Jane Austen

Emma
First published in 1816, *Emma* is generally regarded as Jane Austen's most technically brilliant book. Read it to see how a scheming heiress who is determined not to marry ends up embracing love and growing in maturity without dying or becoming impossibly insipid, the fate of so many nineteenth-century heroines. Determined to control the arrangements of other people's lives, Emma takes on the self-appointed role of matchmaker in a world that grants little public power to women. Small wonder that Emma, who has a "mind lively and at ease," wastes her considerable creative powers dreaming up romantic scenarios that consistently and comically fail all reality checks. As in all of Jane Austen's works, the simple theme of courtship belies the complexity of her vision of human nature and of our need for power. Technical brilliance? Yes. Moral brilliance? Most definitely.

Ray Bradbury

Something Wicked This Way Comes
Few American novels written this century have endured in the heart and memory as has Ray Bradbury's unparalleled literary classic *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. For those who still dream and remember, for those yet to experience the hypnotic power of its dark poetry, step inside. The show is about to begin. The carnival rolls in sometime after midnight, ushering in Halloween a week early. The shrill siren song of a calliope beckons to all with a seductive promise of dreams and youth regained. In this season of dying, Cooger & Dark's Pandemonium Shadow Show has come to Green Town, Illinois, to destroy every life touched by its strange and sinister mystery. And two boys will discover the secret of its smoke, mazes, and mirrors; two friends who will soon know all too well the heavy cost of wishes. . .and the stuff of nightmare.

Charlotte Bronte

Jane Eyre
Orphaned into the household of her Aunt Reed at Gateshead, subject to the cruel regime at Lowood charity school, Jane Eyre none the less emerges unbroken in spirit and integrity. How she takes up the post of governess at Thornfield Hall, meets and loves Mr Rochester and discovers the impediment to their lawful marriage are elements in a story that transcends melodrama to portray a woman's passionate search for a wider and richer life than that traditionally accorded to her sex in Victorian society.

Emily Bronte

Wuthering Heights
*Wuthering Heights* is a classic tale of possessive and thwarted passion. The tempestuous and mythic story of Catherine Earnshaw, the precocious daughter of the house, and the ruggedly handsome, uncultured foundling her father brings home and names Heathcliff, is played out against the backdrop of English moors no less wild and raw than the love they develop for one another. Brought together as children, Catherine and Heathcliff quickly become attached to each other. As they grow older, their companionship turns into obsession. Family, class, and fate work cruelly against them, as do their own jealous and volatile natures, and much of their lives is spent in revenge and frustration. Yet there is something magnificent about the depth and intensity of their love. Even as you condemn Catherine and Heathcliff for the pain they inflict upon themselves and others, it is hard not to listen in awe when Catherine cries out "I am Heathcliff! He's always, always in my mind; not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being."

Arthur Clarke

Childhood's End
Without warning, giant silver ships from deep space appear in the skies above every major city on Earth. Manned by the Overlords, in fifty years, they eliminate ignorance, disease, and
poverty. Then this golden age ends—and then the age of Mankind begins....

**Michael Crichton**  
*Andromeda Strain*  
The United States government stands warned that sterilization procedures for returning space probes may be inadequate to guarantee uncontaminated re-entry to the atmosphere. When a probe satellite falls to the earth two years later, and lands in a desolate area of northeastern Arizona, the bodies that lie heaped and flung across the ground, have faces locked in frozen surprise. The terror has begun....

**Charles Dickens**  
*Tale of Two Cities*  
*A Tale of Two Cities* is Charles Dickens's great historical novel, set against the violent upheaval of the French Revolution. The most famous and perhaps the most popular of his works, it compresses an event of immense complexity to the scale of a family history, with a cast of characters that includes a bloodthirsty ogress and an antihero as believably flawed as any in modern fiction. Though the least typical of the author's novels, *A Tale of Two Cities* still underscores many of his enduring themes—imprisonment, injustice, and social anarchy, resurrection and the renunciation that fosters renewal.

**E.L. Doctorow**  
*Ragtime*  
Published in 1975, *Ragtime* changed our very concept of what a novel could be. An extraordinary tapestry, *Ragtime* captures the spirit of America in the era between the turn of the century and the First World War. The story opens in 1906 in New Rochelle, New York, at the home of an affluent American family. One lazy Sunday afternoon, the famous escape artist Harry Houdini swerves his car into a telephone pole outside their house. And almost magically, the line between fantasy and historical fact, between real and imaginary characters, disappears. Henry Ford, Emma Goldman, J. P. Morgan, Evelyn Nesbit, Sig- mund Freud, and Emiliano Zapata slip in and out of the tale, crossing paths with Doctorow's imagined family and other fictional characters, including an immigrant peddler and a ragtime musician from Harlem whose insistence on a point of justice drives him to revolutionary violence.

**William Golding**  
*Lord of the Flies*  
The classic tale of a group of English school boys who are left stranded on an unpopulated island, and who must confront not only the defects of their society but the defects of their own natures.

**Ralph Ellison**  
*The Invisible Man*  
*Invisible Man* is a milestone in American literature, a book that has continued to engage readers since its appearance in 1952. A first novel by an unknown writer, it remained on the bestseller list for sixteen weeks, won the National Book Award for fiction, and established Ralph Ellison as one of the key writers of the century. The nameless narrator of the novel describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood", and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be. The book is a passionate and witty tour de force of style, strongly influenced by T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Joyce, and Dostoevsky.

**George Eliot**  
*The Mill on the Floss*  
As Maggie Tulliver approaches adulthood, her spirited temperament brings her into conflict with her family, her community, and her much-loved brother Tom. Still more painfully, she finds her own nature divided between the claims of moral responsibility and her passionate hunger for self-fulfillment. This edition of *The Mill on the Floss* offers the definitive Clarendon text with a new Introduction which deals with Eliot, Darwinism, and the intellectual life of the period, as well
as providing close textual analysis.

Ernest Hemingway   The Old Man and the Sea

*The Old Man and the Sea* is one of Hemingway's most enduring works. Told in language of great simplicity and power, it is the story of an old Cuban fisherman, down on his luck, and his supreme ordeal -- a relentless, agonizing battle with a giant marlin far out in the Gulf Stream. Here Hemingway recasts, in strikingly contemporary style, the classic theme of courage in the face of defeat, of personal triumph won from loss. Written in 1952, this hugely successful novella confirmed his power and presence in the literary world and played a large part in his winning the 1954 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Frank Herbert   Dune

After facing masses of rejection letters, Frank Herbert finally published *Dune* in 1965. More than thirty years later, his magnificent *Dune* chronicles have sold more copies than any other science fiction novels in history. *Dune* begins the story of the man known as Maud'dib, a hero who will guide his great family in their ambition to bring about humankind's most ancient and unattainable dream to found the perfect society. Perhaps only J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* has as loyal a following as Frank Herbert's masterwork. But no work of science fiction has had as profound an imaginative influence.

Thor Heyerdahl   Kon Tiki

*Kon-Tiki* is the record of an astonishing adventure -- a journey of 4,300 nautical miles across the Pacific Ocean by raft. Intrigued by Polynesian folklore, biologist Thor Heyerdahl suspected that the South Sea Islands had been settled by an ancient race from thousands of miles to the east, led by a mythical hero, Kon-Tiki. He decided to prove his theory by duplicating the legendary voyage. On April 28, 1947, Heyerdahl and five other adventurers sailed from Peru on a balsa log raft. After three months on the open sea, encountering raging storms, whales, and sharks, they sighted land -- the Polynesian island of Puka Puka. Translated into sixty-five languages, *Kon-Tiki* is a classic, inspiring tale of daring and courage -- a magnificent saga of men against the sea.

S.E. Hinton   The Outsiders

Ponyboy is fourteen, tough and confused, yet sensitive behind his bold front. Since his parents' death, his loyalties have been to his brothers and his gang, the rough, swinging, long-haired boys from the wrong side of the tracks. When his best friend, Johnny, kills a member of a rival gang, a nightmare of violence begins and swiftly envelops Ponyboy in a turbulent chain of events.

Garrison Keillor   Lake Wobegon Days

Garrison Keillor is the consummate storyteller, gifted with the rare ability - both in print and in performance - to hold an audience spellbound with his tales of ordinary people whose lives contain extraordinary moments of humor, tenderness, and grace.

Barbara Kingsolver   The Bean Trees

Clear-eyed and spirited, Taylor Greer grew up poor in rural Kentucky with the goals of avoiding pregnancy and getting away. But when she heads west with high hopes and a barely functional car, she meets the human condition head-on. By the time Taylor arrives in Tucson, Arizona, she has acquired a completely unexpected child, a three-year-old American Indian girl named Turtle, and must somehow come to terms with both motherhood and the necessity for putting down roots. Hers is a story about love and friendship, abandonment and belonging, and the
discovery of surprising resources in apparently empty places

**John Knowles**  
*A Separate Peace*  
Gene was a lonely, introverted intellectual. Phineas was a handsome, taunting, daredevil athlete. What happened between them at school one summer during the early years of World War II is the subject of *A Separate Peace*. A great bestseller for over thirty years--one of the most starkly moving parables ever written of the dark forces that brood over the tortured world of adolescence

**Madeline L’Engle**  
*A Wrinkle in Time*  
Meg Murray, her little brother Charles Wallace, and their mother are having a midnight snack on a dark and stormy night when an unearthly stranger appears at their door. He claims to have been blown off course, and goes on to tell them that there is such a thing as a "tesseract," which, if you didn't know, is a wrinkle in time. Meg's father had been experimenting with time-travel when he suddenly disappeared. Will Meg, Charles Wallace, and their friend Calvin outwit the forces of evil as they search through space for their father?

**Ursula Legin**  
*The Lathe of Heaven*  
Ursula K. Le Guin has been in the vanguard of science fiction since the publication of her first novel in 1966. Her essays and criticism, short stories and novels, have won numerous literary prizes. But out of all she has produced--all the brilliant speculations advanced and wondrous new worlds imagined -- this is the work which perhaps best endures in the mind, the heart and the conscience. *The Lathe of Heaven* is George Orr's story--a man who dreams things into being, for better or for worse. It is a dark vision and a warning--a fable of power uncontrolled and uncontrollable -- a truly prescient and startling view of humanity, and the consequences of God-playing. It is, quite simply, a masterpiece.

**Baroness Orczy**  
*The Scarlett Pimpernel*  
This timeless novel of intrigue and romance is the adventure of one man's defiance in the face of authority. The rulers of the French Revolution are unable to discern the identity of the Scarlet Pimpernel, a man whose exploits are an embarrassment to the new regime. Is he an exiled French nobleman or an English lord? The only thing for certain is his calling card--the blood-red flower known as the Scarlet Pimpernel...

**Marjorie Rawlings**  
*The Yearling*  
In this classic story of the Baxter family of inland Florida and their wild, hard, satisfying life, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings has written one of the great novels of our times. A rich and varied story - tender in its understanding of boyhood, crowded with the excitement of the backwoods hunt, with vivid descriptions of the primitive, beautiful hammock country, with humor and earthy philosophy - *The Yearling* is a novel for readers of all tastes and ages. Its glowing picture of life that is far and refreshingly removed from modern patterns of living becomes universal in its revelation of simple courageous people and the abiding beliefs they live by.

**John Steinbeck**  
*Of Mice and Men*  
The tragic story, given poignancy by its objective narrative, is about the complex bond between two migrant laborers. The plot centers on George Milton and Lennie Small, itinerant ranch hands who dream of one day owning a small farm. George acts as a father figure to Lennie, who is large and simpleminded, calming him and helping to rein in his immense physical strength. When Lennie accidentally kills the ranch owner's flirtatious daughter-in-law, George shoots his friend rather than allow him to be captured by a vengeful lynch mob.

**Robert L. Stevenson**  
*Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde*  
A kind and well-respected doctor can turn himself into a murderous madman by taking a secret
drug he's created

**Jonathan Swift**  **Gulliver's Travels**
This masterpiece tells the incredible tale of Lemuel Gulliver, an English ship's surgeon. He is shipwrecked upon the shores of Lilliput, where the residents are only six inches high, then journeys takes him to the land of Brobdingnag, populated by giants, a floating island in the sky, and a land where horses have intelligence and man lives as a beast. His adventures, while read by children as an adventure story, are a devastating satire of society and human foibles. Part travelogue, part realism, part symbolism, *Gulliver's Travels* remains a treasured classic of literature.

**Amy Tan**  **The Joy Luck Club**
The "joy luck club" is a mah jong/storytelling support group formed by four Chinese women in San Francisco in 1949. Years later, when member Suyuan Woo dies, her daughter June (Jing-mei) is asked to take her place at the mah jong table. With chapters alternating between the mothers and the daughters of the group, we hear stories of the old times and the new; as parents struggle to adjust to America, their American children must struggle with the confusion of having immigrant parents. This novel is full of complicated, endearingly human characters and first-rate storytelling in the oral tradition.

**Mark Twain**  **Huckleberry Finn**
Mark Twain's classic novel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, tells the story of a teenaged misfit who finds himself floating on a raft down the Mississippi River with an escaping slave, Jim. In the course of their perilous journey, Huck and Jim meet adventure, danger, and a cast of characters who are sometimes menacing and often hilarious.

**Laurens van der Post**  **Story Like the Wind, A Far Off Place**
Young Francois Joubert, living in the remote region bordering the Kalahari Desert, thrills to the wonder of the still-primitive land until his idyllic world is shattered by the political violence of contemporary Africa.

**H.G. Wells**  **The Time Machine (and others)**
*The Time Machine* launched H.G. Wells's career and still remains his best-known work. The story follows the Time Traveler who goes more than eight hundred thousand years into the future to discover what will happen to the human race. He finds humans are divided into two groups: those who live idyllically, and those who do the work; travelling even farther into the future, the traveler then observes the physical limitations of both the human species and the planet itself.

**T.H. White**  **The Once and Future King**
Quartet of novels by T.H. White, published in a single volume in 1958. The quartet comprises *The Sword in the Stone* (1938), *The Queen of Air and Darkness*--first published as The Witch in the Wood (1939)--*The Ill-Made Knight* (1940), and *The Candle in the Wind* (published in the composite volume, 1958). The series is a retelling of the Arthurian legend, from Arthur's birth to the end of his reign, and is based largely on Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*. 