives--and the country that shaped and nourished them--with artistry, honesty, and compassion, Rick Bragg brings home the love and suffering that lie at the heart of every family. The result is unforgettable.</p>		

11th Grade

Mandatory

<i>Zeitoun</i>	Dave Eggers	978-0307387943
Abdulrahman Zeitoun is many things: entrepreneur, father, husband, Muslim, Syrian-American, New Orleanian. When Hurricane Katrina bears down on the city, Zeitoun nearly loses it all. How much will one man risk to save his adopted city? What will be his thanks? This non-fiction narrative, based on hundreds of interviews with Zeitoun, his family, and his neighbors, captures both the pride and fear present in post-9/11 America through one man's harrowing journey.		

Choose one of the following:

<i>The Poisonwood Bible</i>	Barbara Kingsolver	978-0061577079
The Price family moves to the Congo to serve as missionaries but quickly find that they are unprepared for the crises of faith and family that await them abroad. Told from perspectives that shift between the four Price daughters, Kingsolver's book examines our larger place in the world and our duties to our fellow man. Critics hailed the book when it debuted in 2000, nominating it for a Pulitzer Prize, and today, it has become a modern classic.		
<i>How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents</i>	Julia Alvarez	978-1565129757
In this coming-of-age tale, Alvarez winds the clock back through the upbringing of four sisters. Starting in the late 1980s and traveling backward to the mid-1950s, the Garcia girls face alienation, oppression, ridicule, and the trials of young womanhood. At times as provocative as <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> , this story of a family of political refugees from Trujillo's dictatorship in the Dominican Republic is also laced with humor and heart.		

12th Grade

All Students must read *Siddhartha*

<i>Siddhartha</i>	Herman Hesse	
<p>“In the shade of a banyan tree, a grizzled ferryman sits listening to the river. Some say he's a sage. He was once a wandering shramana and, briefly, like thousands of others, he followed Gotama the Buddha, enraptured by his sermons. But this man, Siddhartha, was not a follower of any but his own soul. Born the son of a Brahmin, Siddhartha was blessed in appearance, intelligence, and charisma. In order to find meaning in life, he discarded his promising future for the life of a wandering ascetic.” --Amazon Book Review</p> <p>Note: This book is a perfect prelude to 12th grade studies in literature and theology.</p> <p>“Inspiring read—sit under a tree or by a stream and enjoy! Students love this story.” --Mrs. Lycan</p>		

Choose one of the following:

<i>Sarah's Key</i>	Tatiana Rosnay	
<p>“Paris, July 1942: Sarah, a ten-year-old girl, is taken with her parents by the French police as they go door to door arresting Jewish families in the middle of the night. Desperate to protect her younger brother, Sarah locks him in a bedroom cupboard—their secret hiding place—and promises to come back for him as soon as they are released. Sixty Years Later: Sarah's story intertwines with that of Julia Jarmond, an American journalist investigating the roundup. In her research, Julia stumbles onto a trail of secrets that link her to Sarah, and to questions about her own future. In <i>Sarah's Key</i>, Tatiana de Rosnay offers up a mesmerizing story in which a tragic past unfolds, the present is torn apart, and the future is irrevocably altered.” --Macmillan Publishers</p> <p>“Everyone who reads this book is moved by it. <i>Sarah's Key</i> intrigues the reader with parallel plots separated by six decades of living and deceit. The unexpected twists, some fictional, some historical, leave the reader guessing.” --Mrs. Lycan</p>		
<i>Foundation #1</i>	Isaac Asimov	
<p>“For twelve thousand years the Galactic Empire has ruled supreme. Now it is dying. But only Hari Seldon, creator of the revolutionary science of psychohistory, can see into the future -- to a dark age of ignorance, barbarism, and warfare that will last thirty thousand years. To preserve knowledge and save mankind, Seldon gathers the best minds in the Empire -- both scientists and scholars -- and brings them to a bleak planet at the edge of the Galaxy to serve as a beacon of hope for a future generations. He calls his sanctuary the Foundation.</p> <p>But soon the fledgling Foundation finds itself at the mercy of corrupt warlords rising in the wake of the receding Empire. Mankind's last best hope is faced with an agonizing choice: submit to the barbarians and be overrun -- or fight them and</p>		

be destroyed.”—Amazon Book Review

“Although the Foundation was originally published as a series of short stories between 1942 and 1950, it was first published as a book in 1951. Since that time it has been a favorite in the world of Science Fiction and in continuous publication. I am recommending it this year for two reasons:

1. The issues (totalitarian dictatorships, political and religious extremism and ignorance) surrounding the cults of personality in the book are certainly still with us today.

2. Also, the series is as popular and pertinent today as at the time of its inception.

If you are a fan of epic science fiction, I believe you will love this book.” —Mrs. Lycan