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We've all been there: sitting in English class on an essay or teacher's required reading list. And whether or not we love it, most of us have come across at least one book across the way that inspired us or made us think about the world in a different light, even if our teacher required we read it. Ready to look back on your high school days and reminisce on the books you used to read? We've got quite the list of classic books your high school English teacher definitely made you read. So, just how many have you read? The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne Books of Brilliance / Pinterest Published in 1850, The Scarlet Letter is a story of sin and shame, specifically that of Hester Prynne, who became pregnant out of an affair. Shortly thereafter, her town began to shame her and made her wear a scarlet "A" on her chest so everyone knew about her sin. Filled with themes of judgment, social stigma and shame, this novel is an important read when it comes to better understanding how your words and actions affect other people, even if they've done something morally wrong. The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger @LikeltsNas / Twitter J.D. Salinger's 1951 debut novel, The Catcher in the Rye is yet another classic book most of us read in high school. The book follows angst protagonist Holden Caulfield in his prep-school days, a time when he didn't feel like he fit in anywhere or with anyone. While at prep school, Holden frequently called out the "phonies," or, the people, mainly adults, he deemed fake. Holden's tone is both sarcastic and relatable to the teenage experience; it's an attitude all teenagers experience, which makes The Catcher in the Rye all the more enjoyable. This coming-of-age tale is a commentary on adolescence and still remains popular among required reading lists. The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald New West Press / Pinterest Talk about a classic book on social class and wealth, The Great Gatsby was yet another required reading contender in most high school English Literature classes. The novel, set in the 1920s, tells the story of the ever-wealthy Jay Gatsby, who is obsessively in love with Daisy Buchanan. The novel was and still is so popular that it even got made into a movie starring Leonard DiCaprio and Margot Robbie. Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare Bookmarks Retail / Pinterest We've all heard the phrase, "O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?" before, and for good reason. It comes from William Shakespeare's love tragedy, Romeo and Juliet, which tells the story of two lovers who come from two major ruling families, the Capulets and the Montagues. Throughout the story, Romeo and Juliet fall in love with each other, which sparks controversy in their respective families. Adapted as plays, movies and even songs, this story has stood the test of time, even outside of the classroom. To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee HarperCollins / Pinterest Who hasn't read To Kill a Mockingbird, or at the very least, watched the movie? The Pulitzer Prize winning novel came out in 1960 and tackled the ever-important issue of racism in America. Not only was this novel extremely important and educational at the time it was published, but it remains important today, as racial injustice persists. In literature, lawyer Atticus Finch has historically been named a hero for defending a Black man, an action white people at the time looked down upon. It's a classic read everyone should read at some point in their life. 1984 by George Orwell BuzzFeed / Pinterest If you're looking for the novel that set the stage for science fiction and fantasy, this is it. Author George Orwell penned 1984 just four years after his other major work, Animal Farm. 1984 is a story of silencing communities, extreme surveillance and totalitarianism in which protagonist Winston Smith tries to find space for his voice and to find love. It's a true commentary on the negative aspects of government and control, which might be why it's usually on English teachers' radar. The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho Scribd / Pinterest Published in 1988, The Alchemist might be considered a "newer" addition to many high school reading lists. Paulo Coelho touches on the simple, yet completely complex idea of following your dreams, no matter how unattainable they seem. The story's protagonist, Santiago, sets out to find treasure. Ultimately, he comes into contact with the alchemist, a 200-year old healing figure who helps Santiago realize who the true holder of his dreams is. Like Santiago, we all have dreams we hope to fulfill one day, which makes this such an important book for young students to read. Little Women by Louisa M. Alcott Archibald Borges / Pinterest Another book most of us read, or at least have heard of, is Louisa May Alcott's novel Little Women. Perhaps the reason it's been on many required reading lists in schools is because of its coming-of-age theme. In the book, sisters Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy grapple with the hardships of growing up female. Topics of love, loss and feminism are among the most common themes found within Little Women's pages, which makes it relevant still today. Lord of the Flies by William Golding Scholastic / Pinterest It's a bit ironic that The Lord of the Flies appears on numerous high school and even middle school reading lists, considering the amount of fighting it discusses. But, it remains a popular Nobel Prize novel with an important message: ethics are important, especially when it comes to leading a community. And although that might sound like a simple message, it doesn't always hit well with everyone, including teenagers. Further, violence is never the answer. What a powerful message for a young adult novel! The Lord of the Flies is also filled with nature explorations, specifically on a stranded island. Author William Golding likely had vivid imagery on his mind when he penned this work in 1954. Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen Bookmarks Retail / Pinterest Often dubbed a difficult and challenging book to read, Pride and Prejudice still holds a spot on many English reading lists. Set in England in the 1800s, this novel hones in on the love life of Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, both of whom represent the difficult character traits, pride and prejudice. Yes, Pride and Prejudice is another old novel, but it teaches readers an important lesson: to not pass judgments on people we don't fully know. Further, Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth remind us not to let our own pride get in the way of meaningful relationships. DISCLAIMER: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the site owner or any brands and companies mentioned here. Any content provided by our bloggers or authors are of their opinion, and are not intended to malign any religion, ethnic group, club, organization, company, individual or anyone or anything. This article is purely for reference purposes and does not constitute professional advice and may not be reflective of the best choice for your unique situation. This site strives to provide as much accurate information as possible; however, sometimes products, prices, and other details are subject to change. Therefore, this site does not verify for the accuracy of the information presented in this article. This site does not assume any liability for any sort of damages arising from your use of this site and any third party content and services. The Hobbit, the fantasy novel by J.R.R. Tolkien, is a classic. The Hobbit is a great read-aloud for parents to share with children just as Tolkien shared the book with his children. The Hobbit is popular with middle school readers, as well as teens and adults. Since the book provides background for Tolkien's Lord of the Rings trilogy (The Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers, and The Return of the King), reading this book may inspire older readers to read more of Tolkien. I would recommend the following editions of the classic book not only for children and teens but for whole families to enjoy together. For more about the story, read this review of plot and themes in The Hobbit. The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt If you are looking for a gift for a family, I recommend this gift edition of The Hobbit. The illustrations by Jemima Catlin help to make the book accessible to a wide range of ages and add interest to the story. On every double page spread, there is one small color illustration (sometimes 2), and there are also larger illustrations, each covering a double-page spread scattered here and there throughout the book. The Hobbit also includes Tolkien's maps of Wilderwood and Thor's Map. The hardbound book has an attractive green cover with gold lettering and a small illustration of the hobbit, Bilbo Baggins, on it. The pages of the book are of nice slick paper and the book does, indeed, live up to its billing as a special gift edition. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013. ISBN: 9780544174221) Houghton Mifflin Harcourt If The Hobbit is already one of your child's favorite books, one he or she will continue to cherish, or if it's one of your family's favorites, I would recommend you buy this deluxe edition. It is boxed and bound in green leatherette. The cover and spine are stamped with gold and red. Tolkien's stylized artwork includes five full-page spreads in color, as well as many others in black and green and Thor's map. This 319-page book is approximately 7" X 10." Houghton Mifflin published this edition in 1973. The ISBN is 9780395177112. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt This 304-page large (approximately 8" X 10") paperback edition works well as a read-aloud, particularly for younger children who sometimes need more visual reinforcement of the text. There are 48 illustrations in full color by well-known children's book illustrator Michael Hague. Five of them are double-page spreads. The book is also well designed as to type size and layout. Happily, the book contains Tolkien's two maps. In 1989, Houghton Mifflin published this paperback edition. The ISBN is 9780395520215. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt This handsome gift edition of The Hobbit includes dramatic watercolor paintings and other illustrations by Alan Lee. Lee, an award-winning British artist, has illustrated a number of Tolkien-related projects and books. In 2004, he received an Academy Award for Best Art Direction-Set Decoration for his work on The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King. This lavish 320-page gift edition is about 8" X 10." Houghton Mifflin Harcourt published this edition in 1997. Its ISBN is 9780395873465. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt If you would prefer a smaller paperback edition designed for young people, I would recommend this one. The art on the cover of the book was created by Randolph Caldecott Honor artist Peter Sis. The book itself contains 10 black and white stylized pen and ink illustrations by J. R. R. Tolkien, including two maps. The book is well-designed and is about 5" X 7," with 352 pages. This edition was published by Houghton Mifflin in 2001. The ISBN is 9780618150823. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt The dramatic cover of the 75th-anniversary deluxe paperback edition of The Hobbit, which coordinates with the covers of new editions of the books in Tolkien's Lord of the Rings trilogy, will appeal to older readers who want to collect a set of all of the books, one at a time. The 320-page book is a little more than 5½" X 8." (Mariner Books, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012. ISBN: 9780547928227) Note: The four deluxe paperback books - The Hobbit and the three books of the Lord of the Rings trilogy: The Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers, and The Return of the King - are also available as a boxed set. (Mariner Books, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012. ISBN: 9780547928180)

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