

# Core Reading List

## Grade 12

### **Angela's Ashes**

**McCourt, Frank**

Memoir of the author's miserable childhood growing up in the perpetually damp country of Ireland, with the stereotypically long-suffering mother and drunken father who nurtures in his son an appetite for stories

### **Bride Price**

**Emecheta, Buchi**

The love story of Aku-nna, a young Ibo girl, and Chike, the son of a prosperous former slave

### **Frankenstein**

**Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft**

A monster assembled by a scientist from parts of dead bodies develops a mind of his own as he learns to loathe himself and hate his creator

### **Hamlet**

**Shakespeare, William**

The ghost of Hamlet's father appears to him demanding revenge for his murder-- Hamlet seeks the truth and plots revenge

### **Heart of Darkness**

**Conrad, Joseph**

This story set in colonial Africa reveals man's vulnerability to, as well as ultimate triumph over, the forces of greed and temptation

### **House for Mr. Biswas**

**Naipaul, V.S.**

Autobiography of a fictional Trinidadian title character, who struggles to rid himself of the influences of his wife's relatives and finally does so by buying a house and his freedom in one stroke.

### **How to Read Literature Like a Professor**

**Thomas Foster**

This reference book provides the basics necessary to analyze a work of literature, and how to recognize major themes, literary devices/models, narrative techniques, etc.

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### **Importance of Being Earnest**

**Wilde, Oscar**

Hilarious drama of deception, love, and mistake identity in Victorian England

**The Last Lecture**

**Randy Pausch with Jeffrey Zaslow**

In the author's own voice, students will hear the inspiring words of Professor Randy Pausch as he delivers his last lecture. This departure from fiction discusses dreams, seizing the moment, and what it means to really live. The topic of overcoming difficult situations is timely as seniors prepare for life beyond high school.

**Lord of the Flies**

**Golding, William**

Stranded on an island while an atomic war destroys the rest of the world, a group of young boys revert to savagery as they struggle to survive

**\*\*Macbeth**

**Shakespeare, William**

Contains the text of Shakespeare's play in which Macbeth kills Duncan, the King of Scotland, in order to seize the throne for himself

**\*\*Nineteen Eighty-Four (1984)**

**Orwell, George**

The tale of a man caught in a political nightmare in which the power of a totalitarian state is pitted against the personal freedom of the individual

**Othello**

**Shakespeare, William**

Othello appoints Cassio his chief lieutenant-- Iago, who believes he should have gotten the appointment, plots revenge against both Othello and Cassio

**Passage to India, A**

**Forster, E. M.**

Story about the clash between Eastern and Western cultures during British rule in India

**Pride and Prejudice**

**Austen, Jane**

In early nineteenth-century England, a spirited young woman copes with the suit of a snobbish gentleman as well as the romantic entanglements of her four sisters.

**Power and the Glory**

**Greene, Graham**

In one of the southern states of Mexico, during an anti-clerical purge, the last priest is on the run---The priest is impelled toward his Calvary as much by his own compassion for humanity as by his pursuers

**Power of Myth**

**Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers**

Campbell and Moyers offer a brilliant combination of wisdom and wit in conversations that range from modern marriage to virgin births, from saviors to heroes in this great summation of Campbell's work.

**Tale of Two Cities, A**

**Dickens, Charles**

Relates the adventures of a young Englishman who gives his life during the French Revolution to save the husband of the woman he loves

**Tess of the d'Urbervilles**

**Hardy, Thomas**

An English woman finds herself the victim of fate and of forces beyond her control

**Wuthering Heights**

**Bronte, Emily**

Forced by a storm to spend the night at the home of Heathcliff, Mr. Lockwood uncovers a tale of terror and hatred on the Yorkshire moors

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**\*\*Recommendation**-Should be read by all 12<sup>th</sup> grade students



# Supplementary Reading List

## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

### 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Level

2001: Space odyssey, A

Clarke, Arthur Charles

The spacecraft Discovery journeys to the outer edge of the solar system, and two navigators become uneasy when Hal, the craft's talking computer system, demonstrates unusual behavior

Alice in Wonderland

Carrol, Lewis

A little girl falls down a rabbit hole and discovers a world of nonsensical and amusing characters

**And Then There Were None**

**Christie, Agatha**

Ten people are invited to a lonely mansion on Indian Island by a host who, surprisingly, fails to appear – ten people who have something to hide, something to fear

**Antony and Cleopatra**

**Shakespeare, William**

A tragedy in which Cleopatra dies after Antony's death rather than by led through Rome by Octavius

**Arthurian Legend**

Selections from La Morte d' Arthur, "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight", Idylls of the King and novels based on the legend may be included

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**As You Like It**

**Shakespeare, William**

Young girl dressed as a boy escapes into the forest and meets a young man with whom she falls in love

**Beggar's Opera, The**

**Gay, John**

Using English ballads as music, Gay pokes fun at Italian opera and satirizes politicians by comparing them to criminals

**Beowulf**

The English heroic epic depicting the life and outlook of a pagan age through Beowulf, the Scandinavian Warrior, and his struggles against monsters

**Beowulf**

**Somy, Appleban**

A retelling of the story of Beowulf with complicated details and names

**Bleak House**

**Dickens, Charles**

Esther, the illegitimate child of Lady Dedlock and Captain Hawdon, is the ward of Mr. Jarndyce and lives with him at Bleak House

**Brave New World**

**Huxley, Aldolph**

Huxley's novel is a dark satire of a future world in which genetic engineering has turned into horror

**Canterbury Tales, The**

**Chaucer, Geoffrey**

Short selection from the Canterbury Tales – a group of stories told by pilgrims on their way to Canterbury Cathedral – in the original Middle English with definitions, followed by essays on the background of each story, plus criticisms of the texts

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**Childhood's End**

**Clarke, Arthur Charles**

Like many science fiction novels, Childhood's End could be seen as a response to the Darwinian theory of evolution. It presents the appearance of a super-race or rather of two: the aliens and the metamorphosed human children

**Comedy of Errors, The**

**Shakespeare, William**

A comedy where identical twins, sons both named Antipholu, have identical twin sons both named Dromios and confusion results

**Death on the Nile**

**Christie, Agatha**

A murder on a cruise ship on the Nile baffles everyone except Hercule Poirot

**Doctor Faustus**

**Marlowe, Christopher**

An imaginative view of a legendary scholar's fall to damnation through lust for forbidden knowledge, power and sensual pleasure

**Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde**

**Stevenson, Robert Louis**

Dr. Jekyll, A genteel, respectable London physician is transformed into Mr. Hyde, a foul-tempered, uncouth degenerate

**Dracula**

**Stoker, Bram**

An evil count in Transylvania leads an army of human vampires that prey on people

**Emma**

**Austen, Jane**

A young woman acts as a matchmaker in a satirical look at love in the eighteenth-century

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**Everyman**

**Anonymous**

A medieval morality play in which the main character is allegorical of mankind in humanity

**Grendel**

**Gardner, John**

Grendel, the monster, tells his side of the Beowulf story, and compares his values with the chief values of human beings

**Gulliver's Travels**

**Swift, Jonathan**

The voyages of an Englishman carry him to a land of people six inches high, a land of giants, an island of sorcerers, and a land where horses are masters of human-like creatures

**Heart of the Matter, The**

**Greene, Graham**

Set in West Africa, this is the story of Scobie, an assistant police commissioner, and his personal and professional corruption

**Henry IV**

**Shakespeare, William**

Events that follow the murder of England's King Richard II-- Henry IV wants to go to the Holy Land in repentance for Richard's death but unrest at home prevents him--- His son leads an irresponsible life with wild friends

**How to Read Literature Like a Professor**

**Foster, Thomas**

This reference book provides the basics necessary to analyze a work of literature, and how to recognize major themes, literary devices/models, narrative techniques, etc.

**Invisible Man, The**  
**Wells, H.G.**

The tale of the man who watches his body slowly becoming invisible

**Ivanhoe**

**Scott, Walker**

Relates the adventures of the Saxon knight Ivanhoe in 1194, the year of Richard the Lion-Hearted's return from the Third Crusade

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**Jude the Obscure**

**Hardy, Thomas**

The story of Jude Fawley, an impoverished stonemason who aspires to the ministry and fails to fulfill the opposite expectations of the two women he loves in Victorian society

**King Lear**

**Shakespeare, William**

Old king prepares to divide his kingdom among his 3 daughters-- He becomes angry with one daughter when she refuses to flatter him in order to get her fortune--- He disinherits her and she leaves--- The other daughters finally turn their father out and disaster ensues for all

**Last Enchantment, The**  
**Stewart, Mary**

As King Arthur struggles to achieve unity in Britain, Merlin realizes that all of his prophecies are coming true

**The Last Lecture**

**Pauch, Randy and Jeffrey Zaslow**

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**Lord Jim**

**Conrad, Joseph**

A man who has been branded a coward earns the respect of the Malay people

**Lost Horizon**

**Hilton, James**

Story of a group of people who become stranded in Shangri La, a peaceful Tibetan mountain retreat where no one grows old

**Major Barbara**

**Shaw, George Bernard**

A play with the theme of societal salvation and salvation of the human soul brought out in characters representing the rich versus the poor

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**Man and Superman**

**Shaw, George Bernard**

Introduces Shaw's theory of the "life force", which when harnessed by human will can lead to a higher, more creative existence; contains the celebrated scene "Don Juan in Hell"

**Measure for Measure**

**Shakespeare, William**

Duke of Vienna turns over affairs to others hoping they will do a good job-- They scandalize the city and try to ruin others' lives-- Fortunately, all ends well

**Merchant of Venice, The**

**Shakespeare, William**

Merchant borrows money from Jewish moneylender, who then lends it to his friend-- Man promises lender a pound of flesh if he cannot pay back-- Three months pass and he cannot pay-- They go to court to settle argument

**Middlemarch**

**Eliot, George**

A portrait of nineteenth-century English provincial life focusing on Dorothea Brooks and her two marriages, Dr. Lydgate, and the Vincy family

**Mill on the Floss, The**

**Eliot, George**

Tells the story of Dorlcote Mill and of the Tulliver family who own, lose and regain it again

**Mists of Avalon, The**

**Bradley, Marion Zimmer**

A re-creation of the Arthurian legend following the clash between Christianity and paganism that led to the demise of Camelot

**Murder in the Cathedral**

This modern verse play is based on the story of the murder of St. Thomas a' Becket

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**My Fair Lady**

**Lerner, Alan Jay and Loewe, Frederick**

A musical which presents a romantic version of Shaw's Pygmalion

**Robinson, Crusoe**

**Defoe, Daniel**

After being shipwrecked on a deserted island, Robinson Crusoe endures a lonely struggle for survival

**On the Beach**

**Shute, Nevil**

The last generation, innocent victims of an accidental nuclear war, live out their last days, make plans that will never be carried out, and hope for a miracle that will not come-- As the deadly rain moves closer, the world as we know it moves toward the end

**Pamela**

**Richardson Samuel**

The story of the virtuous attractive servant who resists her master's advances and is rewarded by his reformation and his hand

**Persuasion**

**Austen, Jane**

Anne Elliot sent Frederick Wentworth away seven years ago when she was an unhappy girl beset by troubles--- Now she regrets it--- When he returns, it takes a fortuitous series of accidents before the knows can be united

**Pilgrim's Progress, The**

**Bunyan, John**

Depicts the journey of Christian and his companions through mortal life to their entrance into the Celestial City

**Pygmalion**

**Shaw, George Bernard**

Henry Higgins is the cause of Liza Doolittle's metamorphosis from a "draggled-tailed guttersnipe" to a "duchess" by improving her manner, speech, and clothes

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**Mayor of Casterbridge**

**Hardy, Thomas**

Michael Henchard, an unemployed farmhand, gets drunk and sells his wife and baby daughter-- Years later, when he is the Mayor of Casterbridge, his past is brought back to haunt him and he reverts to drinking

**Rebecca**

**Du Maurier, Daphne**

For months after her death, the memory of Rebecca de Winter continues to dominate everyone at her former home, Manderley, one of the most famous English country houses

**Return of the Native, The  
Hardy, Thomas**

Story of Egdon Heath and Eustacia Vye in the nineteenth-century Wessex, England

**Room of One's Own, A  
Woolf, Virginia**

Explores the reasons why women do not have the same influence, power, and wealth as men do-- A "room of one's own" and five hundred pounds a year become symbols of the power to think for oneself and contemplate

**Saint Juan**

**Shaw, George Bernard**

The play depicts the trial, burning at the stake, and canonization of Joan of Arc

**Scarlet Pimpernel, The  
Orczy, Emmuska Orczy**

The rulers of the French Revolution cannot discover who this maddeningly elusive figure is that threatens their total power with his disguises, and endless ruses and infinite daring

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**Sense and Sensibility  
Austen, Jane**

Two sisters of opposing temperaments share the pangs of tragic love---Their mutual suffering brings a closer understanding between the two sisters – and true love finally triumphs

**She Stoops to Conquer  
Goldsmith, Oliver**

A farce telling the story of the Hardcastle family's mishaps and adventures in their undertaking to marry off a single daughter

**Sons and Lovers**

**Lawrence, D.H.**

The story of the emotional crises of Paul Morel, a painter growing to manhood in the Nottingham coalfields-- He is caught in a conflict between his possessive mother of middle class aspirations and the love of two young, beautiful women

**Secret Sharer, The**

**Conrad, Joseph**

Describes the conflict of a young captain torn between his duty to his ship and his loyalty to a young officer

**Third George, The**

**Plaidy, Jean**

The story of the plain German princess who married the dashing young English King George III during a turbulent time in English history

**Through the Looking Glass**

**Carroll, Lewis**

In the sequel to Alice in Wonderland, Alice goes through the mirror to find a strange world where curious adventures await her

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**To the Lighthouse**

**Woolf, Virginia**

Describes a party gathered at a house in England--In later years only caretakers have the house, and in the last part of the story the house is again filled with surviving family members

**Tom Jones**

**Fielding, Henry**

Describes the foundling, Tom, who grows to be athletic, charismatic, generous, and filled with "the glorious lust of doing good" but with a tendency toward dissolution---He leaves home to seek his fortune and his real identity

**Tristram Shandy**

**Sterne, Laurence**

Unconventional novel of conversations and reminiscences rather than action--Centers on Tristram's family rather than the story's namesake--Comedy throughout

**Trinity**

**Uris, Leon**

A novel depicting Ireland's struggle for independence and the violence by the divisions between the impoverished Catholic peasantry and the wealthy Protestant aristocracy

**Twelfth Night**

**Shakespeare, William**

Twins become separated during a shipwreck---Romantic comedy

**Two Gentlemen of Verona, The**

**Shakespeare, William**

Comedy of love and friendship---Two friends become rivals for the same woman

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**Vanity Fair**

**Thackeray, William Makepeace**

The story of English society in the Napoleonic Wars and the early nineteenth century as told through the characters of Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley

**Where Angels Fear to Tread**

**Forester, E.M.**

When a young English widow takes off on the grand tour and along the way marries a penniless Italian, her in-laws step in

**Winter's Tale, The**

**Shakespeare, William**

The King becomes jealous of his wife, has her imprisoned and orders that their newborn daughter be abandoned in some isolated place--- He realizes that he has no cause for jealousy but it is too late

