

SHAKER HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Annotated List of Book Sets for Book Discussion Groups

Award Abbreviations

A	Alex Award	NBA	National Book Award
ALAN	ALA Notable	NBCC	National Book Critics Circle Award
B	Booker Prize	O	Orange Prize
EAP	Edgar Allan Poe-Mystery	P	Pulitzer
H	Hugo Award	PEN	PEN/Faulkner Award
N	Nobel	W	Whitbread Book Award
NM	Newbery Medal		

TITLE INDEX

Abraham

Bruce Feiler

(2002) Non-Fiction, 229 pages

Traveling through war zones and into the caves of ancient Mesopotamia, Feiler journeys to the heart of three Monotheistic faiths to search for the possible reconciliation through Abraham, the shared ancestor of Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

The Accidental Tourist

Anne Tyler

(1985) Fiction, NBCC, 342 pages

This amusing study of human behavior is the story of Macon Leary, a travel book author who meets Muriel, an odd character whose vitality challenges Leary to question his safe responses to the world.

The Age of Innocence

Edith Wharton

(1920) Fiction, P, 362 pages

The strict social rituals and etiquette of 1920s New York society set the stage for attorney Newland Archer's moral dilemma. Although engaged to May Welland, Archer is strongly attracted to Welland's nonconformist cousin Ellen.

All the Pretty Horses

Cormac McCarthy

(1992) Fiction, NBA, NBCC, 302 pages

On the cusp of adulthood, a young man begins an odyssey on horseback across Texas and Mexico and begins to understand the world around him.

An American Childhood

Annie Dillard

(1987) Autobiography, 255 pages

This is a vivid and thoughtful evocation of Dillard's 1950s childhood in Pittsburgh.

Among the Missing

Dan Chaon

(2001) Stories, 258 pages

This collection of short stories by Cleveland Heights author Chaon features an eclectic assortment of characters coping with life. The book was a finalist for the 2001 National Book Award.

Angle of Repose

Wallace Stegner

(1971) Fiction, P, 569 pages

Retired history professor, Lyman Ward, returns to his childhood home to write a book about his paternal grandparents' marriage and their experiences living in the American western frontier in the late 19th century.

Antelope Wife**Louise Erdrich***(1998) Fiction, 240 pages*

The author's story brings to life the cultures and mix of people who live in Minneapolis, once a hunting ground for the Ojibway.

Atonement**Ian McEwan***(2002) Fiction, 384 pages*

Guilt and innocence, punishment and atonement are recurring themes in this tragic tale of the stunning consequences of a young girl's lie.

Away**Amy Bloom***(2007), ALAN, Fiction, 247 pages*

When immigrant Lillian Leyb finds out her three-year-old daughter may still be alive in Siberia, she begins an epic transcontinental journey home ultimately walking the Yukon trail toward the Bering Strait.

Bachelor Brothers' Bed and Breakfast**Bill Richardson***(1996) Fiction, 152 pages*

Unmarried fraternal twins, Hector and Virgil, run a bed and breakfast for bibliophiles on an island near Vancouver Island. Richardson's book won Canada's Stephen Leacock Award for Humor.

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress**Sijie Dai***(2001) Fiction, 192 pages*

This first novel is the inspiring tale of two boys who are sent to a remote Chinese village for "re-education" during the Cultural Revolution. The cast of richly developed characters adds to a timeless lesson in friendship and loyalty.

Be Sweet: A Conditional Love Story**Roy Blount Jr.***(1998) Autobiography, 329 pages*

Blount reflects on his relationship with his mother in this memoir filled with humorous anecdotes, candid thoughts and complex emotions.

The Bean Trees**Barbara Kingsolver***(1988) Fiction, 232 pages*

A poor but adventurous Kentucky girl manages to avoid pregnancy in high school and earns enough money to buy a car and travel west.

Behind You**Jacqueline Woodson***(2004) Teen Fiction, 118 pages*

This sequel to Woodson's "If You Come Softly" is the tender, thoughtful and powerful story of what follows in the wake of the interracial love affair between 15 year-old Jeremiah, who is African-American, and his classmate Elie, who is white. Grades 8 and up.

Bel Canto**Ann Patchett***(2001) Fiction, O, PEN, 318 pages*

Joined by no common language except music, a band of terrorists and their international hostages forge unexpected bonds.

Beloved**Toni Morrison***(1987) Fiction, P, 275 pages*

Set in post-Civil War Ohio, an escaped slave finds catharsis by sharing her gruesome past with an understanding man in this stunning novel about slavery.

Between, Georgia**Joshilyn Jackson***(2007) Fiction, 294 pages*

In this fictional town between Athens and Atlanta with a population of ninety, Nonny is caught in the decades old family feud between her adopted family and her biological one.

Black Girl/White Girl**Joyce Carol Oates***(2007) Fiction, 272 pages*

In this novel of dark suspense and racial tension, Genna reflects on the tragic events leading up to the death of her college roommate in the mid 1970s.

The Bone People**Keri Hulme***(1984) Fiction, B, 445 pages*

This 1985 Booker Prize-winning first novel explores both destruction and healing within families as well as the personal costs of losing touch with traditions and cultures.

Breathing Lessons**Anne Tyler***(1988) Fiction, P, 338 pages*

A middle-aged Baltimore couple comes to terms with one another as they discuss old friends and their grown children on the drive to a distant funeral.

Breathing Underwater**Alex Finn***(2001) Teen Fiction 263 pages*

Caitlin's so lucky to have handsome high school superstar Nick crazy in love with her. Or is she? This contemporary tale of dating violence is seen through the eyes of the male offender and takes readers on a journey from a court-mandated restraining order to the roots of Nick's anger. Grades 9 and up.

The Buffalo Soldier**Chris Bohjalian***(2002) Fiction, 432 pages*

When their twin daughters are killed in a flash flood, a Vermont couple takes in a 10-year-old African-American foster child in an attempt to rekindle their failing marriage.

A Child's Christmas in Wales**Dylan Thomas***(1980) Fiction, 45 pages*

Welsh poet Dylan Thomas recollects the happy celebration of Christmas when he was a child. Edward Ardizzone illustrated this edition.

The Children's Blizzard**David Laskin***(2004) Nonfiction, 307 pages*

The year was 1888, the month January, the day unusually warm and sunny, which provided an unusual break in the weather. Many, especially the children, decided not to wear coats or hats or boots or gloves. Suddenly the weather changed and a terrible storm hit.

Cold Mountain**Charles Frazier***(1997) Fiction, NBA, 449 pages*

In this evocative novel set during the Civil War, a disillusioned confederate soldier deserts his unit and walks back to his home in the Blue Ridge Mountains and to the woman he loved.

The Color of Water**James McBride***(1996) Biography, 291 pages*

In this black man's tribute to his white mother, McBride writes about his mother's heart, strength and determination in raising 12 children, who rose from poverty instilled with a respect for education, religion—and their mother.

The Color Purple**Alice Walker***(1982) Fiction, P, NBA, 251 pages*

A Southern black woman, who experiences rape and human degradation, sacrifices herself to save her sister in this story about the power of love.

Crossing to Safety**Wallace Stegner***(1987) Fiction, 341 pages*

Stegner explores the bonds of a long friendship between two couples despite vast differences in their upbringing and social status.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time**Mark Haddon***(2003) Fiction, A, 226 pages*

When a 15 year-old autistic boy is suspected of killing the neighbor's poodle, he adopts the methods of his favorite sleuth – Sherlock Holmes – to solve the murder in this touchingly humorous novel.

A Dangerous Friend**Ward Just***(1999) Fiction, 256 pages*

Colonialism and idealism clash in this provocative book set in 1965 Saigon when a group of young civilians set out to reform Vietnam.

The Daughter of Time**Josephine Tey***(1951) Mystery, 185 pages*

A Scotland Yard detective convalescing from a bad fall becomes intrigued with an old scandal about Richard III.

The Devil in the White City: Murder Magic and Madness at the Fair that Changed America**Erik Larson***(2003) Nonfiction, 447 pages*

This is the brilliant, chillingly-told true story of H. H. Holmes, serial killer who stalked the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant**Anne Tyler***(1982) Fiction, 303 pages*

In alternating chapters, family members look back on their childhood and come to terms with their mother and themselves.

Disgrace**J. M. Coetzee***(1999) Fiction, B, 220 pages*

This short but powerful Booker Prize-winning novel is the story of the social, racial and political complexities of post-apartheid South Africa.

The Dive from Clausen's Pier**Ann Packer***(2002) Fiction, A, 413 pages*

After a tragic accident leaves her fiancé paralyzed, 23-year-old Carrie Bell leaves her hometown of Madison, Wisconsin for an extended stay in New York.

Dreams from My Father**Barack Obama***(1995) Biography, 453 pages*

Written by the senator from Illinois, this memoir chronicles his life as the son of a black Kenyan father and a white American mother.

The Elegance of the Hedgehog**Muriel Barbery***(2006) Fiction, 325 pages*

The lives of 54-year-old concierge Rene Michel and extremely bright, suicidal 12-year-old Paloma Josse are transformed by the arrival of a new tenant, Kakuro Ozu.

Empire Falls**Richard Russo***(2001) Fiction, P, 483 pages*

Set in a depressed Maine mill town, this rural epic examines the founding family's influence over the town and its people.

Fahrenheit 451**Ray Bradbury***(1953) Fiction, NBA, 165 pages*

In this science fiction, fireman Guy Montag's curiosity about forbidden books leads him from a life of surround sound and video "families" to a life on the run.

The Faith Club**Ranya Idliby, Suzanne Oliver and Priscilla Warner***(2007) Non-Fiction, 293 pages*

This book documents the experiences of three New York City mothers whose attempts to write a children's book about the commonalities among their religions became complicated by their differences.

The Fall of Rome**Martha Southgate***(2002) Fiction, 223 pages*

Jerome Washington is the only African-American faculty member at an elite boarding school. His life is forever altered with the arrival of a new white teacher, Jana Hansen, with whom he becomes romantically involved, and a new black student, Rashid Bryson, a smart but tough city kid.

Falling Leaves: A True Story of an Unwanted Chinese Daughter**Adeline Yen Mah***(1998) Autobiography, 274 pages*

In her memoir, Mah details her gruesome life in Mainland China and her escape to America where she succeeded in becoming a physician and writer.

The Falls**Joyce Carol Oates***(2004) Fiction, 481 pages*

Ariah Erskine has been married for less than a day when her husband commits suicide at Niagara Falls. She quickly remarries and starts a family with Dirk Burnaby but when he takes on Love Canal litigation, she worries that she'll lose him, too.

Felix in the Underworld**John Mortimer***(1997) Mystery, 247 pages*

A quiet, dignified mid-list novelist becomes enmeshed in a wild series of events in which barrister Mortimer's comic and satirical charms abound.

Fieldwork**Mischa Berlinski***(2008) Fiction, 356 pages*

Following his girlfriend to her new teaching position in Thailand, a young reporter researches the story of American anthropologist, Martiya van der Leun, following her suicide in a Thai prison where she was serving a lengthy sentence for murder. A 2007 National Book Award Finalist.

Fifth Business**Robertson Davies***(1970) Fiction, 266 pages*

Set in the Canadian Midwest, this novel is the first of a trilogy dealing with ambition, love and strange vengeance.

Finding Fish: A Memoir**Antwone Fisher***(2001) Autobiography, 339 pages*

Born in prison and raised in Cleveland's foster care system, Fisher recounts his life story – and the major role the U.S. Navy played in his rise to success as a Hollywood producer and screenwriter.

Flame Trees of Thika**Elsbeth Huxley***(1959) Non-Fiction, 281 pages*

This is the author's delightful memoir of growing up in Kenya during the waning days of British colonialism before World War I changed almost everything.

Four Spirits**Sena Jeter Naslund***(2003) Fiction, 560 pages*

The lives of blacks and whites, both living and dead, are skillfully intertwined in rich historical detail in this ambitious novel about the Civil Rights struggle in Birmingham, Alabama during the 1960's.

The Fox Woman**Kij Johnson***(2000) Fiction, 382 pages*

This lyrical first novel about a medieval Japanese shape shifter is based on a Japanese myth about a fox that falls in love with a nobleman and becomes a woman.

Gilead**Marilynne Robinson***(2004) Fiction, NBCC, P, PEN, 247 pages*

In poetic and lyrical language, Reverend John Ames writes a letter to his seven year-old son describing his life and the world around him.

Girl with a Pearl Earring**Tracy Chevalier***(1999) Fiction, A, 233 pages*

Set in 17th-century Holland, this richly imagined novel centers on a young woman employed by the artist, Vermeer, and provides an intimate glimpse into his artistic world.

The Giver**Lois Lowry***(1993) Teen Fiction, NM, 180 pages*

Twelve-year-old Jonas discovers the terrible truth about his utopian society when he becomes the "Receiver of Memories."

The Glass Castle**Jeanette Walls***(2005) Autobiography, A, 288 pages*

This page-turner hooks you from the beginning when the author, dressed for a benefit, looks out her taxi window to watch her mother dumpster diving. MSNBC's Jeanette Walls' memoir goes on to describe her dysfunctional family life with nary a hint of bitterness.

The God of Small Things**Arundhati Roy***(1997) Fiction, B, 321 pages*

Set in India in the late 1960s, Roy's debut novel is the story of twins, Estha and Rahel, and the disturbing consequences of the accidental drowning of a visiting English cousin.

The Golden Compass**Philip Pullman***(2001) Teen Fiction, 399 pages*

The first book in a compelling trilogy set in a fascinating fantasy world filled with highly original characters and situations.

A Good Enough Daughter**Alix Kates Shulman***(1999) Autobiography, 254 pages*

The author of *Memoirs of an Ex-Prom Queen* explores what it means to do exactly what is expected of a daughter, and in the process, discovers the unexpected joys of going home.

A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain**Robert Olen Butler***(1992) Stories, P, 249 pages*

This collection of 15 stories about the unspoken legacy of the Vietnam War and the reality of contemporary American culture is told by the Vietnamese themselves.

The Great Gatsby**F. Scott Fitzgerald***(1925) Fiction, 189 pages*

Living in a luxurious mansion on the Long Island shore, Jay Gatsby pursues Daisy Buchanan through the glittering society of the Roaring Twenties.

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society**Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows***(2008) Fiction, 288 pages*

Impromptu letters between a London journalist and eccentric residents of Guernsey provide a heartwarming, but realistic glimpse of a German occupied British island during WWII, where books and recipes became a lifeline.

The Help**Kathryn Stockett***(2009) Fiction, 451 pages*

Set in Jackson, Mississippi in the early 1960s, this compelling first novel is the story of three women on opposite sides of the racial divide, who prove that ordinary women can be heroic.

Home Town**Tracy Kidder***(2000) Non-Fiction, 432 pages*

A Pulitzer Prize-winning author creates a tender portrait of Northampton, Massachusetts—a typical American home town—as he reveals the dramas behind the ordinary lives of its residents. Their stories demonstrate how individuals shape a community's social conscience and how a group of people can create a strong sense of community.

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet**Jamie Ford***(2009) Fiction, 301 pages*

Set in both the ethnic neighborhoods of Seattle and the World War II Japanese internment camps, this tender first novel explores an innocent passion that crosses racial barriers.

House of Sand and Fog**Andre Dubus III***(1999) Fiction, 365 pages*

A collision of cultures brings tragic results in a struggle for possession of the same house.

I Am Madame X**Gioia Diliberto***(2003) Fiction, 261 pages*

This richly imagined novel illuminates the struggle between American beauty, Virginie Gautreau, and John Singer Sargent, painter of the controversial painting that shocked the 1884 Paris Salon.

The Inheritance of Loss**Kiran Desai***(2006) Fiction, NBCC, B, 357 pages*

Set in politically turbulent India in the 1980's, three central characters—a judge, his orphaned granddaughter, and his cook's son—struggle with their cultural identities.

Interpreter of Maladies**Jhumpa Lahiri***(1999) Stories, P, 198 pages*

This award-winning debut collection of nine stories, set in the United States and India, captures the lives of immigrants, expatriates and first-generation Americans of Indian descent.

The Kite Runner**Khaled Hosseini***(2003) Fiction, A, 372 pages*

In this coming-of-age story, a complex friendship between two motherless boys is set against the backdrop of 1960 Afghanistan.

The Last Universe**William Sleator***(2006) Teen Fiction, 240 pages*

This gripping and suspenseful science fiction tale features a teenage brother and sister, quantum physics, the power of the maze, and the ties that bind family.

A Lesson Before Dying**Ernest Gaines***(1993) Fiction, NBCC, 256 pages*

Set in a small Cajun community in the late 1940s, Grant Wiggins returns to teach a black youth, who is sentenced to die for a crime he didn't commit, how to die with dignity.

Life of Pi**Yann Martel***(2001) Fiction, B, 336 pages*

Born and raised in India, sixteen-year-old Pi Patel finds himself adrift in the Pacific Ocean following a terrible shipwreck.

Little Bee**Chris Cleave***(2008) Fiction, ALAN, 266 pages*

The fates of a 16-year-old Nigerian orphan and a well-to-do British couple seeking to repair their strained marriage are cast when the couple decides to stray beyond the walls of their Nigerian beach resort.

Love in the Time of Cholera**Gabriel Garcia Marquez***(1988) Fiction, 348 pages*

Set in a South American community from the late 1870s to the early 1930s, this is a tale of an unrequited passion so strong that it binds three people's lives together for more than fifty years.

Love Medicine**Louise Erdrich***(1984) Fiction, NBCC, 367 pages*

On a North Dakota reservation, the passionate and dramatic lives of two families are linked to the past and immersed in the present.

The Love Wife**Gish Jen***(2004) Fiction, 379 pages*

A Chinese-American couple has cobbled together a family with two adopted Chinese daughters and a biological son. When the wife's disapproving mother-in-law dies, she wills them a Chinese nanny, whose presence disrupts their lives in this story about cultural assimilation.

Loving Frank**Nancy Horan***(2007) Fiction, 384 pages*

Fact and fiction are blended in this graceful, compelling story of the early Twentieth Century scandal set in motion by architect Frank Lloyd Wright's affair with one of his married clients.

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand**Helen Simonson***(2010) Fiction, 368 pages*

A retired major and a Pakistani shopkeeper are drawn together by their love of literature and the loss of their respective spouses in this unconventional love story.

The March**E. L. Doctorow***(2006) BCC, PEN 363 pages*

In this powerful novel of William Tecumseh Sherman's march to the sea, events are narrated through the perspective of freed slaves and slave owners, unionists and rebels portraying a lively illumination of a country at war with itself.

Memoirs of a Geisha**Arthur Golden***(1997) Fiction, 434 pages*

Golden's historical novel follows the life of Chiyo, a poor child from a rural Japanese fishing village in the 1920s to her later years in luxurious surroundings in New York.

The Memory Keeper's Daughter**Kim Edwards***(2005) Fiction, 401 pages*

Snowed in with a wife in labor, a doctor is forced to deliver his twin children. When he recognizes that one has Down's Syndrome, he tells his wife that the baby was stillborn. He instructs his nurse to take the baby to a home for disabled children but instead; she moves away and raises the child as her own.

Mister Pip**Lloyd Jones***(2007) ALAN, A, Fiction, 256 pages*

On a tropical island torn by violence, Matilda and her classmates are riveted by the story of Dickens' orphan Pip in Victorian England in this magical novel that celebrates the transformative power of literature.

Montana 1948**Larry Watson***(1993) Fiction, 175 pages*

In a small Montana town, a twelve-year-old boy sees his family torn between justice and loyalty.

Mountains Beyond Mountains**Tracy Kidder***(2003) Biography, 322 pages*

This is the true story of Dr. Paul Farmer, who embarks on an epic struggle to change medicine and humanity in Haiti.

Mystic River**Dennis Lehane***(2001) Mystery, 416 pages*

Three boyhood friends – one now a cop, another an ex-con, and the third a haunted man, who was raped as a child – reunite when the ex-con's daughter is murdered.

The Namesake**Jhumpa Lahiri***(2003) Fiction, 304 pages*

The immigrant experience and the conflict of cultures are revealed in this penetrating story of a second-generation immigrant who seeks his place in the world.

The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency**Alexander McCall Smith***(1998) Mystery, 235 pages*

Set in Botswana, this mystery series features detective Precious Ramotswe who sets out to find a missing 11-year-old, who she fears has been kidnapped by evil witchdoctors.

Nineteen Minutes**Jodi Picoult***(2007) Fiction, 408 pages*

Lives can be changed in an instant as demonstrated in this story of a school massacre told in two voices---the victim's and the shooter's.

Olive Kitteridge**Elizabeth Strout***(2008) Fiction, 286 pages*

At the edge of the continent, in the small town of Crosby, Maine, lives Olive Kitteridge, a retired schoolteacher who deplores the changes in her town and in the world at large but doesn't always recognize the changes in those around her.

One Thousand White Women: The Journals of May Dodd**Jim Fergus***(1998) Fiction, 304 pages*

Loosely based in history, these personal journals describe the adventures of white brides, their marriages to Cheyenne warriors and prairie life before the white man's civilization changed it.

The Orchid Thief**Susan Orlean***(1998) Biography, 284 pages*

This is the story of obsessive, eccentric plant dealer John Laroche, who is arrested with three Seminole assistants for poaching rare ghost orchids from a South Florida swamp.

Other People's Children**Joanna Trollope***(1999) Fiction, 352 pages*

Realistic, middle-class characters face recognizable dilemmas when Josie marries Matt and creates a new configuration of step-relationships that affects three women, two men and six children.

Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha**Roddy Doyle***(1993) Fiction, B, 282 pages*

Set in Dublin in the 1960s, a ten-year-old boy, drawn to pranks and boyish deviltry, grows soberly aware of his parents failing marriage and his father's descent into alcoholism.

Palace Walk**Naguib Mahfouz***(1956) Fiction, N/Literature 1988, 498 pages*

While engaging in nightly trysts with his mistress of the moment, a duplicitous Cairo merchant rules his family according to the Koran in the first book of The Cairo Trilogy set in post-World War I Egypt.

Paradise Postponed**John Mortimer***(1985) Fiction, 374 pages*

When an ultraliberal English pastor wills the family brewery to a social-climbing conservative politician, his widow and sons react strongly.

The Paris Wife**Paula McLain***(2011) Fiction, 320 pages*

This historical fiction, written by a local author, is the story of Ernest Hemingway's time in Paris as seen through the eyes of his first wife, Hadley Richardson.

People of the Book**Geraldine Brooks***(2008) Fiction, 372 pages*

Offered a coveted job to analyze and conserve a priceless Sarajevo Haggadah, Australian rare-book expert Hanna Heath discovers a series of tiny artifacts in the volume's ancient binding that reveal its historically significant origins.

The Piano Tuner**Daniel Mason***(2002) Fiction, 336 pages*

The British War Office sends piano expert Edgar Drake into the wilds of 19th century Burma to fix the piano of an eccentric Surgeon-Major who has brokered a tenuous peace among the local warlords through the use of music and poetry.

Plainsong**Kent Haruf***(1999) Fiction, A, 320 pages*

With a prose rich in particulars, small town lives parallel each other and intersect as teacher Maggie Jones becomes involved in the lives of a fellow high school teacher, a pregnant 17-year-old and two elderly bachelor brothers.

Prodigal Summer**Barbara Kingsolver***(2000) Fiction, 464 pages*

Set in southern Appalachia, these narratives of human love and animal life are intertwined in this novel about the importance of the balance of nature.

Race Matters**Cornel West***(1993) Nonfiction, 159 pages*

In this collection of essays, Princeton scholar Cornel West meets the subject of race in America head-on.

Ragtime**E. L. Doctorow***(1975) Fiction, NBCC, 270 pages*

Kenyon College graduate and current NYU professor, Doctorow won the first National Book Critics Circle Award in 1976 for his story of three families in turn-of-the-century New York where real-life characters of the era move in and out of the lives of fictional ones.

The Reader**Bernhard Schlink***(1997) Fiction, 218 pages*

Set in post-World War II Germany, Schlink chronicles the unusual relationship of 15-year-old Michael Berg and 35-year-old Hanna Schmitz. Years later the two are reunited in a war-crimes trial courtroom.

The Red Tent**Anita Diamant***(1997) Fiction, 321 pages*

Narrated by Dinah, daughter of Jacob, this historical novel relates the story of the tribe of Jacob in the Book of Genesis.

Rocket Boys**Homer Hickam***(1998) Biography, 384 pages*

This is the charming memoir of a NASA engineer, who grew up during the 1960s space race and began designing and launching homemade rockets in his hometown of Coalwood, West Virginia.

The Rule of Four**Ian Caldwell***(2004) Fiction, 372 pages*

This debut novel involves four Princeton roommates and their quest to solve the puzzle in the 15th-century book, Hypnerotomachia Poliphili. The friends encounter drama and danger set against the backdrop of college life.

The Samurai's Garden**Gail Tsukiyama***(1994) Fiction, 211 pages*

Sent to Japan, a young Chinese man meets four local residents while recovering from tuberculosis.

Seabiscuit: An American Legend**Laura Hillenbrand***(2001) Nonfiction, 339 pages*

This best-selling sports biography of an unlikely champion tells the story of the men who wagered their luck and lives on one horse's amazing career.

The Secret Life of Bees**Sue Monk Kidd***(2002) Fiction, 302 pages*

This debut novel is the story of 14-year-old Lily Owens and her "stand-in" mother, Rosaleen, who find refuge, courage and hope in the loving home of three black bee-keeping sisters.

The Sense of an Ending**Julian Barnes***(2012) Fiction, B, 163 pages*

In this Man Booker Prize-winning novel, an unexpected bequest forces a man in his 60s to reconsider different decisions, and to revise his place in the world.

The Shadow of the Wind**Carlos Ruiz Zafon***(2004) Fiction, 496 pages*

In 1950s Spain, a young man named Daniel discovers a rare novel by an obscure author named Carax. As Daniel becomes more interested in the author and his books, he learns that a mysterious man is destroying copies of Carax's titles and that there are strange similarities between his own life and that of the author.

The Shipping News**E. Annie Proulx***(1993) Fiction, NBA, P, 335 pages*

A third-rate newspaperman retreats to his ancestral home in Newfoundland with his aunt and two young daughters, hoping to find true love and less unpredictability in a new community.

Sister of My Heart**Chitra Divakaruni***(1999) Fiction, 322 pages*

Two cousins, born on the same day in the same Calcutta household love each other as sisters until arranged marriages and family secrets separate them. When tragedy strikes they turn to each other for love and support.

Snow Falling On Cedars**David Guterson***(1994) Fiction, PEN, 460 pages*

Old prejudices surface in a small island town near Puget Sound when Japanese-American man stands trial for the murder of a fisherman in the 1950's.

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan**Lisa See***(2005) Fiction, 288 pages*

This novel chronicles the friendship of two 19th-century Chinese women and their correspondence using a secret language, passed down by women for more than a thousand years.

The Soloist: A Lost Dream, An Unlikely Friendship and the Redemptive Power of Music**Steve Lopez***(2008) Biography, 289 pages*

The remarkable bond between a Los Angeles Times journalist and a classically trained homeless violinist is recounted in this compelling story of triumph and heartbreak.

Some Love, Some Pain, Sometime**J. California Cooper***(1995) Stories, 273 pages*

This uplifting collection of short stories is about women for whom life—despite its constant struggles—is always worth the journey.

South of Broad**Pat Conroy***(2009) Fiction, 514 pages*

This sprawling novel is both a love letter to Charleston, South Carolina and a tribute to lifelong friendship.

The Space Between Us**Thrity Umrigar***(2007) Fiction, 321 pages*

An Upper middle class Parsi housewife and her domestic servant inhabit different worlds, but find they share much in common as they discover they are bound by shared life experiences.

State of Wonder**Ann Patchett***(2011) O Nominee, Fiction 353 pages*

In the Amazon basin, a medical researcher searches for her former mentor, a despotic scientist who is developing a miracle fertility drug.

Stones from the River**Ursula Hegi***(1994) Fiction, 525 pages*

Trudi Montag, a dwarf and town librarian, recounts life in a small town in Germany from WW I to the early 1950s.

Strapless: John Singer Sargent and the Fall of Madame X**Deborah Davis***(2003) Non-Fiction, 310 pages*

This is the personal history of Virginie Gautreau the twenty-three-year old New Orleans Creole who moved to Paris and a relatively unknown painter, John Singer Sargent, who won the commission to paint her.

The Sweet Hereafter**Russell Banks***(1991) Fiction, 272 pages*

When a school bus goes off the road in a fatal accident, the story of its impact on a small, northern town is told through the voices of several characters, including the bus driver, the father of two of the passengers, an attorney and a cheerleader who was maimed in the crash.

The Sweeter the Juice**Shirlee Taylor Haizlip***(1994) Autobiography, 268 pages*

The author explores her family's heritage as slaves, free blacks, Indians, and whites since the Civil War era.

Teacher Man**Frank McCourt***(2005) Autobiography, 258 pages*

The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Angela's Ashes* recounts his years as a teacher in New York's Stuyvesant High School.

That Old Cape Magic**Richard Russo***(2009) Fiction, 261 pages*

The Pulitzer Prize winning author, (*Empire Falls*, 2002) mixes humor and tragedy in his story about a well-respected, angst-ridden professor who examines his parents' failed marriage and his troubled one as he prepares for his daughter's wedding.

Their Eyes Were Watching God**Zora Neale Hurston***(1937) Fiction, 219 pages*

Set in 1937, this classic novel follows the fortunes of Janie Crawford, a woman living in the black town of Eaton, Florida.

Things Fall Apart**Chinua Achebe***(1959) Fiction, 209 pages*

Achebe presents a sympathetic and complex portrait of the Ibo cultural traditions in Africa. His novel chronicles the life of Okonkwo, the leader of a tribal Igbo community.

The Things They Carried**Tim O'Brien***(1990) NBA, Teen Fiction, 272 pages*

This compelling collection of stories provides a look at the men who fought in Vietnam.

A Thousand Splendid Suns**Khaled Hosseini***(2007) Fiction, 384 pages*

Thirty years of Afghan history are chronicled in a moving story of family and friendship as seen through the eyes of two women, who become allies in their battle with a man to whom each were married.

The Time Traveler's Wife**Audrey Niffenegger***(2003) Fiction, A, 546 pages*

This unforgettable love story with a unique dash of science fiction follows the time-traveling life of librarian, Henry and his artist wife, Clare.

To Kill A Mockingbird**Harper Lee***(1960) Fiction, P, 281 pages*

Set in Alabama during the depression, this novel of class, race, justice and a man's relationship to his family is told through the eyes of his 8-year-old daughter.

The Trees**Conrad Richter***(1940) Fiction, 167 pages*

With varying degrees of distress, staunchness and good humor, members of the pioneering Lucket family meet the hardships of primitive life in the forest wilderness along the Ohio River.

Turbulent Souls: A Catholic Son's Return to His Jewish Family**Stephen Dubner***(1998) Nonfiction, 317 pages*

Filled with humorous anecdotes, this is the personal account of one man's conversion to Judaism from Catholicism, even though his parents converted from Judaism to Catholicism.

The Vintage Caper**Peter Mayle***(2009) Fiction, 223 pages*

A wine savvy sleuth hired to trace an L.A. cellar heist is introduced in this delightful caper that moves from Hollywood to Paris, Bordeaux and Marseille.

Waiting**Ha Jin***(1999) Fiction, NBA, PEN, 320 pages*

This is the unusual love story of Lin Kong, an ordinary Chinese man straddling two worlds as he tries to obey the dictates of his traditional Chinese heritage and the new rules of the Chinese Communist Party.

Walking Across Egypt**Clyde Edgerton***(1987) Fiction, 225 pages*

A spunky senior citizen, a stray dog and a troubled teenager provide a wise and witty romp in a Southern, small-town setting.

Water for Elephants**Sara Gruen***(2007) Fiction, A, 331 pages*

Partially based on real circus stories, this lush compelling novel, set in the circus world of the 1930s, is the reminiscence of ninety-year old Jacob and loves of his life in the circus Marlena the performer and Rosie the elephant.

White Rabbit**Kate Phillips***(1996) Fiction, 212 pages*

Eighty-eight-year-old Ruth Hubble looks back at her life in this poignant first novel about old age written by a promising 28-year-old author.

White Teeth**Zadie Smith***(2000) Fiction, W, 448 pages*

Smith's first novel follows two families and their children from the 1970s to the present day in London's racially mixed environment.

The Woman Warrior**Maxine Hong Kingston***(1976) Autobiography, 209 pages*

An astonishingly accomplished account of a Chinese-American girl's coming of age, in and out of the family laundry business in California.

Women of the Silk**Gail Tsukiyama***(1991) Fiction, 238 pages*

Set in 1926 China, a group of young women working in a silk factory forge a strong sisterhood. When a strike begins, the women use their collective strength to achieve freedom from their enslavement.

The Zookeeper's Wife**Diane Ackerman***(2007) Non-Fiction, ALAN, 368 pages*

The director of the Warsaw Zoo and his wife saved hundreds of imperiled Jews and Polish resisters during the Nazi Occupation in 1944. This well-researched, moving story illuminates the connection between human nature and zoology and the need to adapt to survive.