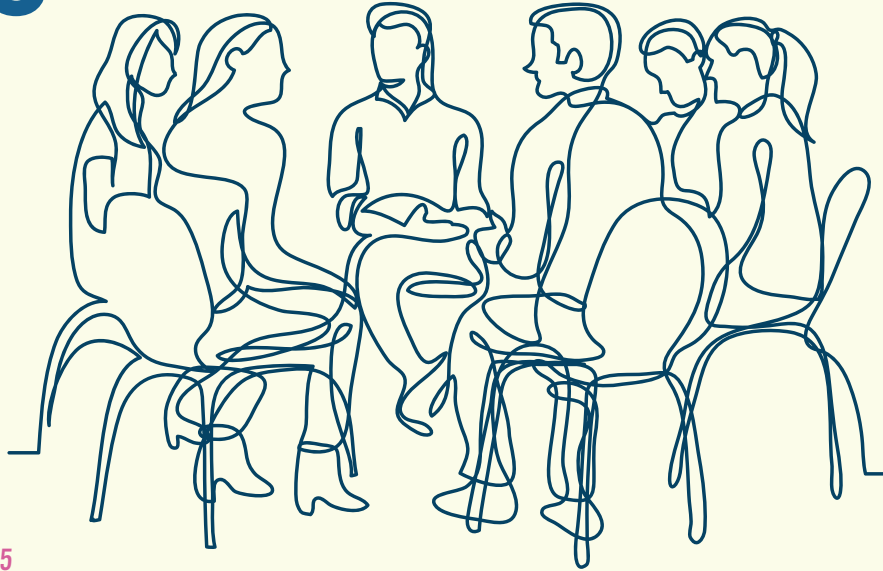


# *The* **GREAT** *American* **READ**

**A PROGRAMMING GUIDE  
FOR LIBRARIES | SUMMER 2018**



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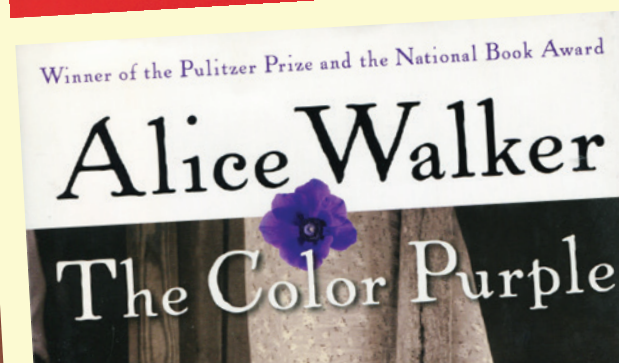
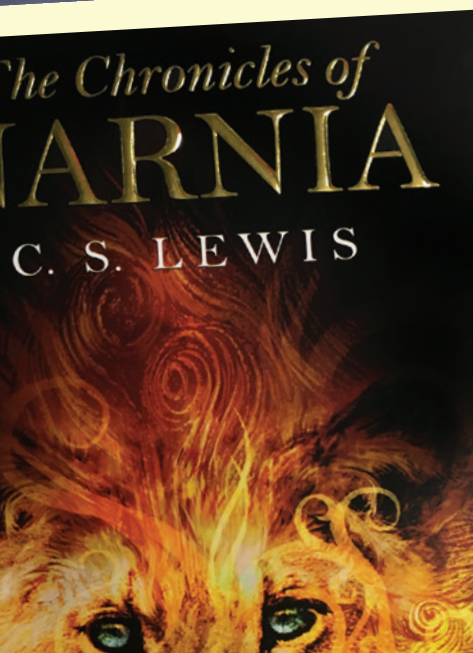
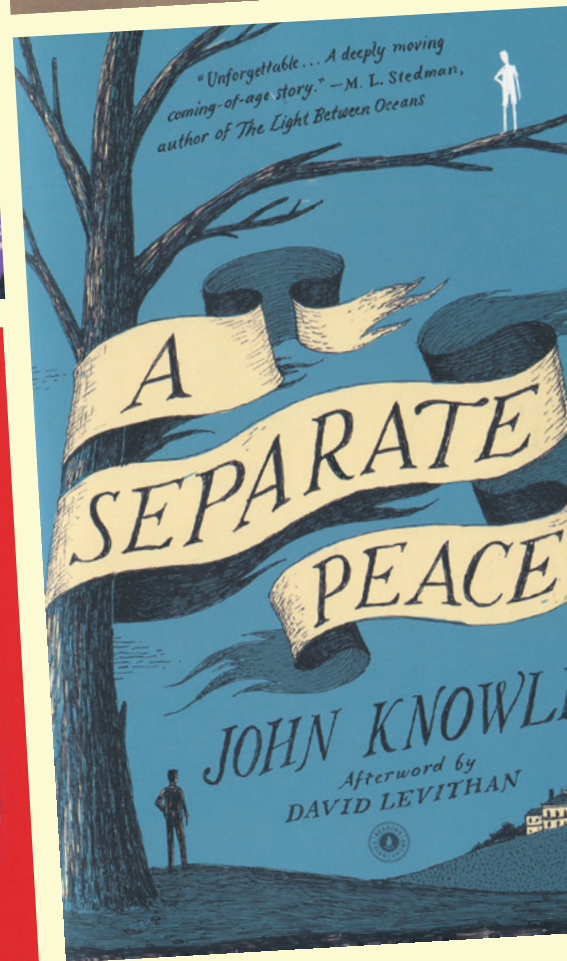
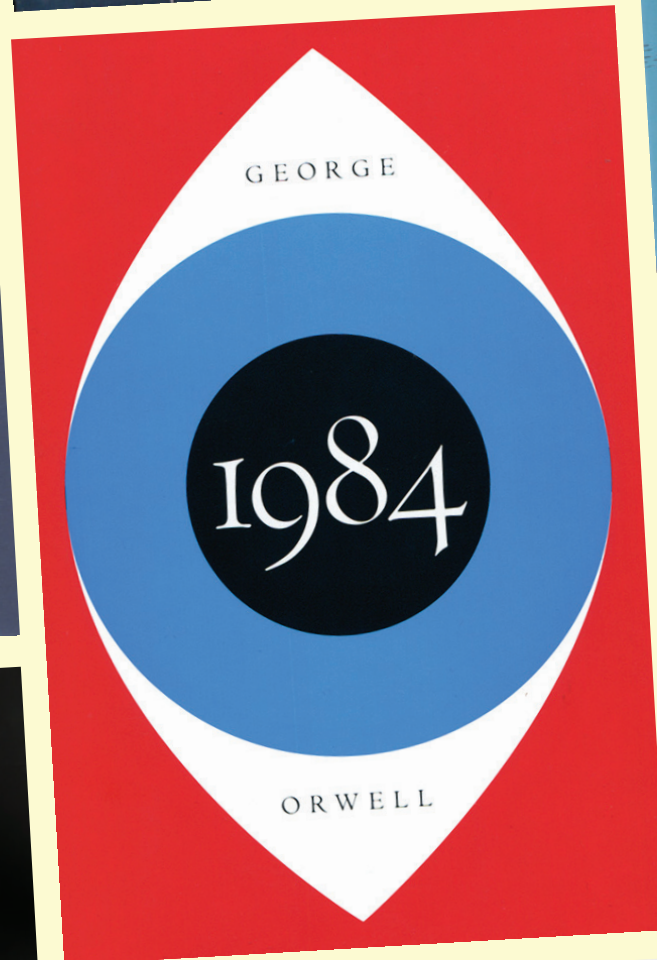
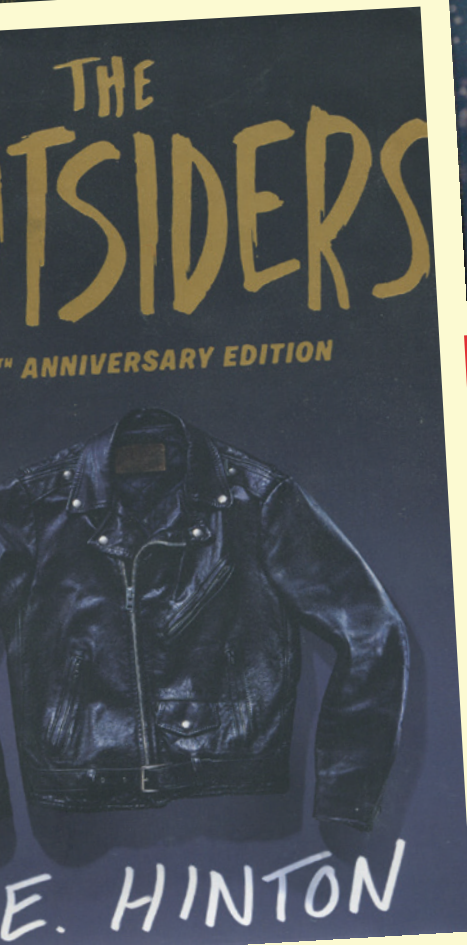
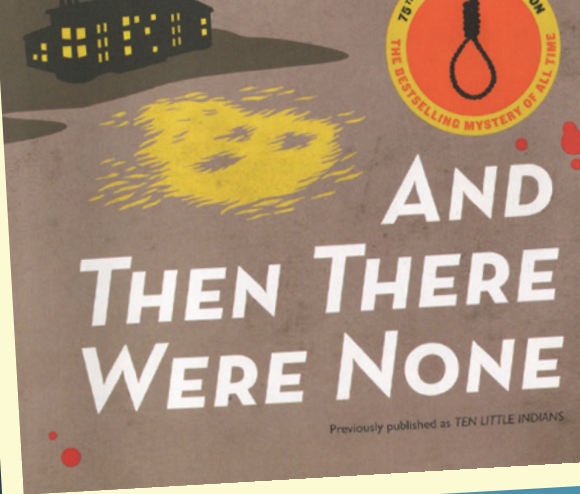
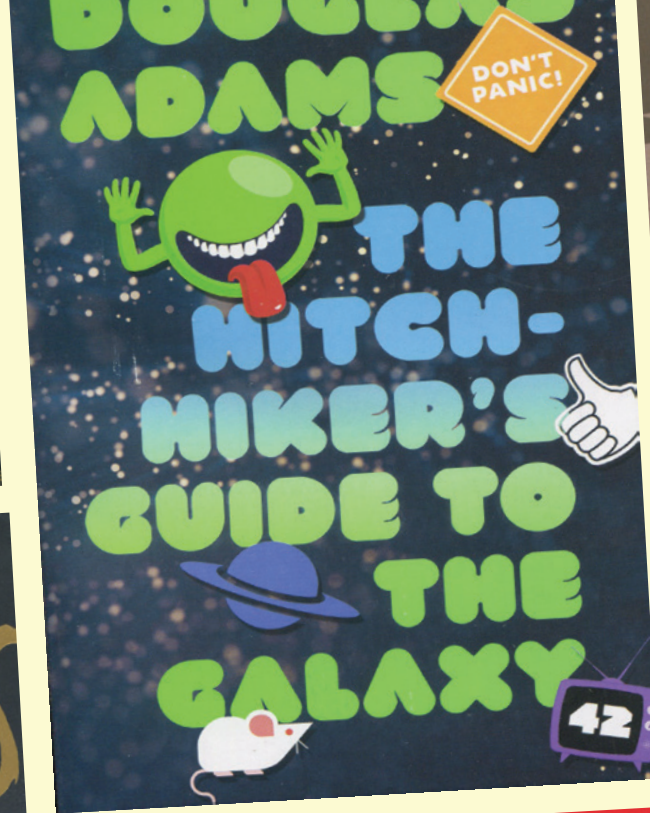
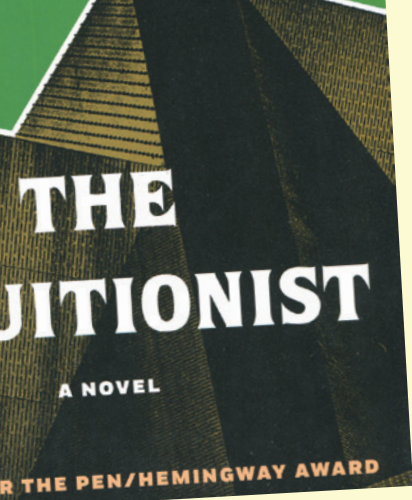
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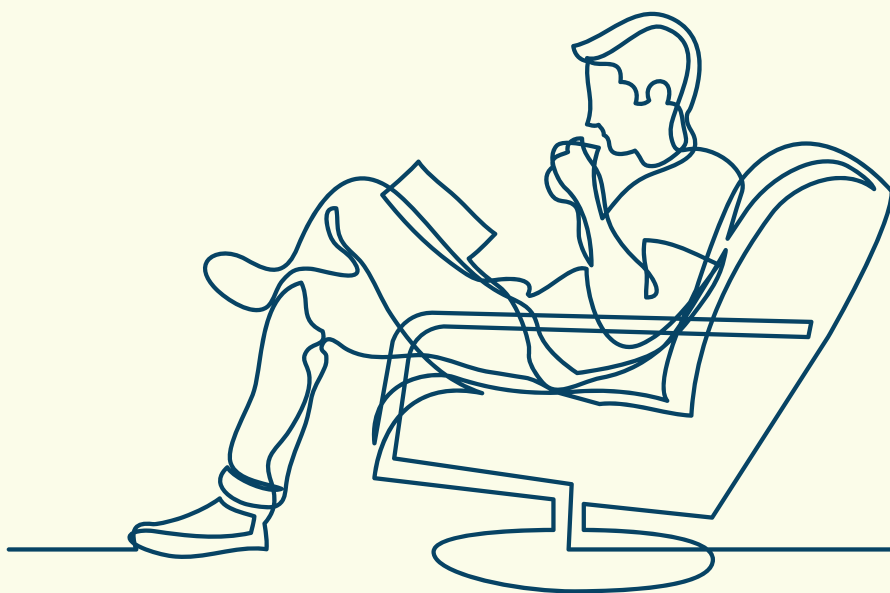
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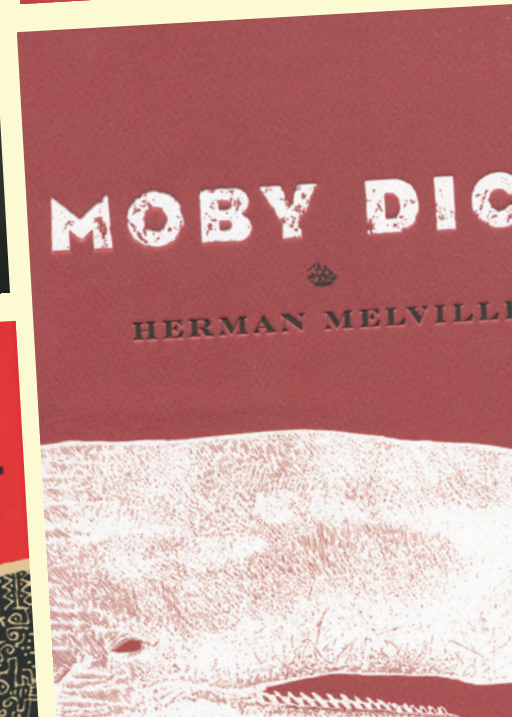
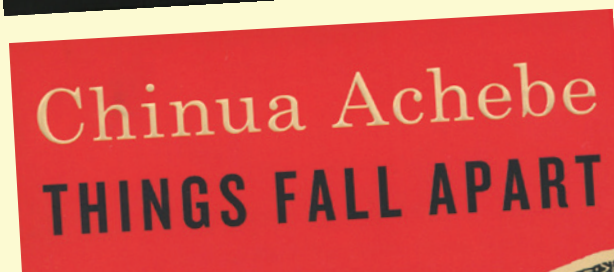
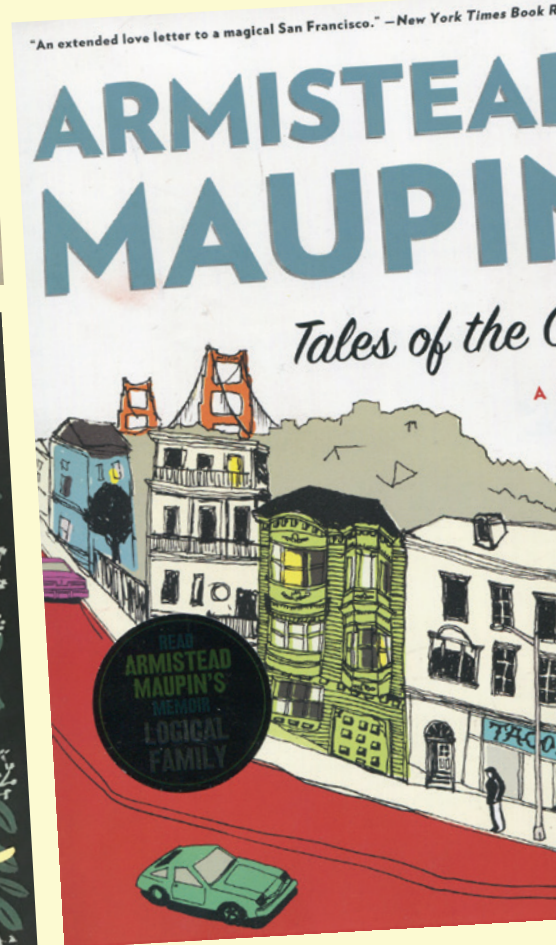
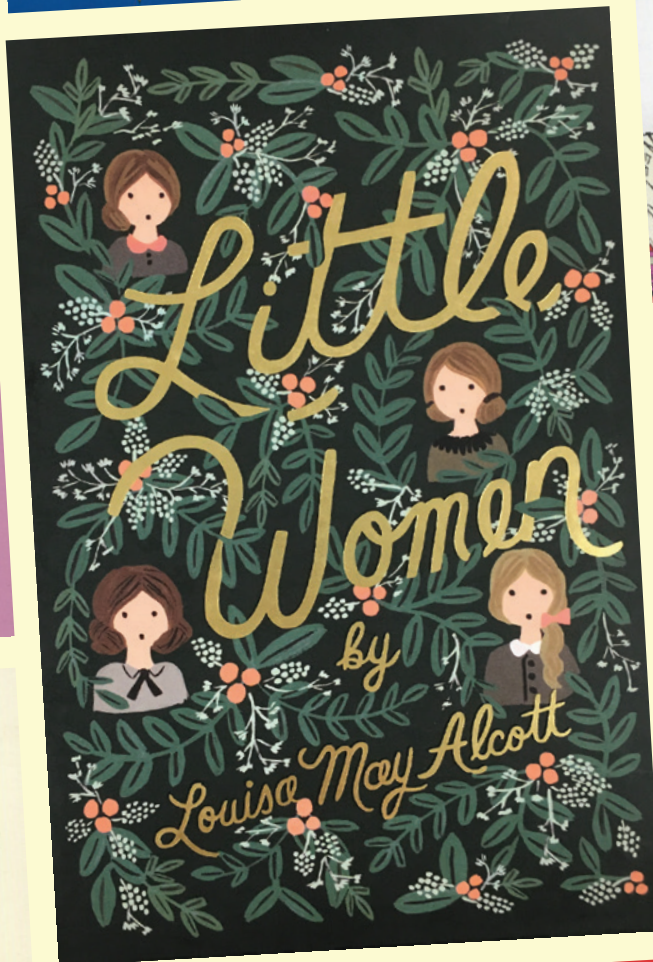
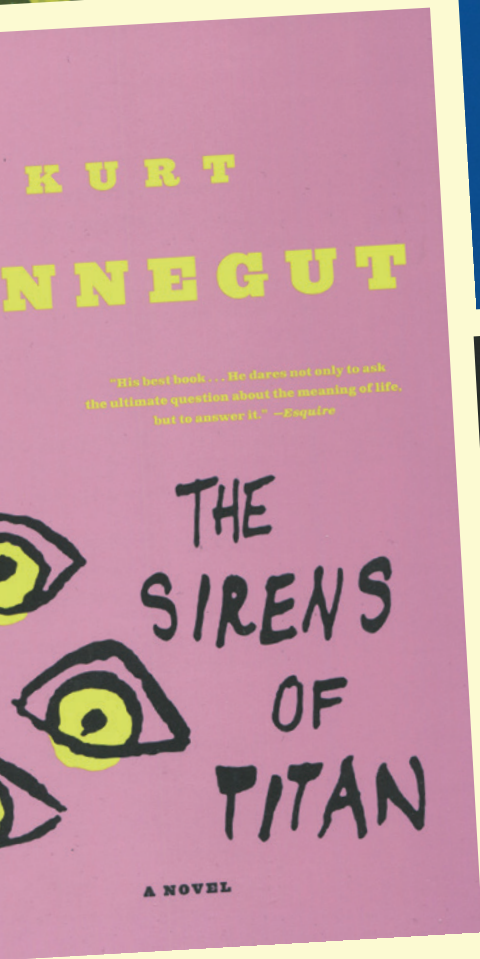
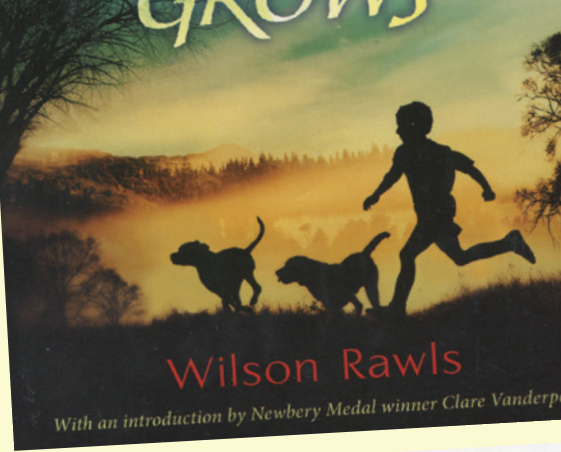
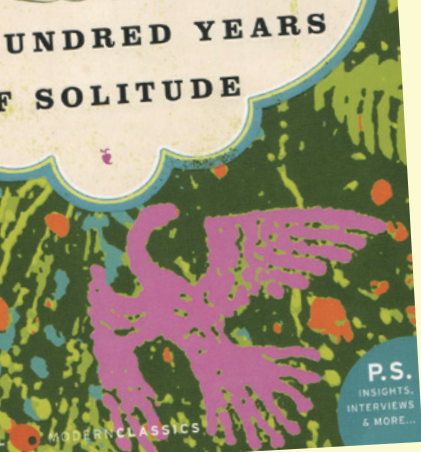
# ABOUT *the* SERIES



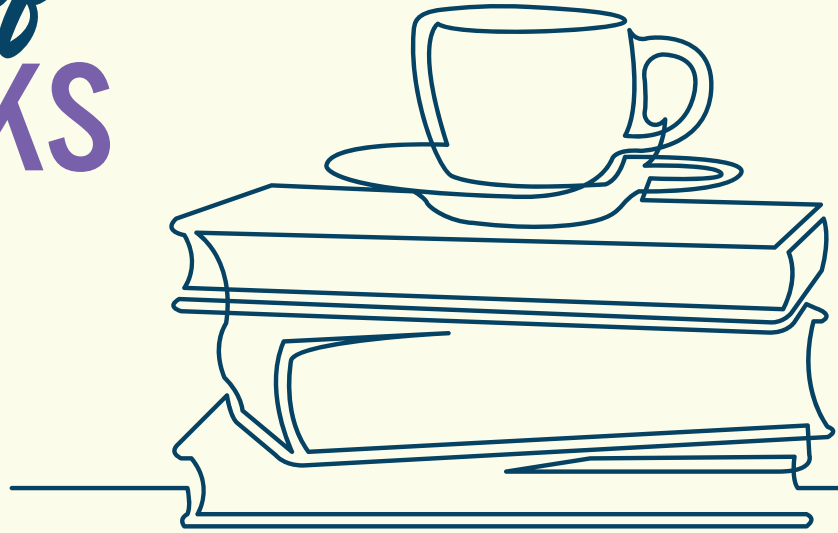
**THE GREAT AMERICAN READ** is an eight-part series that explores and celebrates the power of reading, told through the prism of America's 100 best-loved novels (as chosen in a national survey). It investigates how and why writers create their fictional worlds, how we as readers are affected by these stories, and what these 100 different books have to say about our diverse nation and our shared human experience.

The television series features entertaining and informative documentary segments, with compelling testimonials from celebrities, authors, notable Americans, and book lovers across the country. It comprises a two-hour launch episode in which the list of 100 books is revealed, five one-hour theme episodes that examine concepts common to groups of books on the list, and a finale, in which the results are announced of a nationwide vote to choose America's best-loved novel.

The series is the centerpiece of an ambitious multiplatform digital, social, educational, and community outreach campaign, designed to get the country reading and passionately talking about books.



# The LIST of 100 BOOKS



Below is the list of America's 100 most-loved books brought to you by **THE GREAT AMERICAN READ**.

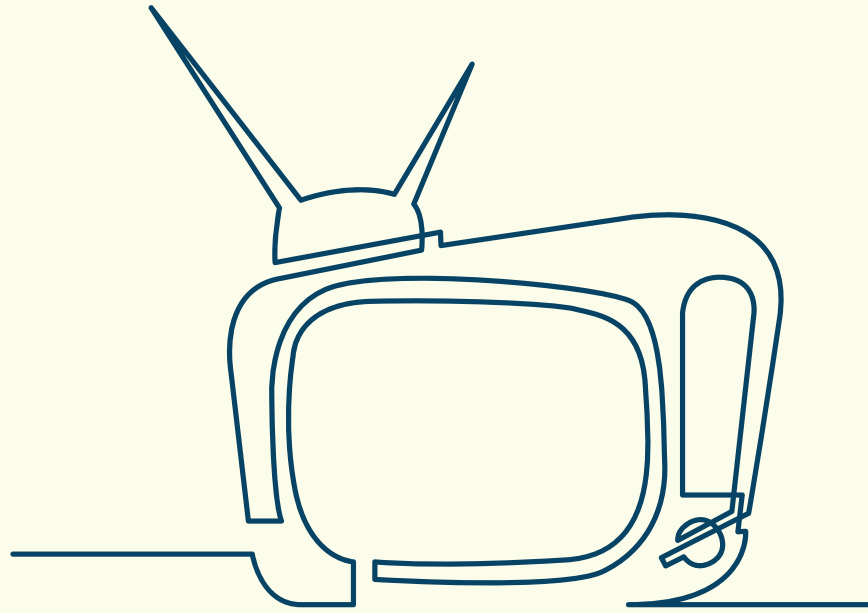
PBS and the producers of the series worked with YouGov—a nationally recognized, third-party public opinion polling service—to conduct a demographically and statistically representative survey that asked Americans to name their “most-loved novel.” It was an open-ended survey and respondents could name any novel that they wished. Approximately 7,200 people participated.

The results were tallied and organized based on selection criteria (to limit an author to one title on the list, for example) with oversight by an advisory panel of 13 literary industry professionals. PBS and its producers had no oversight into the selection of the list. All 100 novels were chosen by the public.

- *1984* by George Orwell
- *A Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole
- *A Game of Thrones* (Series) by George R. R. Martin
- *A Prayer for Owen Meany* by John Irving
- *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles
- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith
- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain
- *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho
- *Alex Cross Mysteries* (Series) by James Patterson
- *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll
- *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie
- *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery
- *Another Country* by James Baldwin
- *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand
- *Beloved* by Toni Morrison
- *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya
- *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak
- *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Díaz
- *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London
- *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller

- *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger
- *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White
- *The Chronicles of Narnia* (Series) by C.S. Lewis
- *The Clan of the Cave Bear* by Jean M. Auel
- *The Coldest Winter Ever* by Sister Souljah
- *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker
- *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas
- *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon
- *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown
- *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes
- *Doña Bárbara* by Rómulo Gallegos
- *Dune* by Frank Herbert
- *Fifty Shades of Grey* (Series) by E.L. James
- *Flowers in the Attic* by V.C. Andrews
- *Foundation* (Series) by Isaac Asimov
- *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
- *Ghost* by Jason Reynolds
- *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
- *The Godfather* by Mario Puzo
- *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn
- *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell
- *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck
- *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens
- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift
- *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
- *Harry Potter* (Series) by J.K. Rowling
- *Hatchet* (Series) by Gary Paulsen
- *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad
- *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett
- *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams
- *The Hunger Games* (Series) by Suzanne Collins
- *The Hunt for Red October* by Tom Clancy
- *The Intuitionist* by Colson Whitehead
- *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë
- *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan
- *Jurassic Park* by Michael Crichton
- *Left Behind* (Series) by Tim LaHaye/Jerry B. Jenkins
- *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
- *Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry
- *Looking for Alaska* by John Green
- *The Lord of the Rings* (Series) by J.R.R. Tolkien
- *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold
- *The Martian* by Andy Weir
- *Memoirs of a Geisha* by Arthur Golden
- *Mind Invaders* by Dave Hunt
- *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville
- *The Notebook* by Nicholas Sparks
- *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez
- *Outlander* (Series) by Diana Gabaldon
- *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton
- *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde
- *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan
- *The Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follett
- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
- *Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline
- *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier
- *The Shack* by William P. Young
- *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse
- *The Sirens of Titan* by Kurt Vonnegut
- *The Stand* by Stephen King
- *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway
- *Swan Song* by Robert R. McCammon
- *Tales of the City* (Series) by Armistead Maupin
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston
- *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe
- *This Present Darkness* by Frank E. Peretti
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
- *The Twilight Saga* (Series) by Stephenie Meyer
- *War and Peace* by Leo Tolstoy
- *Watchers* by Dean Koontz
- *The Wheel of Time* (Series) by Robert Jordan/Brandon Sanderson
- *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls
- *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith
- *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë

# The EPISODES



## EPISODE 1: Launch

Air Date: May 22, 2018

This two-hour special features all 100 books in some capacity.

## EPISODE 2: Fall Kick Off

Air Date: September 11, 2018

The search for America's best-loved novel hits high gear as votes roll in and the final countdown begins.

## EPISODE 3: Who Am I?

Air Date: September 18, 2018

How do America's favorite novels about personal journeys help us understand our own identities? Featured titles include:

- *A Prayer for Owen Meany*
- *A Separate Peace*
- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*
- *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*
- *The Book Thief*
- *The Catcher in the Rye*
- *Ghost*
- *Jane Eyre*
- *The Outsiders*
- *Siddhartha*
- *Tales of the City*
- *To Kill a Mockingbird*

## EPISODE 4: Heroes

**Air Date: September 25, 2018**

We highlight books on America's list that feature heroic characters and explore why we love them.

- 1984
- *A Confederacy of Dunces*
- *Alex Cross Mysteries*
- *Catch 22*
- *Charlotte's Web*
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*
- *Don Quixote*
- *The Giver*
- *The Help*
- *The Hunger Games*
- *The Hunt for Red October*
- *Invisible Man*

## EPISODE 5: Villains & Monsters

**Air Date: October 2, 2018**

We explore the lessons from novels featuring America's favorite villains, monsters, and evil forces.

- *A Game of Thrones*
- *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*
- *And Then There Were None*
- *Beloved*
- *Frankenstein*
- *Gone Girl*
- *The Handmaid's Tale*
- *Harry Potter*
- *Moby-Dick*
- *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
- *Rebecca*
- *The Stand*
- *Watchers*

## EPISODE 6: What We Do for Love

**Air Date: October 9, 2018**

We explore books on America's list of 100 that show what we do for love, in all its many forms.

- *Americanah*
- *Anne of Green Gables*

- *The Call of the Wild*
- *Gilead*
- *The Godfather*
- *Gone with the Wind*
- *The Great Gatsby*
- *The Joy Luck Club*
- *Little Women*
- *Looking for Alaska*
- *The Notebook*
- *Pride and Prejudice*

## EPISODE 7: Other Worlds

**Air Date: October 16, 2018**

We explore how America's favorite novels about other worlds reflect our own world.

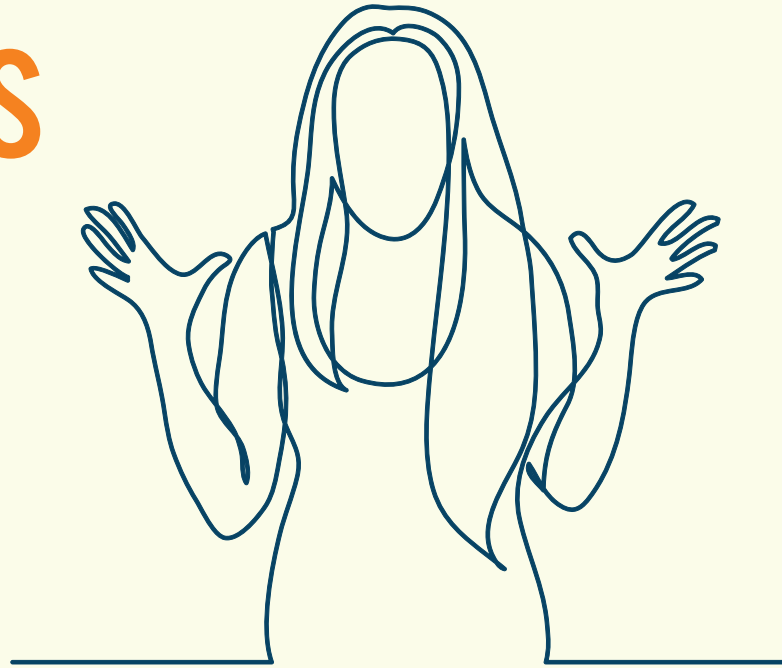
- *Atlas Shrugged*
- *The Chronicles of Narnia*
- *Dune*
- *Foundation*
- *Gulliver's Travels*
- *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*
- *Lonesome Dove*
- *The Lord of the Rings*
- *The Martian*
- *One Hundred Years of Solitude*
- *Outlander*
- *Ready Player One*
- *The Shack*

## EPISODE 8: Grand Finale

**Air Date: October 23, 2018**

In a one-hour countdown special of the top 25 books, PBS will reveal America's Best-Loved Novel. The special, hosted by Meredith Vieira, will include taped packages about the top 25 books with live elements filmed in front of an invited audience of book-lovers, literary experts and notables, celebrities, and authors.

# LEADING DISCUSSIONS *about the* SERIES



THE GREAT AMERICAN READ series provides an opportunity for libraries to lead discussions about the books that have impacted American lives. The episodes themselves provide a good start to that conversation.

Libraries are encouraged to screen the episodes, which will be simulcast on the web and available on the PBS website ([pbs.org/greatamericanread](https://pbs.org/greatamericanread)). Following the screening, lead a discussion using the questions below or others of your choosing.

If you are unable to accommodate screenings in your space, you can still host discussions. Just remind your patrons to view the episode(s) ahead of time.

## EPISODE 1: Launch

THE GREAT AMERICAN READ launches with an introduction to the list of America's 100 most-loved books and how they have impacted American lives. Engage your community by talking about their initial reactions to the list and asking about their own passion for reading and how books have impacted their own lives.

- What are the titles that you are most excited about on this list of favorite books? Which ones are you surprised to see on the list?
- The list has generated a lot of opinions. What do you think qualifies a book to be considered a "great American read"?
- How does this list compare to the literary canon usually taught in schools?

## EPISODE 2: Fall Kick Off

The impact of a book is immeasurable. In this re-launch of the series—scheduled after a summer of reading and voting—book lovers across America will share their deep connections to the titles that make up the list of 100. Now that the list has been released for a while, this is a great opportunity to expand upon the discussion and go a little deeper into your community's reactions.

- Now that you have had all summer to read these books, has your opinion changed on any of the books or of the list?
- What do you think about the representation of genres and writers from marginalized populations? Is this a representative list? How about compared to other favorite or “best of” lists?
- How much of this list is influenced by what is popular versus what is a classic? At what point does a novel become a classic?

## EPISODE 3: Who Am I?

Fiction provides examples and context to help readers on their paths of self-reflection. In Episode 3, we explore how our favorite books about self-discovery help us navigate our life's journey.

- What book has had the biggest impact on your life? How did it impact you?
- How would you define a self-discovery or coming-of-age novel?
- Why is it important to be able to see yourself in the books you are reading? Why is it important to read about characters unlike yourself?

## EPISODE 4: Heroes

Episode 4 brings us face-to-face with the heroes we celebrate in literature by exploring why we are drawn to books with heroic characters and how they bring us comfort, hope, and/or inspiration.

- How do we define a hero today? Has that changed over time?
- This episode explores why we are drawn to books with heroic characters. Which reason do you relate to the most?
- Has a character or book ever inspired you like some of the stories shared in the episode?

## EPISODE 5: Villains & Monsters

From the characters that haunt our sleep to those that torture our psyches, the villains that litter the novels we love are quite memorable. In Episode 5, we explore what our favorite

## BRING YOUR BOOK DISCUSSION ONLINE!

Set up a Goodreads or Facebook group to virtually engage your community. This will help your reach by involving individuals who are more introverted or who have difficult schedules. Here are a few tips to get started:

- Start an introduction thread with an icebreaker such as “what is your favorite book off the list of 100?”
- Have guidelines for appropriate behavior.
- Vary your question types. Help the conversation flow by posting lighter questions.
- Spread out your questions so you are not flooding your patrons’ feeds.
- Have a light touch. Be present, yet don’t dominate the discussion.
- Get staff on board to help kick off the discussion.
- When commenting from your library’s account, sign your name to personalize the discussion. This is especially important if you will have more than one person manning the discussion.
- Advertise your discussion group online through your website and social media platforms as well as in person, through flyers, and by word of mouth.

books about villains, monsters, and evil forces tell us about ourselves and our darkest desires.

- Who are your favorite villainous characters or monsters? Why are they so successful in their villainy?
- Did any of the books mentioned in this episode surprise you by being put in this category?
- If you had to choose, which are you more drawn to in your favorite stories: individual evil or societal evil?

## EPISODE 6: What We Do for Love

Books can help us navigate the relationships we have in our own lives. In Episode 6, we explore how love—in many shapes and sizes—is reflected in novels.

- What are your favorite types of love to read about? Romantic? Friendship? Familial? Destructive?
- Who is your favorite literary couple? Least favorite?
- Although love stories are popular, they don’t receive as much critical acclaim. Why do you think that is?

## EPISODE 7: Other Worlds

Books transport their readers to new worlds, from space to Middle Earth to a futuristic America and beyond. In Episode 7, we explore why readers are so drawn to these novels about other worlds and how they help us gain insight into our own world.

- What is it about a setting that makes it believable to you?
- What draws you toward or away from reading a novel set in another world or time?
- Many of the books mentioned in this episode have been adapted into film. Did you prefer the book or the movie? Why?

## EPISODE 8: Grand Finale

THE GREAT AMERICAN READ will wrap up with a finale countdown of the top 25 books in a live episode. Did your community agree with the top favorite book chosen by America? Where did your personal favorites fall on the list? You can discuss this more in a final wrap-up discussion.

- Which of the 100 books do you think will stand the test of time?
- What has been your favorite part of the series? Did you learn anything?
- What makes a book your favorite?

# LECTURES



Hosting a lecture with a visiting scholar can add depth to your programming lineup while connecting with lifelong learners in your community.

Reach out to local colleges or universities to see if there is a literature professor willing to visit and discuss one of the books on the list. Similarly, your local high school may have an AP English teacher who lectures. Other good places to try are your parks and recreation department, senior center, or continuing education department.

If you can't find a speaker, there are many lectures from prestigious universities available online as well as some great TED Talks. Try screening one of these lectures and have a library staff member lead a discussion afterward.

Below is a list of suggested lecture topics for each episode. For additional lecture topic ideas, see [Alternate Themes](#) on page 41.

## EPISODE 1: Launch or EPISODE 2: Fall Kick Off

- Authors Over Time: How A Given Author's Style or Themes Have Changed
- Guided Conversations About Great Literature
- What Makes a Book a Classic?

## EPISODE 3: Who Am I?

- Coming of Age in a Dystopia
- Holden Caulfield: An Unlikely Rebel
- How History Differs from Hollywood in *Memoirs of a Geisha*



### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

Ask your patrons: Is your favorite book on the list? Which ones are you voting for?

## EPISODE 4: Heroes

- Anti-Heroes in Modern Literature: Challenging the Status Quo
- Overcoming Adversity in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*
- Race Relations in *To Kill a Mockingbird*

## EPISODE 5: Villains & Monsters

- Villains in American Literature
- The Myth of Prometheus in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*
- Toni Morrison's Nobel Prize Lecture  
(a recording is available online at [nobelprize.org](http://nobelprize.org))



### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

Ask your patrons:  
Who is the greatest villain  
in literature?

## EPISODE 6: What We Do for Love

- *The Great Gatsby* and Fitzgerald's Green Light on the Pier
- Toxic Relationships in Literature
- Stephenie Meyer and the 21st-Century Vampire Romance

## EPISODE 7: Other Worlds

- Ayn Rand and Objectivist Thought in *Atlas Shrugged*
- Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*: Madness and Nonsense
- Themes in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*

## TED TALKS FROM AUTHORS WITH BOOKS ON THE LIST

- Amy Tan, author of *The Joy Luck Club*
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, author of *Americanah*
- Douglas Adams, author of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*
- J.K. Rowling, author of *Harry Potter*
- John Green, author of *Looking for Alaska*

## TIPS FOR A ROBUST Q&A SESSION

- Have one question prepared to get the ball rolling in case the audience is shy about asking the first question.
- Leave time for Q&A. A good question & answer session is usually between 15 and 25 minutes long.
- Use a wireless microphone to amplify the voice of the person asking the question or ask the speaker to repeat each question to the audience before answering.
- Let the audience know when there is time for only one or two more questions.
- An alternative to a live Q&A session is to hand out index cards in the beginning of the session and collect them at the end to hand to the speaker. This is a good way to make sure everyone gets to ask a question.

# USING FILM PROGRAMS *to* EXPLORE BOOKS



Each year, dozens of books are adapted for the big screen. According to *The Numbers*, a website that analyzes movies trends and data, movies based on fiction account for 20 percent of all films made since 1995 (<https://www.the-numbers.com/market/sources>). Film adaptations of books often bring new readership to a novel and can be a great way to offer supplementary programming during THE GREAT AMERICAN READ.

Below are several film-related program ideas.

## PRIDE AND PREJUDICE ON THE SCREEN

Of all the books on the list of 100, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* may have the most film adaptations—more than 17 English language adaptations alone. (*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Frankenstein* are others with many screen adaptations.) Some of the adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* stay faithful to the book; others are modern twists or parodies.

Choose two adaptations to screen: one should be a faithful adaptation and the other a modern twist ([see chart on page 16 for some choices](#)). Screen the films on different nights, and at the end of the second screening discuss how faithful they were to the original story.

To help market this program, create a display of *Pride and Prejudice* screen adaptations. If your library does not have enough versions to make a physical display, consider creating a bulletin board by searching online for the various movie posters.

Alternatively, screen the BBC mini-series starring Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth [1995, 327 min] in three parts (two episodes per screening). Hold the program at 3 p.m. and serve tea

and cookies to make a “high tea” screening. Discuss the differences between the mini-series and the novel.

## PRIDE AND PREJUDICE FILM ADAPTATIONS

### FAITHFUL ADAPTATIONS

- *Pride and Prejudice* (1938, starring Curigwen Lewis and Andrew Osborn)
- *Pride and Prejudice* (1940, starring Greer Garson and Laurence Olivier)
- *Pride and Prejudice* (2005, starring Keira Knightley and Matthew Macfayden)

### MODERN TWISTS

- *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001)
- *Bride and Prejudice* (2004)
- *Unleashing Mr. Darcy* (2016)
- *Pride and Prejudice: A Latter-Day Comedy* (2003)
- *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2016)

## BOOKS TO FILM

Many book lovers fervently argue that the book is always better than the film. Is this always the case? More than 60 percent of the books on the list of 100 have been adapted to the big screen. Screen four films from [the list on page 18](#) and have a discussion series based around the film adaptations of beloved books. Why are so many books made into movies? What makes a great adaptation? Is it true that the book is always better than the film?

Alternatively, choose one book. Start with a discussion of the book; then screen the film and lead a conversation comparing the two.

## MOVIES/BOOKS SET IN A DYSTOPIAN FUTURE

Many of the books (and their film adaptations) are set in a dystopian future, and a film series around this aspect would make for interesting conversation. Discuss why dystopian futures are such a popular setting for stories. Titles to consider include 1984, *The Giver*, *The Hunger Games* and *Ready Player One*.

You could also look at the Hulu series based on *The Handmaid's Tale* or the *Atlas Shrugged* trilogy released in 2011, 2012 and 2014.

## FRANKENFEST FILM FESTIVAL

2018 marks 200 years since Mary Shelley first published *Frankenstein*. The classic has been adapted to film dozens of times, both faithfully and in spin-offs and parodies. The 1931 version by Boris Karloff is the one most commonly associated with the book. It, along with 27 other titles, are available to screen if your library has an agreement with Swank. Consider

holding a FrankenFest Film Festival on Halloween by screening several *Frankenstein* titles back to back from open to close. Alternatively, you could screen three different versions over the course of several days and compare how the 1931 version compares with the remakes. (For more *Frankenstein* programming ideas, visit [programminglibrarian.org/frankenstein](http://programminglibrarian.org/frankenstein).)

## FAMILY MOVIES

Many of the GREAT AMERICAN READ titles adapted to screen were published for children and are appropriate for families to watch together. Schedule some daytime or early evening films and encourage families to come watch together. Add a bit of popcorn for extra fun.

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *The Call of the Wild* (2009 version), *Charlotte's Web*, *The Little Prince*. (For more multigenerational programming ideas, see [Programming for All Ages on page 31](#).)

## THE CLASSICS

Though there could be some debate about what makes a classic, certain films on this list stand out as standing the test of time. A thematic film series of classics would appeal to an older crowd; consider offering it in a late morning time slot as a series called Classics and Coffee. (Serve some cookies, too.)

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ *Crime and Punishment*, *Don Quixote*, *Great Expectations*, *Jane Eyre*, *Moby-Dick*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *War and Peace*, *Wuthering Heights*.

## DOCUMENTARIES ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Many of the authors on the list have had documentaries made about their lives. Enhance the series by combining the screenings with moderated discussions about the author and their works. Below is a partial list of documentaries to consider.

- *Ayn Rand: A Sense of Life* [1997, 145 min]: This Academy Award®-nominated documentary was the first authorized film to look at the life and work of the controversial Russian-born author.
- *Ernest Hemingway: Wrestling with Life* [1998, 44 min]: Narrated by granddaughter Mariel Hemingway, this Biography episode covers Hemingway's life from his Midwestern childhood to his tragic suicide.
- *Louisa May Alcott: The Woman Behind Little Women* [2008, 83 min]: The recipient of numerous awards, this *American Masters* biography by PBS reveals the story of a woman who was ahead of her time.
- *The Trouble with Tolstoy* [2011]: This two-part BBC Imagine documentary makes you feel like you are taking an epic train ride through Tolstoy's Russia as you examine how Russia's greatest novelist became her greatest troublemaker.

## GREAT AMERICAN READ BOOKS THAT HAVE BEEN ADAPTED INTO FILMS

TV series not included; some movies have multiple adaptations

- |   |  |                                       |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| ■ 1984                                    | ■ <i>Flowers in the Attic</i>                              | ■ <i>Little Women</i>                 |
| ■ <i>A Prayer for Owen Meany</i>          | ■ <i>Frankenstein</i>                                      | ■ <i>The Lovely Bones</i>             |
| ■ <i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i>         | ■ <i>The Giver</i>   | ■ <i>The Martian</i>                  |
| ■ <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i>     | ■ <i>The Godfather</i>                                     | ■ <i>Memoirs of a Geisha</i>          |
| ■ <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i> | ■ <i>Gone Girl</i>   | ■ <i>Moby-Dick</i>                    |
| ■ <i>And Then There Were None</i>         | ■ <i>Gone with the Wind</i>                                | ■ <i>The Notebook</i>                 |
| ■ <i>Anne of Green Gables</i>             | ■ <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>                               | ■ <i>The Outsiders</i>                |
| ■ <i>Atlas Shrugged</i>                   | ■ <i>Great Expectations</i>                                | ■ <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i>   |
| ■ <i>Beloved</i>                          | ■ <i>The Great Gatsby</i>                                  | ■ <i>The Pillars of the Earth</i>     |
| ■ <i>Bless Me, Ultima</i>                 | ■ <i>Gulliver's Travels</i>                                | ■ <i>Pride and Prejudice</i>          |
| ■ <i>The Book Thief</i>                   | ■ <i>Harry Potter</i>                                      | ■ <i>Ready Player One</i>             |
| ■ <i>The Call of the Wild</i>             | ■ <i>Heart of Darkness</i><br>(via <i>Apocalypse Now</i> ) | ■ <i>Rebecca</i>                      |
| ■ <i>Catch-22</i>                         | ■ <i>The Help</i>  | ■ <i>Siddhartha</i>                   |
| ■ <i>Charlotte's Web</i>                  | ■ <i>The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy</i>              | ■ <i>The Sun Also Rises</i>           |
| ■ <i>The Chronicles of Narnia</i>         | ■ <i>The Hunger Games</i>                                  | ■ <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> |
| ■ <i>The Clan of the Cave Bear</i>        | ■ <i>The Hunt for Red October</i>                          | ■ <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>        |
| ■ <i>The Color Purple</i>                 | ■ <i>Invisible Man</i>                                     | ■ <i>Twilight</i>                     |
| ■ <i>The Count of Monte Cristo</i>        | ■ <i>Jane Eyre</i>   | ■ <i>War and Peace</i>                |
| ■ <i>Crime and Punishment</i>             | ■ <i>The Joy Luck Club</i>                                 | ■ <i>Where the Red Fern Grows</i>     |
| ■ <i>The Da Vinci Code</i>                | ■ <i>Jurassic Park</i>                                     | ■ <i>Wuthering Heights</i>            |
| ■ <i>Don Quixote</i>                      | ■ <i>The Little Prince</i>                                 |                                       |
| ■ <i>Dune</i>                             |  |                                       |
| ■ <i>Fifty Shades of Grey</i>             |  |                                       |

- *Hey, Boo: Harper Lee & To Kill a Mockingbird* [2010, 72 min]: This *American Masters* documentary from PBS examines the life of Harper Lee and sheds light on the context and history of her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel.
- *F. Scott Fitzgerald* [2002, 90 minutes]: This *American Masters* documentary features interviews with the daughter of Fitzgerald's landlord in Baltimore and with neighbors of Zelda's family in Montgomery as well with authors like E.L. Doctorow and literary scholars like James L.W. West.

## A NOTE ABOUT FILM LICENSING

To legally screen films at a library, you'll need to acquire public performance rights. One option is paying an annual fee to companies such as Swank Motion Pictures Inc., Criterion Pictures and/or Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC) to obtain what is known as a

“blanket” or “umbrella” license. Libraries that have this type of service can screen movies covered in the databases of these companies.

The notable difference between the companies are (1) the film studios covered in their licenses and (2) the cost. Swank and Criterion cover more major studios, but they are more expensive. MPLC includes more independent filmmakers and is more affordable (but there will be many films you cannot show with MPLC). If your budget can handle it, subscribing to more than one is ideal. If your library has multiple branches, you will need to buy a license for each location.

If you do not have annual license, it is usually possible to obtain a single event license. Single event licenses usually range from \$100 to \$750 per screening (and sometimes more).

[Swank Motion Pictures](#) and [Criterion Pictures](#) contain almost all recent, mainstream American films and older and classic Hollywood films, as well as some foreign films and independents, so it is best to check these distributors first. Swank also has coverage for television shows, so you can often get the rights for mini-series via this service. Both will issue single event licenses for almost any film they carry.

If neither Swank nor Criterion has the film, you can find the distributor by using the [Internet Movie Database](#) (IMDB, <http://www.imdb.com>). Look up the title of the film, then go to the film’s IMDB entry and click the link for “company credits.” Look down the list of credits until you see the distributor(s) listed. You will then need to see if this distributor is covered by MPLC or another source and contact them.

Another option for screening films is through Kanopy, a streaming subscription service that includes public performance rights for every film in its database. According to their FAQ, “Kanopy videos can be watched by any and all authorized viewers, whether in a group or individual viewing context. Viewing films in a group forum is permitted as long as the viewing is by authorized viewers and it is not for commercial benefit (i.e. no admission costs are charged and no profit is made from the screening).”

## FILM LICENSING RESOURCES

### ■ CRITERION PICTURES

<http://criterionpicusa.com/>

Licenses non-theatrical public performance of feature films from studios, including (but not limited to) Paramount Pictures, 20th Century Fox, Fox SearchLight, and DreamWorks Animation.

### ■ SWANK MOTION PICTURES

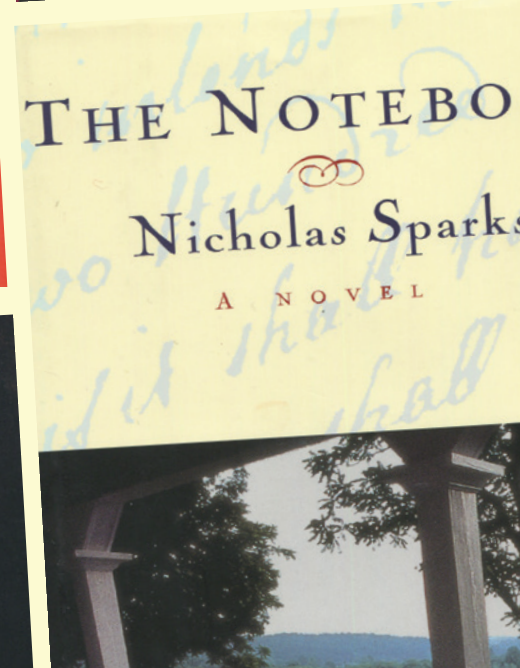
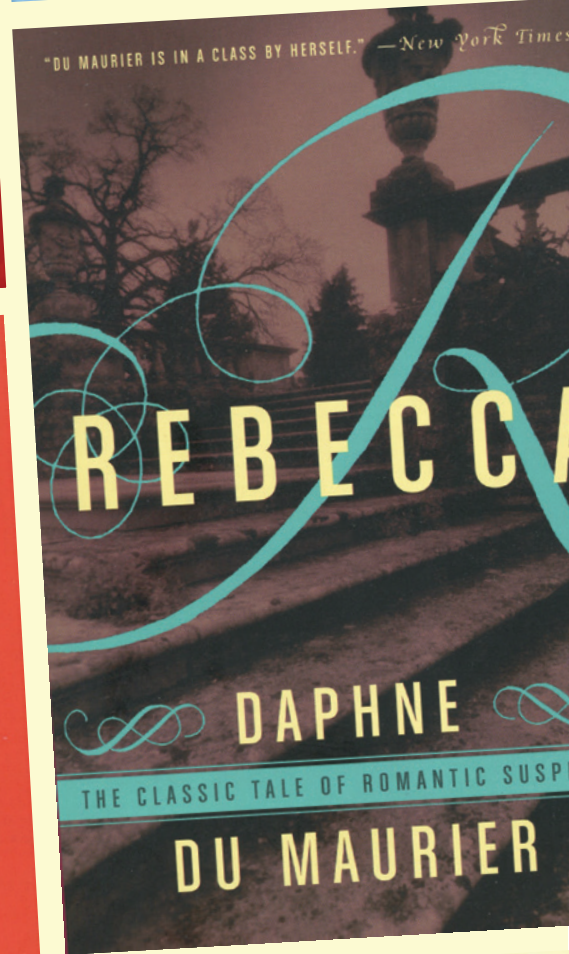
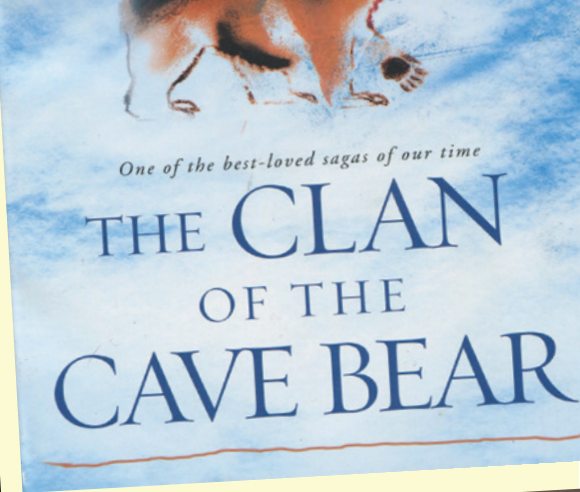
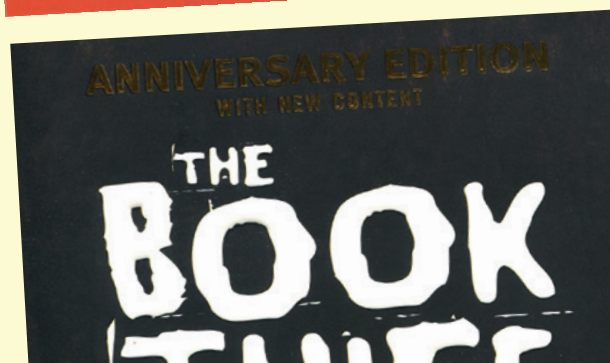
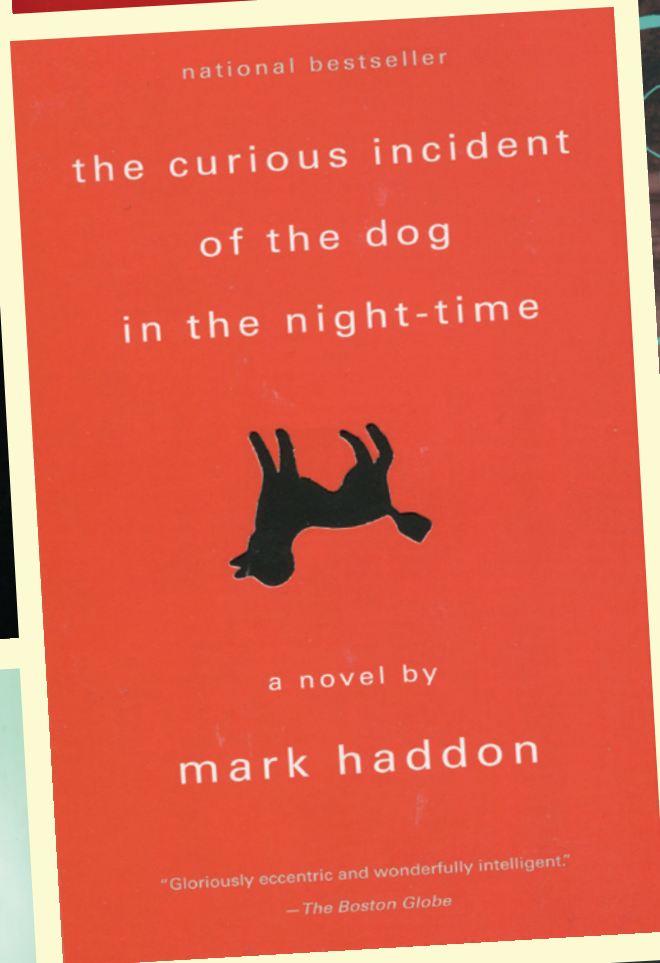
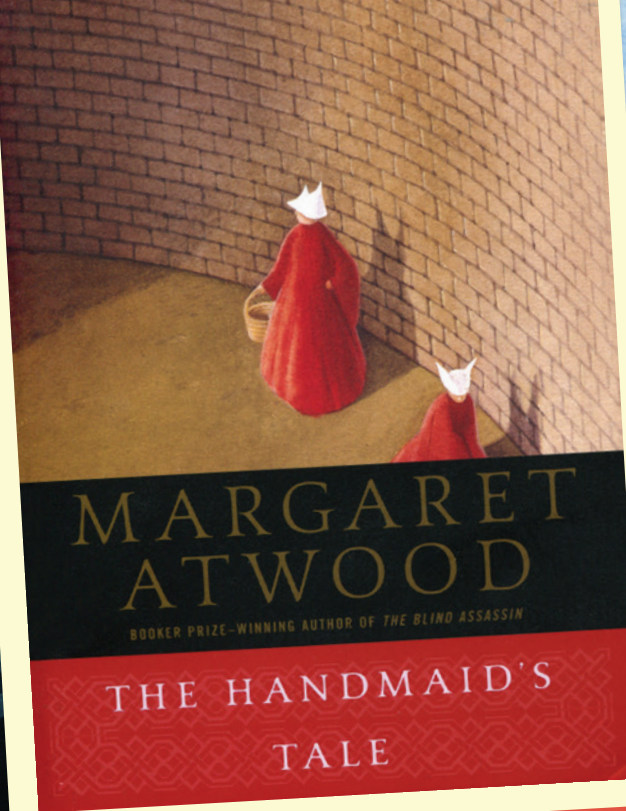
<http://swank.com/>

Licenses non-theatrical public performance of movies and TV shows from studios, including (but not limited to) Disney, Warner Brothers, MGM, Columbia Pictures, and NBC Universal.

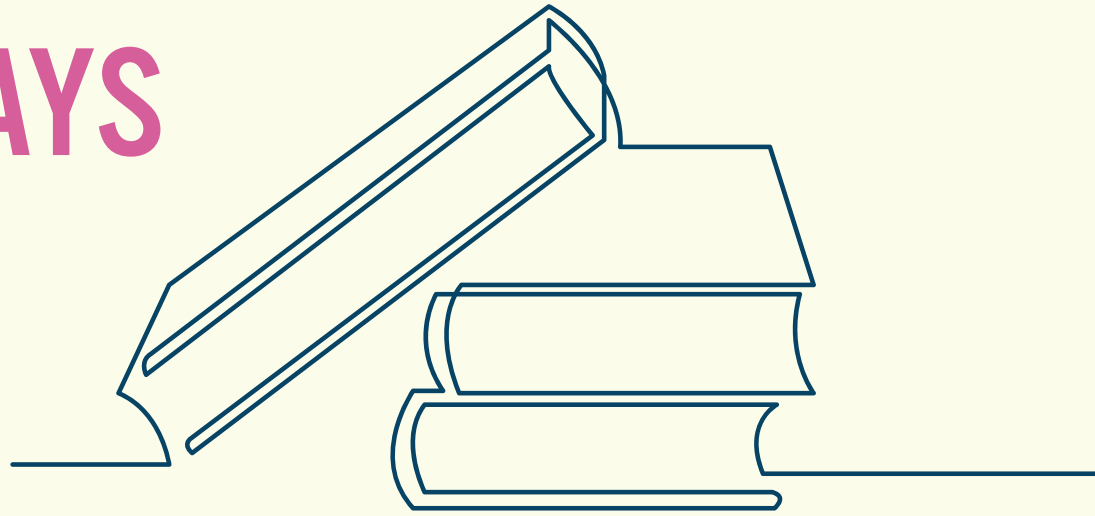
### ■ MOTION PICTURE LICENSING CORPORATION

<https://www.mplc.org/>

Offers a blanket license, called the “umbrella license,” that gives licensees public performance rights for its full catalog of audiovisual works. MPLC does not issue licenses for individual works.



# BOOK DISPLAYS



A national conversation on reading is the perfect time to create intriguing displays encouraging your patrons to read more. In addition to displaying books on **THE GREAT AMERICAN READ** list, create displays based on the central theme of each episode. (For additional theme ideas for your book displays, see [Alternate Themes on page 41.](#))

## EPISODE 3: Who Am I?

Readers enjoy using books as a mirror to their lives, awakening them to new possibilities and providing perspective. They also can teach us empathy and help shape our moral compass. Along with sharing readalikes to the books in this episode, you can explore themes of coming-of-age, finding a community, or emigration to create displays of self-discovery.

**SUBJECT HEADINGS TO SEARCH FOR YOUR DISPLAYS:** Bildungsroman (a novel dealing with a person’s formative years or spiritual education), coming of age, coming out, community life, emigration, identity, immigrants, multiculturalism, self-acceptance, self-realization

## EPISODE 4: Heroes

For a theme like “Heroes,” display books from the list alongside other titles in their series like James Patterson’s Alex Cross books or Tom Clancy’s Jack Ryan series. Highlight the “superpower” of each protagonist, like Katniss Everdeen’s archery skills in *The Hunger Games*, Liesel’s book saving in *The Book Thief*, and Christopher’s crime solving superpower in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. For additional hero-related ideas, see [Alternate Themes: “She-roles” on page 43.](#)

**SUBJECT HEADINGS TO SEARCH FOR YOUR DISPLAYS:** Antiheroes, courage, good and evil, heroines, heroes, mythology, women heroes, superheroes

## EPISODE 5: Villains & Monsters

Whether your patrons are looking for a villain they love to hate or crippling foreboding suspense, the ways villains, monsters, and forces of evil are represented in literature are varied. This is a great opportunity to play with representing a variety of genres and subgenres, such as domestic thrillers or books about societal evil.

**SUBJECT HEADINGS TO SEARCH FOR YOUR DISPLAYS:** Good and evil, good vs. evil, monsters, revenge, supervillains

## EPISODE 6: What We Do for Love

Because this episode is split into several types of love, focus your display on one of the types of love mentioned: family love, first love, romantic love, destructive love, or enduring love. With a theme like love, it should be easy to find books or readalikes from books on the list.

**SUBJECT HEADINGS TO SEARCH FOR YOUR DISPLAYS:** Brothers and sisters, dating, families, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, first love, friendship, sexual orientation, interpersonal relations, marriage, married people, arranged marriage, sisters, triangle (interpersonal relations), unrequited love

## EPISODE 7: Other Worlds

Stories can provide a window to a different place, different time, and different world. Whether readers are looking for escapism or to travel from the comfort of their armchair they can use a book to take them there. Your display could explore themes of fantasy worlds, time travel, or space exploration.

**SUBJECT HEADINGS TO SEARCH FOR YOUR DISPLAYS:** imaginary places, imaginary wars and battles, kings and rulers, life on other planets, time travel

## INTERACTIVE DISPLAYS

You can encourage discussion and engagement through your displays by encouraging patrons to add their own books with a little guidance to a mostly empty display. Some possible topics for such a display: books that fit with the episode themes each week, all-time favorite books, or least favorite books.

This is your time to shine a light on the richness of literature! When putting together your display lists, make sure to keep an eye on the diversity of the authors and characters represented. You can also get creative in how you interpret the themes. Using pre-made lists found on Goodreads or Bibliocommons is a great way to get suggested titles and inspiration.



She-ros display featuring *Beloved*, *The Intuitionist*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, and other titles.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNIFER MASSA

# COMMUNITY READS *and* OTHER READING PROGRAMS



Hosting a One Book, One Community event based on one of the **GREAT AMERICAN READ** books would be a tremendous way to engage your community and create a shared experience. To give your community more agency, you could select a few books off the list for patrons to vote on for their final choice.

However, a One Book program may not fit every library. Here are some other ways to facilitate connections over literature and help strengthen your community's bonds with one another and create new ones.

## TOP 100 BOOK SHARE DISCUSSION

Encourage attendees to read at least one book out of the 100 on the **GREAT AMERICAN READ** list. Host discussions about attendees' experiences reading the books. Using all 100 titles for your community reads will help ease collection pressure and broaden the scope of interest since participants get to choose their own books.

## CREATE THEMED READING MONTHS

Choose one of the themes teased out in **THE GREAT AMERICAN READ**, such as heroism or self-discovery, or select a monthly observance and program around that theme for the month. (For a list of monthly observances and suggested book title pairings, see [Programming and Your Event Calendar on page 51](#).) Include a discussion in which everyone shares about a book they read

that exemplifies this theme. If you would like to provide more structure, you can create a list for attendees to choose to read from.

## COMMUNITY TOURNAMENT OF BOOKS

What are the top 100 books of your own town? Have patrons nominate and vote for their favorite reads. You can take this a step further by mimicking sports tournaments with a March Madness-style bracket so you have a final winning title for your community.

## SPEED-READ BOOK SWAP

Following the structure of speed dating, host a speed-read event. Participants come prepared with their favorite book from the list of 100 and talk about it one-on-one for one or two minutes. Once everyone has spoken with one another, host a mixer so attendees can talk further or swap books.

## HOST A READATHON IN THE LIBRARY

Choose a weekend, a time goal, and a spot in your library. Then let the reading begin. See if your community can make sure at least one person is reading at all times in that spot for the amount of time you are striving for! You can have individuals or groups sign up ahead of time to read. To heighten the stakes, you can make a donation to an organization in the area promoting literacy once your goal is reached.

## HOST A BOOK TASTING

Mimic a food tasting by setting up multiple tables in your program space to look like a cafe. Once attendees are seated, have library staff serve a selection of books at each table that attendees can flip through and sample for a short period of time. Once the allotted time is up, swap out those books for the new course of books. Make sure to provide paper for them to record the books they are interested in. The books patrons “taste” from can either be chosen from the list of 100 or readalikes. After, attendees can share with one another what made it on their menus. (For more information about book tastings, visit [programminglibrarian.org/booktastings](http://programminglibrarian.org/booktastings).)



### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

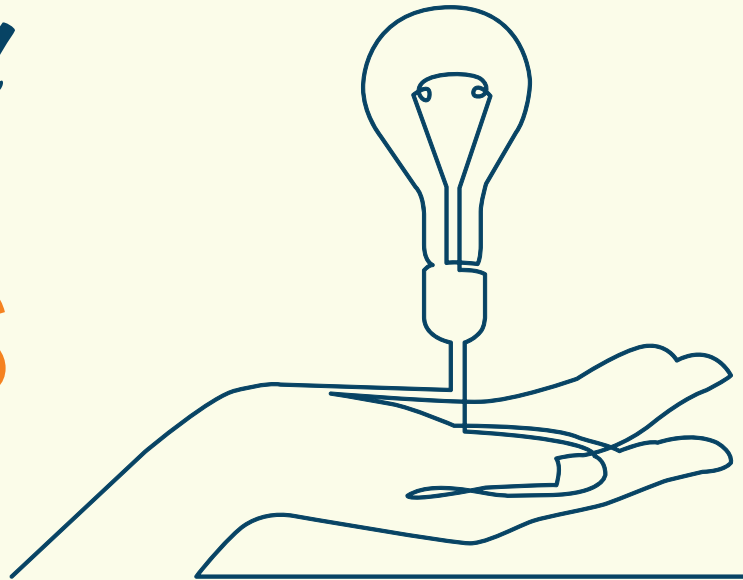
Have your community vote on social media through Facebook or Twitter polls.



A moodily lit book tasting room at the Columbus School for Girls.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE COLUMBUS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

# HANDS-ON MAKER *and* CRAFT PROGRAMS



Even if your library doesn't have a dedicated makerspace, you can still host inexpensive hands-on programs. Below are some ideas for general programs to get you started.

## EPISODE 1: Launch or EPISODE 2: Fall Kick Off

**Edible Book Festival:** There are two rules for an edible books program. Entries must be edible, and they must somehow relate to a book. Have contestants choose a book from **THE GREAT AMERICAN READ** and create an edible dish based on the cover or themes in the book. At the end, everyone can sample each other's work.

**Fan Fiction:** Invite participants to gather for a write-in where everyone chooses a book from the list and rewrites the first chapter from the perspective of a different character other than the protagonist.

**Blackout poetry:** Using discarded books, have participants cut out several pages that have interesting words or phrases. Using markers or crayons, they can black out or draw designs over the extra words so the interesting words are singled out and highlighted.



### **SOCIAL MEDIA TIP**

**Put Edible Book Festival photos on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and ask people to vote for their favorites.**

## EPISODE 3: Who Am I?

Wind chimes create a beautiful sound when the wind blows—the perfect background sound for self-reflection or discovery. Build a wind chime out of sea glass, seashells, recycled glass,

or other objects purchased in bulk from a craft store. First use wire to wrap the objects and connect them to each other. These will be your chimes. Using a piece of driftwood or attractive branch, attach the chimes with wire and then use string to hang the driftwood anchor.

## EPISODE 4: Heroes

Host a vision board night. Using discarded magazines, participants use scissors and glue to create a collage on poster board of their future dreams and desires. This can include heroes they look up to, material objects, words or phrases, and other visuals. At the end of the program give participants the option to explain their vision boards to the group.

## EPISODE 5: Villains & Monsters

Make your own mustache! Provide felt, cloth, fake fur, popsicle sticks, construction paper, ribbon, and adhesive. Invite participants to get creative and make all different types of villainous mustaches. Set up a poster-sized “WANTED” poster to use as a backdrop for photos.

## EPISODE 6: What We Do for Love

Embroidery string and a few pair of scissors are all you need for an afternoon of making friendship bracelets. There are plenty of tutorials online that the group can watch together, or you may be able to find a local expert to help with instructions. Friendship bracelets are not just for kids and are fun to make for friends, family, or anyone you care about.



### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

Maker programs like these provide great visual content for your library's social media platforms. Get followers involved by having them vote on different creations.

## EPISODE 7: Other Worlds

Host a DIY terrarium or fairy garden workshop. All you will need are glass containers like mason jars, potting soil, and accessories like moss, stones, glass, or tiny figurines. Patrons can bring in their own accessories to add to their terrariums.

# HOSTING *a* BOOK TOUR



A novel's setting can offer a great jumping-off point for creative programming. Highlight the settings of America's best-loved books with a "tour" of a specific region. Plan a travelogue for each book on your reading tour: pick some lectures, do a food tasting, or bring in an actor portraying either the author or someone famous from that region. If you host multiple book tours, you could create a map or passport to be stamped as your patrons visit each region.

Here are some examples of book tours for the United States, other countries, and even other worlds. (For a full list of the settings and locations of the books on the list, see [Book Settings on page 55](#).)

## USA / NEW ENGLAND

**BOOK TITLE:** *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles

**LOCATION:** Private school in rural New Hampshire

**PROGRAM IDEAS:** Travelogue on New England; lecture on a New England writer (Stephen King, John Irving, Louisa May Alcott, Edith Wharton, Wally Lamb); food program or tasting of regional cuisine (clam chowder, lobster roll, Boston baked beans)

## USA / MID-ATLANTIC

**BOOK TITLE:** *The Coldest Winter Ever* by Sister Souljah

**LOCATION:** Brooklyn and Long Island, New York

**PROGRAM IDEAS:** Travelogue on New York (or any of the boroughs), Washington DC, etc.; historical program on Philadelphia, early politics, or the Jersey Shore; lecture on a Mid-Atlantic

writer (Joan Didion, Herman Melville, Patti Smith, Judy Blume, Mary Higgins Clark, Caroline Kennedy); food program or tasting of regional cuisine (New York-style pizza, pastrami, tomato pie, Philly cheese steaks, salt-water taffy)

## USA / SOUTHERN

**BOOK TITLE:** *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn

**LOCATION:** a small town in Missouri

**PROGRAM IDEAS:** Travelogue on St. Louis or other locations from the book; lecture on Southern Gothic literature, which focuses on damaged, even delusional characters; book vs. movie discussion; program on music of the South; food program or tasting of regional cuisine (barbecue, gooey butter cake, toasted ravioli)

## USA / MIDWEST

**BOOK TITLE:** *Charlotte's Web* by E. B. White

**LOCATION:** American farmland

**PROGRAM IDEAS:** Theatrical production of *Charlotte's Web*; book vs. movie discussion; program on organic gardening; lecture about the Homestead Act; program about 4H or state fairs

## UNITED KINGDOM

**BOOK TITLE:** *And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie

**LOCATION:** Indian Island, a fictional island off the coast of England's Devon County

**PROGRAM IDEAS:** Travelogue on England; lecture on Agatha Christie or mysteries; historical program on U.K. society or fashion in the 1930s and 1940s; DIY murder mystery game

## NIGERIA

**BOOK TITLE:** *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe

**LOCATION:** Nigeria

**PROGRAM IDEAS:** Travelogue of the Niger River; screenings or lecture about Nigerian cinema, often referred to as "Nollywood"; lecture about Nigerian authors, artists, or composers; nature program about butterflies, of which Nigeria has the largest diversity

## FRANCE

**BOOK TITLE:** *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas

**LOCATION:** Paris

**PROGRAM IDEAS:** Travelogue of Parisian landmarks; lecture about French royalty; food program or tasting of regional cuisine (croissants, escargot, soufflé); lecture about stories of love and betrayal

## FANTASY/PRE-HISTORIC

**BOOK TITLE:** *Jurassic Park* by Michael Crichton

**LOCATION:** Isla Nublar/dinosaur theme park

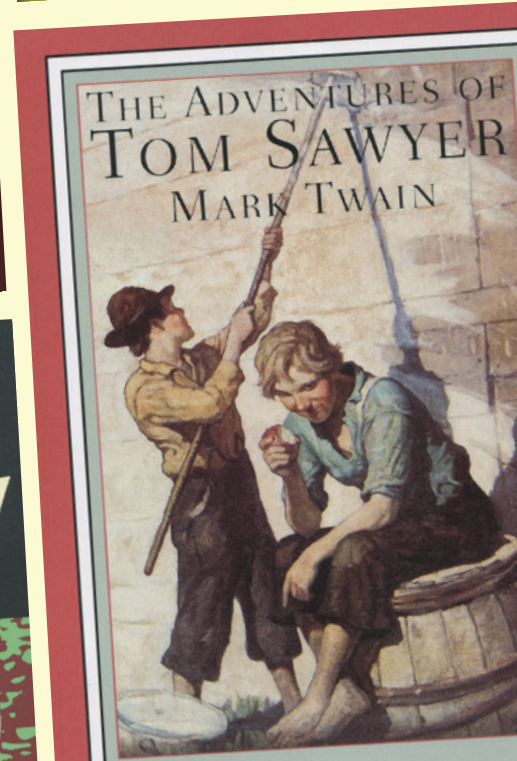
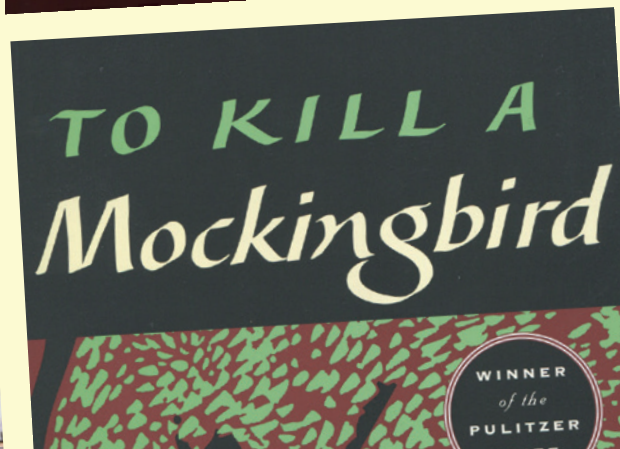
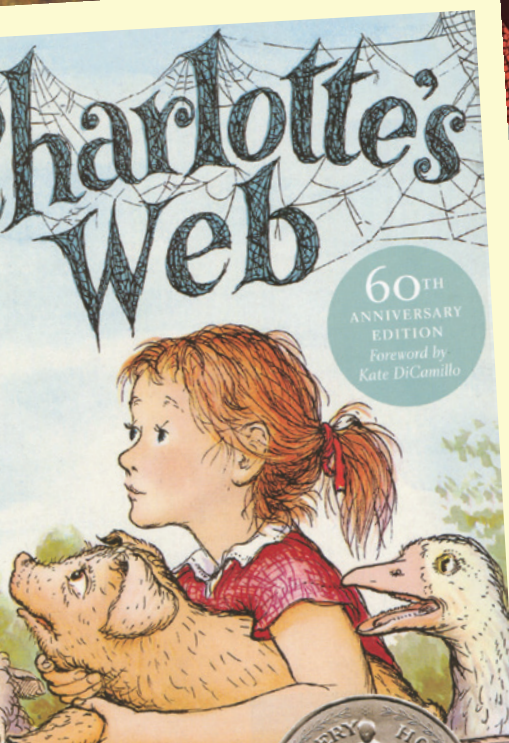
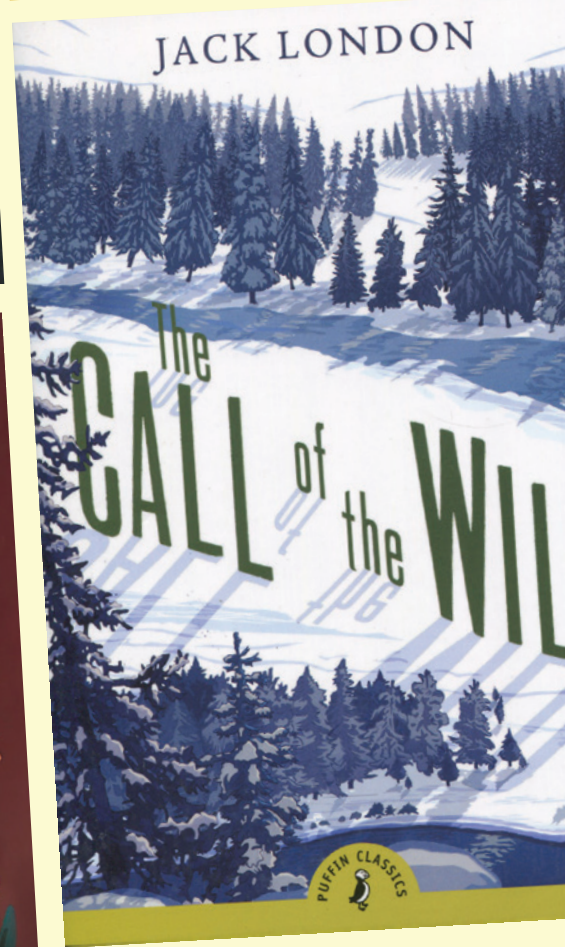
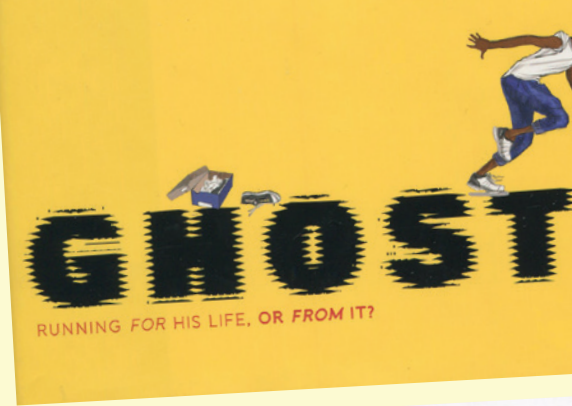
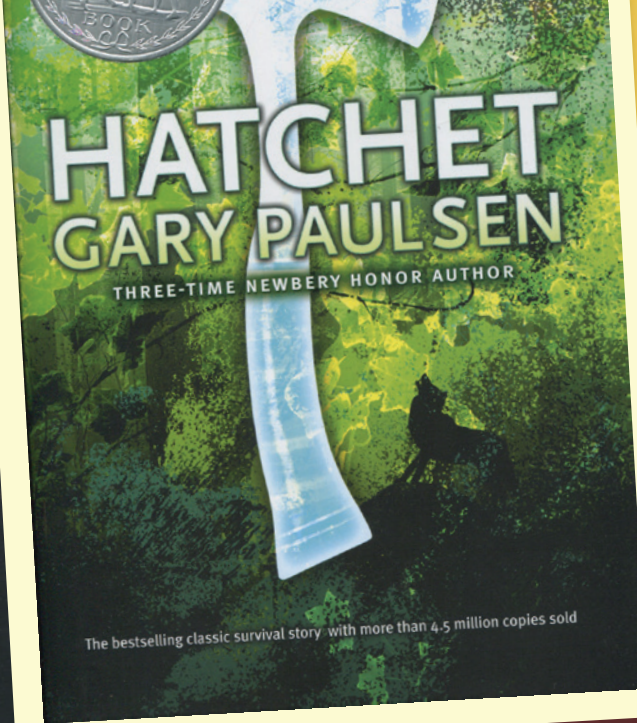
**PROGRAM IDEAS:** Book vs. movie discussion; lectures about DNA, dinosaurs, or the history of theme parks; program about dinosaurs in pop culture

## OUTER SPACE

**BOOK TITLE:** *The Martian* by Andy Weir

**LOCATION:** Mars

**PROGRAM IDEAS:** Lecture on space travel or colonization; book vs. movie discussion; book talk on space-themed novels (*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams, *The Forever War* by Joe Haldeman, *Solaris* by Stanisław Lem, *The Lost Fleet* by John G. Hemry under the pen name Jack Campbell, *Vacuum Diagrams* by Stephen Baxter, *The Gap Cycle* by Stephen R. Donaldson, *The Genesis Quest* and *Second Genesis* by Donald Moffitt, *Hyperion* by Dan Simmons)



# PROGRAMMING *for all* AGES



While most of the **GREAT AMERICAN READ** titles are best for adults, some of the books lend themselves toward multigenerational programming. Even if a child is not old enough to read on their own, being read to can bring great joy to the oldest and youngest members of a family—and hands-on craft programs are often appropriate for all ages. Multigenerational programs are often more convenient for families, as there is no need for adult patrons to find childcare.

Below is a list of suggested novels, discussion questions, and activities for multigenerational audiences.

## FOR AN ALL-AGES AUDIENCE (6–8+)

### **Tom Sawyer** by Mark Twain

*(Note that Tom Sawyer contains controversial language and racial prejudice. Use discretion when programming for children.)*

#### **Book Discussions (8+)**

- Pretend you're Tom. Why did he hide in the closet to eat the jam? Did you think he would get away with it? Have you ever done something like that?
- Tom realizes that all it takes to make someone want something is to make the thing hard to get. Have you ever wanted something that was hard to get?

- What was Tom's plan for running away? What were all the things he was going to need to bring with him? Have you ever thought about running away? Why?
- The villain of the novel is called Injun Joe. (The word "Injun" is considered offensive today.) Do you think the character's Native American heritage affects the story? How would it change if he were of another race? Why do you think the other characters use the word "Injun" as part of his name?

#### Program Ideas (6+)

- Make a white picket fence with craft sticks and paint
- Make a log raft out of sticks collected outside; does it float?
- Make a paper pirate hat
- Make a map of the island where Tom, Huck, and Joe stayed
- Draw a treasure map
- Make a homemade dough cave
- Screen a film adaptation of the book
- Have a tasting of foods inspired by the book: baked apples, peach cobbler, fish dinner, fried eggs, baked ham, corn pone, ice cream

## FOR AN ALL-AGES AUDIENCE (6–8+)

### *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

#### Book Discussions (8+)

- What role does imagination play in our everyday lives?
- Traditionally, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is considered a story for children. What do you think?
- Why is it important that Alice eats the mushroom during her adventures?
- How does Alice change and develop throughout the story?
- Which scene do you find the most ridiculous or funny?
- How is poetry used throughout the story? Is there a poem you like best?

#### Program Ideas (6+)

- Make playing card flowers
- Design your own teacup
- Make your own hat
- Make a paper pocket watch
- Make a Queen of Hearts garland or bookmarks
- Create a book of riddles
- Screen a film adaptation of the book
- Have a tasting of foods inspired by the book: bread and butter-flies, fruit cut into playing card suits, playing card cookies, tea, mushrooms, "eat me" cakes, "drink me" drinks



#### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

September 19 is Talk Like a Pirate Day. Invite followers to make a paper pirate hat and show you their best pirate "aaarrrr" face!



#### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is full of riddles. Ask your patrons: What is your favorite riddle? Can you stump the librarians?

## FOR A MIDDLE GRADE OR ABOVE AUDIENCE (10+)

### *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen

#### Book Discussions (10+)

- A key to Brian's survival was that he did something that wilderness survival experts recommend without even knowing he was doing it. He frequently S.T.O.P.-ed: Stop, Think, Observe, Plan. What is something you tried to rush through—and failed at—only to S.T.O.P.?
- Brian is lucky to have a hatchet with him in the wild. What tool, if you could only pick one, would be most beneficial if you were stranded?
- Brian changes throughout the book, both physically and mentally. Near the end of the novel is he thinking differently about life?

#### Program Ideas (8+)

- Build an airplane (paper or otherwise)
- Fishing (with magnets or Velcro)
- Create found poetry within the text (use a highlighter on copies of several pages)
- Pretend you are Brian, alone in the wilderness, and create a video journal entry
- Write a survival manual
- Create a Rube Goldberg machine/trap with items you might find in the wilderness (sticks, string, leaves, cloth, rocks)
- Screen a related film such as *Never Cry Wolf* (PG, 1983), *Life of Pi* (PG, 2012), or *The Snow Walker* (PG, 2003)
- Have a tasting of foods inspired by the book: fish, berries, roasted fowl, freeze dried and dehydrated “survival kit” foods



#### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

May 26 is National Paper Airplane Day. Invite followers to build one and show you on social media how well it flies.

## FOR A MIDDLE GRADE OR ABOVE AUDIENCE (10+)

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

#### Book Discussions (10+)

- Which parts of the book were the most interesting and held your attention? Why? Which parts seemed less interesting? Why?
- Why is the book titled *To Kill a Mockingbird*?
- Compare the town of Maycomb to the town you live in now—are they similar? Or very different? Are the people in your town similar or different than those found in Maycomb?
- How is the film different from the book?

## Program Ideas (10+)

- Write a newspaper article about the character and events in *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- Write a diary entry that Boo Radley might write, if he were to talk
- What types of clothing do you think the characters are wearing? Draw Scout or Jem wearing what you think they would in the story.
- Create a readers' theatre script of the trial. Assign the roles and read it out loud.
- Make a secret treasure box (like the secret treasures Scout finds in the tree)
- Screen the film adaptation of the book or another courtroom drama
- Have a tasting of foods inspired by the book: bourbon balls, crackling bread (cornbread with pork rinds), pumpkin and pecan pancakes, bananas, ham

## OTHER TITLES TO CONSIDER FOR MULTIGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS

## AGES 6–8+

- *The Call of the Wild*
- *Charlotte's Web*
- *Gulliver's Travels*
- *Harry Potter*
- *Little Women*

## AGES 10+

- *The Book Thief*
- *The Giver*
- *Ghost*
- *Hatchet*
- *The Hunger Games*
- *Looking for Alaska*
- *Ready Player One*
- *The Outsiders*
- *To Kill a Mockingbird*

# More MULTIGENERATIONAL PROGRAM IDEAS



## FAMILY TRIVIA NIGHT

Trivia is a fun way to bring together different generations. Host a trivia night that includes trivia from one or several of the family-friendly books on the list. The volume of trivia questions available online for *Harry Potter* would make this title a top choice for a family trivia night, plus you could encourage attendees to come in their Harry Potter robes and have other fun tie-ins like a sorting hat.

The format can vary (think: “Jeopardy”-style boards or paper-based answer sheets), but to keep it multigenerational each team should have at least one adult for every two or three youth under the age of 18. (For additional trivia night ideas, visit [programminglibrarian.org/trivia-night](http://programminglibrarian.org/trivia-night).)

## FILIBUSTER A BOOK

Select a beloved classic such as *Charlotte’s Web* or *Harry Potter* and hold a reading filibuster in the lobby of the library or another high-traffic area. A reading filibuster occurs when an entire novel is read by multiple people, one after the other, in a single day. Readers can be of any age and can be staff members, kids, parents, teachers, or local celebrities such as the mayor. Set the date for the filibuster (a Saturday usually works best) and create a sign-up system to assign time slots.



Filibustering a book at Princeton Public Library.

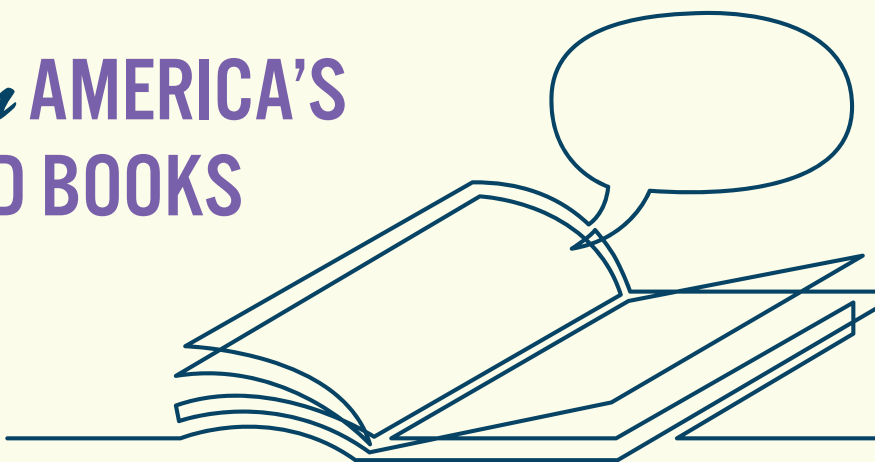
PHOTO COURTESY OF JANIE HERMANN

Princeton (New Jersey) Public Library has filibustered several books; *Harry Potter* was the longest, taking over nine hours to complete. A good way to gauge how long the filibuster will last is to see if the book has been recorded unabridged and then use that as a guide, adding time to allow for switching of readers.

On the day of the event, set the scene for the filibuster with a backdrop or some props and small stage if available. Set up a few chairs in front of the reading area so people can sit and listen for as long they like. A microphone and PA system are also useful. Encourage those signed up for a reading slot to come at least 15 minutes early and to plan to stay and encourage those who follow. It is a good idea to have at least two staff members on hand at all times who are ready to jump in and read in case a reader does not show up or is delayed. Being a bit flexible with time is important during a filibuster. (For more information about Princeton Public Library's Reading Filibuster, visit <https://princetonlibrary.org/event/christmas-carol-filibuster/>.)

# SPINOFFS *and* SATIRES

## FRESH TAKES *on* AMERICA'S 100 BEST-LOVED BOOKS



Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and many of our most popular books have been widely re-imagined, reworked and sequelized in a variety of formats and genres. Recently the web series phenomenon, in which young readers create shows based on classic novels, are giving new life and new interpretations to old favorites. Below is a partial list of new takes on the titles from **THE GREAT AMERICAN READ**.

### ***Alice's Adventures in Wonderland***

- *After Alice* by Gregory Maguire
- *Alice Anonymous and the Wunder Institute* (web series)
- *Alice I Have Been* by Melanie Benjamin
- *Dreamchild* (film)
- *The Looking Glass Wars* by Frank Beddor
- *Still She Haunts Me* by Katie Roiphe

### ***Anne of Green Gables***

- *Anne with an E* (TV series)
- *Green Gables Fables* (web series)
- *Project Green Gables* (web series)
- *Marilla of Green Gables* by Sarah McCoy (publishing October 2018)

### ***Charlotte's Web***

- *Charlotte's Web Series* (web series)  
(Note that this involves discussions of mental illness and suicide among college-age students.)

## The Chronicles of Narnia

- *Shadowlands* (play and film by William Nicholson)

## Crime and Punishment

- *Columbo* (tv series)

## Don Quixote

- *Don Quixote* (ballet by Marius Petipa)
- *Going Bovine* by Libba Bray
- *Lost in La Mancha* (documentary on failed attempt to film the book)
- *Man of La Mancha* (film and musical by Dale Wasserman, Joe Darion, and Mitch Leigh)

## Frankenstein

- *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi
- *Frankenstein M.D.* (web series)
- *Frankenstein Unbound* by Brian Aldiss
- *A Monster's Notes* by Laurie R. King
- *Prodigal Son* by Dean Koontz
- *Young Frankenstein* (film)

## A Game of Thrones

- *School of Thrones* (web series)

## Gone With The Wind

- *Scarlett* by Alexandra Ripley
- *The Wind Done Gone* by Alice Randall

## Great Expectations

- *Havisham* by Ronald Frame

## The Great Gatsby

- *Great* by Sarah Benincasa
- *The Nick Carraway Chronicles* (web series)
- *Trimalchio, an Early Version of the Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

## Harry Potter

- *Lily Evans and the 11th Hour* (web series)
- *My Life as a Background Slytherin* (web comic by Emily McGovern)
- *Harry Potter and The Cursed Child* (play by J.K. Rowling, Jack Thorne and John Tiffany)

## Heart of Darkness

- *Apocalypse Now* (film)
- *Mistah Kurtz! A Prelude to Heart of Darkness* by James Reich

## Jane Eyre

- *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* (web series)
- *The Eyre Affair* by Jasper Fforde
- *The Flight of Gemma Hardy* by Margot Livesey
- *Jane Steele* by Lyndsay Faye
- *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier
- *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys

## Little Women

- *The March Family Letters* (web series)
- *March* by Geraldine Brooks

## Moby-Dick

- *Ahab's Wife* by Sena Jeter Naslund
- *Moby Dick* (opera by by Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer)
- *Moby Dick* (play by David Catlin)
- *White as the Waves* by Alison Baird
- *Wind Whales of Ishmael* by Phillip Jose Farmer

## The Picture of Dorian Gray

- *Dorian* by Will Self

## The Pilgrim's Progress

- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott

## Pride and Prejudice

Also see the GoodReads list "[Inspired by Pride and Prejudice](#)"

- *Bride and Prejudice* (film)
- *Death Comes to Pemberley* by P. D. James
- *Death Comes to Pemberley* (miniseries)
- *Eligible* by Curtis Sittenfeld
- *The Jane Austen Book Club* by Karen Jo Fowler
- *The Jane Austen Book Club* (film)
- *The Lizzie Bennett Diaries* (web series)
- *Longbourn* by Jo Baker
- *Lost in Austen* (TV miniseries)
- *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* by Seth Grahame-Smith
- *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (film)
- *The Secret Diary of Lizzie Bennet* by Bernie Su and Kate Rorick

## Rebecca

- *Alena* by Rachel Pastan
- *Mrs De Winter* by Susan Hill
- *Rebecca's Tale* by Sally Beauman

## Twilight

- *Beautiful Bastard* series by Christina Lauren
- *Fifty Shades of Grey* series by E.L. James

## Wuthering Heights

- *Catherine* by April Lindner
- *The Lost Child* by Caryl Phillips
- *Solsbury Hill* by Susan M. Wyler
- *W.H. Academy* (web series)
- *Windward Heights* by Maryse Condé

## PROGRAMMING IDEAS

There are many ways to develop programming around these spinoffs and satires. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

### Multigenerational discussions

Many classics have been reworked as YA novels or web series. Host a grandparent/parent/child book club or discussion night where participants read the original and then compare to the YA version or the web series.

### Host a writing contest for kids or teens

Write a short story, poem, or essay from the point of view of an alternate character. You might choose a villain (e.g., *White as the Waves*, *Wide Sargasso Sea*) or a background figure (e.g., *Longbourn*, *Havisham*, *The Wind Done Gone*, or *Background Slytherin*).

### Host a fan fiction book discussion

Participants share their favorite fan fics based on *Harry Potter*, *Twilight* (that's how *Fifty Shades of Grey* got started!), *Hunger Games*, *Game of Thrones*, *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *Left Behind*, etc.

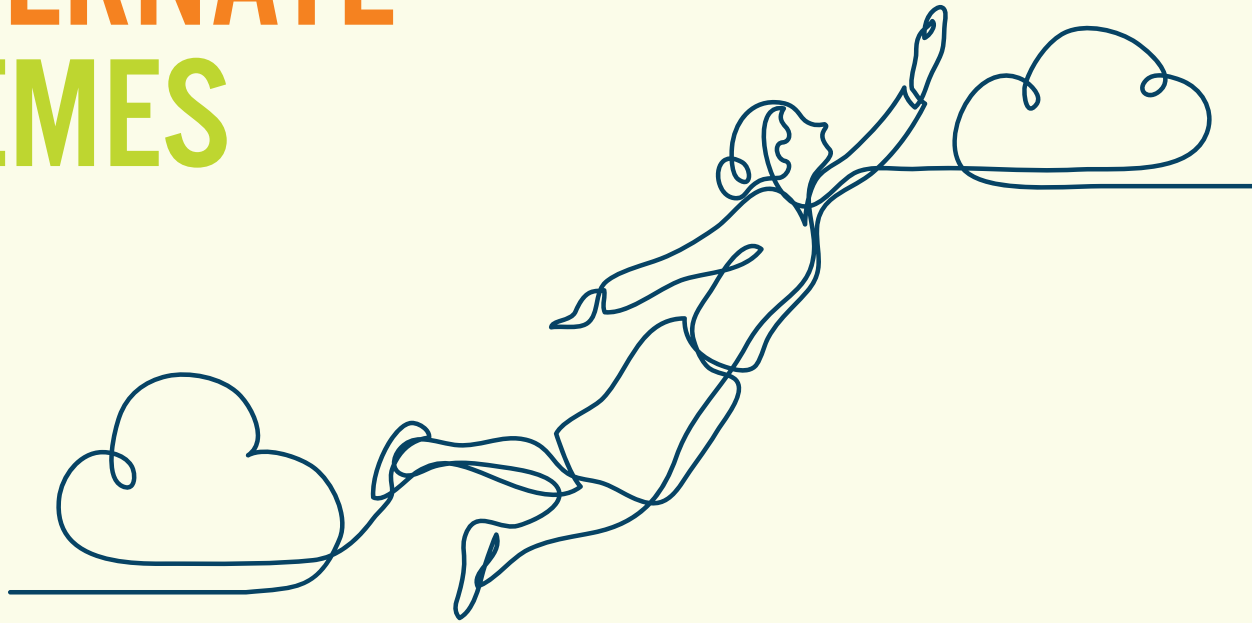
### Host a graphic novel program

Look at how different artists have pictured beloved stories and characters via the format of a graphic novel.

### Host a listening party

Listen to songs and classical music inspired by novels: *Lord of the Rings* symphony, operas and ballets based on *Don Quixote* and *Moby Dick*, *Picture of Dorian Gray*, David Bowie's 1984, "Among the Living" based on *The Stand*.

# ALTERNATE THEMES



While **THE GREAT AMERICAN READ** has divided the list of 100 titles into five broad theme areas, there are many other themes and connections to consider for meaningful programming and displays. Of course, any such list is subjective, so don't feel limited by these categories—use them as a starting point for your own creativity and to meet your community's interests!

## RELIGION, SPIRITUALITY, AND DEATH

Great novels help us probe big questions: Why are we here? Do our lives have purpose, or is existence random? What happens after death? Is there a God? What does S/He want from us?

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ *Beloved*, *The Book Thief*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Gilead*, *Left Behind*, *The Lovely Bones*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Twilight*, *The Shack*, *Siddhartha*, *The Hunger Games*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *This Present Darkness*

### Programming ideas

- Host a panel of local religious leaders or college philosophy or religion professors and ask them to discuss spiritual themes in a selection of the books. How have our concepts of the afterlife changed over the centuries, as reflected in novels?
- Host a local hospice program or bereavement group to discuss literature as a coping mechanism for dealing with death.



#### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

These types of thought-provoking questions are perfect to get your community talking on Facebook or Twitter.

- Host a “choose your favorite afterlife” contest. Whose version of the afterlife would you prefer? *The Lovely Bones*? *The Chronicles of Narnia*? *The Shack*? *Left Behind*?

## ANIMALS AND THE NATURAL WORLD

What is our connection to animals, and what do we gain from these relationships? What does it mean to be “in touch with nature”? What traits does it take to become a survivor, as the protagonists in *Hatchet*, *Clan of the Cave Bear*, and *The Hunger Games* do?

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ *The Call of the Wild*, *Charlotte’s Web*, *Clan of the Cave Bear*, *Jurassic Park*, *Hatchet*, *Moby-Dick*, *Siddhartha*, *Watchers*, *Where the Red Fern Grows*

### Programming ideas

- Host a representative from a local animal shelter or pet rescue or an expert on emotional support animals to talk about the people/animal connection and its psychological benefits.
- Invite a wildlife survival expert to talk about how to survive in the woods. What did Brian (*Hatchet*) and Katniss (*The Hunger Games*) do right? What did they do wrong?
- Hold a favorite animal companion/pet/animal adversary contest. Invite patrons to campaign for Moby Dick, Charlotte, Wilbur, Buck, Aslan, Reepicheep, or the Tyrannosaurus from *Jurassic Park*.



#### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

Ask your patrons about their favorite literary creatures. Or better yet, ask them to post a drawing of their favorite, and invite others to guess who it is.

## OUTSIDERS AND LONELINESS

Many of us feel like outsiders at some point in our lives—because of race, economic status, sexuality, weight, disability, or simply not fitting in. How do these legendary outsiders of literature help us cope?

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, *Americanah*, *Another Country*, *The Book Thief*, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *Charlotte’s Web*, *The Clan of the Cave Bear*, *The Color Purple*, *Crime and Punishment*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Don Quixote*, *Fifty Shades of Grey*, *Frankenstein*, *Ghost*, *Great Expectations*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Harry Potter*, *The Hunger Games*, *Invisible Man*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Outsiders*, *Rebecca*, *Tales of the City*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Wuthering Heights*

### Programming ideas

- Set up a matchmaker club. Which lonely outsiders might be besties if they met? How would Holden Caulfield get along with Oscar Wao? Would the heroine of *Rebecca* hit it off with Heathcliff? Or Jane Eyre? Would Owen Meany enjoy hanging out with Harry Potter? What about book thief Liesel and bookworm Scout? Raskolnikov and Christian Grey?

- Bring in an expert on bullying during National Bullying Prevention Month (October) to talk with parents and teens about coping with being an outsider. How do trauma (*Fifty Shades of Grey*), racism (*Invisible Man*), sexism (*The Color Purple*), homophobia (*Another Country*, *Tales of the City*), and poverty (*Great Expectations*) contribute to feeling like an outsider? How can schools and parents and communities work to make everyone feel welcome?
- Host an anti-bullying panel with a credible community resource, such as a local teacher or social service agency, where individuals can submit questions anonymously ahead of time. Questions can be vetted before the program if needed.

## FAVORITE (AND LEAST FAVORITE) FAMILIES

Many of us fantasize about being part of a favorite literary family. Great novels also describe intentional families, bound not by blood but love or a shared cause. Then there are the hyper-dysfunctional families: could you survive intact as one of the Corleones? Or the Dollangangers? Or the Lannisters?

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ *The Grapes of Wrath*, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Clan of the Cave Bear*, *Flowers in the Attic*, *The Godfather*, *Gone with the Wind*, *Little Women*, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Outsiders*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Twilight*, *War and Peace*, *Wuthering Heights*



### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

Take your literary family trivia to social media by posting questions on your Facebook page or on Twitter using a special contest hashtag.

### Programming ideas

- Organize a “Family Feud”-style trivia contest between two of the famous families. Questions would be trivia about each other’s books.
- Imagine one of your favorite dysfunctional families in group therapy. What would a family counselor have to say to the Bennetts? The Marches? The Cullens? Ask a local behavioral or family therapist to discuss the family dynamics of literary families.
- Mount a display or organize a contest on best/worst sisters, brothers, or parents. For the contest, write out scenarios from the books and ask patrons to match them. Questions could include: Who “crowned” his new brother-in-law in an unforgettable way? Who burned her sister’s story collection in a fit of spite? Who attacked his brother’s girlfriend because she got a papercut? Have displays for Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, or Siblings Day; programs may be held during Family History Month in October.

## SHE-ROES

*The Hunger Games*’ Katniss leading a revolution with her bow and arrow is the ultimate she-roe: fiercely independent, deadly, and yet compassionate and protective of those she loves. Let’s look at other images of feminine courage and self-reliance: Anne of Green Gables heroically saving a small child from diphtheria, Jo March leading an independent, non-traditional life as an

author, refusing to live off a rich husband. Then there are the quietly resolute heroine like Elizabeth Bennet, the intellectual heroines like Hermione Granger and the stoical heroines like Celie and Jane Eyre who simply never give up. Not to mention *A Game of Thrones*, with she-roses of all descriptions!

**TITLES TO CONSIDER ~** *Anne of Green Gables*, *Beloved*, *The Coldest Winter Ever*, *The Color Purple*, *Fifty Shades of Grey*, *A Game of Thrones*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Harry Potter*, *The Hunger Games*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Intuitionist*, *The Joy Luck Club*, *Little Women*, *Memoirs of a Geisha*, *Outlander*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Swan Song*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, *Twilight*

### Programming ideas

- Set up a March Madness–style bracket and have patrons vote on who would take whom in various match-ups.
- Invite a local YWCA or other girls' leadership program to talk about female role models in books and pop culture. Lead a book discussion based on YA she-roses in *The Hunger Games*, *A Game of Thrones* and *Twilight*, as well as classics like *Anne of Green Gables* and *Little Women*.
- She-roses often struggle against racism as well as sexism. Look at how Celie from *The Color Purple*, Winter from *The Coldest Winter Ever*, Sethe from *Beloved*, Nitta from *Memoirs of a Geisha*, and the women in *The Joy Luck Club* confront this double burden.
- Invite kids and teens to draw and illustrate their own graphic novels based on one of the she-roses. Display the teen creations alongside some of the existing graphic novels: *Pride and Prejudice*, *Twilight*, *A Game of Thrones*, and *The Hunger Games*.

## HISTORY ON THE PAGE

There's no better (or fun!) way to learn history than by diving into a great historical novel. Yet fiction written about the past is often more of a reflection on the era the book was written in, rather than the era in which it's set. Let's celebrate great historical reads and what they say about our past, present, and future.

**TITLES TO CONSIDER ~** *A Separate Peace*, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, *Beloved*, *The Book Thief*, *Catch-22*, *The Clan of the Cave Bear*, *Gone with the Wind*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Heart of Darkness*, *The Help*, *The Joy Luck Club*, *Little Women*, *Outlander*, *The Pillars of the Earth*, *War and Peace*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

### Programming ideas

- Prepare booklists matching fictional favorites with accompanying nonfiction (including graphic novels) or other historical fiction reflecting a different viewpoint.
- Invite a local history professor to comment on the accuracy of one of your favorite historical novels or periods: Civil War and slavery (*Gone with the Wind*, *Little Women*, *Beloved*), WWII and the Holocaust (*The Book Thief*), the Civil Rights Movement (*To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Help*), or World War I (*A Separate Peace*).
- Host a historical costume party. Invite patrons to come dressed as favorite historical (or futuristic!) characters. For those who don't want to dress up, try a game of "Who Am I?"

in which each patron has the name of a historical character taped to their back and other guests give hints as to the person's identity.

## MENTAL ILLNESS AND MIND CONTROL

Many of the greatest literary protagonists struggle with mental illness or challenges. Yet literary depictions of mental health often follow (and create) stereotypes and harmful misconceptions—think the “mad wife” in *Jane Eyre* or the passionate but over-the-top histrionics in *Moby-Dick*, *Heart of Darkness*, *The Hunger Games*, or *Wuthering Heights*. Characters whose minds work a bit differently can also be sensitively portrayed heroes: Don Quixote may be mad, but he has a wisdom his followers only occasionally appreciate; Raskolnikov is a murderer in search of a cause; and Ahab may be obsessed, but his obsession is a noble one.

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ 1984, *Catch-22*, *Crime and Punishment*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Don Quixote*, *The Hunger Games*, *Jane Eyre*, *Mind Invaders*, *Moby-Dick*, *The Notebook*, *Wuthering Heights*

### Programming ideas

- Invite a local psychiatrist to clarify common misconceptions and stereotypes about mental illness: what do terms like “schizo,” “bipolar,” “insane” and “obsessive/compulsive” really mean?
- Collaborate with the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) to bring in a speaker or author to share their experience with mental illness.
- It's extremely rare to find excellent fiction written from the viewpoint of someone with autism. Invite a local autism support group to discuss *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*.

## READING ACROSS GENERATIONS: CHILDHOOD FAVORITES

There are books from our youth that we continue to read with pleasure well into adulthood and that we then share with the next generation. Consider these ideas for enjoying the books that have been passed down and continue to be loved.

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *The Call of the Wild*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *Charlotte's Web*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *Ghost*, *The Giver*, *Harry Potter*, *Hatchet*, *The Hunger Games*, *The Little Prince*, *Little Women*, *Looking for Alaska*, *The Outsiders*

### Programming ideas

- Host an intergenerational book club for parents and kids, grandparents and grandkids. Invite them to discuss favorite books from each of their eras—say, *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Hunger Games*, or *Catcher in the Rye* and *Looking for Alaska*.
- Host a parent-child book tasting, a delectable foodie event where books are the main course. Placemats list books to taste, and a book talker as “waiter” moves from table to table. ([For more about book tastings, see page 24.](#))

## HUMOR, DARK AND OTHERWISE

It's surprising how funny otherwise weighty classics like *Moby-Dick* and *War and Peace* can be. Yet humor is highly subjective, and tastes change over time. What might have been real knee slappers in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland's* day sound stilted or even cruel now.

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ *A Confederacy of Dunces*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Catch-22*, *Don Quixote*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Harry Potter*, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Little Prince*, *Little Women*, *Moby-Dick*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *War and Peace*, *White Teeth*

### Programming ideas

- Do a display highlighting the funniest lines from several books on the list. Make it a contest where patrons have to guess which line came from which book.
- Host a "literary comedy club" where contestants compete reading their favorite funny passages from books on the list.



#### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

Posting photos of your displays on social media is a great way to extend their reach to people outside the library.

## DYSTOPIA

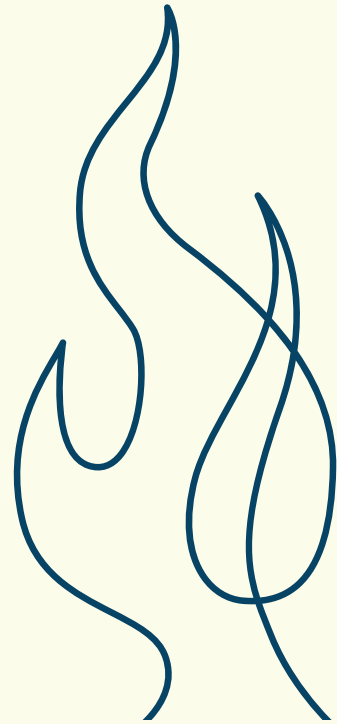
Great writers often point out the weaknesses of their own societies by imagining the extreme. Sometimes these are fantasy or futuristic worlds, but often they are nightmare versions of our own.

**TITLES TO CONSIDER** ~ *1984*, *Atlas Shrugged*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Heart of Darkness*, *The Hunger Games*, *Left Behind*, *Ready Player One*, *Swan Song*, *The Stand*, *This Present Darkness*

### Programming ideas

- Invite a local philosophy, theology, political science, or literature professor to discuss the appeal of dystopian novels and why they remain so popular. What elements of *1984* or *The Hunger Games* do we see in our own world? Of course, dystopia for one group might not be so bad for another: *The Handmaid's Tale*, *This Present Darkness*, and *Atlas Shrugged* identify very specific victims of their dystopias.
- Host a dystopia survival event. This can be structured either as a trivia contest or a scavenger hunt, where patrons must "survive" by solving puzzles or questions drawn from the novels.
- Invite kids and teens to draw and illustrate their own graphic novels based on one of the dystopias. Display the teen creations alongside some of the existing graphic novels.

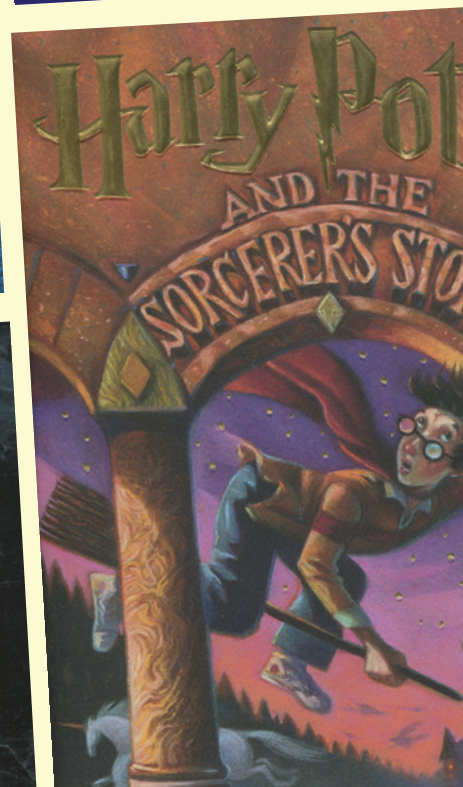
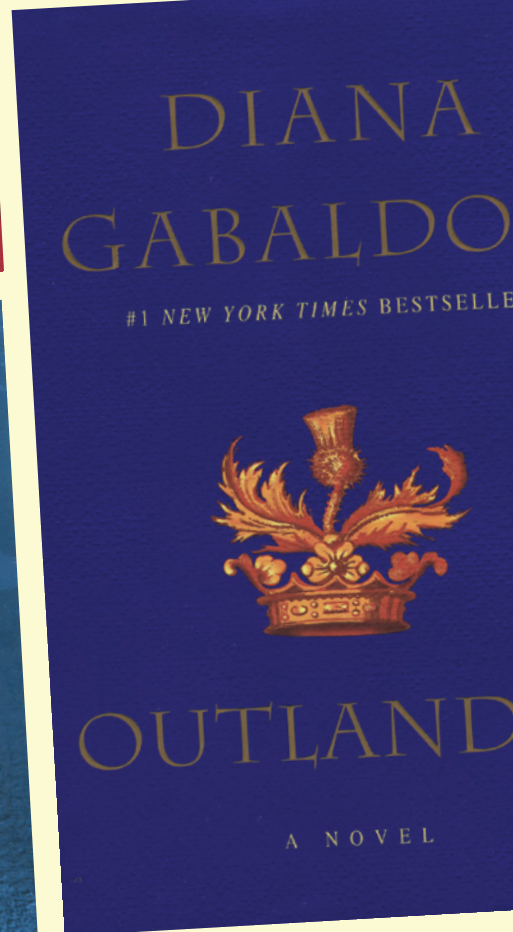
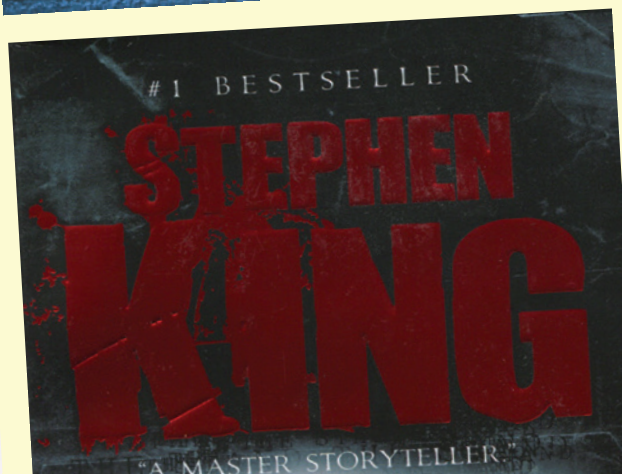
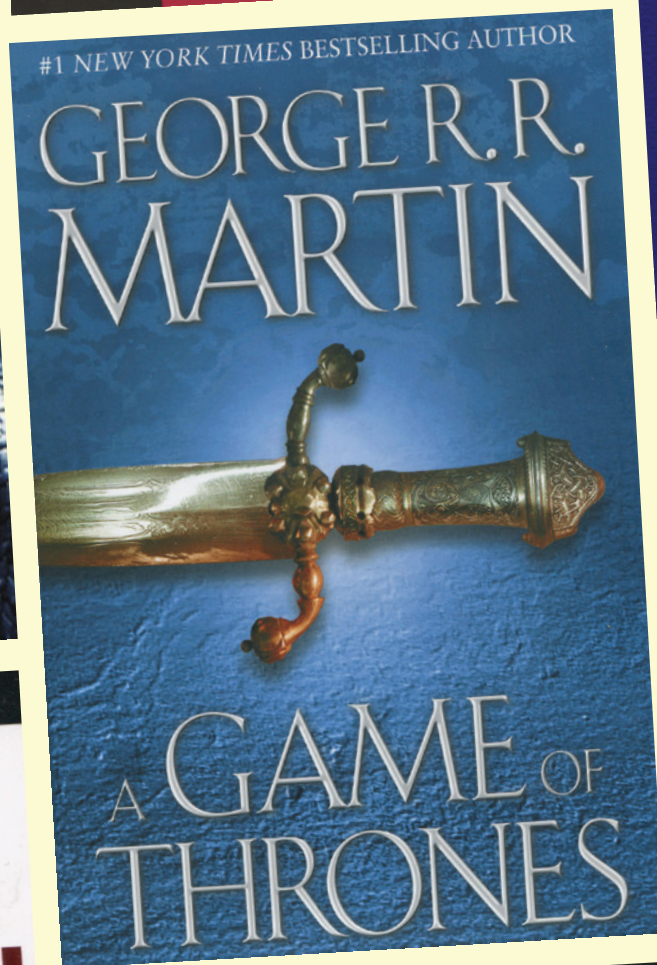
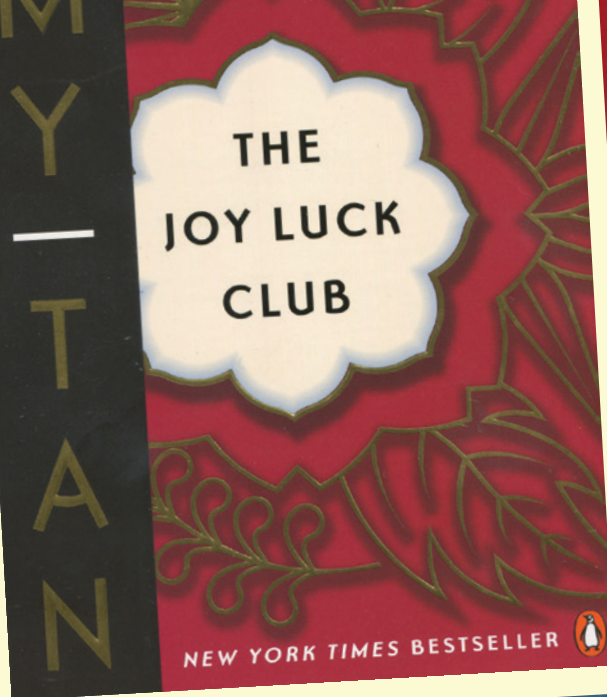
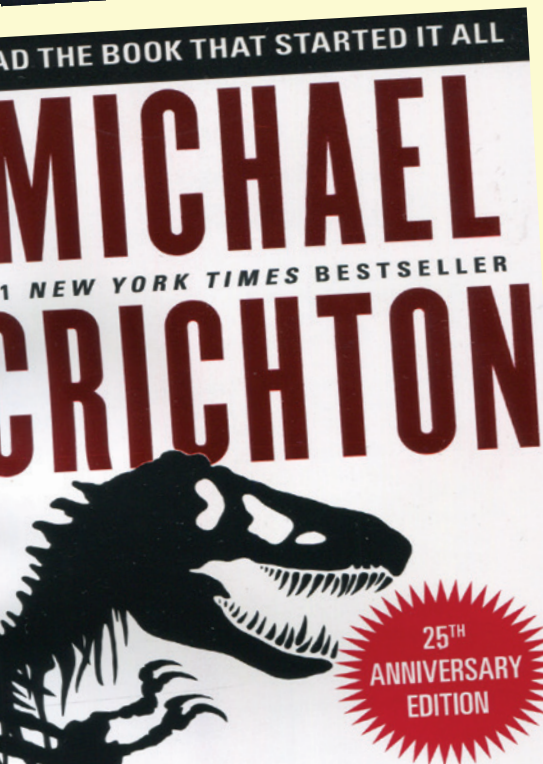
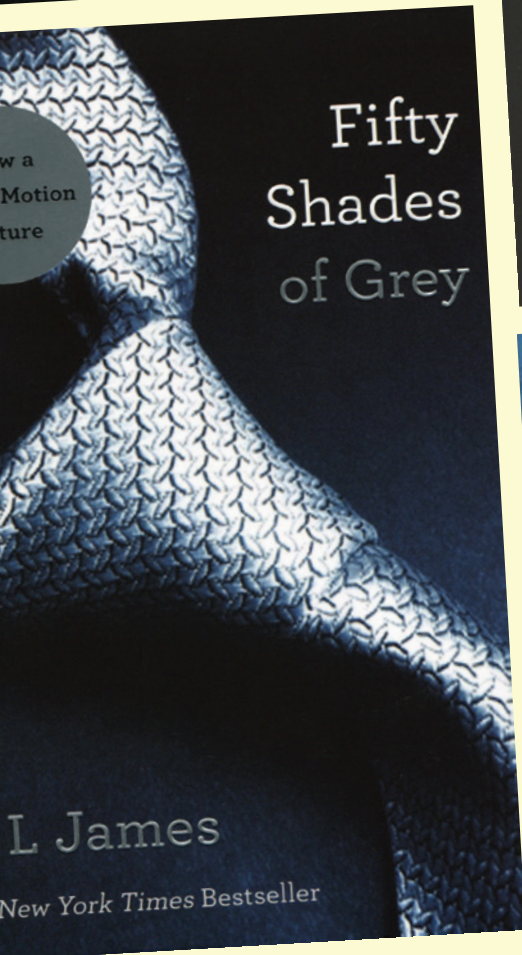
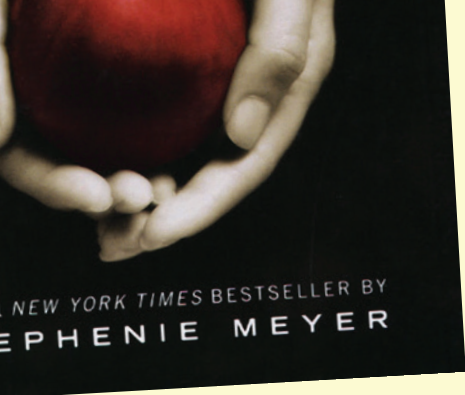
# BANNED *but* BELOVED



Many of our most beloved books have also been the most hated, disparaged, and protested; for political or religious reasons, due to sexuality, drug use, profanity, or simply because someone finds the author or his/her views offensive. According to ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom, at least 46 of the [Radcliffe Publishing Course Top 100 Novels of the 20th Century](#) have been the target of ban attempts.

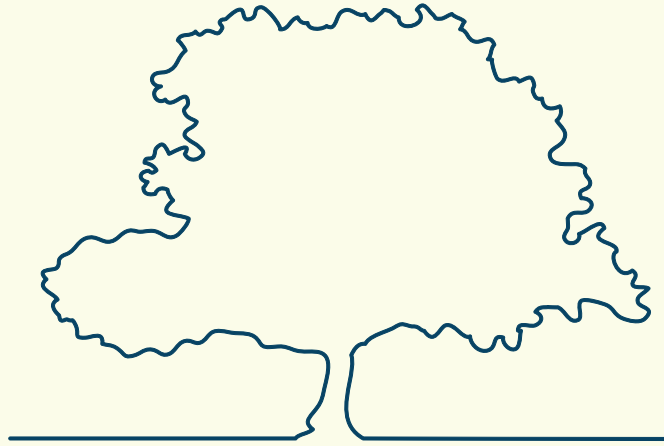
The following 40 titles from **THE GREAT AMERICAN READ** have all been frequent targets of book banning attempts, some as recently as this year. In your programming consider a display or discussion saluting those titles that have inspired the greatest passion, especially during [Banned Books Week](#) in September or [Freedom of Information Day](#) in March. (To learn more about the reasons for the challenges against these books, visit [ala.org/advocacy/bbooks](http://ala.org/advocacy/bbooks).)

- |  |                               |                                       |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ■ 1984   | ■ <i>The DaVinci Code</i>     | ■ <i>Looking for Alaska</i>           |
| ■ <i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i>                      | ■ <i>Fifty Shades of Grey</i> | ■ <i>The Lord of the Rings</i>        |
| ■ <i>The Alchemist</i>                                     | ■ <i>Flowers in the Attic</i> | ■ <i>The Lovely Bones</i>             |
| ■ <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>                  | ■ <i>Frankenstein</i>         | ■ <i>Moby-Dick</i>                    |
| ■ <i>Beloved</i>   | ■ <i>The Giver</i>            | ■ <i>The Outsiders</i>                |
| ■ <i>Bless Me, Ultima</i>                                  | ■ <i>Gone with the Wind</i>   | ■ <i>The Pillars of the Earth</i>     |
| ■ <i>The Call of the Wild</i>                              | ■ <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>  | ■ <i>A Prayer for Owen Meany</i>      |
| ■ <i>Catch-22</i>  | ■ <i>The Great Gatsby</i>     | ■ <i>A Separate Peace</i>             |
| ■ <i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>                            | ■ <i>Gulliver's Travels</i>   | ■ <i>Siddharta</i>                    |
| ■ <i>Charlotte's Web</i>                                   | ■ <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>  | ■ <i>The Sun Also Rises</i>           |
| ■ <i>The Color Purple</i>                                  | ■ <i>Harry Potter</i>         | ■ <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> |
| ■ <i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time</i> | ■ <i>Heart of Darkness</i>    | ■ <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>        |
|  | ■ <i>The Hunger Games</i>     |                                       |
|  | ■ <i>Invisible Man</i>        |                                       |
|  | ■ <i>Little Women</i>         |                                       |



# POPULAR *versus* CLASSICS

## WHICH BOOKS WILL STICK AROUND?



John Grisham authored the bestselling novel every year from 1994–2001 . . . and yet none of his books are on the list of 100. Other missing authors include Terry McMillan, Judy Blume, Roald Dahl, Maya Angelou, Doris Lessing, James Michener, John Le Carre, Danielle Steele, Edna Ferber, E. Lynn Harris, James Joyce, Anne Rice, Herman Wouk, John Updike, Gore Vidal, Ray Bradbury, and Chaim Potok.

Likewise, many literary phenoms, books that “everyone” was reading at one point, also failed to make the cut: *The Celestine Prophecy*, *Jaws*, *Forever Amber*, *Doctor Zhivago*, *Love Story*, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, *Ragtime*, *The Goldfinch*, *The Time Traveler’s Wife*, *Peyton Place*, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, *Like Water For Chocolate*, *Fear of Flying*, *Lolita*, *Sophie’s Choice*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, *Possession*, *Ulysses*, *Watership Down*, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, *Exodus* or *Valley of the Dolls*.

Which of the newer books on this list will go the distance? Which “classics” are likely to drop out over the years?

### PROGRAMMING IDEAS

- Create a time capsule with kids or teens: which of their favorites do they think will be on the top 100 list 10, 20, 50, or 100 years from now?
- Do a display of “forgotten favorites,” perhaps pairing them with similar books from the list: *Fear of Flying* and *Fifty Shades of Grey*; *The Celestine Prophecy* and *The Da Vinci Code*; *The Time Traveler’s Wife* and *Outlander*; *The Godfather* and *The Firm*; *A Separate Peace* and *All Quiet on the Western Front*; or *Gone with the Wind* and *Doctor Zhivago*.

- Invite a local English teacher or professor to talk about what factors turn a popular book into an enduring classic, or about the appeal of “cult” novels.

How well do literary awards and canons reflect what people actually read? Compare the list of 100 with such well known lists as [Great Books of the Western World](#), Harold Bloom’s [Western Canon](#), [Radcliffe Publishing Course Top 100 Novels of the 20th Century](#), The [Modern Library 100 Best Novels](#), as well as the winners of the Pulitzer, Newbery, Caldecott, and National Book Awards. Provide reading lists of THE GREAT AMERICAN READ books that also appear in the canons. How exclusive are “canons” and how well do they reflect female and non-white perspectives?

# PROGRAMMING *and* YOUR EVENT CALENDAR



A great way to work **THE GREAT AMERICAN READ** into your programming and displays is to coordinate them with monthly observances and holidays. Below are some suggestions for books to highlight during a variety of theme months throughout the year, even after the episodes have stopped airing. (For more monthly celebrations, see [programminglibrarian.org/calendar](http://programminglibrarian.org/calendar).)

## JANUARY

- **NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH** ~ *The Godfather*, *Harry Potter*, *The Hunger Games*, *Looking for Alaska*
- **RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY** ~ *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Gilead*, *Left Behind*, *The Lovely Bones*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Shack*, *Siddhartha*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *This Present Darkness*

## FEBRUARY

- **AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH** ~ *Americanah*, *Another Country*, *Beloved*, *The Coldest Winter Ever*, *The Color Purple*, *Ghost*, *The Help*, *The Intuitionist*, *Invisible Man*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, *Things Fall Apart*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *White Teeth*
- **CHILDREN'S AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS WEEK** ~ *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Charlotte's Web*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*,

*Ghost, The Giver, Harry Potter, Hatchet, The Hunger Games, The Little Prince, Little Women, Looking for Alaska, The Outsiders, Ready Player One, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*

- **VALENTINE'S DAY/ANTI-VALENTINE'S DAY** ~ *Americanah, Anne of Green Gables, Another Country, Call of the Wild, Fifty Shades of Grey, Gilead, Gone with the Wind, Little Women, Looking for Alaska, Outlander, Pride and Prejudice, Their Eyes Were Watching God, The Color Purple, The Godfather, The Grapes of Wrath, The Great Gatsby, The Joy Luck Club, The Notebook, The Sun Also Rises, Twilight, War and Peace*
- **WORLD READ ALOUD DAY** ~ All titles

## MARCH

- **NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH** ~ *Anne of Green Gables, Beloved, The Color Purple, The Help, Jane Eyre, The Joy Luck Club, Little Women, Memoirs of a Geisha, Outlander, Pride and Prejudice, Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION DAY** ~ 1984, *The Book Thief, Ready Player One, This Present Darkness*; also see titles in [Banned but Beloved on page 47](#)

## APRIL

- **NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH** ~ *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*
- **SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH** ~ *Beloved, The Coldest Winter Ever, The Color Purple, Fifty Shades Of Grey, Flowers In The Attic, A Game of Thrones, Gone Girl, The Handmaid's Tale, The Joy Luck Club, The Lovely Bones, Memoirs of a Geisha, Outlander*
- **EARTH DAY** ~ *The Call of the Wild, The Clan of the Cave Bear, Hatchet, Moby-Dick*

## MAY

- **ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH** ~ *The Joy Luck Club, Memoirs of a Geisha*
- **JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH** ~ *The Catcher in the Rye, Foundation*
- **MEMORIAL DAY** ~ *A Separate Peace, The Book Thief, Catch-22, Gone with the Wind, The Hunger Games, The Hunt for Red October, War and Peace*
- **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH** ~ 1984, *Catch-22, Crime and Punishment, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Don Quixote, The Hunger Games, Jane Eyre, Mind Invaders, Moby-Dick, The Notebook, Wuthering Heights*

## JUNE

- **ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS** ~ *The Notebook*
- **GAY AND LESBIAN PRIDE MONTH** ~ *Another Country, Tales of the City*

- **JUNETEENTH** ~ *Beloved, The Color Purple, Gone with the Wind*
- **FATHER'S DAY** ~ *To Kill a Mockingbird, The Godfather, The Coldest Winter Ever*

## JULY

- **MALALA DAY**, for celebrating heroic girls ~ *Anne of Green Gables, Beloved, The Coldest Winter Ever, The Color Purple, Fifty Shades of Grey, A Game of Thrones, The Handmaid's Tale, Harry Potter, The Hunger Games*
- **INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP DAY**, for celebrating memorable literary friendships ~ *A Prayer for Owen Meany, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Book Thief, Charlotte's Web, The Color Purple, Don Quixote, Harry Potter, The Hunger Games, The Joy Luck Club, Left Behind, The Little Prince, Little Women, Lonesome Dove, Looking for Alaska, The Lord of the Rings, Moby-Dick, The Outsiders, The Sun Also Rises, Tales of the City, War and Peace, White Teeth*
- **HARLEM BOOK FAIR** ~ *Americanah, Another Country, Beloved, The Coldest Winter Ever, The Color Purple, Ghost, The Help, The Intuitionist, Invisible Man, Their Eyes Were Watching God, Things Fall Apart, To Kill a Mockingbird, White Teeth*

## AUGUST

- **WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY** ~ *Anne of Green Gables, Beloved, The Coldest Winter Ever, The Color Purple, A Game of Thrones, The Handmaid's Tale, Harry Potter, The Hunger Games, Jane Eyre, The Intuitionist, The Joy Luck Club, Little Women, Memoirs of a Geisha, Outlander, Pride and Prejudice, Swan Song, Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY** ~ *Bless Me Ultima, Things Fall Apart*

## SEPTEMBER

- **NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH** ~ *Bless Me Ultima, Doña Bárbara, The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, One Hundred Years of Solitude*
- **NATIONAL LITERACY MONTH** ~ All titles
- **BANNED BOOKS WEEK** ~ See titles in [Banned but Beloved, page 47](#)
- **NATIONAL WILDERNESS MONTH** and **NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH** ~ *The Call of the Wild, The Clan of the Cave Bear, Jurassic Park, Hatchet, Moby-Dick, Watchers*

## OCTOBER

- **NATIONAL READING GROUP MONTH** ~ All titles
- **NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH** ~ *A Prayer for Owen Meany, A Separate Peace, The Book Thief, The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, Charlotte's Web, The Curious*

*Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Harry Potter, The Hunger Games, Jane Eyre, Looking for Alaska, The Outsiders*

- **FAMILY HISTORY MONTH** ~ *Grapes of Wrath, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, The Chronicles of Narnia, The Clan of the Cave Bear, Flowers in the Attic, The Godfather, Gone With The Wind, Little Women, One Hundred Years of Solitude, The Outsiders, Pride and Prejudice, To Kill a Mockingbird, Twilight, War and Peace, Wuthering Heights*
- **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE OLDER PERSON** ~ *Bless Me Ultima, The Notebook, The Giver*
- **LGBT HISTORY MONTH** ~ *Another Country, Tales of the City*
- **TEEN READ WEEK** ~ *A Separate Peace, Anne of Green Gables, The Book Thief, The Call of the Wild, Ghost, The Giver, Harry Potter, Hatchet, The Hunger Games, Looking for Alaska, The Outsiders, Twilight, Where the Red Fern Grows*
- **WORLD SPACE WEEK** ~ *Dune, Foundation, The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, The Little Prince, The Martian, The Sirens of Titan*
- **UNITED NATIONS DAY**, for discussing books from or about other countries ~ *The Alchemist, Americanah, Bless Me Ultima, Doña Bárbara, The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, Crime and Punishment, Don Quixote, Heart of Darkness, The Joy Luck Club, Memoirs of a Geisha, One Hundred Years of Solitude, Siddhartha, The Sun Also Rises, Things Fall Apart, War and Peace, White Teeth*

## NOVEMBER

- **NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH** ~ *Bless Me Ultima*
- **VETERANS DAY** ~ *A Separate Peace, The Book Thief, Catch-22, Gone With the Wind, The Hunger Games, The Hunt for Red October, War and Peace*
- **NATIONAL ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH** ~ *The Notebook*

## DECEMBER

- **READ A NEW BOOK MONTH** ~ All titles
- **PRETEND TO BE A TIME TRAVELER DAY** ~ *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Outlander, The Clan of the Cave Bear, Gone with the Wind, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, The Book Thief, A Separate Peace, Beloved, Catch-22, The Grapes of Wrath, Heart of Darkness, The Help, The Joy Luck Club, Little Women, Outlander, The Pillars of the Earth, War and Peace*

# BOOK SETTINGS

## A COMPLETE LIST



Setting is a powerful element of good storytelling. Details about a story setting make the tale more believable and allow the readers to immerse themselves in the same world that the characters occupy. Locations, real or imaginary, ground the reader and help create a picture in the mind's eye. Imagine changing the locations of *The Grapes of Wrath* or *Anne of Green Gables*—the stories would be completely different.

Using the locations listed below for each book, consider creating books displays based on regions or using a wall map (of the USA or the world) to chart the locations of the novels on the list.

A fun ongoing activity would be to create a mock passport and encourage participants to “read around the world” by reading a book from each location listed below.

## ALL 100 BOOKS SORTED BY LOCATION

### USA

**NEW ENGLAND REGION** Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts,  
New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont

- *A Separate Peace* ~ Private school in rural New Hampshire
- *A Prayer for Owen Meany*: Gravesend, New Hampshire;  
Toronto, Canada
- *Little Women* ~ New England
- *Moby-Dick* ~ New Bedford and Nantucket Island,  
Massachusetts, aboard the Pequod whaling ship



### SOCIAL MEDIA TIP

Ask your patrons: Is your part of the country well represented on THE GREAT AMERICAN READ? Is there a book from your hometown or region that should be on the list?

**MID-ATLANTIC/SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION** New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, District of Columbia, and West Virginia

- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* ~ Brooklyn
- *Alex Cross Mysteries* (series) ~ Washington, D.C.
- *Americanah* ~ Lagos, Nigeria; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- *Another Country* ~ Greenwich Village, New York City
- *The Brief Wondrous Life Of Oscar Wao* ~ New Jersey
- *The Catcher in the Rye* ~ California, Pennsylvania; New York City
- *The Coldest Winter Ever* ~ Brooklyn and Long Island, New York
- *Flowers in the Attic* ~ Virginia
- *Ghost* ~ Urban neighborhood
- *The Godfather* ~ NYC/Long Island; Sicily; Las Vegas
- *The Great Gatsby* ~ Manhattan; Long Island; Queens
- *The Intuitionist* ~ New York City
- *Invisible Man* ~ Greenwood, South Carolina; Harlem, New York
- *The Lovely Bones* ~ Pennsylvania suburbs
- *The Notebook* ~ New Bern, North Carolina

**SOUTHERN REGION** Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

- *A Confederacy of Dunces* ~ New Orleans
- *The Color Purple* ~ Georgia; Western Africa
- *Gone with the Wind* ~ Atlanta; Clayton County, Georgia
- *The Grapes of Wrath* ~ Oklahoma; California
- *The Help* ~ Jackson, Mississippi
- *Invisible Man* ~ Greenwood, South Carolina; Harlem, New York
- *Looking for Alaska* ~ Alabama
- *The Outsiders* ~ Tulsa, Oklahoma
- *Ready Player One* ~ Dystopian future, Oklahoma
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* ~ Florida
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* ~ Maycomb, Alabama
- *Where the Red Fern Grows* ~ Oklahoma

**MIDWEST REGION** Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota

- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* ~ St. Petersburg, inspired by Hannibal, Missouri
- *Gone Girl* ~ Missouri; New York City, New York
- *Gilead* ~ Gilead, Iowa, based on Tabor, Iowa
- *Beloved* ~ Kentucky; Ohio
- *Charlotte's Web* ~ American farmland
- *This Present Darkness* ~ Small college town in a farming community

## SOUTHWEST REGION **Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming**

- *Bless Me, Ultima* ~ New Mexico
- *Lonesome Dove* ~ Texas; Montana

## PACIFIC COASTAL REGION **Alaska, Oregon, California, Hawaii, Washington**

- *Fifty Shades of Grey* (series) ~ Portland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington
- *The Joy Luck Club* ~ San Francisco, California; China
- *The Shack* ~ Oregon wilderness
- *Tales of The City* (series) ~ San Francisco, California
- *The Twilight Saga* (series) ~ Forks, Washington; Phoenix, Arizona
- *Watchers* ~ Near a canyon in the U.S.

## OTHER COUNTRIES

### United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Ireland)

- *And Then There Were None* ~ English county of Devon
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* ~ Swindon and London, England
- *Great Expectations* ~ England
- *Harry Potter* (series) ~ England
- *Jane Eyre* ~ Northern England
- *Outlander* (series) ~ Scotland
- *The Picture of Dorian Gray* ~ London, England
- *The Pillars of The Earth* ~ England
- *Pride and Prejudice* ~ England
- *Rebecca* ~ Cornwall region of England
- *White Teeth* ~ Continental Europe; India; Jamaica; London, England
- *Wuthering Heights* ~ Northern England

### Canada

- *A Prayer for Owen Meany* ~ Gravesend, New Hampshire; Toronto, Canada
- *Anne of Green Gables* ~ Prince Edward Island
- *The Call of The Wild* ~ Yukon Territory
- *Hatchet* (series) ~ Central Canada

### Continental Europe

- *The Alchemist* ~ Tarifa, Spain; Tangier, North Africa; Sahara desert
- *The Book Thief* ~ Molching, Germany

- *Catch-22* ~ Pianosa, an island off the coast of Italy
- *Clan of the Cave Bear* ~ Prehistoric Europe
- *The Count of Monte Cristo* ~ Paris, France
- *Crime and Punishment* ~ St. Petersburg, Russia
- *The Da Vinci Code* ~ Paris & Condécourt France; London, England; Roslin, Scotland
- *Don Quixote* ~ Plains of La Mancha, Spain
- *Frankenstein* ~ Russia; Geneva, Switzerland; Europe
- *Heart of Darkness* ~ London, England; Brussels; Congo, Central Africa
- *The Sun Also Rises* ~ Paris, France; Spain

## Asia and the Middle East

- *Memoirs of a Geisha* ~ Kyoto, Japan
- *The Hunt for Red October* ~ Atlantic Ocean; U.S.S.R.
- *Siddhartha* ~ India
- *War and Peace* ~ Russia

## Africa

- *The Alchemist* ~ Tangier, Morocco; Sahara Desert; Tarifa, Spain
- *Americanah* ~ Lagos, Nigeria; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- *The Color Purple* ~ Georgia; Western Africa
- *Heart of Darkness* ~ London, England; Brussels; Congo, Central Africa
- *The Little Prince* ~ Sahara Desert; Space
- *Things Fall Apart* ~ Nigeria

## South America

- *Doña Bárbara* ~ Venezuela
- *One Hundred Years of Solitude* ~ Colombia

## OTHER

- *1984* ~ Fictional country of Oceania
- *Atlas Shrugged* ~ Dystopian United States
- *The Giver* ~ Dystopian community
- *The Handmaid's Tale* ~ Dystopian United States called the Republic of Gilead
- *The Hunger Games* (series) ~ Dystopian North America
- *Left Behind* (series) ~ Earth after the Rapture
- *Mind Invaders* ~ Dystopian Future

- *The Pilgrim's Progress* ~ Unidentifiable dream-setting
- *Ready Player One* ~ Dystopian future, Oklahoma
- *The Stand* ~ Post-apocalyptic North America
- *Swan Song* ~ Post-apocalyptic North America

## FANTASY

- *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* ~ Wonderland
- *The Chronicles of Narnia* (series) ~ Narnia
- *Game of Thrones* (series) ~ Essos; Seven Kingdoms of Westeros
- *Gulliver's Travels* ~ Balnibarbi; Brobdingnag; Glubbdubdrib; Japan; Laputa; Land of the Houyhnhnms; Lilliput; Luggnagg
- *Harry Potter* (series) ~ England
- *Jurassic Park* ~ Dinosaur Theme Park on Isla Nublar
- *The Lord of the Rings* (series) ~ Middle-earth
- *The Wheel of Time* (series) ~ Unnamed fantasy world

## OUTER SPACE

- *Dune* ~ Planet Arrakis
- *Foundation* (series) ~ Space
- *The Hitchhiker's Guide to The Galaxy* ~ Space
- *The Little Prince* ~ Sahara Desert; Space
- *The Martian* ~ Mars
- *The Sirens of Titan* ~ Space

# credits

**THE GREAT AMERICAN READ PRODUCTION CREDITS:** THE GREAT AMERICAN READ is a production of Nutopia for PBS. The program is executive produced by Jane Root, Michael Cascio, Bob Kirsh, and Charles Marquardt; co-executive produced by Rebecca Ratliff Cameron; line produced by Rachael Jerahian; and produced by Nilam Agrawal-Desai, Katherine Linton, Kate Chumley, Justine Simonson, Michelle Smawley, Siobhan Lockhart, Annie Wong, and Tomek Gross. Bill Gardner, VP of Programming and Development, is executive in charge for PBS, and Bethany Latham is project director.

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