

11th Grade Reading Greater Lowell Tech. High School

The Things They Carried / Tim O'Brien

This novel depicts the men of Alpha Company: Jimmy Cross, Henry Dobbins, Rat Kiley, Mitchell Sanders, Norman Bowker, Kiowa, and of course, the character Tim O'Brien who has survived his tour in Vietnam to become a father and writer at the age of forty-three.

The Watsons Go to Birmingham / Christopher Paul Curtis

Humorous portrayal of African American family life in Flint, Michigan during the 1960s; explores issues and effects of racism through the eyes of a ten-year old boy; a story of strong family values, courage, and coming of age.

You Don't Know Me / Davis Klass

No one knows who the real John is. Not his mother, to whom he feels invisible, not his friend who is not a friend, not the man who is not his father, the students at his anti-school, and not the music teacher who tries to help him. In his house that is not a house, the man who is not John's father abuses him severely, and John is afraid to confide the secret to anyone.

Phoenix Rising / Karen Hesse

Teenager Nyle and her grandmother raise sheep on their Vermont farm. In a post-nuclear accident future, Nyle wishes to be isolated from anyone with radiation sickness, while her grandmother wants to take in Ezra and his mother, two unfortunate people infected with the deadly disease.

Under the Blood-Red Sun / Graham Salisbury

It was an ordinary Sunday morning at Pearl Harbor. Tomi releasing the homing pigeons for their daily exercise. Then came the first explosions. Tomi looked up to see the rising sun on the attacking plane's wings; Grandpa ran out of the house waving Japanese flag. Tomi's world will never be the same, but some things never change, his family, his friends, the Rats.

The Jacket / Andrew Clements

When Phil accuses an African American boy of stealing his younger brother's jacket, he discovers what prejudice really is. Each boy learns about the other and by doing so, most importantly, they learn about themselves.

Morning Girl / Michael Dorris

This book is the story of a girl, Morning Girl, and her brother, Star Boy, two Native Americans of the Taino Tribe. It tells of their family and community as they grow up together in the Bahamas in the fateful year of 1492. Morning Girl and her brother are anxious about change, but the change isn't one they will look forward to at the end.

War Letters / Andrew Carroll

These are, as Carroll writes, "the first, unfiltered drafts of history." His rich sample testifies to the universal and poignant themes of love and honor, courage and rage, duty and fear and mortality. The playful and heartfelt voices grant us the personal perspective all too often lost in news reports and government statements. Taken together, they remind us that, despite the playful good cheer, the human cost of war is far too high. A remarkable contribution to the understanding of war and its impact, and a powerful tribute to those undone by it.

Watership Down / Richard Adams

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 land.

Slaughterhouse Five / Kurt Vonnegut – (recommended for College English)

We are introduced to Billy Pilgrim a man who becomes unstuck in time after he is abducted by aliens from the planet Tralfamadore. In a plot-scrambling display of virtuosity, we follow Pilgrim simultaneously through all phases of his life, concentrating on his (and Vonnegut's) shattering experience as an American prisoner of war who witnesses the firebombing of Dresden. Vonnegut's book is as important as any written since 1945. Like *Catch-22*, it fashions the author's experiences in the Second World War into an eloquent and deeply funny plea against butchery in the service of authority.

Beloved / Toni Morrison – (recommended for College English)

An unspeakable act of horror and heroism: a woman brutally kills her infant daughter rather than allow her to be enslaved. The woman is Sethe, and the novel traces her journey from slavery to freedom during and immediately following the Civil War. Woven into this circular, mesmerizing narrative are the horrible truths of Sethe's past: the incredible cruelties she endured as a slave, and the hardships she suffered in her journey north to freedom. Just as Sethe finds the past too painful to remember, and the future just "a matter of keeping the past at bay," her story is almost too painful to read. Yet Morrison manages to imbue the wreckage of her characters' lives with compassion, humanity, and humor. Part ghost story, part history lesson, part folk tale, *Beloved* finds beauty in the unbearable, and lets us all see the enduring promise of hope that lies in anyone's.

To Destroy You Is No Loss: The Odyssey of a Cambodian Family – **NON-FICTION** /

Joan D. Criddle and Teeda Butt Mam (recommended for all levels)

A story of remarkable courage, fortitude and dignity in the face of adversity. **TO DESTROY YOU IS NO LOSS** follows one Cambodian family's struggle to survive four years of unprecedented brutality and wanton destruction during the Khmer Rouge regime. Featuring fifteen-year-old Teeda, it is the true story of the four generation Butt family's efforts to stay alive, and their eventual terror-filled escape attempts from a war-ravaged, famine-riddled nation.

I Am an American: The True Story of the Japanese Internment – **NON-FICTION**

Jerry Stanley – (recommended for all levels)

They were U.S. Citizens, many of them born in this country. Why were they being taken from their homes and sent to desolate places that were unlike anyplace they had ever lived?