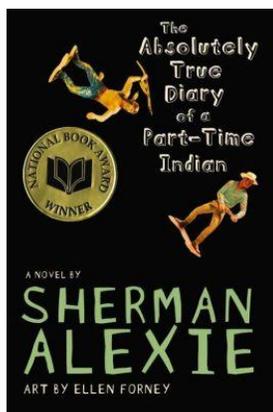


It's Time to Talk: Improving Cultural Competency Through Community Reading

Ohio Center for the Book (OCFB) Book Set Titles

(Ten copies are available for each of these works and specific editions.)

FICTION (including Graphic Novels)



***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2007)**

by Sherman Alexie

Little, Brown, c2007

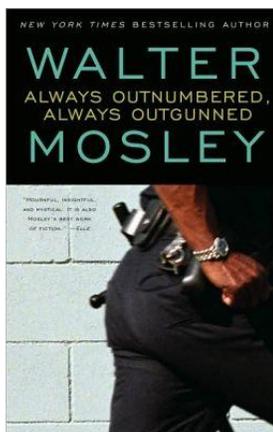
229 pages

ISBN: 9780316013680

2007 National Book Award for Young People's Literature

2008 Boston Globe-Horn Book Award

Based in part on Alexie's own experiences, this is the often humorous story of a **young Spokane Indian boy**, budding cartoonist Junior, who leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school -- where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Adult, YA.



***Always Outnumbered, Always Outgunned* (1998)**

by Walter Mosley

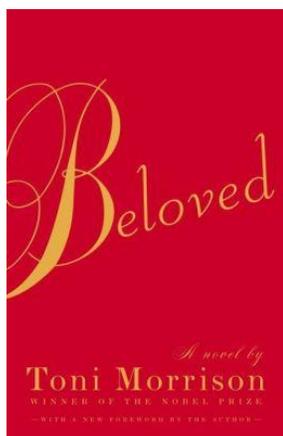
Washington Square Press, 1998

208 pages

ISBN: 9780671014995

1998 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

Meet the philosophical and astonishing Socrates Fortlow in this acclaimed collection of entwined tales by bestselling author Walter Mosley. Fortlow is a tough, black ex-con seeking truth and redemption in South Central Los Angeles -- and finding the miracle of survival.



***Beloved* (1987)**

by Toni Morrison

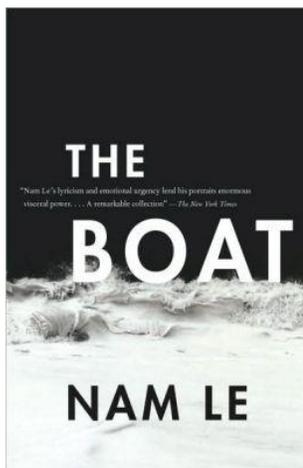
Vintage, 2004, c1987

324 pages

ISBN-13: 9781400033416

1988 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award; 1987 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction

Set in rural Ohio several years after the Civil War, this novel is a profoundly affecting chronicle of slavery and its aftermath. Sethe was born a slave and escaped to Ohio, but eighteen years later she is still not free. She has too many memories of Sweet Home, the beautiful farm where so many hideous things happened. And Sethe's new home is haunted by the ghost of her baby, who died nameless and whose tombstone is engraved with a single word: Beloved.



The Boat (2008)

by **Nam Le**

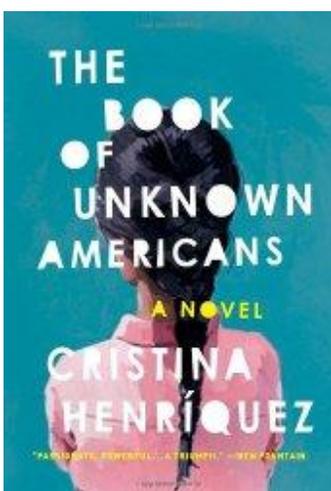
Vintage Books, 2008

272 pages

ISBN: 9780307388193

2009 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award; 2010 PEN/Malamud Award; 2008 Dylan Thomas Prize
2009 Prime Minister's Literary Award for Fiction (AUS - \$100,000 prize)

The seven stories in Nam Le's masterful collection *The Boat* take us across the globe, from the slums of Colombia to Iowa City; from the streets of Tehran to a foundering vessel in the South China Sea. They guide us to the heart of what it means to be human—and herald the arrival of a remarkable new writer.



The Book of Unknown Americans (2014)

by **Cristina Henríquez**

Knopf Doubleday, 2014

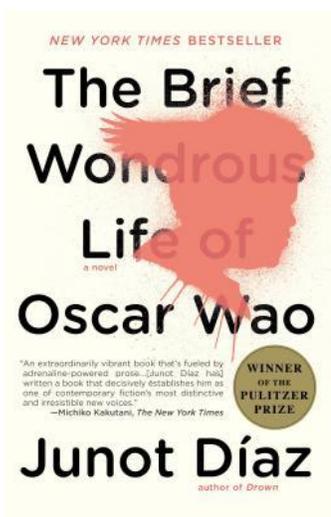
304 pages

ISBN: 9780385350846

Nominee 2015 Alex Award; NPR Great Read

The Daily Beast's Novel of the Year 2014

The Riveras uproot their family from their home in **Mexico** to head to America with a dream: that in this country of great opportunity and resources, their injured 15-year-old daughter can get better. They befriend the Toros from **Panama**. Woven into their stories are the testimonials of people who have **come to the U.S. from all over Latin America**, whose inspirational journeys will touch your heart.



The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao (2007)

by **Junot Díaz**

Riverhead Books, 2008

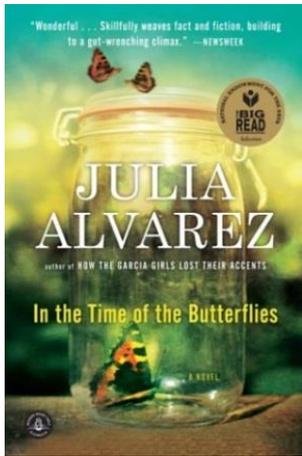
339 pages; ISBN: 9781594483295

2008 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award; 2008 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction

2008 National Book Critics Circle Award

ISBN: 9781594483295

This story documents the tribulations of Oscar, a sweet but disastrously overweight, lovesick **Dominican-American ghetto nerd**. From his home in **New Jersey**, where he lives with his old-world mother and rebellious sister, Oscar dreams of becoming the Dominican J. R. R. Tolkien and, most of all, of finding love. But he may never get what he wants, thanks to the fukú – the curse that haunts Oscar's family.



In the Time of the Butterflies (1994)

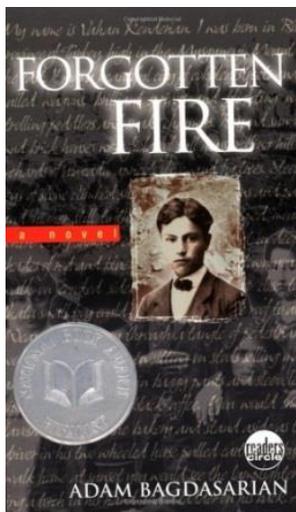
by **Julia Alvarez**

Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2010

336 pages

ISBN: 9781565129764

Finalist for 1994 National Book Critics Circle Award; Selection of *The Big Read*
Butterflies is set during the waning days of the Trujillo dictatorship in the **Dominican Republic in 1960**. The “Butterflies” of the story are the Mirabal sisters, **three young Latin American women** assassinated after visiting their husbands, jailed as suspected rebel leaders.



Forgotten Fire (2002)

by **Adam Bagdasarian**

Dell Laurel-Leaf, 2002

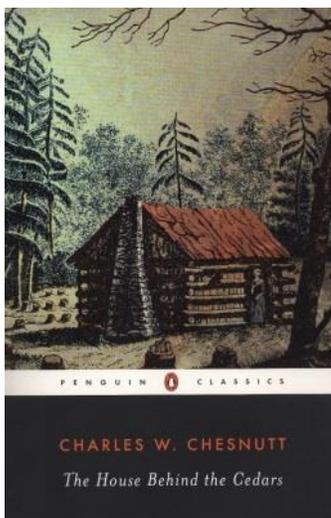
272 pages

ISBN: 9780440229179

Finalist for 2000 National Book Awards-Young People’s Literature

Based on a true story, this book follows the twelve-year-old son of an influential **Armenian family in Turkey**, as he struggles to survive alone after witnessing the deaths of many of his family and friends during the **Armenian Genocide of 1915 to 1923**.

(Young adult novel)



The House Behind the Cedars (1900)

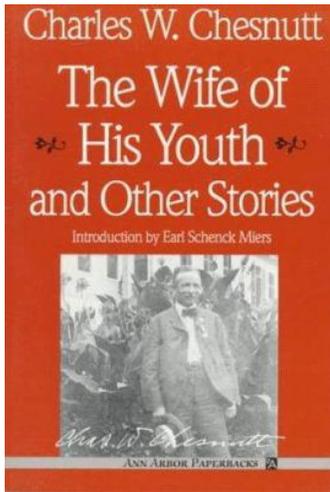
by **Charles Chesnutt**

Penguin Books, 1993

195 pages

ISBN: 9780140186857

First published in 1900, Chesnutt’s masterpiece explores the lives of **two young African Americans** who decide to pass for white in order to claim their share of the American dream.



The Wife of His Youth, and Other Stories of the Color Line (1899)

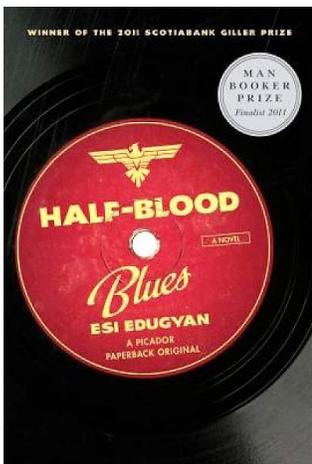
by **Charles Chesnutt**

Ann Arbor Paperbacks, The University of Michigan Press, 1968

323 pages

ISBN: 9780472061341

Selected stories by the noted black writer of the late nineteenth century reflect changing racial attitudes in America. Chesnutt writes of the **black search for identity** in the **period between the Civil War and the turn of the century**.



Half-Blood Blues (2011)

by **Esi Edugyan**

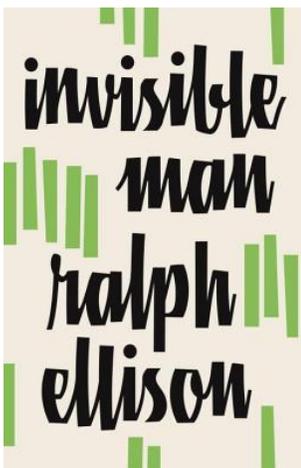
Picador, 2012

329 pages

ISBN: 9781250012708

2012 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

In 1939 Berlin, a popular jazz band has been forbidden to play by the **Nazis**. Their young star trumpeter, Hieronymus Falk, is arrested in a Paris café and never heard from again. **A German citizen, Falk was also black**. Jump to **Berlin in 1952**, where Falk is now a legend and two **African American band members from Baltimore** set out to fill in his story.



Invisible Man (1952)

by **Ralph Ellison**

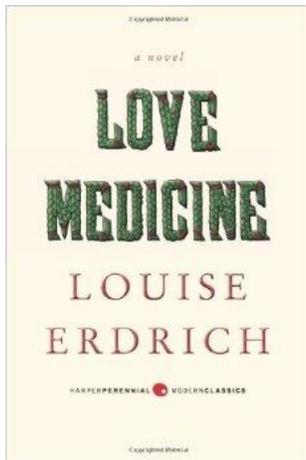
Vintage Books, 1995, c1952

581 pages

ISBN: 9780679732761

1992 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for Landmark Achievement

Invisible Man is a milestone in American literature, The nameless narrator describes **growing up in a black community in the South**, being expelled from a **Negro college, moving to New York** and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be. A milestone in American literature, this passionate and witty novel won the National Book Award for fiction, and established Ralph Ellison as one of the key writers of the century.



Love Medicine (1984)

by **Louise Erdrich**

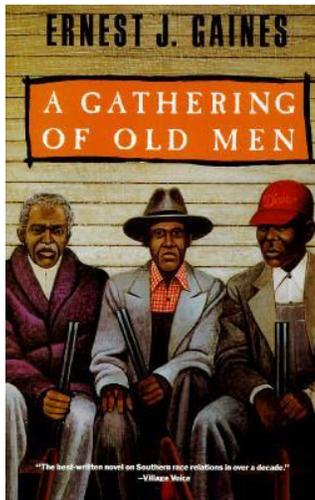
Harper Perennial Modern Classics, [2013]

331 pages (+ discussion guide)

ISBN: 9780062206312

1984 National Book Critics Circle Award

The first book in Louise Erdrich's **Native American** series, *Love Medicine* explores 60 years (from 1981 back through recent history) in the lives of a **small group of Chippewa** (aka Ojibwa or Anishinaabe) living on the **Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in North Dakota**.



A Gathering of Old Men (1983)

by **Ernest Gaines**

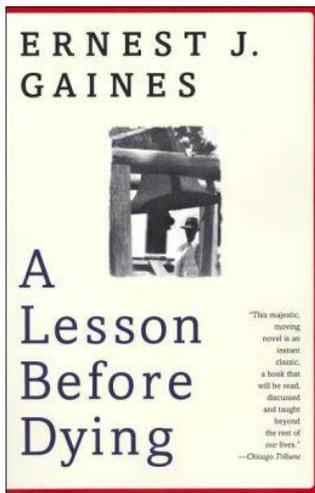
Vintage Books, 1992, c1983

214 pages

ISBN: 9780679738909

2000 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award Lifetime Achievement

Although it includes a whole cast of Southern characters, *A Gathering of Old Men* is the story of a **young white woman fighting to protect an elderly black man** from the revenge of a murdered man's family. She rallies **seventeen elderly African American men**, each between the ages of 70 and 80, who make the collective decision to take on the sufferings of another, and act out against a lifetime of oppression.



A Lesson Before Dying (1993)

by **Ernest Gaines**

Vintage Contemporaries, [1997], c1993.

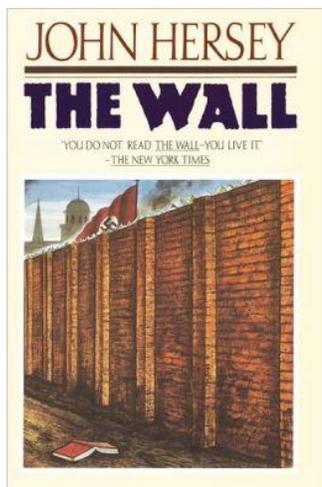
256 pages

ISBN: 9780375702709

2000 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award Lifetime Achievement

1993 National Book Critics Circle Award

Set in a **small Cajun community in the late 1940s**, *A Lesson Before Dying* is an "enormously moving" (*Los Angeles Times*) coming-of-age story of **two young black men**, one condemned to die for a crime he did not commit, and another who visits him in his cell. In the end, the two men forge a bond as they both come to understand the simple heroism of resisting—and defying—the expected.



***The Wall* (1950)**

by **John Hersey**

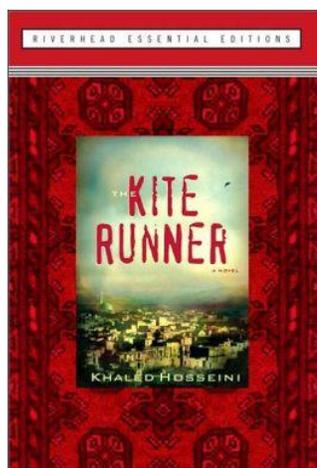
Vintage Books, 1988, c1950

632 pages

ISBN: 9780394756967

1952 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

The Wall tells the inspiring story of forty men & women who escape the dehumanizing horror of the **Warsaw ghetto**. John Hersey's novel documents the Warsaw ghetto both as an emblem of **Nazi persecution** and as a personal confrontation with torture, starvation, humiliation, and cruelty.



***The Kite Runner* (2003)**

by **Khaled Hosseini**

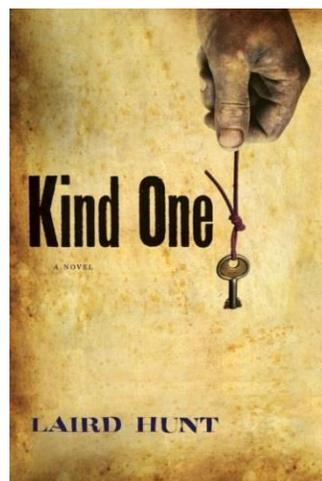
Riverhead Books, 2005, c2003

371 pages

ISBN: 9781594481772

South African Boeke Prize in 2004; Alex Award 2004

The heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, *The Kite Runner* is set against the devastating backdrop of the history of **Afghanistan over the last thirty years**.



***Kind One* (2012)**

by **Laird Hunt**

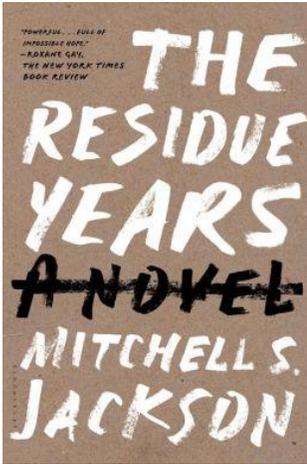
Coffee House Press, 2012

211 pages

ISBN: 9781566893114

Winner, 2013 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

As a teenage girl, Ginny marries Linus Lancaster, her mother's second cousin. Moving to his **Kentucky pig farm**, she discovers his empty promises. His charm falls away to reveal a troubled man and **cruel slave owner**. Ginny befriends two young slave girls, and the events that follow Linus's death change all three women for life. Haunting, chilling, and suspenseful, *Kind One* is a powerful tale of redemption and human endurance in **antebellum America**.



***The Residue Years* (2013)**

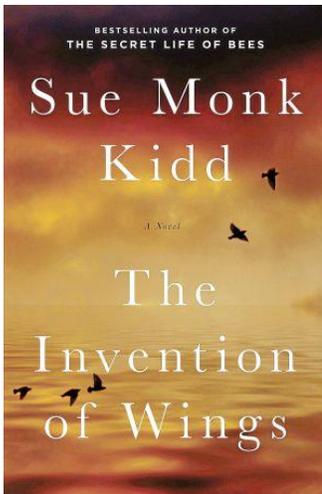
by **Mitchell S. Jackson**

Bloomsbury, 2013

345 pages

ISBN: 9781620400296

College senior Shawn “Champ” Thomas has one goal: to buy back the house on **Portland**’s Sixth Street where his family found brief happiness. Champ is dealing crack cocaine in order to save up for his dream, but his pregnant girlfriend wants a better life, and his mother, Grace, is newly out of rehab. Grace fights to stay clean while her world falls apart. Yielding to drugs once again, she inadvertently starts to take Champ down with her.



***The Invention of Wings* (2014)**

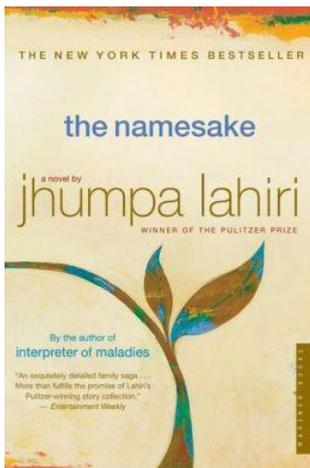
by **Sue Monk Kidd**

Viking, 2014

372 pages

ISBN: 9780670024780

The novel begins on Sarah Grimke's eleventh birthday, when her wealthy parents give her ownership over Hetty "Handful" Grimke, a **Charleston slave**, who is to be her handmaid. *The Invention of Wings* follows the next thirty-five years of their lives. Inspired in part by the historical figure of Sarah Grimke (a feminist, suffragist and, importantly, an abolitionist), Kidd allows herself to go beyond the record to flesh out the inner lives of all the characters, both real and imagined.



***The Namesake* (2003)**

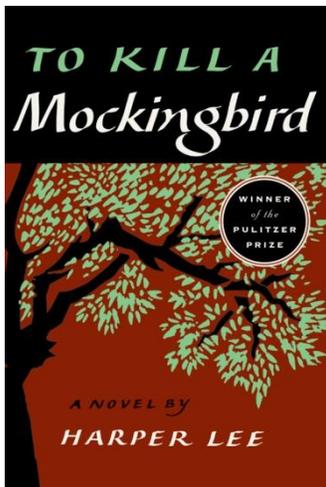
by **Jhumpa Lahiri**

Mariner Books, 2004

291 pages

ISBN: 9780618485222

The Namesake takes the Ganguli family from their tradition-bound life in Calcutta through their fraught transformation into Americans. Shortly after their arranged marriage, they settle in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The engineer husband adapts far less warily than his wife, who resists all things American and pines for her family. When their son is born, the task of naming him betrays the vexed results of bringing old ways to the new world.



To Kill a Mockingbird (1960)

by Harper Lee

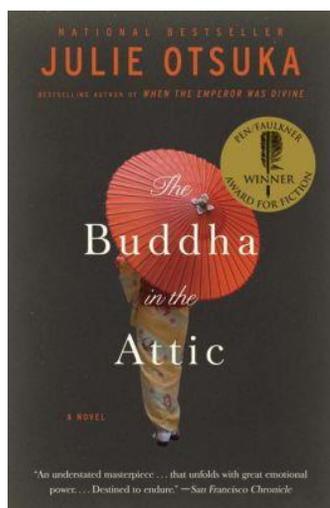
Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2006, c1960.

323 pages

ISBN: 9780061120084

Winner, 1961 Pulitzer Prize

A gripping and heart-wrenching tale of coming-of-age in a South poisoned by virulent prejudice, it views a world of great beauty and savage inequities through the eyes of 8-year-old Scout. Her father, Atticus Finch is a crusading local lawyer, risking everything to defend a black man unjustly accused of a terrible crime.



Buddha in the Attic (2011)

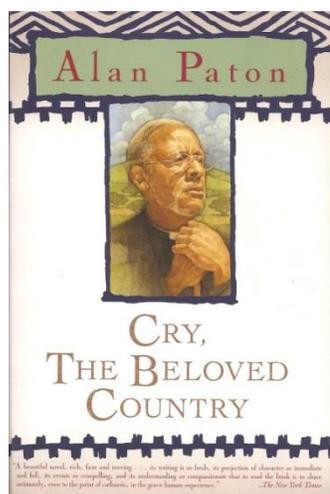
by Julie Otsuka

Anchor Books, 2011

129 pages

ISBN: 9780307744425

This short novel is a tour de force of economy and precision as it presents the stories of six **Japanese mail-order brides** whose new lives in **early twentieth-century San Francisco** are marked by backbreaking migrant work, cultural struggles, children who reject their heritage, and the prospect of wartime internment.



Cry, the Beloved Country (1948)

by Alan Paton

Scribner, 1987, c1948

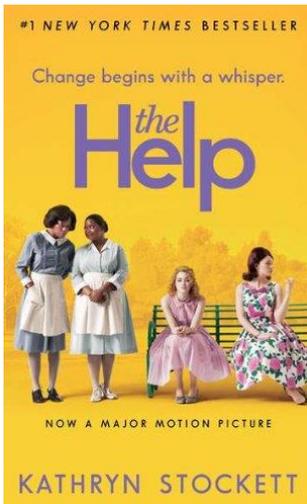
316 pages

ISBN: 9780743262170

1949 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

The most famous and important novel in South Africa's history, this impassioned work looks at a black man's country under white man's law. It is the story of Zulu pastor Stephen Kumalo and his son, Absalom, set against the background of a land and a people riven by racial injustice, and in need of the love and hope, courage and endurance, born of the dignity of man.





***The Help* (2009)**

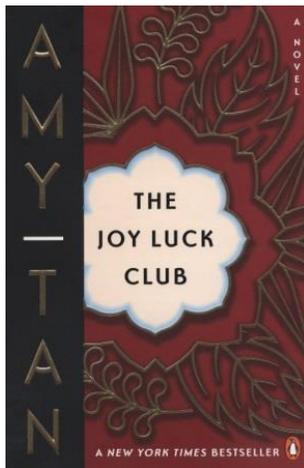
by Kathryn Stockett

Berkley Books, 2011, c2009

534 pages

ISBN: 9780425232200

It is 1962, Jackson, Mississippi, and African-American maids work in the white households. Skeeter, a new college graduate, comes home to find that her beloved maid Constantine has disappeared. Aibileen is a black maid, a wise, regal woman raising her seventeenth white child. Minny, Aibileen's best friend, is short, fat, and sassy enough to lose her job. These three very different women come together for a clandestine project that puts them all at risk, starting a movement of their own that forever changes their town.



***The Joy Luck Club* (2006)**

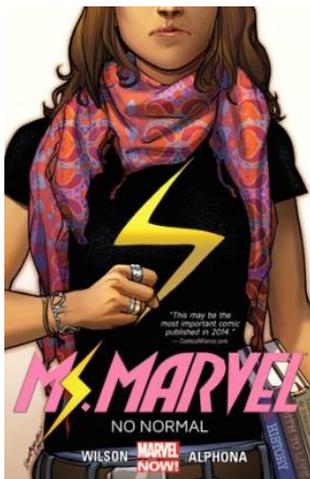
by Amy Tan

Penguin Books, 2006, c1989

289 pages

ISBN: 9780143038092

In 1949 four Chinese women - drawn together by the shadow of their past - begin meeting in San Francisco to play mah jong, invest in stocks, eat dim sum, and "say" stories. They call their gathering the Joy Luck Club. Nearly forty years later, one of the members has died, and her daughter has come to take her place, only to learn of her mother's lifelong wish—and the tragic way in which it has come true.



***Ms. Marvel: No Normal* (vol.1)**

by G. Willow Wilson

Marvel Worldwide, 2014

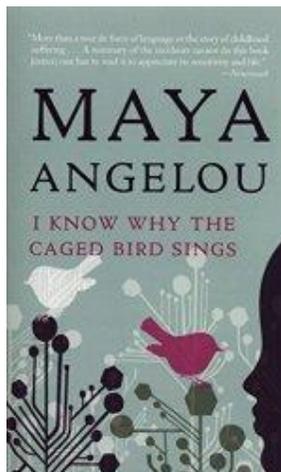
[120 unpagged]

ISBN: 9780785190219

This update of the classic Ms. Marvel comic finds teenage Muslim high school student Kamala Khan, an ordinary girl from Jersey City, suddenly empowered with extraordinary gifts. As Kamala discovers the dangers of her newfound powers, she unlocks a secret behind them as well. Is Kamala ready to wield these immense new gifts? Or will the weight of the legacy before her be too much to handle?



NONFICTION (including Graphic Memoirs)



I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (1969)

by **Maya Angelou**

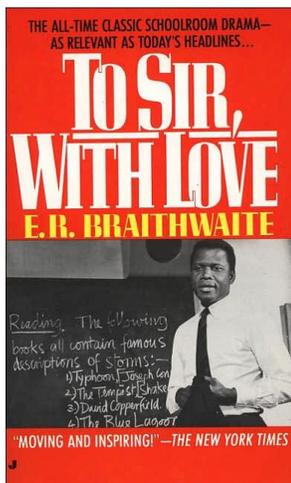
Ballantine Books, 2009, c1969

289 pages

ISBN: 9780345514400

PS3551.N464 Z46 2009

Powerful and poetic, this is the 1969 autobiography of the early years of African-American writer and poet Maya Angelou. The first in a seven-volume series, it is a coming-of-age story that illustrates how strength of character and a love of literature can help overcome racism and trauma.



To Sir with Love (1959)

by **E. R. Braithwaite**

Jove, 1977, c1959

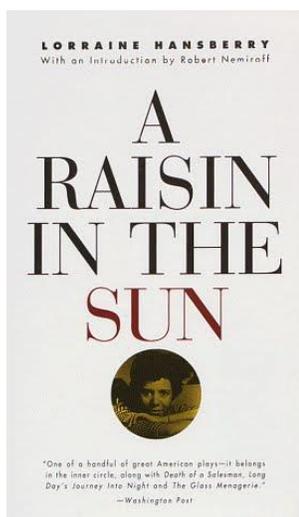
189 pages

ISBN: 9780515083729

LA639.L8 B7 1977x

1961 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

This autobiographical novel is set in the East End of London in 1959. A Black engineer, desperate for work after being demobilized from the RAF, accepts a teaching post in this tough corner of the city. His pupils are unresponsive to his efforts, unmotivated, semi-literate, and semi-articulate. He decides to take a radical new approach: he shames them into showing more respect for each other, wrestles with them, enlightens them, and - ultimately - learns to love them.



A Raisin in the Sun (1959)

by **Lorraine Hansberry**

Vintage Books, 1994

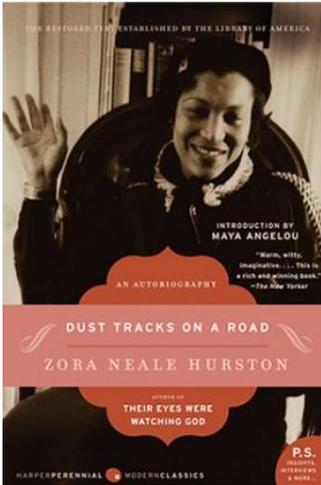
151 pages

ISBN: 9780679755333

PS3515.A515 R3 1994

The breadwinner for his family living in poverty on Chicago's south side, Walter Younger desperately wants to become wealthy. Within this context, Hansberry addresses issues that were new to open discussion at the time: concepts of black beauty, generational conflict, class differences, feminism and black Americans' relationship to their African past. It was the first play written by an African American to be produced on Broadway and Hansberry was the first black to win the coveted New York Drama Critics Circle Award for best play of the year.





Dust Tracks on the Road (1942)

by Zora Neale Hurston

Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2006

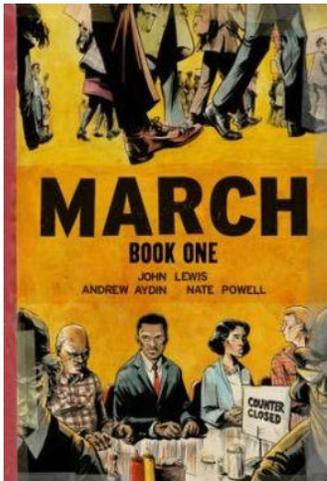
308 pages

ISBN: 9780060854089

PS3515.U789 Z465 2006

1943 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

This autobiography of Hurston, daughter of the Mayor of the "all Negro" town Eatonville, Florida, vividly documents her younger years into adulthood in the early 19th century. She writes with candid honesty of the loss of her mother, her fights with her stepmother who eventually leaves, and the challenging journey that takes her through college at Howard University.



March. Book One (2013)

by John Lewis; [co-written by] Andrew Aydin; [art by] Nate Powell

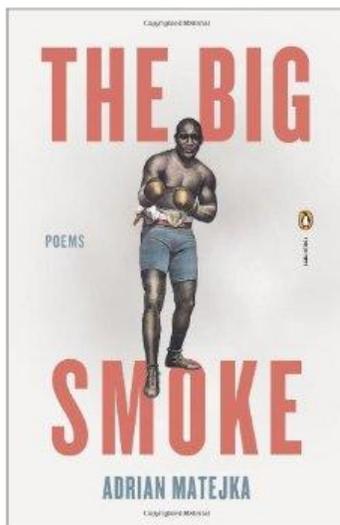
Top Shelf Productions, [2013]

121 pages

ISBN: 9781603093002

E840.8.L43 A3 2013

In this superb graphic memoir, Congressman John Lewis, a resounding moral voice in the quest for equality for more than 50 years, now shares his riveting story of the Civil Rights Movement. It is a powerful tale of courage, principle, and perseverance igniting sweeping social change, told by a strong-minded, uniquely qualified eyewitness.



The Big Smoke (2014)

by Adrian Matejka

Penguin Books, 2013

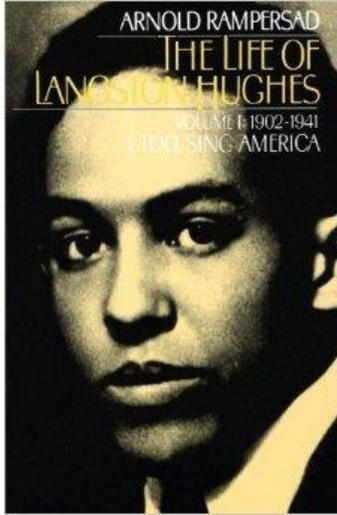
109 pages

ISBN: 9780143123729

PS3613.A825 B54 2013

2014 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

The legendary Jack Johnson was a true American creation. The child of emancipated slaves, he overcame the violent segregationism of Jim Crow, challenging white boxer and white America to become the first African-American heavyweight world champion. *The Big Smoke*, Adrian Matejka's third work of poetry, follows the fighter's journey from poverty to the most coveted title in sports through the multi-layered voices of Johnson and the white women he brazenly loved.



The Life of Langston Hughes. Vol.1&2 (1987)

by Arnold Rampersad

2nd Ed. Oxford University Press, 2002

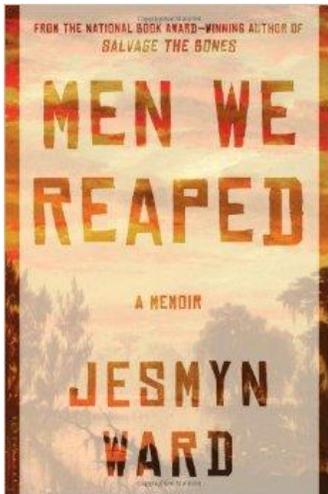
ISBN (v.1): 9780195151602

PS3515.U274 Z698 2002

1987 Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards

This is the 2nd edition of Rampersad's highly-praised biography of this most extraordinary and prolific American writer. In young adulthood Hughes possessed a nomadic but dedicated spirit that led him from Mexico to Africa and the Soviet Union to Japan, and countless other stops around the globe. Associating with political activists, patrons, and fellow artists, and drawing inspiration from both Walt Whitman and the vibrant Afro-American culture, Hughes soon became the most original and revered of black poets. The second volume finds Langston Hughes rooting himself in

Harlem, receiving stimulation from his rich cultural surroundings. Here he rethought his view of art and radicalism and cultivated relationships with younger, more militant writers such as Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison.



Men We Reaped: A Memoir (2013)

by Jesmyn Ward

Bloomsbury, 2013

258 pages

ISBN: 9781608195213

PS3623.A7323 Z46 2013

Jesmyn's memoir shines a light on the small town of DeLisle, Mississippi, a place of quiet beauty and fierce attachment. Here, she lost five young men dear to her, to drugs, accidents, murder, and suicide. Their deaths were seemingly unconnected, yet Jesmyn chronicles their true stories and a staggering truth: these young men died because of who they were and the place they were from, because certain disadvantages breed a certain kind of bad luck, because they lived with a history of racism and economic struggle.