

Title	Author	Class/Age level	Publisher's Summary
Anthem	Ayn Rand	English 3 - Juniors - Thematic analysis: Dystopia, Individuality, and Freedom	<p>Anthem is Ayn Rand's "hymn to man's ego." It is the story of one man's rebellion against a totalitarian, collectivist society. Equality 7-2521 is a young man who yearns to understand "the Science of Things." But he lives in a bleak, dystopian future where independent thought is a crime and where science and technology have regressed to primitive levels.</p> <p>All expressions of individualism have been suppressed in the world of Anthem; personal possessions are nonexistent, individual preferences are condemned as sinful and romantic love is forbidden. Obedience to the collective is so deeply ingrained that the very word "I" has been erased from the language.</p> <p>In pursuit of his quest for knowledge, Equality 7-2521 struggles to answer the questions that burn within him — questions that ultimately lead him to uncover the mystery behind his society's downfall and to find the key to a future of freedom and progress.</p> <p>Anthem anticipates the theme of Rand's first best seller, The Fountainhead, which she stated as "individualism versus collectivism, not in politics, but in man's soul."</p>
Citizen: An American Lyric	Claudia Rankine	English 1 - 9th grade/advanced 8th grade - Supplement to <u>Some of My Best Friends are Black:</u> Sparking discussion on the experience of racial tension in the USA	<p>Winner of the 2015 PEN Oakland-Josephine Miles Literary Award Winner of the 2015 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award in Poetry Winner of the 2015 Forward Prize for Best Collection Winner of the 2015 PEN Open Book Award Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award in Poetry Winner of Poets and Writers' Jackson Poetry Prize One of the Guardian's Best Politics Books of 2015 One of the Guardian's Readers' Books of the Year for 2015 One of Entropy's Best Nonfiction books of 2015 One of MPR's, The Atlantic's, the Guardian's, Pioneer Press, Bitch Media's, Subtext Bookstore's Best Books of 2015 Featured in the Millions "Year in Reading 2015" by Angela Flournoy and Katrina Dodson Finalist for 2014 National Book Award in Poetry Finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in Criticism One of the Millions' Most Anticipated Books Featured in Literature Works' Christmas Wish List of 2015 by Kathryn Simmonds Featured in the Conium Review's Best of 2015 by James R. Gapinski</p>

			"Marrying prose, poetry, and the visual image, Citizen investigates the ways in which racism pervades daily American social and cultural life, rendering certain of its citizens politically invisible. Rankine's formally inventive book challenges our notion that citizenship is only a legal designation that the state determines by expanding that definition to include a larger understanding of civic belonging and identity, built out of cross-racial empathy, communal responsibility, and a deeply shared commitment to equality."—National Book Award Judges' Citation
Feed	M.T. Anderson	English 2 - 10th grade/advanced 9th grade - Thematic Analysis: Dystopia, Technology, Entertainment, Mind Control, and Freedom	For Titus and his friends, it started out like any ordinary trip to the moon — a chance to party during spring break. But that was before the crazy hacker caused all their feeds to malfunction, sending them to the hospital to lie around with nothing inside their heads for days. And it was before Titus met Violet, a beautiful, brainy girl who has decided to fight the feed and its ever-present ability to categorize human thoughts and desires. M. T. Anderson's not-so-brave new world is a smart, savage satire that has captivated readers with its view of an imagined future that veers unnervingly close to the here and now.
The Hobbit	J.R.R. Tolkien	English 4 - Seniors - Literary Comparison: Beowulf and the ancient Saga in modern times	Probably the most famous children's book of modern times – regularly topping polls for 'favourite book'. Bilbo Baggins enjoys a quiet and contented life, with no desire to travel far from the comforts of home; then one day the wizard Gandalf and a band of dwarves arrive unexpectedly and enlist his services as a burglar on a dangerous expedition to raid the treasure-hoard of Smaug the dragon. Bilbo's life is never to be the same again. The Hobbit became an instant success when it was first published in 1937, and more than 60 years later Tolkien's epic tale of elves, dwarves, trolls, goblins, myth, magic and adventure, with its reluctant hero Bilbo Baggins, has lost none of its appeal.
The Buddha in the Attic	Julie Otsuka	English 3 - Juniors - Thematic Discussion: Immigration and What it Means to be "American"	Winner of the PEN/Faulkner Award For Fiction National Book Award and Los Angeles Times Book Prize Finalist A New York Times Notable Book A gorgeous novel by the celebrated author of When the Emperor Was Divine that tells the story of a group of young women brought from Japan to San Francisco as "picture brides" nearly a century ago. In eight unforgettable sections, The Buddha in the Attic traces the extraordinary lives of these women, from their arduous journeys by boat, to their arrival in San Francisco and their tremulous first nights as new wives; from their experiences raising children who would later reject their culture and language, to the

			<p>deracinating arrival of war. Once again, Julie Otsuka has written a spellbinding novel about identity and loyalty, and what it means to be an American in uncertain times.</p>
Into the Wild	Jon Krakauer	20th Century Am Lit - Juniors	<p>In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. How McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of <i>Into the Wild</i>.</p> <p>Immediately after graduating from college in 1991, McCandless had roamed through the West and Southwest on a vision quest like those made by his heroes Jack London and John Muir. In the Mojave Desert he abandoned his car, stripped it of its license plates, and burned all of his cash. He would give himself a new name, Alexander Supertramp, and, unencumbered by money and belongings, he would be free to wallow in the raw, unfiltered experiences that nature presented. Craving a blank spot on the map, McCandless simply threw the maps away. Leaving behind his desperate parents and sister, he vanished into the wild.</p> <p>Jon Krakauer constructs a clarifying prism through which he reassembles the disquieting facts of McCandless's short life. Admitting an interest that borders on obsession, he searches for the clues to the drives and desires that propelled McCandless. Digging deeply, he takes an inherently compelling mystery and unravels the larger riddles it holds: the profound pull of the American wilderness on our imagination; the allure of high-risk activities to young men of a certain cast of mind; the complex, charged bond between fathers and sons.</p> <p>When McCandless's innocent mistakes turn out to be irreversible and fatal, he becomes the stuff of tabloid headlines and is dismissed for his naiveté, pretensions, and hubris. He is said to have had a death wish but wanting to die is a very different thing from being compelled to look over the edge. Krakauer brings McCandless's uncompromising pilgrimage out of the shadows, and the peril, adversity, and renunciation sought by this enigmatic young man are illuminated with a rare understanding--and not an ounce of sentimentality. Mesmerizing, heartbreaking, <i>Into the Wild</i> is a <i>tour de force</i>. The power and luminosity of Jon Krakauer's storytelling blaze through every page.</p>
The Pearl	Steinbeck	English 3 - Symbolism and Allegory: How do	<p>One of Steinbeck's most taught works, <i>The Pearl</i> is the story of the Mexican diver Kino, whose discovery of a magnificent pearl from the Gulf beds means the promise of a better life for his impoverished family. His dream blinds him to the greed and suspicions the pearl arouses in him and his neighbors, and even his loving wife Juana cannot temper his obsession or stem the events leading to tragedy. This classic novella</p>

		we achieve true happiness?	from Nobel Prize-winner John Steinbeck examines the fallacy of the American dream, and illustrates the fall from innocence experienced by people who believe that wealth erases all problems.
Salvage the Bones	Jesmyn Ward	English 3 - Understanding Complex Characters, their actions, beliefs, motivations, and experiences	A hurricane is building over the Gulf of Mexico, threatening the coastal town of Bois Sauvage, Mississippi, and Esch's father is growing concerned. A hard drinker, largely absent, he doesn't show concern for much else. Esch and her three brothers are stocking food, but there isn't much to save. Lately, Esch can't keep down what food she gets; she's fourteen and pregnant. Her brother Skeetah is sneaking scraps for his prized pitbull's new litter, dying one by one in the dirt. While brothers Randall and Junior try to stake their claim in a family long on child's play and short on parenting. As the twelve days that comprise the novel's framework yield to the final day and Hurricane Katrina, the unforgettable family at the novel's heart--motherless children sacrificing for each other as they can, protecting and nurturing where love is scarce--pulls itself up to struggle for another day. A wrenching look at the lonesome, brutal, and restrictive realities of rural poverty, Salvage the Bone is muscled with poetry, revelatory, and real.