

Senior Book List

Authors:	Titles:	Topics:	Summaries:
Adiga, Arvind	<i>The White Tiger</i> **	2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 26, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 38, 39, 44	The white tiger of this novel is Balram Halwai, a poor Indian villager whose great ambition leads him to the zenith of Indian business culture, the world of the Bangalore entrepreneur. On the occasion of the president of China's impending trip to Bangalore, Balram writes a letter to him describing his transformation and his experience as driver and servant to a wealthy Indian family, which he thinks exemplifies the contradictions and complications of Indian society.
Anderson-Dargatz Gail	<i>A Recipe for Bees</i> **	14, 18, 31, 32, 41, 42	Awaiting news about her much-loved son-in-law Gabe, as he undergoes surgery, Augusta reminisces about her sometimes harsh, sometimes wonderful life, from her mother's early death and her difficult marriage to a life-changing love affair and the benefits of old age.
Atwood, Margaret	<i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> **	3, 4, 11, 15, 23, 25, 27, 42, 43	In the Republic of Gilead, we see a world devastated by toxic chemicals and nuclear fallout and dominated by a repressive Christian fundamentalism. The birthrate has plunged, and most women can no longer bear children. Offred is one of Gilead's Handmaids, who as official breeders are among the chosen few who can still become pregnant. Offred can remember the years before, when she was an independent woman, had a job of her own, a husband and child. But all of that is gone now...everything has changed.
	<i>Wilderness Tips</i> **	16, 5, 6, 7, 12, 24	In each of these tales Margaret Atwood illuminates the single instant that shapes a whole life: in a few brief pages we watch as characters progress from the vulnerabilities of adolescence through the passions of youth into the precarious complexities of middle age. Atwood paints interior landscapes shaped by time, regret, and life's lost chances.
	<i>Oryx and Crake</i> ***	1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 36, 37, 43	A novel of the future explores a world that has been devastated by ecological and scientific disasters. Snowman (a man once known as Jimmy) sleeps in a tree and just might be the only human left on our devastated planet. He is not entirely alone, however, as he considers himself the shepherd of a group of experimental, human-like creatures called the Children of Crake. As he scavenges and tends to his insect bites, Snowman recalls in flashbacks how the world fell apart.
Bock, Dennis	<i>The Ash Garden</i> **	13, 14, 19, 20, 22, 24, 28, 40	The lives and fates of three people--a scientist smuggled into America to work at Los Alamos, a young woman quarantined on a refugee ship in the Atlantic, and a young Japanese girl--collide in August 1945 with the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima.
Bohjalian, Chris	<i>Tran-sister Radio</i> **	4, 11, 25, 29, 30, 35, 30, 40, 42, 44,	With her daughter about to leave for college, fortysomething Alison Banks enrolls in a local college course to take her mind off things and finds herself falling for her instructor, Dana, a man who later confides that he wants to have a sex-change operation.
Boyden,	<i>Three Day</i>	4, 5, 7, 11, 20, 21, 24,	This is the story of two Cree friends who leave the beautiful Canadian North to

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Joseph	<i>Road**</i>	28, 29, 33, 36, 37, 41, 45	fight in the trenches during World War I. When one of them, Xavier, is wounded, his only living relative, a medicine woman named Niska, takes him back to the bush in a canoe. During the three-day journey, Xavier relives the war in flashbacks and struggles to overcome a morphine addiction. Niska tells him her life story believing there is "medicine in the tale" which might keep him alive.
	<i>Through Black Spruce *</i>	1, 2, 4, 10, 11, 16, 24, 26, 28, 38, 41, 45	This novel depicts contemporary Aboriginal life. When Suzanne Bird disappears after moving to the city, her sister Annie is compelled to search for her, leaving behind their uncle, Will. While Annie travels from modeling studios to A-list parties in New York, Will encounters dire troubles. Both learn about the inescapable ties of family.
	<i>The Orenda ***</i>	3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 32, 33	A visceral portrait of life at a crossroads, <i>The Orenda</i> opens with a brutal massacre and the kidnapping of the young Iroquois Snow Falls, a spirited girl with a special gift. Her captor, Bird, is an elder and one of the Huron Nation's great warriors and statesmen. It has been years since the murder of his family, and yet they are never far from his mind. In Snow Falls, Bird recognizes the ghost of his lost daughter and sees that the girl possesses powerful magic that will be useful to him on the troubled road ahead. Bird's people have battled the Iroquois for as long as he can remember, but both tribes now face a new, more dangerous threat from afar.
Brand, Dionne	<i>What We All Long For**</i>	1, 2, 5, 9, 17, 23, 25, 38, 45	The overlapping lives of four twenty-somethings: Tuyen is the lesbian daughter of Vietnamese parents who've never recovered from losing one of their children; Carla, who's still reeling from her mother's suicide; Oku, a jazz-loving poet in conflict with his father and in love with Jackie, who is a black woman who dates only white men. The fifth character is Quy, the child Tuyen's parents lost. A member of the Thai underworld, he will soon be reunited with his family, but is it to love them or hurt them?
Byatt, A.S.	<i>Possession **</i>	6, 16, 22, 24, 25, 40,	<i>Possession</i> is an exhilarating novel of wit and romance, at once a literary detective novel and a captivating love story. It is the tale of a pair of young scholars investigating the lives of two Victorian poets. Following a trail of letters, journals and poems they uncover a web of passion, deceit and tragedy, and their quest becomes a battle against time.
Chan, Jing	<i>Wild Swans**</i>	7, 11, 13, 9, 19, 21, 22, 23, 28, 32, 33, 37	Told over 3 generations, this story recounts the experience of living in China during the political maelstrom of the twentieth century, exploring subjects from foot binding and concubines to the Japanese occupation and the Cultural Revolution.
Chandler, Raymond	<i>The Big Sleep**</i>	4, 5, 7, 11, 19, 22, 24, 26, 30	When a dying millionaire hires Philip Marlowe to handle the blackmailer of one of his two troublesome daughters, Marlowe finds himself involved with more than extortion. Kidnapping, pornography, seduction, and murder are just a few of the complications he gets caught up in.
Chbosky, Stephen	<i>The Perks of Being a</i>	1, 2, 7, 8, 13, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31,	This is the story of what it's like to grow up in high school. More intimate than a diary, Charlie's letters are singular and unique, hilarious and devastating. We may

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	<i>Wallflower *</i>	33, 35, 37, 39, 42, 44, 46, 48	not know where he lives. We may not know to whom he is writing. All we know is the world he shares. Caught between trying to live his life and trying to run from it puts him on a strange course through uncharted territory. The world of first dates and mixed tapes, family dramas and new friends. The world of sex, drugs, and The Rocky Horror Picture Show, when all one requires is that perfect song on that perfect drive to feel infinite. Through Charlie, Stephen Chbosky has created a deeply affecting coming-of-age story, a powerful novel that will spirit you back to those wild and poignant roller coaster days known as growing up.
Christie, Michael	<i>If I Fall, If I Die**</i>	49, 4, 5, 1, 2, 21, 23,	The boy stepped Outside, and he did not die. Will has never been Outside, at least not since he can remember. For most of his young life he has lived happily – and safely – Inside his small house with his mother, a fiercely loving yet wildly eccentric agoraphobe who panics at the thought of opening the front door. But Will's curiosity can't be contained. Clad in a hockey helmet to protect himself from unknown dangers, he finally ventures Outside – and braces himself for disaster. What he finds instead will change everything.
Cohen, Matt	<i>Elizabeth and After **</i>	2, 6, 11, 13, 22, 23, 26, 30, 34, 36, 37, 40, 42, 44	Carl McKelvey returns to the small Canadian town of his birth, hoping to reconnect with his young daughter and exorcise his mother's ghost, and in doing so, find some measure of forgiveness.
Conrad, Joseph	<i>Heart of Darkness ***</i>	4, 11, 19, 22, 28, 32, 45	This novel is an indictment of the evils of imperialism. It reflects the savage repressions carried out in the Congo by the Belgians in one of the largest acts of genocide committed up to that time. Conrad's narrator encounters at the end of the story a man named Kurtz, dying, insane, and guilty of unspeakable atrocities.
De Rosnay, Tatiana	<i>Sarah's Key *</i>	1, 2, 4, 16, 20, 21, 23, 25, 28, 30, 32, 33, 39, 44, 45	Paris, July 1942: Sarah, a ten-year-old girl, is taken with her parents by the French police as they go door to door arresting Jewish families in the middle of the night. Desperate to protect her younger brother, Sarah locks him in a bedroom cupboard—their secret hiding place—and promises to come back for him as soon as they are released.
Dewitt, Patrick	<i>The Sisters Brothers **</i>	1, 2, 5, 11, 13, 16, 19, 22, 23, 24, 30, 34, 37, 40	Hermann Kermit Warm is going to die. The enigmatic and powerful man known only as the Commodore has ordered it, and his henchmen, Eli and Charlie Sisters, will make sure of it. Though Eli doesn't share his brother's appetite for whiskey and killing, he's never known anything else. But their prey isn't an easy mark, and on the road from Oregon City to Warm's gold-mining claim outside Sacramento, Eli begins to question what he does for a living — and whom he does it for.
Diamant, Anita	<i>The Red Tent **</i>	3, 20, 22, 29, 30, 32, 33, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42	The story of Dinah, a tragic character from the Bible whose great love, a prince, is killed by her brother, leaving her alone and pregnant. The novel traces her life from childhood to death, in the process examining sexual and religious practices of the day, and what it meant to be a woman.
Doerr, Anthony	<i>All the Light We Cannot See **</i>	46, 33, 34, 20, 21, 28, 30, 44, 50	Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where he works as the master of its thousands of locks. When she is six, Marie-Laure goes blind and her father builds a perfect miniature of their neighborhood so

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			she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great-uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel.
Donoghue, Emma	<i>Room **</i>	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 16, 19, 21, 23, 32, 33, 37, 44	To five-year-old Jack, Room is the world where he was born. It's where he and Ma eat and sleep and play and learn. Room is home to Jack, but to Ma, it's the prison where she has been held captive since she was nineteen -- for seven long years. Through her fierce love for her son, she has created a life for him in that eleven-by-eleven foot space. But Jack's curiosity is building alongside Ma's own desperation, and she knows that Room cannot contain either indefinitely.
Dorris, Michael	<i>A Yellow Raft in Blue Water **</i>	1, 5, 9, 12, 21, 24, 29, 32, 34, 37, 40, 41, 46	This novel is about three generations of American Indian women. Teenager Rayona Taylor reacts to feelings of rejection and abandonment by running away, unaware that her mother had done the same thing fifteen years before. But, bonded by blood and secrets, family ties draw her to return home to her reservation in Montana.
Dunant, Sarah	<i>The Birth of Venus**</i>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37, 42, 44, 47	Turning fifteen in Renaissance Florence, Alessandra Cecchi becomes intoxicated with the works of a young painter whom her father has brought to the city to decorate the family's Florentine palazzo.
Echlin, Kim	<i>The Disappeared **</i>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 16, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 44	Anne Greves is a teenager in Montreal when she first encounters Serey, a Cambodian exile, who has lost touch with his family since the borders of his native country, Cambodia, were closed during Pol Pot's genocidal massacre. Over the objections of the girl's father, Anne and Serey begin an affair. When the Vietnamese invade Cambodia and the borders are thrown open, Serey returns home to search for his family and vanishes, prompting Anne to embark on a dangerous journey to Phnom Penh to find him.
Edwards, Kim	<i>The Memory Keeper's Daughter *</i>	1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 16, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, 32, 37, 38, 44	In a tale spanning twenty-five years, a doctor delivers his newborn twins during a snowstorm and, rashly deciding to protect his wife from their baby daughter's affliction with Down Syndrome, turns her over to a nurse, who secretly raises the child.
Egan, Jennifer	<i>A Visit From the Goon Squad**</i>	7, 11, 13, 24	Bennie is an aging former punk rocker and record executive. Sasha is the passionate, troubled young woman he employs. Here Jennifer Egan brilliantly reveals their pasts, along with the inner lives of a host of other characters whose paths intersect with theirs. With music pulsing on every page, A Visit from the Goon Squad is a startling, exhilarating novel of self-destruction and redemption.
Endicott, Marina	<i>Close to Hugh**</i>	34, 38, 1, 2, 24, 30 ,39	Fifty-something Hugh Argyll, owner of the Argyll Art Gallery, has a jarring fall from a ladder--a fall that leaves him with a fractured off-kilter vision of his own life and the lives of his friends, who are going through crises (dying parents; disheveled marriages; wilting businesses) that leave them despairing, afraid, one half-step from going under emotionally or financially. Someone's going to have to

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			fix all that, thinks Hugh--and it will probably be him.
Eskens, Allen	<i>The Life We Bury**</i>	2, 23, 33, 21, 1	College student Joe Talbert has the modest goal of completing a writing assignment for an English class. His task is to interview a stranger and write a brief biography of the person. He meets Carl Iverson, and soon nothing in Joe's life is ever the same. Carl is a dying Vietnam veteran--and a convicted murderer. With only a few months to live, he has been medically paroled to a nursing home, after spending thirty years in prison for the crimes of rape and murder. As Joe writes uncovers Carl's valor in Vietnam, and he cannot reconcile heroism with the convict. He hopes to uncover the truth.
Fitch, Janet	<i>White Oleander*</i>	1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 23, 25, 32, 33, 37, 38, 40, 46	At the age of 12, Astrid has her world blown away when her mother is sentenced to life in prison for murdering her lover. Sharpened by harsh foster home environments, Astrid remakes herself as a survivor, and ultimately, an artist.
Ford, Jamie	<i>Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet**</i>	1, 2, 5, 6, 16, 20, 21, 23, 28, 31, 34, 44, 45	Set during one of the most conflicted and volatile times in American history, Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet is an extraordinary story of commitment and enduring hope. In Henry and Keiko, Jamie Ford has created an unforgettable duo whose story teaches us of the power of forgiveness and the human heart. The story is focused around the love and friendship of a Chinese boy and a Japanese girl during the Japanese internment in World War II.
Galloway, Steven	<i>The Cellist of Sarajevo**</i>	4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 30, 35, 37, 47	This novel follows four people trying to survive war-torn Sarajevo. After a mortar attack kills 22 people waiting in line to buy bread, an unnamed cellist vows to play at the point of impact for 22 days. Meanwhile, Arrow, a young woman sniper, picks off soldiers; Kenan makes a dangerous trek to get water for his family; and Dragan, who sent his wife and son out of the city at the start of the war, works at a bakery and trades bread in exchange for shelter.
Garland, Alex	<i>The Beach*</i>	5, 8, 19, 29	A rootless young Westerner believes he has stumbled upon paradise on a remote island off Thailand, a place known as "The Beach," until he discovers the deadly underside of the island's culture.
Genova, Lisa	<i>Left Neglected**</i>	49, 23, 13	Sarah Nickerson, like any other working mom, is busy trying to have it all. One morning while racing to work and distracted by her cell phone, she looks away from the road for one second too long. In that blink of an eye, all the rapidly moving parts of her over-scheduled life come to a screeching halt. After a brain injury steals her awareness of everything on her left side, Sarah must retrain her mind to perceive the world as a whole. In so doing, she also learns how to pay attention to the people and parts of her life that matter most.
	<i>Love Anthony**</i>	38, 26, 23, 1, 52	A novel about the extraordinary voice of Anthony, a nonverbal boy with autism. Anthony reveals a neurologically plausible peek inside the mind of autism, why he hates pronouns, why he loves swinging and the number three, how he experiences routine, joy, and love. And it is the voice of this voiceless boy that guides two women in this powerfully unforgettable story to discover the universal truths that connect us all.

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Gibb, Camilla	<i>Sweetness in the Belly</i> **	1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 12, 19, 32, 37, 47	A look beyond the stereotypes of Islam. After her hippie British parents are murdered, Lilly is raised at a Sufi shrine in Morocco. As a young woman she goes on pilgrimage to Harar, Ethiopia, where she teaches Qur'an to children and falls in love with an idealistic doctor. But even swathed in a traditional headscarf, Lilly can't escape being marked as a foreigner. Forced to flee Ethiopia for England, she must once again confront the riddle of who she is and where she belongs.
Gibson, Margaret	<i>Opium Dreams</i> **	2, 8, 13, 44	A daughter's poignant attempt to understand her dying father illuminates both their lives. Writer Maggie Glass watches her father fade into the murky realm of Alzheimer's. To understand the man Timothy Glass was, Maggie pieces together fragments of his life, and, in doing so, gradually tells her own harrowing story.
Gowda, Shilpi Somaya	<i>Secret Daughter</i> *	1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 23, 26, 39, 40, 44,	Set in India, in a culture that favours sons, the only way for Kavita to save her newborn daughter's life is to give her away. It is a decision that will haunt her and her husband for the rest of their lives, even after the arrival of their cherished son. Halfway around the globe, Somer, an American doctor, decides to adopt a child after making the wrenching discovery that she will never have one of her own. Interweaving the stories of Kavita, Somer, and the daughter Asha, the novel poignantly explores issues of culture and belonging as it moves between two worlds and two families, one struggling to survive in the fetid slums of Mumbai, the other grappling to forge a cohesive family despite their diverging cultural identities.
	<i>The Golden Son</i> *	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 23, 24, 32, 39, 44	Anil is the cherished son of a large family in rural India. As the eldest boy, he is expected to inherit the role of leader of his clan and arbiter of its disputes, dispensing wisdom and good advice. Leena is his closest companion, a fiercely brave girl who loves nothing more than the wild terrain they inhabit and her close-knit family. As childhood friends, they are inseparable—but as adulthood approaches, they grow apart.
Gowdy, Barbara	<i>The Romantic</i> **	6, 23, 24, 25, 40	Lacking maternal love since the age of nine, when her mother abandoned the family, Louise Kirk develops a near-lifelong obsession with the boy from across the street--now a man who is incapable of loving her as much as she loves him.
	<i>The White Bone</i> **	12, 21, 36, 43	A novel told entirely from the perspective of African elephants follows young Mud and her family as they desperately struggle to survive the harsh drought and ivory hunters that threaten their lives
Greene, Graham	<i>Brighton Rock</i> **	3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 19, 21, 24, 26, 30, 32, 37, 39	A gang war is raging through the dark underworld of Brighton. Pinkie, malign and ruthless, has killed a man. Believing he can escape retribution, he is unprepared for the courageous Ida Arnold, who is determined to avenge a death.
Gruen, Sara	<i>Water for Elephants</i> *	4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 21, 22, 23, 25, 34, 36, 43	Jacob Jankowski, an elderly man in a nursing home, uses flashbacks to reveal this story. During the Great Depression, his parents are killed in a car crash, leaving him penniless. He drops out of veterinary school and gets a job with the circus. There, he falls in love with the performer Marlena, who is married to the circus'

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			psychotic animal trainer. He also grows to love Rosie the elephant.
	<i>At the Water's Edge *</i>	23, 1, 2, 24, 26,38,	After embarrassing themselves at the social event of the year in high society Philadelphia on New Year's Eve of 1942, Maddie and Ellis Hyde are cut off financially by Ellis's father. Ellis decides that the only way to regain his father's favor is to hunt the famous Loch Ness monster. Maddie, now alone in a foreign country, must begin to figure out who she is and what she wants. The novel tells of Maddie's social awakening: to the harsh realities of life, to the beauties of nature, to a connection with forces larger than herself, to female friendship, and finally, to love.
Gulland, Sarah	<i>The Secret Lives and Sorrows of Josephine B.</i>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 13, 28, 33, 34	In this first of three books inspired by the life of Josephine Bonaparte, wife of Napoleon, Sandra Gulland recreates the astonishing world of a young girl who transforms herself into one of the most powerful women in history. Told in an imaginative and historically accurate diary form, this is an utterly absorbing novel of magical proportions.
Hamilton, Jane	<i>Map of the World *</i>	7, 13, 26, 29, 40	On a diary farm in the midwest, Alice is watching her neighbour's daughter when she drowns in the pond. This marks the beginning of a series of events that turns Alice into a scapegoat and brings about her family's downfall.
Harris, Joanne	<i>Five Quarters of an Orange **</i>	1, 2, 7, 12, 13, 19, 20, 24, 29, 30, 42, 46	Set during World War II, and told over two generations, this is the story of a young woman who fights against her mother in order to find control under Nazi rule.
Hashimi, Nadia	<i>The Pearl that Broke its Shell **</i>	51, 3, 4, 28, 1, 9, 33, 2	In Kabul, 2007, with a drug-addicted father and no brothers, Rahima and her sisters can only sporadically attend school, and can rarely leave the house. Their only hope lies in the ancient custom of bacha posh, which allows Rahima to dress and be treated as a boy until she is of marriageable age. As a son, she can attend school, go to the market, and chaperone her older sisters. But Rahima is not the first to adopt this unusual custom. A century earlier, her great-aunt, Shekiba, left orphaned by an epidemic, saved herself and built a new life the same way.
	<i>When the Moon is Low**</i>	51, 28, 1, 4, 2, 5, 33, 16	Mahmoud's passion for his wife Fereiba, a schoolteacher, is greater than any love she's ever known. But their happy, middle-class world—a life of education, work, and comfort—implodes when their country is engulfed in war, and the Taliban rises to power. Mahmoud, a civil engineer, becomes a target of the new fundamentalist regime and is murdered. Forced to flee to England. She makes a dangerous crossing into Iran under cover of darkness. But in a busy market square, their fate takes a frightening turn when her teenage son, Saleem, becomes separated from the rest of the family. Across the continent Fereiba and Saleem struggle to reunite, and ultimately find a place where they can begin to reconstruct their lives.
Hegi, Ursula	<i>Stones from the River **</i>	2, 20, 24, 25, 33, 45, 47	Trudi, a dwarf librarian, tells about the lives of people in the small German town of Burgdorf from World War I and into the 1950s. There's Trudi's mother, who slowly

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			goes insane living in an "earth nest" beneath the family house; Trudi's best friend Georg, whose parents dress him as the girl they always wanted; and, of course, Trudi herself, whose condition dooms her to long for an impossible normalcy.
Hesse, Hermann	<i>Siddhartha</i> **	3, 9, 12, 13, 24, 25, 32	Siddhartha's life takes him on a journey towards enlightenment. First, he joins a group of ascetics, fasting and living without possessions. Then, he reenters the world, slipping into hedonism and materialism. Disgusted, he flees to become a ferryman's apprentice. This novel parallels the life of Buddha and his efforts to find meaning in life.
Hill, Lawrence	<i>The Book of Negroes</i> **	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 45, 46, 47	Aminata Diallo, born in Bayo, West Africa, in 1745, is kidnapped at the age of 11 by British slavers. She survives the Middle Passage and is reunited in South Carolina with Chekura, a boy from a village near hers. Her story gets entwined with his, and with those of her owners: nasty indigo producer Robinson Appleby and, later, Jewish duty inspector Solomon Lindo. During her long life of struggle, she does what she can to free herself and others from slavery, including learning to read and teaching others to, and befriending anyone who can help her, black or white.
Hillenbrand, Laura	<i>Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption</i> **	4, 5, 10, 20, 33, 34, 37, 38	On a May afternoon in 1943, an Army Air Forces bomber crashed into the Pacific Ocean and disappeared, leaving only a spray of debris and a slick of oil, gasoline, and blood. Then, on the ocean surface, a face appeared. It was that of a young lieutenant, the plane's bombardier, who was struggling to a life raft and pulling himself aboard. So began one of the most extraordinary odysseys of the Second World War. An unforgettable story of a man's journey into extremity, <i>Unbroken</i> is a testament to the resilience of the human mind, body, and spirit.
Hosseini, Khaled	<i>The Kite Runner</i> **	19, 28, 29, 33, 36, 37, 39	This novel traces the unlikely friendship of a wealthy Afghan youth and a servant's son, in a tale that spans the final days of Afghanistan's monarchy through the atrocities of the present day.
	<i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i> **	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 32, 33, 34, 44	<i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i> is a breathtaking story set against the volatile events of Afghanistan's last thirty years--from the Soviet invasion to the reign of the Taliban to post-Taliban rebuilding--that puts the violence, fear, hope, and faith of this country in intimate, human terms. It is a tale of two generations of characters brought jarringly together by the tragic sweep of war, where personal lives--the struggle to survive, raise a family, find happiness--are inextricable from the history playing out around them.
Zora, Neale	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> ***	4, 9, 12, 13, 21, 32	Meet the unforgettable Janie Crawford, an articulate African-American woman in the 1930s. The novel traces Janie's quest for identity, through three marriages, on a journey to her roots.
Irving, John	<i>The World According to Garp</i> **	1, 2, 24, 25, 30	T. S. Garp, a man with high ambitions for an artistic career and with obsessive devotion to his wife and children, and Jenny Fields, his famous feminist mother, find their lives surrounded by an assortment of people including teachers, whores, and radicals.

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	<i>A Widow for One Year**</i>	1, 2, 24, 25, 30, 40	Chronicles the life of a complex, abrasive woman born in the shadow of her siblings' deaths and her parents' adultery, who only finds love after motherhood and widowhood.
Ishiguro, Kazuo	<i>Never Let Me Go**</i>	4, 6, 10, 21, 23, 24, 25, 28, 35, 37, 40	Hailsham seems like a pleasant English boarding school, far from the influences of the city. Its students are well tended and supported, trained in art and literature, and become just the sort of people the world wants them to be. But, curiously, they are taught nothing of the outside world and are allowed little contact with it. Within the grounds of Hailsham, Kathy grows from schoolgirl to young woman, but it's only when she and her friends Ruth and Tommy leave the safe grounds of the school (as they always knew they would) that they realize the full truth of what Hailsham is.
	<i>The Remains of the Day**</i>	4, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29,30, 40, 44	In 1956, Stevens, a long-serving butler at Darlington Hall, decides to take a motoring trip through the West Country. The six-day excursion becomes a journey into the past of Stevens and England, a past that takes in fascism, two world wars, and an unrealised love between the butler and his housekeeper. Ishiguro's dazzling novel is a sad and humorous love story, a meditation on the condition of modern man, and an elegy for England at a time of acute change.
	<i>The Buried Giant**</i>	1, 16, 4, 2,	<i>The Buried Giant</i> begins as a couple set off across a troubled land of mist and rain in the hope of finding a son they have not seen in years.
Itani, Frances	<i>Deafening**</i>	1, 2, 4, 5, 4, 7, 11, 12, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 31, 32, 34, 36, 40	Left profoundly deaf from scarlet fever, Grania O'Neill grows up protected from the hearing world and learning sign language, but her life changes when she falls in love with Jim Lloyd, a hearing man, on the eve of the Great War.
Joyce, Graham	<i>Smoking Poppy*</i>	1, 2, 9, 15, 25, 30	When Dan Innes hears that his estranged daughter, Charlie, has been arrested for drug smuggling in Thailand, he embarks on a harrowing and dangerous journey into the dark underworld of Thailand in order to save his daughter.
Joyce, Rachel	<i>The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry**</i>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 44	Recently retired, sweet, emotionally numb Harold Fry is jolted out of his passivity by a letter from Queenie Hennessy, an old friend, who he hasn't heard from in twenty years. She has written to say she is in hospice and wanted to say goodbye. Leaving his tense, bitter wife Maureen to her chores, Harold intends a quick walk to the corner mailbox to post his reply but instead, inspired by a chance encounter, he becomes convinced he must deliver his message in person to Queenie--who is 600 miles away--because as long as he keeps walking, Harold believes that Queenie will not die. So without hiking boots, rain gear, map or cell phone, one of the most endearing characters in current fiction begins his unlikely pilgrimage across the English countryside. Along the way, strangers stir up memories--flashbacks, often painful, from when his marriage was filled with promise and then not, of his inadequacy as a father, and of his shortcomings as a husband.
Kerr, Phillip	<i>Philosophical Investigation**</i>	2, 7, 8, 11, 15, 23, 30	In an intensely violent futuristic world where serial killers abound and people are screened to determine their predisposition for criminality, a man who fits the model decides to become a serial killer of serial killers.

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Kerouac, Jack	<i>On The Road**</i>	7, 11, 13, 16, 24, 25, 32	This novel is a thinly fictionalized autobiography, filled with a cast made of Kerouac's real life friends, lover, and fellow travelers. Sal Paradise, one of Kerouac's alter-egos, narrates this cross-country bohemian odyssey that not only influenced writing in the years since its 1957 publication but penetrated into the deepest level of American thought and culture.
Khadra, Yasmina	<i>The Swallows of Kabul**</i>	4, 7, 9, 13, 19, 21, 24, 28, 47	In Kabul under the Taliban, Atiq and Moshen walk the city in pain. Both have witnessed several regimes' destruction of business, education, and women's rights. Their paths cross when Moshen's beautiful wife becomes a prisoner in Atiq's jail, and Atiq becomes determined to save her life.
	<i>The Sirens of Baghdad**</i>	4, 8, 9, 10, 12, 20, 22, 24, 25, 30, 35, 37, 47	After enduring US bombing of the university in Baghdad, the murder of a mentally impaired man by GI's, and a missile destroying a wedding party, the novel's unnamed narrator, who is a young Arab, agrees to become a suicide bomber and carry a weapon that its developers hope will dwarf the 9/11 attack. Khadra makes the mind of a terrorist accessible to a Western audience with a plot that is frighteningly plausible.
Kingsolver, Barbara	<i>The Poisonwood Bible</i>	1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 29, 32, 39.	The family of a fierce evangelical Baptist missionary--Nathan Price, his wife, and his four daughters--begins to unravel after they embark on a 1959 mission to the Belgian Congo, where they find their lives transformed over the course of three decades
Kingsolver, Barbara	<i>Prodigal Summer**</i>	5, 6, 23, 25, 32	This novel tells three intertwined stories. Wildlife biologist Deanna is caught off guard by an intrusive young hunter, while bookish city wife Lusa finds herself facing a difficult identity choice, and elderly neighbors find attraction at the height of a long-standing feud. The novel has a strong focus on the natural world, and tackles timely issues, including the ecological damage caused by herbicides, ethical questions about raising tobacco, and the endangered condition of subsistence farming.
Lamb, Wally	<i>She's Come Undone *</i>	1, 2, 12, 23, 42, 33	Overweight and sensitive Dolores Price grows from painful childhood, through excruciating adolescence, to lonely adulthood, experiencing the heartache of being a misfit in a confusing world.
	<i>I Know This Much is True **</i>	25, 30, 35, 36, 39, 40	Dominick Birdsey, a forty-year-old housepainter living in Three Rivers, Connecticut, finds his subdued life greatly disturbed when his identical twin brother Thomas, a paranoid schizophrenic, commits a shocking act of self-mutilation.
	<i>We are Water</i>	1, 6, 44, 42, 13,50 ,40	Annie Oh—wife, mother, and artist—has shaken her family to its core. After twenty-seven years of marriage and three children, Annie has fallen in love with Viveca, the wealthy, cultured, confident Manhattan art dealer who orchestrated her professional success. The two plan to wed in the Oh family's hometown of Three Rivers, Connecticut, where gay marriage has recently been legalized. But this provokes mixed reactions and opens a Pandora's box of toxic secrets—dark and painful truths that have festered below the surface of the Ohs' lives.
Lansens, Lori	<i>The Girls **</i>	1, 2, 4, 7, 23, 29, 44	Rose and Ruby are twenty-nine-year-old conjoined twins. Joined to Ruby at the head, Rose's face is pulled to one side, but she has full use of her limbs. Ruby has

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			a beautiful face, but her body is tiny and she is unable to walk. As they describe their relatively sheltered childhood, rocky adolescence, and tentative experiments with love, the interplay between these two distinct voices heightens the dramatic tension of what's to come.
	<i>The Mountain Story **</i>	44, 34, 1, 4, 21, 5	Nola has gone up the mountain to commemorate her wedding anniversary, the first since her beloved husband passed. Blonde, stick-thin Bridget is training for a triathlon. Vonn is working out her teenage rebellion at eight thousand feet, driven by family obligation and the urge to escape her mistakes. Still reeling from the tragic accident that robbed him of his best friend, Wolf Truly is the only experienced hiker among them, but he has come to the cliffs on his eighteenth birthday without food or supplies because he plans to take his own life.
	<i>Rush Home Road **</i>	1, 2, 4, 8, 13, 14, 21, 23, 24, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 44, 45	When 5-year old Sharla Cody is dumped on the doorstep of Addy Shadd, a 70-year old woman living in a trailer park, Addy does not know how completely her life is about to change. She's hardly used to company and the troubled Sharla is not the sweet, beautiful angel she had envisioned. Over time, Addy and Sharla form a bond that neither of them expected-and Sharla begins to undergo a transformation under Addy's patient and loving care. But much to Addy's surprise and dismay, Sharla's presence brings back memories of her own tumultuous childhood. As she reminisces about her days growing up in Rusholme, a town settled by fugitive slaves in the mid-1800s, she remembers her family and her first love and confronts the painful experience that drove her away from home, never to return.
Lapierre, Dominique	<i>The City of Joy **</i>	2, 9, 21, 24, 34, 36	What irony that one of Calcutta's most devastating slums should be known as Anand Nagar, "the City of Joy." By interweaving impressionistic glimpses from the lives of a French priest, a rickshaw driver, and an American doctor, Lapierre creates a searing vision of the struggle for survival, the flashing violence, and the social and cultural practices of the slum.
Lawson, Mary	<i>Crow Lake ***</i>	40, 46, 25, 23, 39	After their parents are killed in a car accident, four siblings must struggle to survive and to stay together. Living in the rural farm country of northern Ontario, their lives become intertwined with another family's – and characters are brought together and torn apart by misunderstanding, resentment, sibling rivalry, family love, and tragedy.
	<i>The Other Side of the Bridge ***</i>	1, 2, 5, 7, 11, 10, 16, 19, 21, 25, 24, 23, 37, 44	Two brothers, Arthur and Jake Dunn, are the sons of a farmer in the mid-1930s, when life is tough and another world war is looming. Arthur is reticent, solid, dutiful and set to inherit the farm and his father's character; Jake is younger, attractive, mercurial and dangerous to know – the family misfit. When a beautiful young woman comes into the community, the fragile balance of sibling rivalry tips over the edge.
Lessing, Doris	<i>The Fifth Child *</i>	2, 11, 21, 24, 30, 33, 39	The first four children are adorable, but when Harriet becomes pregnant for the fifth time, she realizes that this baby is different. Painfully active in the womb, newborn Ben seems more like a monster than child; Harriet thinks he is a throwback to humanity's primitive forebears. Howling and raging, Ben destroys

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			family harmony. From Ben's time spent in an institution to his descent into a group of thugs, this novel is an indictment of how society refuses to acknowledge the violence inherent in humans.
Letts, Billie	<i>Where the Heart Is *</i>	6, 16, 24, 33, 40	Pregnant, overweight, and convinced about her inherent bad luck, Novalee Nation hopes for a new life in a new state with her boyfriend but is dumped along the way at an Oklahoma Wal Mart. For months, she surreptitiously makes her home in the store, sleeping there at night and befriending an assortment of characters in the parking lot during the day. The novel follows Novalee's story as well as the heart-warming and sometimes brutal stories of the other characters.
Lorde, Audre	<i>Zami**</i>	12, 25, 33, 45, 40, 44, 42	Set in the Southern States in the 1960s, this is the story of a young, black woman who, from her vivid childhood memories in Harlem to her coming of age in the 1950s, is coming to terms with her sexuality.
MacDonald, Anne-Marie	<i>The Way the Crow Flies **</i>	1, 2, 4, 7, 11, 12, 16, 23, 24, 25, 28, 33, 39, 40, 42, 46, 47	Twenty years after her early 1960s military father is forced to choose between loyalties in the wake of a local murder, Madeleine begins to understand the case's implication and launches a search for the killer.
	<i>Fall on Your Knees **</i>	13, 23, 33, 34, 40, 42, 44	This novel tells the story of several generations of the Piper family of Cape Breton. With a controlling father, a young, immigrant mother, and four daughters, the story follows an intricately plotted series of tragedies which is, in turn, extreme, beautiful, and violent.
Martel, Yann	<i>The Life of Pi ***</i>	3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 30, 33, 46	Possessing encyclopedia-like intelligence, unusual zookeeper's son Pi Patel sets sail for America, but when the ship sinks, he escapes on a life boat and is lost at sea with a dwindling number of animals until only he and a hungry Bengal tiger remain.
McCarthy, Cormac	<i>The Road **</i>	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 22, 24, 32, 35, 43	Set in a post-apocalyptic world in which the skies rain ash, all wildlife is extinct, starvation is prevalent, and bands of cannibals roam the landscape, this novel depicts a journey by a father and son who must struggle to keep hope in a world that is, quite literally, dying.
	<i>No Country for Old Men **</i>	44, 33, 24, 26, 30,	One day, a good old boy named Llewellyn Moss finds a pickup truck surrounded by a bodyguard of dead men. A load of heroin and two million dollars in cash are still in the back. When Moss takes the money, he sets off a chain reaction of catastrophic violence that not even the law—in the person of aging, disillusioned Sheriff Bell—can contain.
McCourt, Frank	<i>Angela's Ashes *</i>	1, 3, 21, 24, 26, 28, 36, 39	This is the memoir of Frank McCourt, born in Depression-era Brooklyn as the child of Irish immigrants who decide to return to worse poverty in Limerick, Ireland when his infant sister dies. With an alcoholic father who can't hold down a job, Frank endures near-starvation and the cruelty of relatives and neighbours. Yet Frank lives for his father's exuberant stories and tells his own tale with remarkable forgiveness.
McEwan, Ian	<i>Atonement **</i>	1, 4, 5, 10, 12, 24, 26, 30, 33, 37, 46	In the summer of 1935, thirteen-year-old Briony sees her older sister Cecilia strip off her clothes and plunge into their garden, watched by Robbie, a childhood

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			friend. Briony makes an accusation, then suffers guilt that colours her entire life. The novel explores shame, forgiveness, and the difficulty in absolution.
	<i>Amsterdam</i> **	44, 25, 6, 23, 35, 52	On a chilly February day, two old friends meet in the throng outside a crematorium to pay their last respects to Molly Lane. Both Clive Linley and Vernon Halliday had been Molly's lovers in the days before they reached their current eminence. Clive is Britain's most successful modern composer; Vernon is editor of the quality broadsheet <i>The Judge</i> . Gorgeous, feisty Molly had other lovers, too, notably Julian Garmony, Foreign Secretary, a notorious right-winger tipped to be the next prime minister. In the days that follow Molly's funeral, Clive and Vernon will make a pact with consequences neither has foreseen. Each will make a disastrous moral decision, their friendship will be tested to its limits, and Julian Garmony will be fighting for his political life.
McKay, Amy	<i>The Birth House</i> **	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 12, 16, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 40, 47	The first daughter in five generations of her Nova Scotia family, Dora Rare becomes an apprentice to a gifted midwife and storyteller before their home is threatened by the arrival of a brash medical doctor who promises sterile and painless births.
	<i>The Virgin Cure</i> *	1, 4, 5, 19, 31, 38	This book follows the lives of various female characters in late nineteenth-century lower Manhattan. Moth is a young girl living with her mother in the tenements. When her mother sells her to service as a maid, Moth's life changes forever. From here she uses her survival skills to stay alive and get ahead in lower Manhattan through a variety of different circumstances.
Mistry, Rohinton	<i>Such a Long Journey</i> ***	3, 9, 11, 16, 18, 29, 33, 34, 35, 37, 40	Gustad Noble and his family live in Bombay in 1971 where he works as a bank clerk and is eventually drawn into the corrupt politics of his country during India's crisis with Pakistan.
	<i>A Fine Balance</i> ***	1, 4, 9, 12, 25, 30, 32, 36, 37	This is a portrait of India featuring four characters. Two are tailors who are forcibly sterilized, one is a student who emigrates, and the fourth is a widowed seamstress who decides to hang on. A tale of cruelty, political thuggery and despair.
Monk Kidd, Sue	<i>The Secret Life of Bees</i> *	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 21, 22, 28, 32, 34, 45, 46	14-year-old Lily Owen, neglected by her father and isolated on their Georgia peach farm, spends hours imagining a blissful infancy when she was loved and nurtured by her mother, Deborah, whom she barely remembers. These consoling fantasies are her heart's answer to the family story that as a child, in unclear circumstances, Lily accidentally shot and killed her mother.
Morgenstern, Erin	<i>The Night Circus</i> *	7, 11, 12, 21, 23, 25, 29, 30, 32, 35, 40, 44,46	The circus arrives without warning. No announcements precede it. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not. It is called <i>Le Cirque des Rêves</i> , and it is only open at night. But behind the scenes, a fierce competition is underway: a duel between two young magicians, Celia and Marco, who have been trained since childhood expressly for this purpose by their mercurial instructors. Unbeknownst to them both, this is a game in which only one can be left standing. Despite the high stakes, Celia and Marco soon tumble headfirst into love, setting off a domino effect of dangerous consequences, and leaving the lives of everyone, from the performers to the patrons, hanging in the balance.

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Morrison, Toni	<i>Beloved</i> ***	1, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 21, 30, 42, 45	After the Civil War ends, Sethe longingly recalls the two-year-old daughter whom she killed when threatened with recapture after escaping from slavery 18 years before. The novel juxtaposes flashbacks full of harrowing brutality with scenes in which the spirit of Sethe's murdered daughter returns in the flesh.
	<i>Jazz</i> ***	1, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 21, 30, 42, 45	In Harlem, 1926, Joe Trace, a door-to-door salesman in his fifties, kills his teenage lover. At the funeral, his wife attacks the corpse. A profound love story which travels back and forth in time and depicts the sights and sounds of Black urban life during the Jazz Age.
	<i>The Bluest Eye</i> ***	1, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 21, 30, 42, 45	Eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove, an African-American girl in an America whose love for blonde, blue-eyed children can devastate all others, prays for her eyes to turn blue, so that she will be beautiful, people will notice her, and her world will be different.
Niffenegger, Audrey	<i>The Time Traveler's Wife</i> **	5, 12, 15, 22, 25, 32, 37, 40	Henry De Tamble is a Chicago librarian with "Chrono Displacement" disorder; at random times, he suddenly disappears without warning and finds himself in the past or future, usually at a time or place of importance in his life. The book alternates between Henry's and his wife, Claire's, points of view, and weaves together a love story.
Ondaatje, Michael	<i>In the Skin of A Lion</i> ***	11, 5, 47, 44, 37, 50	A love story and an irresistible mystery set in the turbulent, muscular new world of Toronto in the 20s and 30s. Michael Ondaatje entwines adventure, romance and history, real and invented, enmeshing us in the lives of the immigrants who built the city and those who dreamed it into being: the politically powerful, the anarchists, bridge builders and tunnellers, a vanished millionaire and his mistress, a rescued nun and a thief who leads a charmed life. This is a haunting tale of passion, privilege and biting physical labour, of men and women moved by compassion and driven by the power of dreams -- sometimes even to murder.
	<i>The Cat's Table</i> **	5, 7, 9, 12, 17, 21, 23, 29, 32, 45, 46	An eleven-year-old boy is put alone aboard a ship bound for England. At mealtimes he is seated at the insignificant "cat's table"--as far from the Captain's table as can be--with two other lone boys and a small group of strange fellow passengers: one appears to be a shadowy figure from the British Secret Service; another a mysterious thief, another seems all too familiar with the dangerous ways of women and crime. On the long sea voyage across the Indian Ocean and through the Suez Canal, the three boys rush from one wild adventure and startling discovery to another: experiencing the first stirrings of desire, spying at night on a notorious shackled prisoner, moving between the decks and holds of the ship. As the adult world is slowly revealed, they realize that a drama is unfolding on board, and the prisoner's crime and fate will be a mystery that will haunt and link them forever.
Patchett, Ann	<i>Bel Canto</i> ***	4, 5, 12, 13, 19, 28, 29, 37	When terrorists seize hostages at an embassy party, an unlikely assortment of people is thrown together, including an American opera star and various countries' diplomats. As hostage negotiations stretch into months, hostages and terrorists form unlikely bonds.

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Peirce, Marge	<i>Woman on the Edge of Time**</i>	4, 5, 8, 11, 15, 19, 21, 28, 41	Connie Ramos, a woman in her mid-thirties, has been declared insane. But Connie is overwhelmingly sane, merely tuned to the future, and able to communicate with the year 2137. As her doctors persuade her to agree to an operation, Connie struggles to force herself to listen to the future and its lessons for today.
	<i>Gone to Soldiers**</i>	1, 4, 5, 10, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 35, 37, 38, 39, 42, 45	Focusing on issues of gender identity and propaganda, this novel weaves a tapestry of women who were heroines on the homefront during World War II. It is also the story of the men who completed, complicated or threatened their lives and new-found independence.
Rankin, Ian	<i>The Naming of the Dead **</i>	4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 23, 24, 26, 30, 37	July 2005, and the G8 leaders have gathered in Scotland. With daily marches, demonstrations, and scuffles, the police are at full stretch. Detective Inspector John Rebus, however, has been sidelined, until the apparent suicide of an MP coincides with clues that a serial killer may be on the loose. The authorities are keen to hush up both, for fear of overshadowing a meeting of global importance - but Rebus has never been one to stick to the rules, and when his colleague Siobhan Clarke finds herself hunting down the identity of the riot cop who assaulted her mother, it looks as though both Rebus and Clarke may be pitted against both sides in the conflict.
	<i>A Question of Blood **</i>	4, 7, 11, 13, 24, 30, 37, 39	Two seventeen-year-olds are killed by an ex-Army loner who has gone off the rails. The mystery takes Rebus into the heart of a shattered community. Ex-Army himself, Rebus becomes fascinated by the killer, and finds he is not alone. Army investigators are on the scene, and won't be shaken off. The killer had friends and enemies to spare and left behind a legacy of secrets and lies. Rebus has more than his share of personal problems, too. He's fresh out of hospital, but won't say how it happened. Could there be a connection with a house-fire and the unfortunate death of a petty criminal who had been harassing Rebus's colleague Siobhan Clarke?
	<i>Dead Souls **</i>	4, 7, 11, 24, 26, 27, 30, 37, 39, 46	Stalking a poisoner at the local zoo, Inspector John Rebus comes across a paedophile taking pictures of children. When the social workers claim he is there for legitimate educational reasons, Rebus is faced with a dilemma - should he be outed to protect local kids or given a chance to start anew? As the locals begin a hate campaign Rebus gets a call from the past: the son of a friend has gone missing and no one else will make time to ask the right questions. And then a fragment of Scotland's criminal history is repatriated at the end of a life sentence for murder. Once more Rebus's cup of trouble runneth over and the ghosts of past misdeeds return to haunt Edinburgh's streets.
Ricci, Nino	<i>Lives of the Saints ***</i>	16, 17, 29, 33, 42, 44, 46	When young Vittorio's mother has an affair with a mysterious blue-eyed stranger, his family is treated much differently by the villagers in his small Italian town. Eight months pregnant, and unable to bear this ruthless treatment, Vittorio's mother takes him to Canada to begin a new life, but not to reunite with Vittorio's father, who had moved there years earlier.

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	<i>In a Glass House</i> ***	1, 2, 9, 17, 23, 29, 38, 46,	Young Vittorio Innocente leaves Italy and his dead mother to join his estranged father in Canada. But the shame of his mother's adulterous affair and subsequent death in childbirth poisons life with his embittered father. Emotions explode when his Aunt Theresa arrives with his baby half-sister, Rita, but then like the vegetables they labor to grow under acres of glass in a hostile climate, the Innocentes struggle to fashion a family from the wreckage of dashed hopes. Caught between his father's dark fury and his aloof half-sister, Vittorio struggles to escape the hothouse environment of an immigrant community isolated by custom and language. Ricci adroitly portrays the developing awareness of a child growing into adulthood whose emotional scars barely heal before they are ripped open by fresh revelations. Through Vittorio's brooding sensitivity, Ricci explores what binds these volatile characters into a family as well as what ultimately drives them apart.
	<i>Where She Has Gone</i> ***	1, 2, 17, 23, 25, 29, 30, 38, 40, 44	Upon returning to Toronto after teaching in Africa, Vittorio Innocente reconnects with his half-sister Rita, who is in her first year of college. Rita's mother died in childbirth aboard a ship for Canada, and Rita, resented by Vittorio's father, grew up in a foster home. Vittorio, big brother and surrogate father, also finds himself attracted to Rita, creating tensions in their relationship; when she leaves for Europe with John, a man old enough to be her father, Vittorio follows to meet her in the Italian village where he lived with his mother.
Roy, Arundhati	<i>The God of Small Things</i> **	7, 9, 12, 23, 32	In 1969 in Kerala, India, Rahel and her twin brother, Estha, struggle to forge a childhood for themselves amid the destruction of their family life, as they discover that the entire world can be transformed in a single moment.
Rubio, Gwyn Hyman	<i>Icy Sparks</i> *	1, 4, 7, 11, 21	Young Icy Sparks tell her story of growing up during the 1950s in a small Kentucky town where her uncontrollable jerks, spasms, and cursing make her an object of fright and scorn, and ultimately lead to her expulsion from school. After treatment for Tourette's Syndrome, she learns to control herself and eventually becomes a therapist.
Russo, Richard	<i>Empire Falls</i> **	1, 2, 4, 8, 13, 14, 21, 23, 26, 29, 34	Miles Roby has been slinging burgers at the Empire Grill for 20 years, a job that cost him his college education and much of his self-respect. What keeps him there? It could be his bright, sensitive daughter Tick, who needs all his help surviving the local high school. Or maybe it's Janine, Miles' soon-to-be ex-wife, who's taken up with a noxiously vain health-club proprietor. Or perhaps it's the imperious Francine Whiting, who owns everything in town—and seems to believe that "everything" includes Miles himself. In <i>Empire Falls</i> Richard Russo delves deep into the blue-collar heart of America in a work that overflows with hilarity, heartache, and grace.
Saramago, Jose	<i>Blindness</i> ***	4, 12, 19, 21, 28,30, 33, 34, 36, 37,	A city is hit by an epidemic of "white blindness" that spares no one. Authorities confine the blind to an empty mental hospital, but there the criminal element holds everyone captive, stealing food rations and assaulting women. There is one eyewitness to this nightmare who guides her charges—among them a boy with no mother, a girl with dark glasses, a dog of tears—through the barren streets, and

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			their procession becomes as uncanny as the surroundings are harrowing. <i>As Blindness</i> reclaims the age-old story of a plague, it evokes the vivid and trembling horrors of the twentieth century, leaving readers with a powerful vision of the human spirit that's bound both by weakness and exhilarating strength.
Sebold, Alice	<i>The Lovely Bones</i> *	1, 7, 13, 32	Looking down from heaven, 14-year-old Susie Salmon recounts her rape and murder and watches her family as they cope with their grief and "the lovely bones" growing around her absence.
See, Lisa	<i>Snow Flower and the Secret Fan</i> *	1, 2, 5, 9, 11, 12, 22, 23, 26, 32, 33, 35, 39, 44,	In nineteenth-century China, a seven-year-old girl named Lily is paired with a laotong, an "old same," in an emotional match that will last a lifetime. The laotong, Snow Flower, introduces herself by sending Lily a silk fan on which she's written a poem in nu shu, a unique language that Chinese women created in order to communicate in secret, away from the influence of men. As the years pass, Lily and Snow Flower endure the agony of footbinding and reflect upon their arranged marriages, their loneliness, and the joys and tragedies of motherhood. But when a misunderstanding arises, their relationship suddenly threatens to tear apart.
Seth, Vikram	<i>An Unequal Music</i> **	6, 25, 51, 29, 8, 4, 37	A deeply romantic tale of two gifted musicians. Michael Holme is a violinist, a member of the successful Maggiore Quartet. He has long been haunted, though, by memories of the pianist he loved and left ten years earlier, Julia McNicholl. Now Julia, married and the mother of a small child, unexpectedly reenters his life and the romance flares up once more.
Sevadurai, Shyam	<i>Funny Boy</i> **	6, 9, 21, 32, 42	A boy growing up in an upper middle class family in Sri Lanka struggles with his own gay identity while the world around him disintegrates as a result of growing racial tension and civil unrest.
Stockett, Kathryn	<i>The Help</i> **	1, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 21, 22, 25, 28, 30, 37, 45	Set in 1962 in Jackson, Mississippi, this story is about two black maids and one white socialite who is considered a failure because she is not married. Together they write a tell-all book about work as a black maid in the South – an act that could forever alter their destinies and the life of a small town.
Schwarz, Christina	<i>Drowning Ruth</i> **	1, 5, 7, 22, 23, 30, 44	Worn out from nursing soldiers at a Milwaukee hospital and struggling to recover from a traumatic love affair, Amanda Starkey returns to her family's rural Wisconsin farm to stay with her beloved sister, Mattie, and young niece, Ruth. But when Mattie drowns in the lake, a tale of family rivalry, madness, secrets and obsessive love unfolds.
Tartt, Donna	<i>The Goldfinch</i> **	2, 4, 12, 23, 32, 34	Theo Decker, a thirteen-year-old New Yorker, miraculously survives an accident that kills his mother. Abandoned by his father, Theo is taken in by the family of a wealthy friend. Bewildered by his strange new home on Park Avenue, disturbed by schoolmates who don't know how to talk to him, and tormented above all by his unbearable longing for his mother, he clings to one thing that reminds him of her: a small, mysteriously captivating painting that ultimately draws Theo into the underworld of art. As an adult, Theo moves silkily between the drawing rooms of the rich and the dusty labyrinth of an antiques store where he works. He is alienated and in love-and at the center of a narrowing, ever more dangerous circle.

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Taylor, Jackson	<i>The Blue Orchard**</i>	1, 2, 7, 9, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 33, 35, 37, 38, 45	On the eve of the Great Depression, Verna Krone, the child of Irish immigrants, must leave the eighth grade and begin working as a maid to help support her family. Her employer takes inappropriate liberties, and as Verna matures, it seems as if each man she meets is worse than the last. Through sheer force of will and a few chance encounters, she manages to teach herself to read and becomes a nurse. But Verna's new life falls to pieces when she is arrested for assisting a black doctor with "illegal surgeries." As the media firestorm rages, Verna reflects on her life while awaiting trial.
Thompson, Hunter S.	<i>Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas **</i>	5, 8, 11, 12, 16, 22, 24,	A chronicle of drug-soaked, addle-brained, rollicking good times. It is also the tale of a long weekend road trip that has gone down in the annals of American pop culture as one of the strangest journeys ever undertaken.
Toews, Miriam	Summer of My Amazing Luck **	50, 2, 5, 13, 23, 24, 26,, 34,	Lucy Van Alstyne always thought she'd grow up to become a forest ranger. Instead, at the age of eighteen, she's found herself with quite a different job title: Single Mother on the Dole. As for the father of her nine-month-old son, Dillinger, well...it could be any of number of guys. At the Have-a-Life housing project--aptly nicknamed Half-a-Life by those who call it home--Lucy meets Lish, a zany woman whose idea of fashion is a black beret with a big silver spider brooch stuck on it. Lish is the mother of four daughters, two by a man on welfare himself and twins from a one-week stand with a fire-eating busker who stole her heart--and her wallet. When Lish and Lucy head to Colorado to find the fire-eater, Lucy discovers this just may be the summer of her amazing luck.
	All My Puny Sorrows **	50, 1, 8, 13, 23, 24, 32, 34, 39	You won't forget Elf and Yoli, two smart and loving sisters. Elfrieda, a world-renowned pianist, glamorous, wealthy, happily married: she wants to die. Yolandi, divorced, broke, sleeping with the wrong men as she tries to find true love: she desperately wants to keep her older sister alive. Yoli is a beguiling mess, wickedly funny even as she stumbles through life struggling to keep her teenage kids and mother happy, her exes from hating her, her sister from killing herself and her own heart from breaking.
Umrigar, Thrity	The Space Between Us **	50, 1, 5, 9, 23, 38	Set in modern-day India, it is the story of two compelling and achingly real women: Sera Dubash, an upper-middle-class Parsi housewife whose opulent surroundings hide the shame and disappointment of her abusive marriage, and Bhima, a stoic illiterate hardened by a life of despair and loss, who has worked in the Dubash household for more than twenty years. A powerful and perceptive literary masterwork, author Thrity Umrigar's extraordinary novel demonstrates how the lives of the rich and poor are intrinsically connected yet vastly removed from each other, and how the strong bonds of womanhood are eternally opposed by the divisions of class and culture.
	If Today Be Sweet *	50, 1, 2, 5, 9, 14, 16, 24, 30, 40	Tehmina, a middle-aged widow from India, is visiting her 38-year-old son, Sorab, his American wife, and son at their home in Ohio. (Sorab left his native India for graduate school in the U.S. and has lived there ever since.) Heartbroken by the death of her beloved husband, Tehmina is hardly in a position to face the life-

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			altering choice before her: to settle in with Sorab in the safe, antiseptic Midwest or to live out her days in earthy, chaotic Bombay. Tehmina must make up her mind soon: her tourist visa is about to expire, and the lack of privacy in their home is putting stress on her son and daughter-in-law. Meanwhile, Tehmina's quiet, private life becomes very public when she rescues two neighborhood children from domestic abuse. Umrigar renders a sublime, cross-cultural tale about lives driven by tradition and transformed by love.
Walker, Alice	Possessing the Secret of Joy ***	50, 4, 7, 9, 21, 1, 11, 16, 29, 32, 40, 42	After submitting to the ritual genital mutilation her people practice, Tashi makes her way in the world, mourning the loss of sexual pleasure.
	The Color Purple***	45, 33, 21, 23, 28, 1, 2, 4, 26, 6, 7, 12, 50	Celie's letters tell her life story, beginning at age 14 when she is being abused and raped by her father and attempting to protect her sister from the same fate, and continuing over the course of her marriage to "Mister," a brutal man who terrorizes her.
Winman, Sarah	When God Was a Rabbit**	1, 13, 24, 29, 30, 40, 46	Spanning four decades, from 1968 onwards, this is the story of a fabulous but flawed family and the slew of ordinary and extraordinary incidents that shape their everyday lives. It is a story about childhood and growing up, loss of innocence, eccentricity, familial ties and friendships, love and life. Stripped down to its bare bones, it's about the unbreakable bond between a brother and sister.
Wright, Richard B.	Clara Callen **	14, 16, 31, 33, 34	A finely detailed depiction of small town Ontario during the Depression era, the story is told entirely in the narrative form of letters between two sisters. The main character is a sensitive teacher who is raped and struggles to keep this ordeal a secret from her younger sister.
Wright, Richard	Native Son **	45, 38, 33, 30, 34, 4, 5, 8	Right from the start, Bigger Thomas had been headed for jail. It could have been for assault or petty larceny; by chance, it was for murder and rape. <i>Native Son</i> tells the story of this young black man caught in a downward spiral after he kills a young white woman in a brief moment of panic. Set in Chicago in the 1930s, this novel is a reflection on the poverty and feelings of hopelessness experienced by people in inner cities across the country and of what it means to be black in America.
Zafon, Carlos Ruiz	Shadow of the Wind **	11, 22, 32, 33, 5	Barcelona, 1945: A city slowly heals in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, and Daniel, an antiquarian book dealer's son who mourns the loss of his mother, finds solace in a mysterious book entitled <i>The Shadow of the Wind</i> , by one Julián Carax. But when he sets out to find the author's other works, he makes a shocking discovery: someone has been systematically destroying every copy of every book Carax has written. In fact, Daniel may have the last of Carax's books in existence. Soon Daniel's seemingly innocent quest opens a door into one of Barcelona's darkest secrets--an epic story of murder, madness, and doomed love.
	Angel's Game **	11, 22, 32, 33, 5	In this powerful, labyrinthian thriller, David Martín is a pulp fiction writer struggling to stay afloat. Holed up in a haunting abandoned mansion in the heart of Barcelona, he furiously taps out story after story, becoming increasingly desperate

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			and frustrated; thus, when he is approached by a mysterious publisher offering a book deal that seems almost too good to be real, David leaps at the chance. But as he begins the work, and after a visit to the Cemetery of Forgotten Books, he realizes there is a connection between his book and the shadows that surround his dilapidated home and that the publisher may be hiding a few troubling secrets of his own. Once again, Ruiz Zafón ventures into a dark, gothic Barcelona and creates a breathtaking tale of intrigue, romance, and tragedy.
	<i>The Prisoner of Heaven **</i>	11, 22, 32, 33, 5	Barcelona, 1957. It is Christmas, and Daniel Sempere and his wife Bea have much to celebrate. They have a beautiful new baby son named Julian, and their close friend Fermín Romero de Torres is about to be wed. But their joy is eclipsed when a mysterious stranger visits the Sempere bookshop and threatens to divulge a terrible secret that has been buried for two decades in the city's dark past. His appearance plunges Fermín and Daniel into a dangerous adventure that will take them back to the 1940's and the dark early days of Franco's dictatorship. The terrifying events of that time launch them on a journey fraught with jealousy, suspicion, vengeance, and lies, a search for the truth that will put into peril everything they love and ultimately transform their lives.

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Common Topics Explored in Literature:

1. Families under stress
2. Complex relationships between parents and children
3. Religion and its influences
4. Trapped or imprisoned humans tend to assert their individuality
5. Settings and their influence on characterization
6. Love and its profound effects
7. Narration and its effects on the story
8. Madness may in fact be sanity
9. Other cultures can make us see ourselves anew
10. "Heroism" can be a destructive force
11. Reality is often illusion and vice versa
12. Imagery and symbolism are powerful tools to...
13. Some writers illustrate that human beings are beautiful, not in spite of but, because of their foibles
14. Old age and its mythologies
15. The future is really the present, especially in science fiction
16. The journey motif...
17. The immigrant experience...
18. Epigraphs, dedications, prologues, introductions, and titles can play a significant role in illuminating theme
19. Power and its effects
20. War is...
21. The nature of freedom and/or captivity
22. The protagonist is a product of his/her time (i.e. Victorian, Elizabethan, the future)
23. The importance of relationships on the protagonist's life
24. There are no absolute answers; life consists of a series of complex and reverberating choices.
25. Passion and its effects on the protagonist's life
26. Price paid for an error in judgement
27. Media and its impact

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28. The government and its forms of control
29. The effects of love/hate relationships
30. Right/wrong or good/evil as a motivating force in the protagonist's life
31. The importance of letters as a narrative technique
32. The use of symbolism to support characterization and theme
33. The protagonist's ability/inability to act in crisis
34. It is only through suffering and/or humiliation that happiness/peace is revealed
35. Free will vs. the idea of fate
36. Ugliness and horror can be fascinating and can enhance the beautiful
37. Desperation produces dangerous characters
38. Neediness produces...
39. The effect of guilt...
40. For intimate relationships to grow...
41. Native issues...
42. Struggles with gender identity
43. Environment and animal rights issues...
44. The impact of secrets on relationships
45. The effects of racism
46. Adolescence and morality
47. Non-fiction and its effects on fiction
48. Physical growth and its connection to success (sports)
49. Overcoming the impact of physical and/or psychological isolation
50. Cultural/societal pressure can create an overwhelming burden
51. Unrequited love can change the course of one's life
52. In order to heal, characters must undergo a process of grief