

The List

The English Department invites you to complete the list. What is the list? It is easier to say what it is not than what it is. It is not a list of books that represents the canon. It is not even a list of all our favorite books or all the great works we hope you will someday read. Rather, it is the list of books that emerged when we asked this question of ourselves: what books do we think are essential; what books do we think no one—and in particular, no English major—should leave college without having read? We gave ourselves this limitation: we could each only offer up five books for the list and at least three of those had to come from our area of specialization. So, the list is idiosyncratic in the best sense of the word: all tenure-track, tenured, and visiting professors in the department are required to identify five books we think it most essential for our English majors to read while in college. The books that emerge from these individual choices become “The List.”

We hope you will take the challenge to read these books along with us. If you read 50 of the books from this list while at Wittenberg, you get to make a difficult choice yourself: you get to choose a work of literature to add to The List. For those of you who complete 35 works from The List, we will buy you a copy of your favorite work from the list, inscribe it, and then invite you at the end of the year to join us at a literary salon where we discuss these wonderful works. If you complete 20 books, you will receive an English Department mug.*

Here's how the challenge works:

- Sign up in the English Department office (Hollenbeck 102) if you want to take the challenge. You have your college years to complete the list.
- When you finish reading a work of literature from the list, pick up a slip from the English Department office to fill out with your name and the title of the book.
- Take that slip with you and talk with the professor who recommended the book (or with one of the alternate professors if any are listed for that title) about what you found most interesting about the work, and get his/her signature on your completion slip. Return the slip to the English Department office.
- When you complete 20 works, you receive an English Department mug! At 35 works, there is further cause for celebration: a gift of a book and the promised party are forthcoming. If you complete 50, you have earned the right to name your own essential book and alumni will be contacting you in the future and letting you know what they found interesting about your selection.

**The List will vary over time as individual professors retire and new tenure-track and visiting professors arrive. So, if you sign up to read 50 books from the list, you can read any 50 books from the various evolving lists that have been created during your time at Wittenberg, so long as you are able to meet with a listed professor to receive credit.*

The (check) List

**While you should try to meet with the Professor who chose the book for The List (in bold, listed parenthetically after the author), most titles have alternate Professors (listed after the professor who chose the book) with whom you may also meet to discuss and earn credit for completing the work.*

Date
Read

_____ *A Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry (**Battle**, Askeland)

_____ *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf (**Askeland**, Fallon, Inboden, Incorvati, Mattison, Richards)

_____ *A Shimmer of Something: Lean Stories of Spiritual Substance*, Brian Doyle (**Fallon**)

_____ *Angels in America*, Tony Kushner (**Incorvati**, Askeland, Davis, Richards)

_____ *Blues for Mister Charlie*, James Baldwin (**Battle**, Askeland)

_____ *Circe*, Madeline Miller (**Anderson**, Fallon)

_____ *Clarissa*, Samuel Richardson, Broadview abridged (**Richards**)

_____ *Collected Poems*, William Butler Yeats (**Inboden**, Polak)

_____ *Deogratias*, Jean-Philippe Stassen (**Polak**, Askeland)

_____ *Dream Country*, Shannon Gibney (**Askeland**)

_____ *Evelina*, Frances Burney (**Richards**)

_____ *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley (**Incorvati**, Hinson, Inboden, McClelland, Richards)

_____ *Gilead*, Marilynne Robinson (**Hinson**, Askeland, Davis, Incorvati)

_____ *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (**Polak**, Askeland, Battle)

_____ *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Harriet Ann Jacobs (**Askeland**, Battle, Davis, Mattison, Richards)

_____ *Infinite Jest*, David Foster Wallace (**Mattison**)

_____ *Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison (**McClelland**, Askeland, Battle, Davis, Incorvati, Polak)

_____ *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Bronte (**Inboden**, Fallon, Incorvati, Mattison, Richards)

_____ *Kindred*, Octavia Butler (**Anderson**, Askeland, Battle, Davis, Polak)

_____ "Lamia," "Isabella," "The Eve of St. Agnes," and other poems, John Keats (**Incorvati**, Inboden, Richards)

_____ *Leaves of Grass*, Walt Whitman (**Davis**, Askeland, Hinson)

_____ *Little Fires Everywhere*, Celeste Ng (**Anderson**, Mattison)

_____ *Lolita*, Vladimir Nabokov (**Hinson**, Askeland, Fallon, Mattison, Polak)

Date
Read

_____ *Marriage of a Thousand Lies*, SJ Sindu (**Anderson**)

_____ *Middlemarch*, George Eliot (**Inboden**, Askeland, Richards)

_____ *Moby-Dick*, Herman Melville (**McClelland**, Askeland, Davis, Hinson, Mattison)

_____ *My Bondage and My Freedom*, Frederick Douglass (**Askeland**, Davis)

_____ *Nervous Conditions*, Tsitsi Dangarembga (**Battle**, Polak)

_____ *Ohio*, Stephen Markley (**Mattison**)

_____ *Oroonoko*, Aphra Behn (**Richards**, Inboden, Incorvati)

_____ *Praisesong for the Widow*, Paule Marshall (**Battle**, Askeland)

_____ *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen (**Incorvati**, Fallon, Inboden, Polak, Richards)

_____ *Selected Poems*, Emily Dickinson (**Davis**, Askeland)

_____ *Simulacra and Simulation*, Jean Baudrillard (**Polak**, Hinson)

_____ *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, Audre Lorde (**Askeland**, Battle)

_____ *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, Joan Didion (**Fallon**, Incorvati, Mattison, McClelland)

_____ *Tennyson's Poetry (Norton Critical Ed. selection)*, Alfred Tennyson (**Inboden**)

_____ *Tenth of December: Stories*, George Saunders (**Davis**, Mattison)

_____ *Tess of the d'Urbervilles (or Jude the Obscure)*, Thomas Hardy (**Inboden**, Polak, Richards)

_____ *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain (**McClelland**, Askeland, Davis, Fallon)

_____ *The Anatomy of Prejudices*, Elisabeth Young-Bruehl (**Polak**)

_____ *The Blind Assassin*, Margaret Atwood (**Hinson**, Askeland)

_____ *The Boys of My Youth*, Jo Ann Beard (**Fallon**)

_____ *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Junot Diaz (**Polak**, Askeland, Fallon, Mattison)

_____ *The Complete Stories*, Flannery O'Connor (**Davis**, Hinson, Mattison, Polak)

_____ *The Hate U Give*, Angie Thomas (**Battle**, Mattison)

_____ *The Lais of Marie de France* (**Anderson**, Richards)

_____ *The Letters of John Keats* (**Richards**, Inboden, Incorvati)

_____ *The Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, William Blake (**Incorvati**, Inboden, Polak)

Date
Read

_____ *The Sound and the Fury*, William Faulkner (**Hinson**, Askeland, Davis, Polak)

_____ *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien (**Fallon**, Davis, Mattison, McClelland, Polak, Richards)

_____ *The Undertaking*, Thomas Lynch (**Fallon**, Mattison)

_____ *Tristram Shandy*, Laurence Sterne (**Richards**, Askeland)

_____ *Ulysses*, James Joyce (**Hinson**, Davis, Mattison)

_____ *Walden*, Henry David Thoreau (**Davis**, Askeland, Mattison)

_____ *White Noise*, Don DeLillo (**McClelland**, Askeland, Davis, Hinson, Polak)

_____ *Wittgenstein's Mistress (or Reader's Block)*, David Markson (**Mattison**)

_____ *Wolf Whistle*, Lewis Nordan (**Mattison**)

_____ *Words and Rules: The Ingredients of Language*, Steven Pinker (**Mattison**)

_____ *40 Short Stories: A Portable Anthology*, Beverly Lawn (**McClelland**, Mattison)

_____ *Flatland*, Edwin A. Abbott (**Jordan Hildebrandt** the first student to complete The List, reading 75 books)