

## Hamilton Southeastern Schools Grades 7 & 8 Classic Book List

- Adams, Richard                      *Watership Down*  
The story follows a warren of Berkshire rabbits fleeing the destruction of their home by a land developer. As they search for a safe haven, skirting danger at every turn, we become acquainted with the band and its compelling culture and mythos. Adams has crafted a touching, involving world in the dirt and scrub of the English countryside, complete with its own folk history and language (the book comes with a "lapine" glossary, a guide to rabbitese). As much about freedom, ethics, and human nature as it is about a bunch of bunnies looking for a warm hidey-hole and some mates.
- Agee, James                              *A Death in the Family*  
On a sultry summer night in 1915, Jay Follet leaves his house in Knoxville, Tennessee, to tend to his father, whom he believes is dying. The summons turns out to be a false alarm, but on his way back to his family, Jay has a car accident and is killed instantly. Dancing back and forth in time and braiding the viewpoints of Jay's wife, brother, and young son, Rufus, Agee creates an overwhelmingly powerful novel of innocence, tenderness, and loss that should be read aloud for the sheer music of its prose.
- Alcott, Louisa May                      *Little Women*  
It is no surprise that *Little Women*, the adored classic of four sisters and their enduring devotion to and protection of one another, was loosely based on Louisa May Alcott's own life. Alcott drew from her own personality to create a unique protagonist: Jo, willful, headstrong, and undoubtedly the backbone of the March family, is a heroine unlike any seen before. Follow the sisters from innocent adolescence to sage adulthood, with all the joy and sorrow of life in between, and fall in love with them and this endearing story.
- Austen, Jane                              *Emma*  
*Emma*, when first published in 1816, was written when Jane Austen was at the height of her powers. In it, we have her two greatest comic creations -- the eccentric Mr. Woodhouse and that quintessential bore, Miss Bates. In it, too, we have her most profound characterization: the witty, imaginative, self-deluded Emma, a heroine the author declared "no one but myself will much like," but who has been much loved by generations of readers. Delightful funny, full of rich irony, *Emma* is regarded as one of Jane Austen's finest achievements.
- Bradbury, Ray                              *The Martian Chronicles*  
Bradbury's Mars is a place of hope, dreams and metaphor - of crystal pillars and fossil seas - where a fine dust settles on the great, empty cities of a silently destroyed civilization. It is here the invaders have come to despoil and commercialize, to grow and to learn - first a trickle, then a torrent, rushing from a world with no future toward a promise of tomorrow. The Earthman conquers Mars...and then is conquered by it, lulled by dangerous lies of comfort and familiarity, and enchanted by the lingering glamour of an ancient, mysterious native race.
- Fahrenheit 451*  
Bradbury's novel details the eternal war between censorship and freedom of thought and continues to be relevant today more than ever. In Bradbury's future, books are illegal and happily so--citizens are too busy watching their wall-sized televisions and listening to their in-ear "seashell" radios to care about the loss of good literature. Guy Montag begins the novel as a fireman who enforces the temperature of the title--that at which books burn--but then transforms and tries to show his society the mistake of censorship.

Brontë, Charlotte

*Jane Eyre*

Orphaned into the household of her Aunt Reed at Gateshead, subject to the cruel regime at Lowood charity school, Jane Eyre none the less emerges unbroken in spirit and integrity. How she takes up the post of governess at Thornfield Hall, meets and loves Mr. Rochester and discovers the impediment to their lawful marriage are elements in a story that transcends melodrama to portray a woman's passionate search for a wider and richer life than that traditionally accorded to her sex in Victorian society.

Brontë, Emily

*Wuthering Heights*

The turbulent and tempestuous love story of Cathy and Heathcliff spans two generations -- from the time Heathcliff, a strange, coarse young boy, is brought to live on the Earnshaw's windswept estate, through Cathy's marriage to Edgar Linton and Heathcliff's plans for revenge, to Cathy's death years later and the eventual union of the surviving Earnshaw and Linton heirs.

Burroughs, Edgar Rice

*Tarzan of the Apes*

Born of noble parents marooned on the savage West African coast, the young lord Greystoke is orphaned in his first year of life. Named Tarzan by the great apes that raise him, he must learn the law of the jungle to survive. As he matures, his strength and agility develop to match those of the beasts that surround him, yet he realizes that he is different. He combines higher intelligence, superhuman strength and his jungle training to become the unconquerable Lord of the Jungle! But, when a group of civilized people invade his paradise, his life is changed forever, for with them is Jane. She is the first woman Tarzan has ever seen and he must have her as his own! How can this uncivilized ape-man hope to win her?

Carroll, Lewis

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland/Through the Looking-Glass*

The Mad Hatter, the Ugly Duchess, the Mock Turtle, the Queen of Hearts, the Cheshire Cat—characters each more eccentric than the last, and that could only have come from Lewis Carroll, the master of sublime nonsense. In these two brilliant satires he created two of the most famous and fantastic novels of all time that not only stirred our imagination but revolutionized literature.

Christie, Agatha

*Murder on the Orient Express*

*Murder on the Orient Express* is a tour-de-force variation on the theme of the English house-party, gathering a remarkable set of characters, each a secretive soul, for a journey on the fabled Orient Express train as it travels from Istanbul to Paris. On hand to resolve the murder of an American passenger is Hercule Poirot, the dapper Belgian detective, dependent only on his wit, who tucks away obscure, seemingly unrelated minutiae in his facile mind.

*Death on the Nile*

Linnett Ridgeway has almost everything: youth, beauty, brains, and money. Then her best friend Jackie brings her handsome fiancé, Simon Doyle, to visit and asks Linnett to give him a job. Now Linnett and Simon are on their honeymoon, a cruise up the Nile. When Linnett is killed, Jackie is the obvious suspect, but she couldn't have done it. It seems like an insolvable crime, until the famous detective Hercule Poirot starts to investigate.

*And Then There Were None*

First, there were ten—a curious assortment of strangers summoned as weekend guests to a private island off the coast of Devon. Their host, an eccentric millionaire unknown to all of them, is nowhere to be found. All that the guests have in common is a wicked past they're unwilling to reveal—and a secret that will seal their fate. For each has been marked for murder. One by one they fall prey. Before the weekend is out, there will be none. And only the dead are above suspicion. (also known as *Ten Little Indians*)

- Cooper, James Fenimore     *The Deerslayer*  
 Set in 1740 during the French and Indian Wars, *The Deerslayer* testifies to the murderous humanity and natural beauty on which the history of America was written. In the climactic novel of the Leather-stocking Tales, Hawkeye, the noble white youth, learns to sacrifice self-interest for the common good and discovers his identity in bloody struggles among the powerful Iroquois confederacy.
- Crane, Stephen     *The Red Badge of Courage*  
 Henry Fleming had no idea how horrible war really was. Attacks come from all sides, bullets fly, bombs crash. Men everywhere are wounded, bleeding, and dying. Now, Henry's fighting for his life and he's scared. He must make a decision, perhaps the most difficult decision he will ever make in his life: save himself-run from the enemy and desert his friends-or fight, be brave, and risk his life. If he stays to fight, he may die with his regiment. If he runs, he'll have to live with knowing he was a coward. Can Henry find the strength within himself to earn his red badge of courage?
- Defoe, Daniel     *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*  
 Daniel Defoe relates the tale of an English sailor marooned on a desert island for nearly three decades. An ordinary man struggling to survive in extraordinary circumstances, Robinson Crusoe wrestles with fate and the nature of God.
- Dickens, Charles     *Oliver Twist*  
 Born and raised in the appalling deprivation of the workhouse, the orphan Oliver escapes the drudgery of apprenticeship only to fall into the hands of the notorious Fagin and his gang of child thieves. But Oliver is an innocent at heart and the attempts by Fagin and the impudently witty Artful Dodger to teach the boy the trick of the pick-pocket's trade lead only to his almost immediate capture. Oliver's rescue by the kindly Mr. Brownlow is only the beginning of a series of adventures that lead him to an incredible discovery.
- David Copperfield*  
 David Copperfield is the novel that draws most closely from Charles Dickens's own life. Its eponymous hero, orphaned as a boy, grows up to discover love and happiness, heartbreak and sorrow amid a cast of eccentrics, innocents, and villains.
- Doyle, Arthur Conan, Sir     *The Hound of the Baskervilles*  
 At Baskerville Hall on the grim moors of Devonshire, a legendary curse has apparently claimed one more victim. Sir Charles Baskerville has been found dead. There are no signs of violence, but his face is hideously distorted with terror. Years earlier, a hound-like beast with blazing eyes and dripping jaws was reported to have torn out the throat of Hugo Baskerville. Has the spectral destroyer struck again? More important, is Sir Henry Baskerville, young heir to the estate, now in danger? Enter Sherlock Holmes, summoned to protect Sir Henry from the fate that has threatened the Baskerville family. As Holmes and Watson begin to investigate, a blood-chilling howl from the fog-shrouded edges of the great Grimpen Mire signals that the legendary hound of the Baskervilles is poised for yet another murderous attack.
- Dumas, Alexandre     *The Count of Monte Cristo*  
 Falsely accused of treason, the young sailor Edmund Dantes is arrested on his wedding day and imprisoned in the island fortress of the Chateau d'If. After staging a dramatic escape, he sets out to discover the fabulous treasure of Monte Cristo and catch up with his enemies. A novel of enormous tension and excitement, Monte Cristo is also a tale of obsession and revenge. Believing himself to be an 'Angel of Providence', Dantes pursues his vengeance to the bitter end, only then realizing that he himself is a victim of fate.

- Gaines, Earnest J. *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*  
Using the convention of a history professor who transcribes months of interviews into a coherent and episodic oral history, Gaines creates the fictional autobiography of an indomitable African-American woman who lives through slavery, emancipation, reconstruction, segregation and the beginning of the modern Civil Rights Movement. More than a history lesson and an exciting story, this novel reflects the courage of all oppressed people to push on through to their own particular Ohio.
- Gibran, Khalil *The Prophet*  
In a distant, timeless place, a mysterious prophet walks the sands. At the moment of his departure, he wishes to offer the people gifts but possesses nothing. The people gather round, each asks a question of the heart, and the man's wisdom is his gift.
- Grahame, Kenneth *The Wind in the Willows*  
One of the true classics of English literature, here are the adventures of Mole, Water Rat, Badger, and Toad. Grahame's idyllic world is as fresh now as when they first discovered his enchanting tales--of Ratty sculling his boat on the River, Badger grumpily entertaining his friends in his comfortable underground home, and the exasperating Toad being driven into one tangle after another by his obsession with motor cars.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel *House of the Seven Gables*  
Hawthorne's tale about the brooding hold of the past over the present is a complex one, twisting and turning its way back through many generations of a venerable New England family, one of whose members was accused of witchcraft in 17th century Salem. More than 200 years later, we meet the family in its decaying, gabled mansion, still haunted by the presence of dead ancestors
- Hemingway, Earnest *The Old Man and the Sea*  
*The Old Man and the Sea* is one of Hemingway's most enduring works. Told in language of great simplicity and power, it is the story of an old Cuban fisherman, down on his luck, and his supreme ordeal — a relentless, agonizing battle with a giant marlin far out in the Gulf Stream.
- Herbert, Frank *Dune*  
Here is the novel that will be forever considered a triumph of the imagination. Set on the desert planet Arrakis, *Dune* is the story of the boy Paul Atreides, who would become the mysterious man known as Maud'dib. He would avenge the traitorous plot against his noble family--and would bring to fruition humankind's most ancient and unattainable dream.
- Homer *The Iliad*  
This timeless poem--more than 2,700 year old--still vividly conveys the horror and heroism of men and gods wrestling with towering emotions and battling amid devastation and destruction as it moves inexorably to its wrenching, tragic conclusion.
- Hugo, Victor *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*  
Feared and hated by all, Quasimodo is looked after by Dom Claude Frollo, a stern, cold priest who ignores the poor hunchback in the face of his frequent public torture. But someone steps forward to help—the beautiful gypsy Esmeralda, whose single act of kindness fills Quasimodo with love. Can the hunchback save the lovely gypsy from Frollo's evil plan, or will they all perish in the shadows of Notre Dame?
- James, Henry *The Turn of the Screw*  
One of literature's most gripping ghost stories depicts the sinister transformation of two innocent children into flagrant liars and hypocrites. Elegantly told tale of unspoken horror and psychological terror creates what few stories in literature have been able to do—a complete feeling of dread and uncertainty.

- London, Jack *The Call of the Wild*  
A classic story of survival from Jack London, published in 1903 and widely regarded as his masterpiece. *The Call of the Wild* is the story of a courageous dog, Buck, taken from pampered surroundings and shipped to the wilds of Alaska to be a sled dog. As Buck fights for survival, his primitive nature begins to emerge and he becomes more like the wolf from whom his breed is descended.
- Lord, Walter *A Night to Remember*  
Lord's classic time-travel tale drawn from survivors' accounts remains the best Titanic story after all these years. The analysis of the event moves from reports of pretrip hype through the ambiance of the fated last evening to first reports of trouble, loading life boats, and rescue efforts.
- Melville, Herman *Moby Dick*  
On a previous voyage, a mysterious white whale had ripped off the leg of a sea captain named Ahab. Now the crew of the Pequod, on a pursuit that features constant adventure and horrendous mishaps, must follow the mad Ahab into the abyss to satisfy his unslakeable thirst for vengeance. Narrated by the cunningly observant crew member Ishmael, *Moby-Dick* is the tale of the hunt for the elusive, omnipotent, and ultimately mystifying white whale—Moby Dick.
- Montgomery, L. M. *Anne of Green Gables*  
When Anne Shirley arrives at Green Gables farm on Prince Edward Island, she surprises everyone: first of all, she is a girl. Marilla Cuthbert and her brother, Matthew, had specifically asked for an orphan boy. She has bright red hair that won't manage and a mouth that won't shut. Nothing will ever be the same at Green Gables!
- Orwell, George *Animal Farm*  
It is a political fable based on the events of Russia's Bolshevik revolution and the betrayal of the cause by Joseph Stalin. The book concerns a group of barnyard animals who overthrow and chase off their exploitative human masters and set up an egalitarian society of their own. Eventually the animals' intelligent and power-loving leaders, the pigs, subvert the revolution and form a dictatorship even more oppressive and heartless than that of their former human masters.
- Pyle, Howard *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*  
He stole from the rich and gave to the poor, and in so doing became an undying symbol of virtue. But most important, Robin Hood and his band of Merry Men offer young readers more than enough adventure and thrills to keep them turning the pages. Who could resist the arrows flying, danger lurking, and medieval intrigue?
- Remarque, E M *All Quiet on the Western Front*  
Paul Baumer enlisted with his classmates in the German army of World War I. Youthful, enthusiastic, they become soldiers. But despite what they have learned, they break into pieces under the first bombardment in the trenches. And as horrible war plods on year after year, Paul holds fast to a single vow: to fight against the principles of hate that meaninglessly pits young men of the same generation but different uniforms against each other--if only he can come out of the war alive.
- Richter, Conrad *A Light in the Forest*  
Though reared as a Lenni Lenape Indian, fifteen-year-old True Son, once called John Camera Butler, was ordered back to the white man. It was impossible for True Son to believe that his people were white and not Indian. He had learned to hate the white man. And now he learned to hate his new father, his new house, his new family. He hated the name John Butler. Where did he belong now—and where could he go?

Rostand, Edmund

*Cyrano De Bergerac*

*Cyrano de Bergerac* is a book about three men named Cyrano, Christian, and Comte de Guiche who constantly try to get with a beautiful woman named Roxane. In the process of doing this the men often needed help by having Cyrano write poetry.

Scott, Walter

*Ivanhoe*

As knights battle to the death, the fate of England hangs in the balance. England is in turmoil--torn by fierce and bitter hatreds between Norman and Saxon. Rival claimants to the throne have plunged into bloody civil war. Prince John--taking advantage of Richard's absence while fighting in the Crusades--plots to make himself crowned king. Richard returns and vows to take his revenge on John. But he will need a courageous and able warrior on his side--a warrior like Wilfred of Ivanhoe. Disinherited by his father, disowned and dishonored, Wilfred allies himself with Richard. In many adventures he will battle knights in deadly tournaments, scale castle walls, be wounded, captured, and rescued by the infamous Robin Hood, and find true love with the fiery Rowena. In what has become Sir Walter Scott's most beloved and rousing adventure, Wilfred helps Richard I foil John's plot. More importantly, Wilfred of Ivanhoe reclaims his good name.

Sewell, Anna

*Black Beauty*

When Black Beauty is just a young colt, his mother warns him that a horse's life is often difficult. And this strong, handsome horse soon meets with many adventures and all types of people -- some kind and caring, others cruel and indifferent. But no matter what circumstances he encounters, nothing can break Black Beauty's spirit.

Stevenson, Robert Louis

*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

The idea for Robert Louis Stevenson's immortal masterpiece of psychological terror sprang from the deepest recesses of his own subconscious -- a nightmare from which his wife awakened him. He wrote it as a stark yet complex tale whose popularity has endured for more than a century, making the phrase "Jekyll and Hyde" synonymous with man's internal war between good and evil. Brilliantly anticipating modern psychology, Stevenson's story of the kindly scientist who drinks a potion that nightly transforms him into a stunted, evil version of himself is a tale of incomparable suspense and horror.

*Treasure Island*

The most popular pirate story ever written in English, featuring one of literature's most beloved "bad guys," *Treasure Island* has been happily devoured by several generations of boys—and girls—and grownups. Its unforgettable characters include: young Jim Hawkins, who finds himself owner of a map to Treasure Island, where the fabled pirate booty is buried; honest Captain Smollett, heroic Dr. Livesey, and the good-hearted but obtuse Squire Trelawney, who help Jim on his quest for the treasure; the frightening Blind Pew, double-dealing Israel Hands, and seemingly mad Ben Gunn, buccaneers of varying shades of menace; and, of course, garrulous, affable, ambiguous Long John Silver, who is one moment a friendly, laughing, one-legged sea-cook . . .and the next a dangerous pirate leader!

*Kidnapped*

*Kidnapped* is a finely honed, stirring adventure story about the orphan David Balfour, who, after escaping through the Scottish Highlands from the hands of his villainous uncle, becomes involved in Scotland's struggle for independence.

Stoker, Bram

*Dracula*

More than a century after its first publication, *Dracula* remains the ultimate horror story, thrilling readers with its hair-raising portrait of a bloodthirsty vampire set loose on an English port town. Spawning countless film adaptations and literary spin-offs, Stoker's novel - a patchwork of letters, diary entries, and newspaper clippings - was the first to capture vampire mythology as we know it. We can still trace its abiding influence among the cinemas, bookstores, and television programs of today.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher

*Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Nearly every young author dreams of writing a book that will literally change the world. A few have succeeded, and Harriet Beecher Stowe is such a marvel. Although the American anti-slavery movement had existed at least as long as the nation itself, Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) galvanized public opinion as nothing had before. The book sold 10,000 copies in its first week and 300,000 in its first year. Its vivid dramatization of slavery's cruelties so aroused readers that it is said Abraham Lincoln told Stowe her work had been a catalyst for the Civil War.

Swift, Jonathan

*Gulliver's Travels*

First published in 1726, this classic work of satire presents a world gone haywire, where humans, despite their pomposity and grandiose illusions, are no better than weak and helpless fools. Lemuel Gulliver's journeys take him to Lilliput, a country whose inhabitants are no more than six inches tall; to Brobdingnag, a land of giants; to Laputa, a flying island inhabited by absent-minded people; and to the land of Houyhnhnms, where horselike creatures rule with intelligence and courtesy over repulsive humanlike Yahoos. One of literature's lasting legacies, Swift's trenchant cautionary tale is a witty, allegorical depiction of people at their worst; yet it may also be read as an enchanting, playful children's story with universal appeal.

Twain, Mark

*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* remains a timeless classic for both mischievous children and nostalgic adults alike. Mark Twain, widely known as "the Lincoln of our Literature," penned this dreamlike world of summertime, hooky, pranks, villains, and desperate adventures, seen through the eyes of a boy who might have been the young Mark Twain himself.

*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*

Hank Morgan awakens one morning to find he has been transported from nineteenth-century New England to sixth-century England and the reign of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Morgan brings to King Arthur's utopian court the ingenuity of the future, resulting in a culture clash that is at once satiric, anarchic, and darkly comic. Critically deemed one of Twain's finest and most caustic works, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* is both a delightfully entertaining story and a disturbing analysis of the efficacy of government, the benefits of progress, and the dissolution of social mores.

*The Prince and the Pauper*

When young Edward VI of England and a poor boy who resembles him exchange places, each learns something about the other's very different station in life.

Verne, Jules

*20,000 Leagues under the Sea*

An American frigate, tracking down a ship-sinking monster, faces not a living creature but an incredible invention -- a fantastic submarine commanded by the mysterious Captain Nemo. Suddenly a devastating explosion leaves just three survivors, who find themselves prisoners inside Nemo's death ship on an underwater odyssey around the world from the pearl-laden waters of Ceylon to the icy dangers of the South

Pole . . . as Captain Nemo, one of the greatest villains ever created, takes his revenge on all society.

*Around the World in Eighty Days*

*Around the World in Eighty Days* is one of the greatest adventure novels of all time by one of the greatest of all adventure novel writers, Jules Verne. It is the story of the eccentric English inventor Phileas Fogg who sets out to make it around the world in eighty days in order to win a bet. With his trusted French valet, Passepartout, Fogg hurries off in a mad dash around the world, encountering numerous obstacles and adventures along the way.

Wells, H. G

*The Time Machine*

When the Time Traveler courageously stepped out of his machine for the first time, he found himself in the year 802,700 -- and everything has changed. In another, more utopian age, creatures seemed to dwell together in perfect harmony. *The Time Traveler* thought he could study these marvelous beings -- unearth their secret and then return to his own time -- until he discovered that his invention, his only avenue of escape, had been stolen.

*The War of the Worlds*

This is the granddaddy of all alien invasion stories, first published by H.G. Wells in 1898. The novel begins ominously, as the lone voice of a narrator tells readers that "No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's..."

White, T. H.

*The Once and Future King*

The whole world knows and loves this book. It is the magical epic of King Arthur and his shining Camelot; of Merlin and Owl and Guinevere; of beasts who talk and men who fly, of wizardry and war. It is the book of all things lost and wonderful and sad. It is the fantasy masterpiece by which all others are judged.

Wilde, Oscar

*The Picture of Dorian Gray*

An incredibly handsome young man in Victorian England retains his youthful appearance over the years while his portrait reflects both his age and evil soul as he pursues a life of decadence and corruption.

Wyss, Johann

*Swiss Family Robinson*

When the Robinson family is shipwrecked and cast away on a desert island, they have only the island's natural resources--and each other--to rely on. Making the most of what they find, they construct an elaborate tree house and struggle against the forces of nature in this treasured family classic.