

## Text Selection Handout

Novels and plays are listed by author last name, then by title.

Author	Title	Written in/Setting	Description
Angelou, Maya	<i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i>	written in 1969, set in the 1930s–1950s	A coming-of-age autobiography about Angelou, an African-American girl who loses and then regains her self-confidence as she grows up with her difficult family
Baldwin, James	<i>The Fire Next Time</i>	published in 1963	A 300-page essay that is recognized as a starting point for discussing race relations in America
Bradbury, Ray	<i>The Martian Chronicles</i>	published in 1950, set in 1999 into the 21st century	A cautionary science fiction novel about the dangers of technology and the colonization of space
Brown, Claude	<i>Manchild in the Promised Land</i>	published in 1965, set in the 1940s and 50s	A fictionalized account of the author's coming of age in Harlem
Carson, Ben	<i>Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story</i>	published in 1996	A real-life success story of an inner-city African-American boy who grows up to be a top neurosurgeon
Delany, Sarah and Annie	<i>Having Our Say</i>	published in 1993, chronicles the 1890s to the 1990s	The memoir of two centenarian African-American sisters who were both professionals
Fitzgerald, F. Scott	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	published 1925, set in 1922	The story of a Midwesterner in New York who becomes involved with the problems of Gatsby, his decadently wealthy neighbor, in a book about class and jazz-age excess
Hemingway, Ernest	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i>	published 1929, set during WWI	The story of an American soldier in Italy who falls in love with an English nurse and deserts the army after a defeat
Hemingway, Ernest	<i>The Sun Also Rises</i>	published in 1926, set in 1924	The tale of an American in Paris with his friends, who follows the woman he loves to a bullfighting festival in Spain
Hurston, Zora Neale	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	published in 1937, set in the 1920s or 30s	The story of a woman who returns to her childhood town and recounts her marriages and her long struggle for respect
Knowles, John	<i>A Separate Peace</i>	published 1959, set in 1942–43	The story of the struggle and turbulent friendship of two boys at an elite boarding school
Morrison, Toni	<i>Beloved</i>	published in 1987, set in 1871 and 1851	A story that uses flashbacks and the possession of a young woman by a dead family member to tell the story of a former slave who comes to understand her turbulent past
Morrison, Toni	<i>The Bluest Eye</i>	published in 1970, set in 1940–1941	The story of an African-American girl who wishes she were white and struggles with a hostile community and an abusive father
Morrison, Toni	<i>Song of Solomon</i>	published in 1997 set in 1931–1963	A magical-realist epic about an African-American man, his family, and his family's mythic history
Morrison, Toni	<i>Sula</i>	published 1974, set in 1920–1965	The story of two women who fall in and out of friendship over their very different lives in an African-American neighborhood that is threatened by plans for a golf course

Steinbeck, John	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>	published 1939, set in the mid 1930s	The story of a hard-luck family who is driven off their land and migrate to California, where they find violence and labor unrest, but few jobs
Trumbo, Dalton	<i>Johnny Got His Gun</i>	published 1939, set in the early to mid 1920s	The tale of a blinded amputee stuck in a hospital who turns against the war in which he fought
Wharton, Edith	<i>Ethan Frome</i>	published in 1911, set in the turn of the century	A story in which a man waylaid at a stranger's house hears the story of how the stranger's restrained affections for his maid led to his downfall
Wright, Richard	<i>Black Boy</i>	published in 1945, set in 1912–1937	A coming-of-age novel about a young African-American southern boy who grows up with racism, abusive family members, and poverty and later becomes a communist and a writer

### Option II Books

Anaya, Rudolfo	<i>Bless Me, Ultima</i>	published in 1972, set during and after WWII	A coming of age story in New Mexico, where a boy looks for moral guidance, which might come either from Ultima, the local mystic, or the church
Cather, Willa	<i>My Antonia</i>	published 1918, set in 1880–1910	A lawyer nostalgically reminisces about a Central European childhood friend he had in Nebraska
Cisneros, Sandra	<i>Caramelo</i>	published in 2003	The story of a girl who lives in Chicago but travels to her extended family in Mexico each year
Jimenez, Francisco	<i>The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child</i>	published in 1997, stories start in the late 1940s	Realist autobiographical short stories about a Mexican boy who grows up as his family follows the harvests looking for the next low-paying job
Kingston, Maxine Hong	<i>Woman Warrior</i>	published in 1976, set in 1924–1975	In this myth-like memoir, the author uses the voice of five women to tell her own Chinese-American story
Ng, Fae Myenne	<i>Bone</i>	published in 1993, set in postwar San Francisco Chinatown	The story of an elder sister and her family who struggle with a middle sister's suicide
Okada, John	<i>No-No Boy</i>	published in 1978, set in WWII and the postwar years	After going to jail for refusing to be drafted, a Japanese-American tries to re-claim an identity
Potok, Chaim	<i>My Name Is Asher Lev</i>	published in 1972, set in 1942–1972	Gifted in painting, a young man does not fit in with his family or his Hasidic Jewish community
Santiago, Esmeralda	<i>When I Was Puerto Rican</i>	published in 1994	The memoir of a girl who grows up in rural Puerto Rico and Brooklyn, New York; a story about transitions and changing values
Tan, Amy	<i>Joy Luck Club</i>	published 1989, set in the 1920s through the 1980s	In a book about barriers and bridges between cultures and generations, four women tell short stories about themselves, their mothers, and their daughters
Thomas, Piri	<i>Down These Mean Streets</i>	published in 1997, set in 1941–1960	The autobiography of a Puerto Rican who deals with family, racism, and poverty in Spanish Harlem