

FOREST LAKE CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL HONORS PROGRAM
Honors English Reading Lists, Grades 9 through 12

GRADE 9

BUNYAN, JOHN. *The Pilgrim's Progress: From this World to That which is to Come*. 1678. Classic Christian Fiction/Classic Fiction

The classic allegory of Christian's search for Heaven describes his perseverance in pursuing his goal despite a myriad of extreme physical and spiritual obstacles. It is alternately titled *The Pilgrim's Progress: From this World to That which is to Come, Delivered Under the Similitude of a Dream: Wherein is Discovered the Manner of his Setting Out, His Dangerous Journey and Safe Arrival at the Desired Country*.

DICKENS, CHARLES. *Great Expectations*. 1860, 1861. Classic Fiction.

The orphan Pip narrates the story of his life from the early days of his childhood until later adulthood. Considered semi-autobiographical of Dickens, like much of his work, the story draws on his experiences of early 19th century life and people.

DICKENS, CHARLES. *Oliver Twist*. 1837, 1838. Classic Fiction.

The first novel in the English language to focus throughout the story on a child protagonist, the story focuses on orphan Oliver who is forced to practice thievery in nineteenth-century London and live a life of crime until ultimately rescued by good-hearted and wealthy benefactor.

DOYLE, SIR ARTHUR CONAN. *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. 1892. (required coursework – excerpt) Mystery/Classic Fiction

This collection of Sherlock Holmes mystery adventures starring the famed eponymous sleuth and the ever helpful Dr. Watson includes "A Scandal in Bohemia," "The Red-Headed League," and "The Adventure of the Speckled Band."

DOYLE, SIR ARTHUR CONAN. *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. 1901-1902. Mystery/Classic Fiction.

This classic crime novel follows Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson as they solve the mysteries surrounding a supposed curse hanging over the infamous Baskerville house.

FRANK, ANN. *The Diary of a Young Girl*. 1947. Autobiography/Classic Nonfiction

Hidden from Nazi soldiers along with her family and others in an annex of rooms above her father's office in Amsterdam, a young German-Jewish girl keeps a diary of her experiences.

HILTON, JAMES. *The Lost Horizon*. 1933. Classic Fiction.

A fantasy novel of the utopian Shangri-La, the story follows a manuscript given to the narrator by his friend Rutherford, tracing the telling of main character Hugh Conway's mysterious journey into a strangely life-sustaining Tibetan monastery.

LEE, HARPER. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. (required coursework)

This American classic, told from the point of view of a precocious young girl, unfolds a story of the tragedies of prejudice, the healing powers of compassion, and the difficult and challenging decisions we all face while growing up in a world filled with injustice. The text contains culturally-accurate language and some content that will require teacher or parental discussion. It is one of few titles to have been honored as the Great American Novel.

MACDONALD, GEORGE. *Sir Gibbie*. (republished as *The Baronet's Song*) 1879.

The themes of self-sacrifice, honor, honesty and purity pervade this classic story of one neglected, impoverished, and illiterate boy's journey across the moors of Scotland's Highlands to ultimately discover who he is and of what his character is truly made.

NORDOFF, CHARLES and JAMES NORMAN HALL. *Mutiny on the Bounty*. 1932. Classic Fiction/Historical Fiction.

The classic novel, based on the mutiny against Lieutenant William Bligh of the British Royal Navy in 1789, tells the story through the first-hand account of faithful (fictional) crew member Roger Byam.

SCOTT, SIR WALTER. *Ivanhoe*. 1819. Classic Fiction/Historical Fiction.

Expelled from his father's home due to his honorable love for the already spoken for Lady Rowena, Ivanhoe goes off to war for King Richard in the Crusades, becomes a brave knight, and meets with many trials and adventures as he finds himself battling for the honor of his friends and his love.

SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM. *Romeo and Juliet*. 1597. Classic Drama (required coursework)

In this classic Shakespearean tragedy of star-crossed love, two young people from feuding families defy societal bounds for the sake of their love and make decisions that ultimately lead to their own tragic demise and their families' restoration of peace.

STEVENSON, ROBERT LEWIS. *Treasure Island*. 1883. Classic Fiction/Adventure Novel.

The tale of young Jim Hawkins and the devious pirate Captain Long John Silver is a coming-of-age novel mixed with non-stop swashbuckling adventure. Much of the popular pirate symbolism and imagery we are familiar with today finds its origin in the descriptions, atmosphere, character, and action of this classic story.

STEVENSON, ROBERT LEWIS. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. 1886.

Dr. Jekyll, a research scientist, develops a drug that changes him from a good person to a bad one. Though the two antagonistic personalities mesh within one body, the evil Mr. Hyde is the dominant personality and must be annihilated.

TOLKIEN, J.R.R. *The Hobbit*. 1937. Classic Fiction/Fantasy.

A precursor to *The Lord of the Rings*, this tale follows the unlikely hobbit-hero Bilbo Baggins through his many treacherous adventures through Middle Earth alongside the good wizard Gandalf. (During these adventures, Bilbo encounters the unfortunate creature Gollum in an underground lake and wins from him the ancient and cursed One Ring, setting into motion the eventual quest Bilbo's nephew will take to destroy it.)

TOLKIEN, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings (Trilogy)*. 1954-1955. Classic Fiction/Fantasy.

This legendary three-part epic follows the "young" hobbit Frodo and his companions through the seemingly impossible quest to destroy the evil One Ring in the fires of Mount Doom. *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers*, and *The Return of the King* are filled with themes of destiny, faith, sacrifice, redemption, and victory of good over evil.

TWAIN, MARK. *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. 1889. Time Travel/Classic Fiction.

This tale of time-travel revolves around Hank Morgan, a 19th century Connecticut man who, inexplicably transported in his sleep (after a head trauma), wakes up under an oak tree in King Arthur's England. As he tries to overcome people's ridicule and suspicions, the main character inevitably resorts to the innovations of modernization, and Twain then offers his reader a satirical look at modern ideology in contrast with the medieval, especially in the areas of industrialization and warfare.

TWAIN, MARK. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. 1876. Classic Fiction.

This classic tale follows the antics and adventures of the young and mischievous Tom Sawyer as he grows up in the American South near the Mississippi River. The text contains culturally-accurate language that may require teacher or parental discussion.

TWAIN, MARK. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. 1885. Classic Fiction.

A poor white boy and a runaway slave find murder, family feuds, villains, and true friendship while traveling down the Mississippi River on a raft. The themes of compassion and understanding contrasted with fear and prejudice, and prevalent messages of the value of human life and dignity are found throughout the story. The text contains culturally-accurate language that may require teacher or parental discussion. It is one of few titles to have been honored as the Great American Novel.

VERNE, JULES. *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. 1869. Science Fiction/Classic Fiction

Kidnapped by the fictional Captain Nemo, master of the powerful submarine *Nautilus*, a French professor embarks on a fantastic undersea voyage and disputes his host's hatred for a flawed humanity. Insightfully written before modern sea-going submarines had become a reality, this tale often returns to the timeless themes of warfare and the value of human life.

VERNE, JULES. *Around the World in 80 Days*. 1873. Adventure Novel/Classic Fiction.

On an extravagant bet, a London gentleman and his valet attempt to circumnavigate the world within 80 days. Written at a time when global tourism was being made easier due to modern advances in major railway systems and the completion of the Suez Canal, the novel allowed the contemporary reader to envision the possibility of such an adventure.

WELLS, H.G. *The Time Machine*. 1895. Science Fiction/Classic Fiction

An inventor and adventurer referred to by the narrator as the Time Traveler relates his story of fearsome and wondrous journeys by means of traveling through what he asserts to be the “fourth dimension” to a group of dinner guests. The tale of his thrilling adventures in a futuristic civilization in 802,701 AD forms the majority of the novel’s plot.

GRADE 10

BRADBURY, RAY. *The Martian Chronicles*. 1950. Science-Fiction/Classic Fiction

Connected stories describe man’s attempts to explore and colonize Mars to resemble the world they left behind during a dystopian 21st century. For the mature reader: the text contains content that may require teacher or parental discussion.

BRONTE, EMILY. *Wuthering Heights*. 1847. Classic Fiction.

Forced by a storm to spend the night at the home of his landlord, the somber Heathcliff, Mr. Lockwood uncovers a tale of tragedy, terror, and hatred on the Yorkshire moors, and much later observes as peace is restored to the conflict at last.

BUCK, PEARL S. *The Good Earth*. Classic Fiction. 1931. Classic Fiction.

When this Pulitzer Prize winning novel was first published, it helped to tackle prejudices commonly held by the Western World. A challenging and heartbreaking fictional account of one man’s struggle, alongside his family, from impoverished farmer to wealthy landowner, this tale gives much insight into traditional Chinese cultural practice and heritage and repeatedly evokes in the reader empathy and compassion for the trials and injustices the characters must face. The story touches on complex and difficult cultural issues such as the practice of foot-binding, the abandonment (or abortion) of female infants, the practice of employing concubines, and the prevalence of opium addiction. It should be read with maturity and concurrently discussed with parents and teachers.

CONRAD, JOSEPH. *Lord Jim*. 1899-1900. Classic Fiction.

Narrator Marlow relates most of the story’s plot to a group of enrapt listeners and later finishes the tale through a letter. His narration tells the tragedy of the almost-doomed pilgrimage ship the S.S. Patna, and the trial involving the men, including young Lord Jim, who deserted the ship and her unfortunate passengers in their greatest hour of need. The story then traces Jim’s determined redemption of his moral and heroic character and the adventurous events that follow. The story is based on an actual historical occurrence, and the character Marlow is also the narrator of three of Conrad’s other works, *Heart of Darkness*, “Youth” and *Chance*.

COSTAIN, THOMAS B. *The Silver Chalice*. 1952. Historical Fiction/Modern Fiction.

Inspired by the archeological discovery of a first century silver chalice in Antioch, and containing a range of biblical and historical figures, this novel offers a fictional context as to the making of a silver chalice used to house the Holy Grail.

DICKENS, CHARLES. *A Tale of Two Cities*. 1859. Historical Fiction/Classic Fiction.

This story of the French Revolution follows a classic band of complex Dickens characters through a tragic yet beautiful story that contrasts human cruelty with the light of self-sacrifice and redemption.

DOUGLAS, LLOYD C. *The Robe*. 1942. Christian Historical Fiction/Classic Fiction.

This story presents a moving retelling of the crucifixion of Christ from the vantage of a Roman tribune commanding the unit that puts Jesus on the cross. It offers an interesting alternate perspective, as historical fiction, regarding this pivotal event in human – and eternal – history.

DUMAS, ALEXANDRE. *The Three Musketeers*. 1844. Classic Fiction.

Set in France from the years 1625 to 1628, the classic tale recounts the adventures of brave d'Artagnan after he leaves home to become a musketeer. The novel follows the young man and his companions along their journey as they encounter a slew of mysterious, cunning, and intriguing characters.

ELIOT, GEORGE (MARY ANN EVANS). *Silas Marner*. 1861. Classic Fiction.

In this tale of familial love and loyalty, a reclusive and disenfranchised elderly weaver who has lost his faith is brought back to life and love by the saving grace of his adopted daughter's faithful devotion to him.

ELLIOT, ELIZABETH. *Through Gates of Splendor*. 1957. Classic Christian Nonfiction.

The true story of five young missionaries savagely killed while trying to establish communication and friendship with the Auca Indians of Ecuador. The story is told through the eyes of Elisabeth Elliot, the wife of Jim Elliot, one of the young men who was killed. (It was adapted for the screen in 2006 in the movie *End of the Spear*.)

HANSBERRY, LORRAINE. *A Raisin in the Sun*. Drama/Classic Fiction.

The first Broadway play written by a black woman, this semi-autobiographical story portrays experiences based on the author's own girlhood in the Woodlawn community of Chicago. The support and value of family, the tragedy of poverty, and the fight for human dignity are themes throughout.

HOMER. *The Odyssey*. (High School Level, Abridged) 700s B.C. Classic Fiction.

Homer's epic tale is a staple for studying Greek mythology. The story follows the eponymous hero's journey as he struggles to survive his quest and return once more to his wife and son who wait for him at home. Various characters of Greek mythology – gods, monsters, and heroic figures – pepper the pages, and Homer's classic heroic storytelling makes this epic a cornerstone of world literature. (The abridged high school version is preferred, as unabridged translations are extremely lengthy and complex).

HUGO, VICTOR. *Les Miserables*. Classic Fiction.

Hugo's celebrated tale follows twenty years of the journey of Jean Valjean from unjustly convicted criminal to wealthy factory owner and generous benefactor. The story unfolds on the cusp of the French Revolution, and reveals the plight of the struggling working class, and the rightness of upper class generosity and compassion. Themes of justice, redemption, poverty, good vs. evil, and the love of family and community are found throughout the novel.

HUGO, VICTOR. *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. 1831. Classic Fiction.

Set in Paris in 1482, the novel centers around Paris' famous cathedral and the characters whose lives become interwoven with the structure's own story. The hunchback Quasimodo, the gypsy Esmeralda, and the maniacal and deceitful priest Frollo feature across the eleven books composing the tale. Hugo's criticism of "modernization" and the Parisian justice system of his day is prevalent in the novel, and themes of treachery vs. integrity, possession vs. love, the value of loyalty to true justice, and goodness vs. evil are found throughout.

KNOWLES, JOHN. *A Separate Peace*. 1959. Modern Fiction.

Gene Forrester returns after years absent to his old college preparatory school in New England and deals with the heavy guilt he has held for having indirectly caused the death of his former roommate. Set during World War II, this story reveals the angst and disillusionment experienced by young boys either terrified by the prospect of enlistment, or eager to fight for their nation's honor.

ORCZY, BARONESS EMMUSKA. *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. 1903. Drama/Classic Fiction

This classic adventure is set during the French Revolution and follows the story of a secret society of English aristocracy, led by a secretive hero who goes by the name Scarlet Pimpernel, occupied with the task of saving their French counterparts from death by the guillotine.

ORWELL, GEORGE. *Animal Farm*. 1945. Satire/Classic Fiction

This satire-told-as-fable covers the rise of Russian communism and offers a look at a frightening revolution by subjugated animals against their oppressive humans, after which the animals who assume control turn out to be just as cruel as the humans who once controlled them all.

PATON, ALAN. *Cry the Beloved Country*. 1948. Classic Fiction.

This classic depicts the tale of a black African Anglican priest of a rural parish as he searches for his son Absalom in the city of Johannesburg. Lamenting the degradation of traditional culture and the value of honor and family, the novel portrays the sadness of a nation racked with racism and mistrust.

REMARQUE, ERICH MARIA. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. 1929. Classic Fiction.

In this solidly narrated, semi-autobiographical story of the tragic realities of warfare, a naïve young German soldier and his comrades quickly become disillusioned and appalled by the horrors of the World War I trenches. The text contains culturally-accurate language that may require teacher or parental discussion.

RICHARDSON, DON. *Peace Child*. 1975. Christian Fiction.

A missionary couple learns the secret to winning over a tribal community that tragically honors deceit and treachery above all. In the midst of terrible tribal warfare, a startling analogy presents itself to demonstrate to the tribal people God's love in sending His own Son as a redeeming sacrifice.

ROSTAND, EDMUND. *Cyrano de Bergerac*. (*English translation*) 1897. Drama/Classic Fiction.

One of the most popular plays in the French language, the drama is based on the life of the real Cyrano, a French soldier, remarkable swordsman, and a gifted poet, whose self-doubt due to his physical ugliness causes his love for his fair cousin Roxanne to go unrequited. Themes of valor, honor, and goodness of heart prevail throughout.

SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM. *Julius Caesar*. 1623. Drama/Classic (Historical) Fiction

This timeless Shakespeare play (featuring the often quoted line, "*Et tu, Brute?* Then fall, Caesar.") depicts the events and characters surrounding the conspiracy to assassinate the Roman dictator, Julius Caesar.

SOPHOCLES. *Antigone*. 5th Century B.C. Drama/Classic Fiction

Chronologically the third drama in the Three Theban Plays, this selection portrays the conflict between individual conscience and state policy, and focuses on the themes of fate, guilt, human suffering, and divine and human justice.

TEN BOOM, CORRIE. *The Hiding Place*. 1964. Autobiography/Classic Nonfiction.

An amazing real life account of one family's experiences during the German occupation of Holland demonstrates the author's stalwart Christian faith that perseveres with hope in the face of horror and tragedy.

WILKERSON, DAVID. *The Cross and the Switchblade*. 1963. Autobiography/Classic Christian Nonfiction.

This autobiographical account of the author's move to New York City as an inner-city pastor follows his struggles to love and serve his adopted community in the midst of gang perpetrated violence and drug use. Text contains culturally-accurate descriptions of violence and gang life and may need teacher or parental discussion.

WELLS, H.G. *War of the Worlds*. 1898. Science Fiction/Classic Fiction

This early science fiction novella follows the fictional account of an early 20th century invasion of England by aliens from Mars. The narrator and others struggle for basic survival and the aliens methodically take over the majority of England before being overthrown by infectious earth microbes for which they have no natural immunities. The author's views on social Darwinism and evolutionary ideology come through the story's plot, as do the themes of the struggle for stable civilization, the moral questions of predator vs. prey, the moral issues of warfare, and the value of human life.

GRADE 11

ACHEBE, CHINUA. *Things Fall Apart*. 1958. Classic Fiction.

Nigerian author Achebe presents this fictional story following the life of late 1800's African wrestling phenomenon Okonkwo and his family, and touches on the effects of British colonialism mixed with Christian missionary influence on the culture and traditions of his tribal and ethnic Nigerian community.

ANDERSON, SHERWOOD. *Winesburg, Ohio*. 1919. Classic Fiction.

A collection of short stories that can be loosely defined as a novel, Anderson's work follows the main character George Willard and the other inhabitants of his eponymous home town. The book can be seen as an exploration of the frustrations and stunted mental, emotional, and social maturity of inhabitants of small-town America, and a testimony to the real beauty and value that can be discovered under the surface of even the most sorrowful, disfigured, and disillusioned of people.

CATHER, WILLA. *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. 1927. Classic Fiction

This narrative is told as a legend, a beautiful, tragic, yet hopeful story set against a backdrop of Roman Catholic heritage in the American Southwest. A French Jesuit missionary priest is commissioned to bring spiritual life back into the 19th century New Mexico territory. The novel follows his journey across the years as he experiences great empathy not only for the native peoples of the land, their traditions, and their plight under corrupted leadership, but also for his fellow missionaries and their commission to bring hope to a people so long oppressed. Themes of racial equality, compassion, the corruption of wealth, the transforming power of faith, and the value of integrity abound.

CATHER, WILLA. *My Antonia*. 1918. Classic Fiction.

This classic American story of family, devotion, charity, and friendship, focuses on a community of immigrant families in rural Nebraska. It tells the story of Antonia Shimerdas through the lens of narrator Jim Burden, her loyal childhood friend, revealing much of the trials and triumphs of immigrant life.

CERVANTES, MIGUEL DE. *Don Quixote De La Mancha*. 1605. Classic Fiction.

Noted as the most influential work from Spain's Golden Age, Cervantes' classic novel presents the story of a retired country gentleman named Alonso Quixano, who has immersed himself so much in the world of fiction that he comes to believe himself a "knight", and his friend, also so immersed, who calls himself Don Quixote De La Mancha. The humorous novel follows them on their many adventures in search of opportunities to exercise acts of chivalry.

CRANE, STEPHEN. *The Red Badge of Courage*. 1895. Historical Fiction/Classic Fiction.

In this classic story of bravery and honor set during the Civil War, a young Union soldier matures to manhood and finds peace of mind and heart as his conflicting emotions about war are finally resolved.

COOPER, JAMES FENIMORE. *The Deerslayer*. 1841. Classic Fiction.

The last published of (though chronologically the prequel to) Cooper's Leatherstocking Tales, this novel gives the previous life story of main character Nathaniel Bumppo, a young man of the New York frontier in the 18th century. A quintessential hero, the noble and compassionate "Natty" becomes involved in daring rescues, the last of which lands him in a frightening predicament.

COOPER, JAMES FENIMORE. *The Last of the Mohicans*. 1826. Classic Fiction.

Earning Cooper the distinction of being one of the first world-famous American writers, this adventure story is the best known of all the Leatherstocking Tales. Set in 1757 during America's French and Indian War, the novel tells the tale of Nathaniel Bumppo and his involvement in the rescue of two sisters, daughters of a British commander, who had been captured by the Magua tribe during a massacre of unarmed Anglo-American troops and innocent civilians.

FITZGERALD, F. SCOTT. *The Great Gatsby*. 1925. Classic Fiction. (alternately required coursework)

Rich in vivid characters and a masterful depth of symbolism, Fitzgerald's famous novel allows his readers to revisit the "Jazz Age" in New York City and Long Island in the summer of 1922. The tragic, yet telling story is given through the eyes of narrator Nick Carraway, a young man impressed by the wealth and pomp of elegant New England society, yet at the same time disturbed by the flagrant squandering of wealth and degradation of morality he observes to be so prevalent in his

society. Despite his attempts to understand and assist his new acquaintances – representatives of a culture that Fitzgerald observed to be the result of post-World War I shock and disillusionment – he ultimately watches as they suffer due to their desperate decisions. While a standard in high school and college courses throughout the United States, the text does contain culturally-accurate language and subject matter that may require teacher and parental discussion. It is one of few titles to have been honored as the Great American Novel.

GOLDING, WILLIAM. *Lord of the Flies*. Classic Fiction.

After their plane crashes on a deserted island, a marooned group of preparatory school boys must fend for themselves and establish some version of civilization as they await rescue. Themes of good vs. evil, compassion and justice, the psychological effects of fear, the corruptive influences of power, the frailty of humanity's best efforts for community, the ease of civilization's fall into savagery, and the balance of power in government pepper this staple of the American academic literary cannon. The text contains culturally-accurate language and subject matter (including some graphic scenes of violence) that may require teacher and parental discussion.

HAWTHORNE, NATHANIEL. *The House of Seven Gables*. 1851. Classic Fiction.

Character and motive are the driving force of this story centered around a gloomy and history-haunted mansion. The tale moves through stories of the family who has lived in the house for generations. It traces them from the past to the present and resolves with the redemption of the family as they move on from the deep sadness linked to their history.

HAWTHORNE, NATHANIEL. *The Scarlet Letter*. 1850. Classic Fiction. (alternately required reading)

This Gothic American novel is considered to be Hawthorne's masterpiece. The tale explores the issues of love, adultery, sin and guilt, grace, past and present, civilization vs. the wild, redemption, and legalism in the setting of Puritan 17th century New England. Hester Prynne gives birth to a daughter after committing adultery, but will not disclose the father. The story follows her struggle to regain her dignity – and that of her child – through sincere and repentant living. The climax of the story and the onset of the resolution come quickly, side by side, as the child's father finally reveals himself to the community. This book is one of few titles to have been honored as the Great American Novel.

HEMINGWAY, ERNEST. *A Farewell to Arms*. 1929. Classic Fiction.

Hemingway's semi-autobiographical story tells the sorrowful tale of Lieutenant Frederick Henry, an ambulance driver in Europe during World War I, and his love for Catherine Barkley. The book traces their relationship through the terrors and trials of a wartime world.

HEMINGWAY, ERNEST. *The Old Man and the Sea*. 1952. Classic Fiction. (alternately required coursework)

In this classic allegorical tale filled with themes of honor, determination, and the truths of gleaning life from death, the old Cuban fisherman Santiago battles a giant marlin far out in the Gulf Stream and bequeaths a legacy to his faithful pupil, Manolin.

HERRIOT, JAMES. *All Things Bright and Beautiful*. 1974. Modern Fiction.

Herriot's semi-autobiographical story collection (the second book in the American publications of his stories, preceded by *All Creatures Great and Small* and followed by *All Things Wise and Wonderful*) about the life of a country veterinarian, are full of endearing vignettes, comical and heart-warming, and true-to-life.

MELVILLE, HERMAN. *Moby Dick*. 1851. Classic Fiction.

Considered one of the greatest novels in the English language, this classic tale follows the stirring adventures of its main character, Ishmael, aboard the whaling vessel, the *Pequod*. After signing on to the ship's crew, Ishmael discovers that Captain Ahab intends to use this particular voyage, not to hunt whales to sell, but to track and hunt down his arch nemesis, a gigantic and ferocious white whale called Moby Dick. Symbolism and metaphor play an integral role in this classic novel, unveiling themes of good vs. evil, questions of social class and status, and ultimately, personal discoveries (primarily for the main character) concerning the existence of God. This book is one of few titles to have been honored as the Great American Novel.

MILLER, ARTHUR. *The Crucible: A Play in Four Acts*. 1953. Drama/Classic Fiction. (alternately required coursework)

This play, based on the real-life events of the Salem witch trials of 1692, follows the tragic consequences of deception, mob-mentality, prejudice, and paranoia in one small Massachusetts community. Considering the time period in which the

drama was written, it can be understood that Miller intended the plot to serve as an allegory for McCarthyism and the “Red Scare” mindset rampant in 1950s America.

MITCHELL, MARGARET. *Gone with the Wind*. 1936. Classic Fiction.

The story follows the rebellious Southern belle Scarlett O’Hara and her relationships and experiences before, during, and after the Civil War. It traces the aftereffects of war on the world of Southern aristocracy with the themes of wealth and poverty, determination, loyalty and betrayal, and love.

ORWELL, GEORGE. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (or *1984*). 1949. Science Fiction/Classic Fiction

Presenting the author’s frightening view of a dystopian future, this story follows the life of intellectual Winston Smith and his disillusionment with the totalitarian government that runs the lives of everyone in his fictional home country of Oceania. Translated into 62 different languages since its original publication, this startling piece of modern literature that coined the phrase “Big Brother is watching you” brings to light questions and terrifying predictions surrounding the definition of personal privacy and the extent of government interference in private life. Seen by some societies as revolutionary and politically dangerous, this book (along with Ayn Rand’s *Anthem*, Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, and Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451*) has been banned by libraries in many countries. For the mature reader: the text contains content that may require teacher or parental discussion.

PERETTI, FRANK E. *This Present Darkness*. 1986. Modern Christian Fiction.

In this powerful portrayal of the power of prayer as a weapon against the workings of evil, a newspaperman and a pastor, unknowingly joined by angelic forces, find themselves fighting a plan by demonic entities to subjugate humanity from a stronghold in the fictional town of Ashton, Oregon.

POTOK, CHAIM. *The Chosen*. 1967. Classic Fiction.

The first-person narrative set in New York City at the end of World War II follows seven years in the friendship of two young Jewish boys from very different backgrounds. Over the course of the novel, from their fifteenth year until the start of college, the two find their separate paths, each in ways that lead to answered questions and resolutions.

RICHTER, CONRAD. *A Light in the Forest*. 1953. Classic Fiction.

Set in 1764 New England, the novel depicts the experiences of True Son, a young man captured and raised from the age of four by the Delaware Indian tribe. True Son, who loves his tribal life and considers the Indians his family, is among several captives returned (in a bargain to keep tribal land) to his birth family – and white civilization – and tries to cope with the cultural differences and suspicion surrounding him.

STEINBECK, JOHN. *Of Mice and Men*. 1937. Classic Fiction.

This Depression era novella follows the tragic story of main characters George Milton and Lennie Small, two migrant California ranch workers who struggle to maintain human dignity in the face of poverty, desperation, and injustice. It explores the idea that man’s best intentions cannot guarantee a pleasant future. The text contains culturally-accurate language and subject matter that may require teacher or parental discussion.

STEINBECK, JOHN. *The Grapes of Wrath*. 1939. Classic Fiction.

This American classic, winner of both the Pulitzer Prize for the Novel and the Nobel Prize for Literature, weaves a powerful tale of Depression era woe. It follows the story of the Joads, a poor “Okie” sharecropper family struggling to survive after making their way to California during the Dust Bowl era. While a staple in high school and college classes throughout the United States, the text does contain culturally-accurate language and subject matter that may require teacher or parental discussion. The book is one of few titles to have been honored as the Great American Novel.

STEINBECK, JOHN. *The Pearl*. 1947. Classic Fiction. (alternately required coursework)

Main character Kino, a poor native pearl diver in Baja California, discovers a beautiful pearl that he names “The Pearl of the World” for its magnificence and grandeur; he thinks it will bring tremendously good fortune to his family. The book follows the effects of wealth on Kino and his family, and traces through the story the themes of poverty, wealth, and injustice.

STOWE, HARRIET BEECHER. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. 1852. Classic Fiction.

One of the most well-known and powerful works of anti-slavery literature, the story reveals the cruelty Stowe recognized in her contemporary society. The author also illustrates through her characters the very real power of Christian love in conquering the evils of this world. While maintaining its place as the best-selling novel of the 19th century, the text contains culturally-accurate language and subject matter that may require teacher or parental explanation and discussion.

STRATTON-PORTER, GENE. *A Girl of the Limberlost*. 1909. Classic Fiction.

The novel tells the story of the life and love of Elnora Comstock, a neglected girl growing up on the edge of poverty near the Limberlost swamp in Indiana. Themes of the redeeming qualities of forgiveness, kindness, and compassion, the degradations of poverty, and the triumph of love over tragedy abound.

WHITE, T.H. *The Once and Future King*. 1958. Arthurian Fantasy/Classic Fiction.

The novel (from which comes its popular first of four parts entitled *The Sword in the Stone*) is a fanciful retelling of the legendary King Arthur, his boyhood, education, and kingship, and the romance between his most valued and trusted knight Lancelot and Queen Guinevere (spelled "Guenever" in White's text).

WILDER, THORTON. *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. 1927. Classic Fiction.

This Pulitzer Prize winning story tells the tales surrounding the lives of the people whose lives were lost with the collapse of a rope suspension bridge in Peru. An eyewitness, a friar, makes inquiries into the lives of each of the victims in search of the deep answers to the question of why each of them had to die. The book takes a hard look at the problem of evil as the friar wrestles with his findings.

WILDER, THORNTON. *Our Town*. 1938. Drama/Classic Fiction.

This Pulitzer Prize winning drama features glimpses into the everyday lives of several characters from the fictional small town of Grover's Corners, New Hampshire. The play's structure employs an effective dramatic technique by allowing the main character, the Stage Manager, to be aware of his presence in the dramatic production and to communicate directly with the audience. Much of the play's beauty lies in its portrayal of the daily relationships, loves, struggles, and hopes of an American family.

GRADE 12

AUGUSTINE. *Confessions of St. Augustine*. Autobiography/Classic Christian Nonfiction.

This world classic is the autobiographical testimony of Augustine, one of the greatest early church fathers. Amazing to read for its honesty and humility in describing temptation and sinfulness, the book offers inspiration in its portrayal of God's redemptive truth and grace, and the saving power of divine love and faithfulness.

AUSTEN, JANE. *Emma*. 1816. Classic Fiction.

In this comic novel set in Regency England, young Emma Woodhouse comes of age and attempts to play matchmaker for her friends with various comical and dramatic results. The beautiful, intelligent, witty, and rather spoiled heroine must figure out what is truly most important concerning love, and eventually opens her eyes to the state of her own heart.

AUSTEN, JANE. *Persuasion*. 1818. Classic Fiction.

Jane Austen's last complete novel follows its heroine, 27-year-old Anne Elliot, a bright, intellectual, and compassionate young woman who is the voice of reason – though most often unheeded – for her family. Her father, a pompous and vain baronet, and her two sisters would do well to be guided by her moderate and sensible perspectives, but they do not see in her what her other acquaintances do. Having rejected the gallant Captain Wentworth's proposal of marriage eight years prior upon the advice of a respected family friend, Anne has never relinquished her love for him. But fate brings them together again through a series of peculiar circumstances. This is perhaps Austen's strongest and most refined work.

AUSTEN, JANE. *Pride and Prejudice*. 1813. Classic Fiction. (required coursework)

Elizabeth Bennet, the bright and beautiful second eldest daughter of a well-to-do country gentleman, has the grace of character and sense of humor fit to challenge even the apparent pride of Mr. Darcy, a brooding and seemingly arrogant

master of the grand Pemberley estate. Various trials and tribulations find the Bennet family over the course of this novel, bringing the characters together in a way none of them could have foreseen.

AUSTEN, JANE. *Sense and Sensibility*. 1811. Classic Fiction. (required coursework – excerpt)

Elinor and Marianne Dashwood are beloved sisters with quite opposite temperaments, showing varying degrees of sense and sensibility. When their father dies, the family estate passes to their elder half-brother John, and the Dashwood women are left impoverished. A generous, though humorously meddling relative offers to rent Mrs. Dashwood and her three daughters a cottage on his property, introducing them to society that leads to both heartbreak and hope.

BLACKMORE, RICHARD D. *Lorna Doone*. 1869. Classic Fiction.

Set in 17th century Devon, England, the story follows the title heroine and the heroic farmer John Ridd through this classic tale of intrigue, family rivalry and revenge, heritage and loyalty, noble destiny, and the faithfulness of true love.

BOLT, ROBERT. *A Man for All Seasons*. 1960 (1954). Drama/Classic Fiction

The plot is based on the true story of Sir Thomas More (the political scholar who coined the word “utopia”), Chancellor of England during the reign of Kings Henry VIII. Refusing to endorse or denounce the king’s wish to divorce his wife and marry his mistress, even in the face of death by execution, More is portrayed as a respected man of principle, beloved by the common people for his intelligence, dignity, and uprightness of character.

BRADBURY, RAY. *Fahrenheit 451*. 1953. Science Fiction/Classic Fiction.

In this story of a futuristic dystopian society of ignorance and hedonism, “fireman” Guy Montag’s job is to burn books. Prompted by secretly reading some of the books he is supposed to destroy, Guy becomes more and more disillusioned by the morally, and intellectually, decaying world around him. Finally, he must decide to either give in to societal norms, or to stand for what he believes and face the consequences. For the mature reader: the text contains content that may require teacher or parental discussion.

BRONTE, CHARLOTTE. *Jane Eyre*. 1847. Classic Fiction. (alternately required coursework)

This classic novel spans many years in the life of title heroine Jane Eyre, whose childhood, education, independence, and career as governess and teacher provide the backdrop for a rather gothic *Bildungsroman* of mystery, suspense, romance, and the triumph of moral integrity and innocence of heart.

CHAUCER, GEOFFREY. *The Canterbury Tales*. 1300. Classic Fiction/Poetry. (required coursework – excerpt)

This world classic of British literature features a collection of stories – originally written in Middle English verse with the exception of two of the tales which were written in prose – as is known in its entirety as a “frame story”, in other words, many stories within a larger story. The larger story follows a group of medieval pilgrims as they journey together from Southwark to Canterbury to visit the shrine of the murdered monk-turned-saint Thomas Becket at the town’s famous Cathedral. Along the way, the pilgrims each tell stories – ranging from hopeful to bawdy to tragic to hilarious – in the effort to win the challenge for best story posed at the onset of the journey.

CHESTERTON, G.K. *Orthodoxy: The Romance of Faith*. 1908. Christian Classic Nonfiction.

Drawing on Christian scripture and doctrine, as well as works and perspectives of several renowned writers and thinkers, Chesterton asserts in this deep-reaching book that the Christian life is indeed full of fantastic adventure, startling story, and truth greater than anything we have dared to imagine. Similar to the nonfiction writings of C.S. Lewis (Chesterton had, in fact, a huge impact on the forging of Lewis’ own faith and writing), the book is down to earth, honest, and intellectually stimulating.

CONRAD, JOSEPH. *Heart of Darkness*. 1902. Classic Fiction.

The novella offers a deeply symbolic, brilliantly woven frame narrative that lives up to its name. An Englishman who has taken a job as a ferry captain in the Congo tells a tale as he travels deep into the jungle to meet with a group of men aboard a ship stationed in the Thames Estuary. The narrator becomes fascinated with a mysterious and notorious man named Kurtz, an individual whom we meet as a man with formerly great prospects haunted by a severe fever and the evil – metaphorically represented by such elements as his paintings, his voice, and the deep darkness of the Congo jungle – that he has allowed to virtually take over his life.

DANTE. *The Inferno*. (first of the three parts of *The Divine Comedy*. 1308-1321.) Classic Epic Poetry.

In this classic work of world literature (which is followed by the second and third parts of *The Divine Comedy*, namely *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*) Dante presents a horrifying picture of the terrors awaiting the unrepentant in Hell. Dante figures himself, accompanied by the poet Virgil as his guide, as the first-hand observer of condemned souls as he travels through the gate and on to behold the tortures that await the lost in the “nine circles” of Hell.

DEFOE, DANIEL. *Robinson Crusoe*. 1719. Classic Fiction. (required coursework - excerpt)

Often regard as the first English language novel, this adventure story presents the tale of a shipwrecked and stranded castaway and his adventurous survival on the island upon which he lands. After past disobedience to his parents, frightening encounters with pirates, and involvement in the African slave trade, Crusoe becomes the sole survivor of a terrible wreck, and, after reading the Bible, realizes that Providence has allowed him to survive. Casting off his past, he resolves to look to God for his provision. The book then narrates the detailed events of his life of the island.

DICKENS, CHARLES. *David Copperfield*. 1850. Classic Fiction.

Out of all of his many works, this lengthy novel was Dickens’ personal favorite. It follows the life and times of protagonist David Copperfield, incorporating many autobiographical elements from Dickens’ own experience. The first of the author’s novels to be told almost completely as a first person narrative, the story sees Copperfield through his relationships, tribulations, and life lessons of childhood, education, early career, and adulthood. It deals greatly with the discipline and quality of the heart, and glorifies compassion, generosity, honesty, and faithfulness. It was alternately titled *David Copperfield or The Personal History, Adventures, Experience and Observation of David Copperfield the Younger of Blunderstone Rookery (which he never meant to be published on any account)*.

DICKENS, CHARLES. *Hard Times*. 1854. Classic Fiction. (required coursework)

This Dickens’ tale is fraught with the author’s socioeconomic commentary of Victorian England, hidden amongst the antics and absurdities, the loves and losses, the lives and lessons of a slew of classic Dickens characters. Set in fictional Coketown, a fully industrialized, dirty, smoky milling town characteristic of the author’s critical view of the Industrial Revolution, the story follows the experiences of the family and relations of Thomas Gradgrind, a learned and moderately wealthy man who has adopted the utilitarian philosophy that only factual knowledge – rather than imaginative – is worth anything. The novel’s several plotlines eventually interweave, culminating in a powerful message making clear those intangible – even nonfactual – things that make life truly worth living.

DOSTOYEVSKY, FYODOR. *Crime and Punishment*. 1866. Classic Fiction.

Out of desperation and the attempted justification of purging an evil from the world, a destitute Russian student commits to murdering an underhanded pawnbroker for her money. The novels follows its title’s course, as the student finds himself having to face the emotional, mental, and physical consequences of his actions. After he is sent to Siberia for his crime, we see present in the main character’s relationships – as in other Dostoyevsky works – a stirring allegory of God’s redeeming love for fallen humanity.

DOSTOYEVSKY, FYODOR. *The Brothers Karamazov*. Classic Fiction.

The author’s last and perhaps greatest work, this novel follows the members of the Karamazov family, primarily the three highly disparate brothers, through years of trial and tribulation, as the selfless and endlessly compassionate youngest of the brothers, Alexei, perseveres in loving his family members unconditionally, despite their corrupt lifestyles and ill treatment of themselves and those around them. It presents a beautiful story of the redemptive and restorative power of human – following Divine – love, and saving grace purchased through sacrifice of self. (Be prepared for many characters with several names each. For example, Alexei is alternately called Alyosha, Alyoshka, Alyoshenka, Alyoshechka, Alexeichik, Lyosha, and Lyoshenka throughout the novel, and his brothers are also given various versions of their names.)

DUMAS, ALEXANDRE. *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

Presenting themes of justice and vengeance, mercy and forgiveness, the novel (based on certain details of a true historical account) traces the story of a man unjustly accused of being a political traitor and sentenced to prison. Upon his eventual release, he swears vengeance on those who falsely accused him and is swept up in the events that follow.

DU MAURIER, DAPHNE. *Rebecca*. 1938. Mystery/Classic Fiction.

Maxim de Winter's young second wife becomes the new mistress of the grand English estate of Manderley. As the story unfolds, the unnamed heroine gradually uncovers a strange and dark mystery surrounding the marriage and death of Rebecca, Maxim's glamorous first wife, who has been dead for eight months prior.

ELIOT, GEORGE (MARY ANN EVANS). *Middlemarch*. 1871. Classic Fiction.

The lives of several individuals in the fictional early 19th century English country town of Middlemarch converge in one of the greatest literary works of its era, this classic story that author Virginia Woolf called "one of the few English novels written for grown up people." The novel touches on issues of faith, loyalty, commitment, self-discipline, philanthropy, the balance between intellectuality and emotional health, love and devotion, and the effects of class distinctions and financial status on individual persons.

ELIOT, GEORGE (MARY ANN EVANS). *The Mill on the Floss*. 1860. Classic Fiction.

The loves and losses, adventures and misadventures, and various experiences of brother and sister Tom and Maggie Tulliver are painted throughout the 10-15 years, set in mid-1800s England, that the novel's plot covers. A story of familial relationship and hardship, love and loss, it covers the themes of unconditional love, the necessity of human affection, circumstances and determinism, and ultimate redemption.

ELIOT, T.S. *The Four Quartets*. 1943. Modern Poetry. (required coursework – excerpt)

An extensive free-verse poem in four parts, this epoch work in the T.S. Eliot cannon uses the metaphorical imagery of the four elements as a backdrop to the exploration of place, time, memory, experience, and spiritual truth.

ELIOT, T.S. *Murder in the Cathedral*. 1935. Modern Poetic Drama.

The play presents a dramatization of the tragic 1170 assassination of Archbishop Thomas Becket in the Cathedral of Canterbury, based largely on a preserved eyewitness account.

GOLDSMITH, OLIVER. *The Vicar of Wakefield*. 1766. Classic Fiction.

A literary classic, as well as a very popular novel among the literati during the Romantic and Victorian periods, Goldsmith's novel follows the well-to-do vicar and his family as they struggle through a severe loss of fortune, a series of strange and seemingly tragic occurrences, and the family's eventual restoration to an even better future than they could have envisioned.

HERSEY, JOHN R. *Hiroshima*. 1946. (originally published in *The New Yorker*, taking up the whole of that issue) Journalism.

This stirring and terrifying piece offers a nonfiction, journalistic account of the real-life happenings that occurred to six particular Japanese individuals during and after the hydrogen bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945. It contains graphic (potentially very disturbing) descriptions of injuries and illnesses caused by the event, and triggers compassion when taken in by the mature reader as a window to the experiences of "the other side" during this cataclysmic event.

JAMES, HENRY. *The Turn of the Screw*. 1898. Classic Fiction.

The novella is a frame story and ghost story, presenting a harrowing tale of a governess who finds that the house in which she accepts employment is quite possibly haunted. Frightening encounters and sightings increase as the governess realizes that the two young children in her care are likely in very grave danger. She tries to rescue her charges, but tragedy results.

KAFKA, FRANZ. *The Metamorphosis*. 1915. Classic Fiction.

Main character Gregor Samsa awakes one morning to discover that he has somehow transformed into a strange kind of large insect-like creature. His family's terrible treatment of him and all that results represents themes of prejudice, society's treatment of those who are ostracized, and the loneliness and desperation of isolation.

LEWIS, C.S. *Mere Christianity*. 1943. Classic Christian Nonfiction. (required coursework – excerpt)

This is C.S. Lewis' quintessential work of Christian apologetics. The result of compiling the content of a series of radio lectures he gave in England during World War II, this book outlines the basis of the Christian faith, many absolute truths

left undeniable, and the necessity for the Church to be essentially united under Christ, undivided in heart by mere differences in denominations, hence the title phrase, “*mere Christianity*”.

LEWIS, C.S. *The Space Trilogy. (Out of the Silent Planet, Perelandra, That Hideous Strength)* 1938-1946. Christian Science Fiction.

The books in this series cover three separate space journeys with consequences of cosmic proportions. Like other Lewis works, these stories offer intricate allegorical and biblical allusions, and provide an interesting array of characters, fantastical settings, and strange events that characterize the science fiction genre.

LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. Classic Christian Fiction. (required coursework)

A senior devil corresponds with his nephew concerning his “patient”, the young man he has been sent to torment and lead astray, in this satirically humorous and darkly realistic commentary on the spiritual forces at work behind the physical world.

MACDONALD, GEORGE. *Phantastes, A Faerie Romance for Men and Women*. 1858.

Macdonald’s first prose work ever published, this fantasy novel follows a young man who is pulled into a dreamlike world and then faces adventure and temptation as he searches for his ideal love. C.S. Lewis has been quoted as saying that the reading of this novel “baptized” his imagination.

MILTON, JOHN. *Paradise Lost*. 1667. Classic Epic Poetry.

Arguably the greatest epic poem in the English language, Milton’s fictionalized retelling of the original rebellion in the heavenly realms, the creation, temptation, and fall of mankind, and a galactic struggle for power.

RAFFEL, BURTON, translator. *Beowulf*. (or 1999 translation by SEAMUS HEANEY, *Beowulf, A New Translation*). Classic Epic Poetry. (required coursework in text – excerpt)

The anonymously written Old English Anglo-Saxon legend, as translated into modern English, weaves a poetic adventure of the grandly heroic champion of the Nordic tribal Geats as he battles the monstrous Grendel, Grendel’s mother, and ultimately a terrorizing dragon. (Seamus Heaney’s bilingual translation provides the original Old English alongside the modern.)

SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM. *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*. Drama/Classic Fiction.

One of Shakespeare’s most popular plays, this classic tragedy of the famed Danish prince covers such themes as the balance between intellect and heart, revenge, insanity, depression, and the evils of trying to take the retribution of sins into our own hands.

SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM. *Macbeth*. 1623. Drama/Classic Fiction. (required coursework)

Amidst themes of destiny, the corruption of uncontrolled ambition, cruelty vs. strength, kingship vs. tyranny, and classic good vs. evil, Shakespeare’s dramatic tragedy follows the rise and fall of Scotland’s famous ruler.

SHELLEY, MARY. *Frankenstein*. 1818. Science Fiction/Horror/Classic Fiction

Narrator Captain Walton tells this classic story (considered by many authors to be the first ever science fiction novel) as a frame narrative, relating his conversations and experiences with the doomed inventor Victor Frankenstein (who narrates within Walton’s narration in the first person) and the tragic story of “the creature”, as was told to Victor from the monster’s own point of view. The themes of compassion and cruelty, the healing power of love contrasted with the corruption of neglect and rejection, and the horrors that result from man’s attempts to “play God” are masterfully expressed as the story unfolds.

SINCLAIR, UPTON. *The Jungle*. 1906. Classic Fiction.

The novel traces the experiences of a Lithuanian immigrant family that finds jobs working in the Union Stock Yards of Chicago in the early 1900s. In a country they had hoped would offer them the glory of a new and successful life, they instead face poverty, terrible working conditions, squalor, and the hopelessness of the little chance they felt they had to improve their situation. Sinclair, a socialist, tries to bring to light the deficiencies of capitalism as he observed its effects on the urban poor, in contrast to the wealthy upper classes. A powerful look into a sad chapter of our nation’s economic history, this book is definitely not for the weak of heart or queasy of stomach.

SWIFT, JONATHAN. *Gulliver's Travels*. 1726. Classic Fiction. (required coursework in text – excerpt)

Swift's classic satire on human nature follows main character Gulliver on his many journeys to far away lands where he encounters various strange civilizations, each presenting some very obvious deficiencies developed due to corrupted aspects of their mere humanness. The story carries the themes of religious and governmental pettiness, the corruptibility of human nature, the potential for "littleness" of character and the converse potential for the inflated ego, the necessity of the balance between intellect and compassion, and the importance of getting outside of ourselves to understand others.

THACKERAY, WILLIAM M. *Vanity Fair: A Novel without a Hero*. 1847. Classic Fiction.

With its title taken from John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, this novel presents a caustic satire of 19th century England. Human weaknesses are highlighted throughout the characters and plot, offering the reader a greater level of realism as the novel darkens from beginning to end.

TOLSTOY, LEO. *War and Peace*. 1865-1869. Classic Fiction.

This epic novel presents the story of five families of the Russian aristocracy (a very large cast of characters) during the years spanning 1805 to 1813. The different families become immersed in the tribulations of the world in which they live, a world threatened by the ever-nearing Napoleonic Wars. The book tackles such life themes as youth and age, marriage, death, and the obvious, war and peace.

WALLACE, LEW. *Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ*. 1880. Classic Historical Fiction.

Weaving together the historical account of the birth and life of Jesus and the fictional account of main character Judah, a Hebrew prince of the house of Hur, this novel beautifully intertwines these plotlines, bringing the reader through a powerful account of one man (and one family's) realization of the true identity of Christ, the very real hope found in Him, and the true purpose of the Church. This novel was the best-selling American novel from its own time until *Gone with the Wind* earned the title in 1936, and interestingly, it was the first work of fiction to be blessed by a pope.