Great Books List
A guide to classic literature for youth of all ages

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Chronicles

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

The Alcuin Internship

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Dear Friends,

Classical education has burst on the scene in recent years as newbie in the panoply of education options. In reality, it is nothing new, but simply a resurrected discovery of a path to successful education.

One of the unique elements of classical education lies in the great works of history and literature it teaches. Once known and actively studied throughout Western Civilization, these works have largely been forgotten or ignored by modern education methods – to our detriment.

A few years ago, while diving into research about classical education, I was tasked with examining what students in America’s classical schools were reading. This task became a treasure hunt as I first sought to find classical schools, both public and private, and then sought to uncover the reading materials they used for each grade. The resulting list was mammoth. We pared it down to feature the top 50 works for various age groups in kindergarten through 12th grade.

In the last few years, this list has developed a reach that I never imagined. I’ve received reports of parents using it when perusing book fairs, searching for good books to give their little ones, while others hang it on their refrigerator, using it as a handy checklist as their children grow in wisdom and knowledge.

But it’s not just for children. I, too, keep a copy of this list in my desk, using it to make the overwhelming task of choosing what to read next a little easier. Like many adults, I missed reading a number of these works as a student. Yet with this systematic checklist, I’m able to direct my energies and get down to business catching up on the classic works I failed to read.

If you, like myself, want to defend and advance Western Civilization and train our children to do the same, then we need to feed ourselves with a steady diet of truth and ideas. I hope you will join me in tackling the great works of the past!

Sincerely,

Annie Holmquist, Editor
Intellectual Takeout

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**Great Books, The Wisdom of the Past**

*Moby Dick*

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Kindergarten to Third Grade

☐ 1. Charlotte’s Web, E.B. White
☐ 2. The Courage of Sarah Noble, Alice Dalgliesh
☐ 3. The Complete Adventures of Peter Rabbit, Beatrix Potter
☐ 4. The Velveteen Rabbit, Margery Williams
☐ 5. Sarah, Plain & Tall, Patricia MacLachlan
☐ 6. Little House in the Big Woods, Laura Ingalls Wilder
☐ 7. The Lion, the Witch, & the Wardrobe, C.S. Lewis
☐ 8. Frog & Toad Are Friends, Arnold Lobel
☐ 9. Caps for Sale, Esphyr Slobodkina
☐ 10. Madeline (and other books in series), Ludwig Bemelmans
☐ 11. Mr. Popper’s Penguins, Richard & Florence Atwater
☐ 12. Homer Price, Robert McCloskey
☐ 13. Little Bear, Else Holmelund Minarik
☐ 14. The Boxcar Children, Gertrude Chandler Warner
☐ 15. Curious George, H.A. Rey
☐ 16. Amelia Bedelia, Peggy Parish
☐ 17. Aesop’s Fables, S.A. Handford
☐ 18. Blueberries for Sal, Robert McCloskey
☐ 19. Frog & Toad Together, Arnold Lobel
☐ 20. Bears on Hemlock Mountain, Alice Dalgliesh
☐ 21. Pinocchio, Carlo Collodi
☐ 22. D’Aulaire's Book of Greek Myths, Edgar & Ingrid D'Aulaire
☐ 23. Detectives in Togas, Henry Winterfield
☐ 24. Winnie the Pooh, A.A. Milne
☐ 25. Make Way for Ducklings, Robert McCloskey
☐ 26. Corduroy, Don Freeman

☐ 27. Ox Cart Man, Donald Hall
☐ 28. The Emperor’s New Clothes, Hans Christian Andersen, adap. Val Biro
☐ 29. Tut’s Mummy, Judy Donnelly
☐ 30. Little Bear’s Visit, Else Holmelund Minarik
☐ 31. Stone Soup, Marcia Brown
☐ 32. Nate the Great, Marjorie Sharmat
☐ 33. Little House on the Prairie, Laura Ingalls Wilder
☐ 34. Stuart Little, E.B. White
☐ 35. Henry & Mudge, Cynthia Rylant
☐ 36. Misty of Chincoteague, Marguerite Henry
☐ 37. Billy & Blaze, C.W. Anderson
☐ 38. Dr. De Soto, William Stieg
☐ 39. The Ugly Duckling, Hans Christian Andersen
☐ 40. New Coat for Anna, Harriet Ziefert
☐ 41. The Wind in the Willows, Kenneth Grahame
☐ 42. The Story about Ping, Marjorie Flack
☐ 43. Pompeii…Buried Alive!, Edith Kunhardt Davis
☐ 44. Black Ships Before Troy, Rosemary Sutcliff
☐ 45. Miss Nelson Is Missing!, James Marshall
☐ 46. The Little Engine That Could, Watty Piper
☐ 47. The Biggest Bear, Lynd Ward
☐ 48. The Hundred Dresses, Eleanor Estes
☐ 49. Magic Fish, Freya Littledale
☐ 50. The Mouse & the Motorcycle, Beverly Cleary
1. Robin Hood, Roger Lancelyn Green, E. Charles Vivian, Neil Philip, Howard Pyle
2. Johnny Tremain, Esther Forbes
3. Treasure Island, Robert Louis Stevenson
4. The Hobbit, J.R.R. Tolkien
5. Where the Red Fern Grows, Wilson Rawls
6. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Mark Twain
7. A Christmas Carol, Charles Dickens
8. The Door in the Wall, Marguerite De Angeli
9. The Witch of Blackbird Pond, Elizabeth George Speare
10. The Bronze Bow, Elizabeth George Speare
11. A Wrinkle in Time, Madeleine L’Engle
12. The Secret Garden, Frances Hodgson Burnett
13. Tales from Shakespeare, Charles & Mary Lamb
14. From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, E.L. Konigsburg
15. The Call of the Wild, Jack London
16. Little Women, Louisa May Alcott
17. Carry on Mr. Bowditch, Jean Lee Latham
18. Sign of the Beaver, Elizabeth George Speare
19. The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, C.S. Lewis
20. The Hiding Place, Corrie ten Boom
21. Tuck Everlasting, Natalie Babbit
22. Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry, Mildred Taylor
23. The Lion, the Witch, & the Wardrobe, C.S. Lewis
24. Adam of the Road, Elizabeth Gray
25. Old Yeller, Fred Gipson
26. The Swiss Family Robinson, Johann David Wyss
27. King Arthur & the Knights of His Round Table, Roger Lancelyn Green
28. Anne of Green Gables, Lucy Maud Montgomery
29. The Phantom Tollbooth, Jules Feiffer
30. Across Five Aprils, Iren Hunt
31. Charlie & the Chocolate Factory, Roald Dahl
32. Robinson Crusoe, Daniel Defoe
33. Island of the Blue Dolphins, Scott O’Dell
34. The Jungle Book, Rudyard Kipling
35. Dangerous Journey: The Story of Pilgrim’s Progress, Oliver Hunkin
36. Mrs. Frisby & the Rats of NIMH, Robert C. O’Brien
37. Number the Stars, Lois Lowry
38. My Side of the Mountain, Jean Craighead George
39. Prince Caspian, C.S. Lewis
40. Julius Caesar, William Shakespeare
41. Amos Fortune, Elizabeth Yates
42. The Silver Chair, C.S. Lewis
43. Cricket in Times Square, George Selden
44. The Magician’s Nephew, C.S. Lewis
45. Caddie Woodlawn, Carol Ryrie Brink
46. Heidi, Johanna Spyri
47. Gulliver’s Travels, Jonathan Swift
48. Beowulf, trans. Frederick Rebsamen
49. The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, Washington Irving
50. Animal Farm, George Orwell
Seventh to Eighth Grade

☐ 1. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Mark Twain
☐ 2. *Julius Caesar*, William Shakespeare
☐ 3. *Animal Farm*, George Orwell
☐ 5. *Sir Gawain & the Green Knight*, J.R.R. Tolkien
☐ 6. *Canterbury Tales*, Geoffrey Chaucer
☐ 7. *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee
☐ 11. *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, William Shakespeare
☐ 13. *The Odyssey*, Homer
☐ 15. *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*, Robert Louis Stevenson
☐ 16. *The Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighieri
☐ 17. *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens
☐ 19. *Across Five Aprils*, Irene Hunt
☐ 20. *King Arthur & His Knights of the Round Table*, Roger Lancelyn Green & Howard Pyle
☐ 22. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain
☐ 23. *Great Expectations*, Charles Dickens
☐ 24. *Johnny Tremain*, Esther Forbes
☐ 25. *Diary of Anne Frank*, Anne Frank
☐ 26. *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, Emma Orczy
☐ 27. *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, Howard Pyle
☐ 30. *The Iliad*, Homer
☐ 31. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe
☐ 33. *Robinson Crusoe*, Daniel Defoe
☐ 34. *Confessions*, St. Augustine of Hippo
☐ 35. *Treasure Island*, Robert Louis Stevenson
☐ 36. *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Edmond Rostrand
☐ 37. *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, John Bunyan
☐ 38. *The Song of Roland*
☐ 39. *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens
☐ 40. *The Merchant of Venice*, William Shakespeare
☐ 41. *Tales from Shakespeare*, Charles & Mary Lamb
☐ 42. *Mythology*, Edith Hamilton
☐ 43. *Old Man & the Sea*, Ernest Hemingway
☐ 44. *The Hiding Place*, Corrie ten Boom
☐ 45. *Epic of Gilgamesh*
☐ 46. *Twelfth Night*, William Shakespeare
☐ 47. *Out of the Silent Planet*, C.S. Lewis
☐ 48. *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury
☐ 49. *Little Women*, Louisa May Alcott
☐ 50. *Oliver Twist*, Charles Dickens
1. *The Odyssey*, Homer
2. *The Iliad*, Homer
4. *Julius Caesar*, William Shakespeare
7. *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens
8. *Theban Plays: Antigone, Oedipus the King, & Oedipus at Colonus*, Sophocles
9. *The Old Man & the Sea*, Ernest Hemingway
10. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
11. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain
12. *Oresteia (Oresteia trilogy)*, Aeschylus
13. *Beowulf*
15. *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Frederick Douglass
16. *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, John Bunyan
17. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe
18. *The Histories*, Herodotus
19. *My Antonia*, Willa Cather
22. *Greek Lives (and Roman Lives) or Plutarch’s Lives*, Plutarch
23. *Walden*, Henry David Thoreau
24. *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee
28. *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley
29. *Civil Disobedience*, Henry David Thoreau
30. *Pride & Prejudice*, Jane Austen
32. *1984*, George Orwell
33. *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler
34. *The Scarlet Letter*, Nathaniel Hawthorne
35. *Till We Have Faces*, C.S. Lewis
36. *Abraham Lincoln: Speeches & Writings*, Abraham Lincoln
37. *The Westminster Confession of Faith*
38. *Canterbury Tales*, Geoffrey Chaucer
40. *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*
41. *Our Town*, Thornton Wilder
42. *Animal Farm*, George Orwell
43. *The Divine Comedy* (particularly *Inferno*), Dante Alighieri
44. *Republic*, Plato
45. *Theogony*, Hesiod
46. *On Poetics*, Aristotle
47. *The History of Rome*, Livy
48. *The Twelve Caesars*, Suetonius
49. *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville
50. *Gulliver’s Travels*, Jonathan Swift
Tenth Grade

☐ 1. *The Divine Comedy* (particularly *Inferno*), Dante Alighieri
☐ 2. *The Canterbury Tales*, Geoffrey Chaucer
☐ 3. *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens
☐ 5. *Pride & Prejudice*, Jane Austen
☐ 6. *Beowulf*
☐ 8. *Confessions*, St. Augustine of Hippo
☐ 9. *The Iliad*, Homer
☐ 12. *Annals*, Tacitus
☐ 14. *Sir Gawain & the Green Knight*
☐ 17. *Meditations*, Marcus Aurelius
☐ 18. *Crime & Punishment*, Fyodor Dostoyevsky
☐ 22. *The War with Hannibal*, Livy
☐ 23. *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley
☐ 24. *The Odyssey*, Homer
☐ 25. *Church History*, Eusebius

☐ 27. *The Rule of St. Benedict*, Benedict of Nursia
☐ 29. *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes
☐ 30. *The Landmark Thucydides*, Thucydides
☐ 31. *The Bacchae & Other Plays*, Euripides
☐ 32. *Lysistrata & Other Plays*, Aristophanes
☐ 33. *Introduction to Aristotle*, Richard McKeon
☐ 34. *The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha*
☐ 35. *Euclid's Elements*, Euclid
☐ 36. *On the Nature of Things*, Lucretius
☐ 37. *Eclogues & Georgics*, Virgil
☐ 39. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
☐ 40. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, William Shakespeare
☐ 41. *Utopia*, Thomas More
☐ 42. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain
☐ 43. *Paradise Lost*, John Milton
☐ 44. *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald
☐ 45. *Animal Farm*, George Orwell
☐ 46. *Morte d' Arthur*, Thomas Malory
☐ 47. *Merchant of Venice*, William Shakespeare
☐ 48. *The Faerie Queene*, Edmund Spenser
☐ 49. *Antony & Cleopatra*, William Shakespeare
☐ 50. *On the Incarnation*, Athanasius of Alexandria
1. Pride & Prejudice, Jane Austen
2. Hamlet, William Shakespeare
3. Macbeth, William Shakespeare
4. The Scarlet Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne
5. The Divine Comedy (particularly Inferno), Dante Alighieri
6. Canterbury Tales, Geoffrey Chaucer
7. The Iliad, Homer
8. Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle
9. Republic, Plato
10. The Odyssey, Homer
11. The Prince, Niccolò Machiavelli
12. The City of God, St. Augustine of Hippo
13. Romeo & Juliet, William Shakespeare
14. The Consolation of Philosophy, Boethius
15. The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald
16. A Tale of Two Cities, Charles Dickens
17. Paradise Lost, John Milton
18. Rhetoric, Aristotle
19. Don Quixote, Miguel de Cervantes
20. History of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides
21. Gorgias, Plato
22. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain
23. Poetics, Aristotle
24. The Aeneid, Virgil
25. The Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan
26. Theban Plays, Sophocles
27. Heart of Darkness, Joseph Conrad
28. Fierce Wars & Faithful Loves, Edmund Spenser
29. Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings/Works
30. Oresteia, Aeschylus
31. Meno, Plato
32. Beowulf
33. Uncle Tom's Cabin, Harriet Beecher Stowe
34. The Social Contact, Jean Jacques Rousseau
35. Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift
36. Two Lives of Charlemagne, Einhard & Monk of Saint Gall
37. Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Aquinas
38. The Praise of Folly, Desiderius Erasmus
39. The Lives of Thomas Becket, Michael Staunton
40. Confessions, St. Augustine of Hippo
41. The Federalist Papers, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay
42. The Communist Manifesto, Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels
43. Othello, William Shakespeare
44. Henry V, William Shakespeare
45. Brave New World, Aldous Huxley
46. King Lear, William Shakespeare
47. 1984, George Orwell
48. The Last Days of Socrates: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Plato
49. Idylls of the King, Alfred Tennyson
50. Chronicle of the Kings, William of Malmsbury
1. Paradise Lost & Other Poems, John Milton
2. Brave New World, Aldous Huxley
3. Brothers Karamazov, Fyodor Dostoyevsky
4. Democracy in America, Alexis de Tocqueville
5. Hamlet, William Shakespeare
6. The Divine Comedy (particularly Inferno), Dante Alighieri
7. The Wealth of Nations, Adam Smith
8. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain
9. King Lear, William Shakespeare
10. Discourse on Method & Meditations, Objections, & Replies, René Descartes
11. 1984, George Orwell
12. The Scarlet Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne
14. Moby Dick, Herman Melville
15. One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn
16. The Aeneid, Virgil
17. Macbeth, William Shakespeare
18. Heart of Darkness, Joseph Conrad
19. The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald
20. Confessions, St. Augustine of Hippo
21. The Communist Manifesto, Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels
22. Leviathan, Thomas Hobbes
23. The Stranger, Albert Camus
24. Crime & Punishment, Fyodor Dostoyevsky
25. Emma, Jane Austen
26. The Pensées, Blaise Pascal
27. Letter from the Birmingham Jail, Martin Luther King, Jr.
28. Beyond Good & Evil, Friedrich Nietzsche
29. All Quiet on the Western Front, Erich Remarque
30. Social Contract, Jean Jacques Rousseau
31. Treatise on Law, Morality, & Politics, Thomas Aquinas
32. Reason in History, G.W.F. Hegel
33. The Sun Also Rises, Ernest Hemingway
34. Robinson Crusoe, Daniel Defoe
35. Origin & Principles of the American Revolution, Friedrich von Gentz
36. Citizen Soldiers, Stephen Ambrose
37. Othello, William Shakespeare
38. Orthodoxy, G.K. Chesterton
39. Second Treatise on Government, John Locke
40. On Liberty, John Stuart Mill
41. The Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck
42. The Old Man & the Sea, Ernest Hemingway
43. Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis
44. Beowulf, trans. Seamus Heaney
45. Frankenstein, Mary Shelley
46. The Prince, Niccolò Machiavelli
47. Parker’s Back, Flannery O’Connor
48. U.S. Constitution
49. Pride & Prejudice, Jane Austen
50. Notes from the Underground, Fyodor Dostoyevsky
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Samuel Johnson,
Adventurer 785 (August 28, 1753)