

# 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 four 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 four 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.\*

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 35 works, there is 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 Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf (Askeland, Buckman, Fallon, Inboden, Incorvati, Mattison, Richards)

\_\_\_\_\_ *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*, David Foster Wallace (Mattison, Fallon, Polak)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Clarissa*, Samuel Richardson, Broadview abridged (Richards, Buckman)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Collected Poems*, William Butler Yeats (Inboden)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Deogratiás*, Jean-Philippe Stassen (Polak, I. MacDonald)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Evelina*, Frances Burney (Richards, Buckman)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley (Incorvati, Buckman, Hinson, Inboden, I. MacDonald, McClelland)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Gilead*, Marilynne Robinson (Hinson, Askeland, Incorvati)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, James Baldwin (Battle, Askeland, Incorvati)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Polak, Askeland, Battle, I. MacDonald)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Huck Finn*, Mark Twain (McClelland, Askeland, Fallon, I. MacDonald)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison (McClelland, Askeland, Buckman, Incorvati, I. MacDonald, Polak)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Bronte (Inboden, Fallon, Incorvati, Richards)

\_\_\_\_\_ *King Lear*, William Shakespeare (Buckman, Hinson, Inboden, I. MacDonald, Mattison)

\_\_\_\_\_ "Lamia," "Isabella," "The Eve of St. Agnes," and other poems, John Keats (Incorvati, Inboden)

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

\_\_\_\_\_ *Lolita*, Vladimir Nabokov (Hinson, Askeland, Buckman, Fallon, I. MacDonald, Mattison, Polak)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Lost in the Funhouse*, John Barth (Mattison)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Middlemarch*, George Eliot (Inboden, Askeland, I. MacDonald)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Moby Dick*, Herman Melville (McClelland, Askeland, Davis, Hinson, I. MacDonald, Mattison)

\_\_\_\_\_ *My Bondage and My Freedom*, Frederick Douglass (Askeland, I. MacDonald)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Nervous Conditions*, Tsitsi Dangarembga (I. MacDonald, Battle, Polak)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Paradise Lost*, John Milton (Buckman, Incorvati, I. MacDonald, Richards)

Date  
Read

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

\_\_\_\_\_ *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen (Incorvati, Fallon, Inboden, I. MacDonald, Polak)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Rhetorical Grammar*, Martha Kolin and Loretta Gray, 7<sup>th</sup> edition (Mattison, Polak)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Salt*, Earl Lovelace (Battle)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Selected Poems*, Emily Dickinson (Davis, Askeland)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Selected Works of John Donne* (Buckman, Inboden, Richards)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Simulacra and Simulation*, Jean Baudrillard (Polak, Buckman, Hinson, I. MacDonald)

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

\_\_\_\_\_ *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, Joan Didion (Fallon, Incorvati, I. MacDonald, Mattison, McClelland)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Still Life with Woodpecker*, Tom Robbins (Mattison)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Sweet and Sour Milk*, Nuruddin Farah (I. MacDonald)

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

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Ayi Kwei Armah (I. MacDonald, Battle)

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Blind Assassin*, Margaret Atwood (Hinson, Askeland, I. MacDonald)

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

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Junot Diaz (Polak, Askeland, Fallon, I. MacDonald, Mattison)

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

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Faerie Queene*, Edmund Spenser (Buckman)

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Famished Road*, Ben Okri (I. MacDonald)

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

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, William Blake (Incorvati, Inboden)

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Sound and the Fury*, William Faulkner (Hinson, Buckman, I. MacDonald, Polak)

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Street*, Ann Petry (Battle)

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien (Fallon, Buckman, Mattison, McClelland, Polak, Richards)

\_\_\_\_\_ *The Undertaking*, Thomas Lynch (Fallon)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Tristram Shandy*, Laurence Sterne (Richards, Buckman)

Date  
Read

\_\_\_\_\_ *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe (Askeland)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Walden*, Henry David Thoreau (Davis, Askeland, I. MacDonald)

\_\_\_\_\_ *White Noise*, Don DeLillo (McClelland, Askeland, Buckman, Davis, Hinson, I. MacDonald, Polak)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Flatland*, Edwin A. Abbott (Jordan Hildebrandt [the first student to complete The List, reading 75 books] Buckman, I. MacDonald)