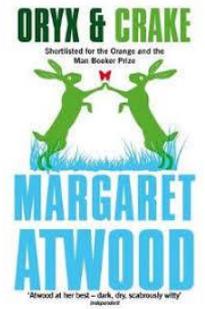




# A LEVEL RECOMMENDED READING LIST

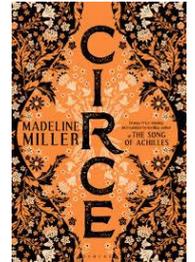


## INTERESTING RETELLINGS OF CLASSIC TALES

**Circe, by Madeline Miller**- just enjoyable on its own merit, but also as an overview of Greek mythology which is really helpful for understanding allusion.

**The Silence of the Girls, by Pat Barker**- a retelling of The Iliad from the point of view of the enslaved Trojan women.

**The Bloody Chamber, by Angela Carter**- a collection of short stories which are retellings of fairy tales/folk tales. Read in connection with Grimm's Fairy Tales, by the Brothers Grimm.



## INTERESTING ALLEGORIES

**Animal Farm, by George Orwell**- a very easy to read allegory focusing on the Russian Revolution/Soviet Union.

**Lord of the Flies, by William Golding**- a fascinating look at human nature and the construct of society.

## ESSENTIAL DYSTOPIAN FICTION

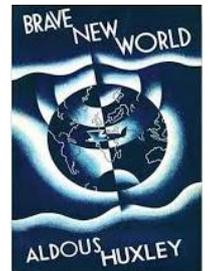
**Brave New World, by Aldous Huxley**- an interesting but frightening look at what society could become.

**1984, by George Orwell**- a Lit set text and incredibly influential piece of literature.

**The Handmaid's Tale, by Margaret Atwood**- also a Lit set text.

**Oryx and Crake, by Margaret Atwood**- a warning about the effects of scientific experimentation and the power of corporations- read this if you enjoy The Handmaid's Tale.

**The Road, by Cormac McCarthy**- SO BLEAK, but stylistically interesting.



## ESSENTIAL 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY FICTION

**Frankenstein, by Mary Shelley**- read if you liked Jekyll and Hyde.

**Dracula, by Bram Stoker**- a gothic classic!

**The Picture of Dorian Gray, by Oscar Wilde**- a gothic story exploring beauty, corruption, and morality.

**The Yellow Wallpaper, by Charlotte Perkins Gilman**- a really interesting short story exploring mental health and the institution (and restrictions) of marriage in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

**Wuthering Heights, by Emily Bronte**- full of horrible, weird characters and inspired a cracking Kate Bush song.

**North and South, by Elizabeth Gaskell**- explores class divisions in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century- after reading, watch the Richard Armitage version!

## ESSENTIAL 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY FICTION

**The Great Gatsby, by F. Scott Fitzgerald**- A Lang/Lit set text for a good reason!

**The Bell Jar, by Sylvia Plath**- her only novel. It is a fascinating look at identity, social pressure, and mental health.

**To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee**- a book that inspired a love of literature for many people.

**Of Mice and Men, by John Steinbeck**- see above.

**The Colour Purple, by Alice Walker**- a novel set in Georgia about the trials and tribulations of Celie, a young African American woman.

**Midnight's Children, by Salman Rushdie**- rather impressively won the Man Booker prize and then the Booker of Bookers and Best of the Bookers.

**Beloved, by Toni Morrison**- won the Nobel Prize for Literature!

## ESSENTIAL 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY FICTION

**Americanah, by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**- a beautifully written love story, dealing with race and immigration.

**The Underground Railroad, by Colson Whitehead**- this follows Cora, and her attempts to escape a life of slavery in Georgia. It's brutal in parts, but wonderful too.

**The Kite Runner, by Khaled Hosseini**- the saddest story ever written (it's beautiful, though).

**Atonement, by Ian McEwan**- a novel that traverses three different time periods, but all around the Second World War, exploring growing up, love, and the devastating consequences of a misunderstanding.

**The Narrow Road to the Deep North, by Richard Flanagan**- won the Man Booker Prize, yet somehow still underrated- it's beautifully written.

## ESSENTIAL? NO! ENJOYABLE? YES!

**One Day, by David Nicholls**

**The Night Circus, by Erin Morgenstern**

**The Rosie Project, by Graeme Simsion**

**How to Build a Girl, by Caitlin Moran**

**The Power, by Naomi Alderman**

