

Recommended Reading List

The following recommendations have been compiled from a number of reading lists: College Board – 101 Great Books for College-Bound Readers, Prentice-Hall Suggested Reading for High School, and a number of individual high school reading lists. At the end of this list is included a list of personal recommendations by Valley Lutheran High School faculty and staff.

The reading level of each book was determined using Lexile scores. You can also find the Lexile score of many books by using www.lexile.com and inserting the book title into the search box. In cases where different editions are available (i.e. reduced novels, simplified grade school versions, etc.) the original version by the author was used, which typically placed it at the highest available reading level.

The Lexile score goal for an incoming freshman should be approximately 1000, while the Lexile score goal for a college-bound senior is around 1200 – 1300.

Recommended Reading for Struggling Readers (Lexile 750 – 990)

Title	Author
How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents	Alvarez, Julia
Feed	Anderson, M. T.
O Pioneers!	Cather, Willa
Girl with a Pearl Earring	Chevalier, Tracy
The House on Mango Street	Cisneros, Sandra
The Red Badge of Courage	Crane, Stephen
Rebecca	Du Maurier, Daphne
Invisible Man	Ellison, Ralph
As I Lay Dying	Faulkner, William
A Lesson Before Dying	Gaines, Ernest
Lord of the Flies	Golding, William
Plainsong	Haruf, Kent
To Kill a Mockingbird	Lee, Harper
Member of the Wedding	McCullers, Carson
Beloved	Morrison, Toni
The Things They Carried	O'Brien, Tim
Cry, the Beloved Country	Paton, Alan
The Chosen	Potok, Chaim
All Quiet on the Western Front	Remarque, Erich Maria
The Catcher in the Rye	Salinger, J. D.
Frankenstein	Shelley, Mary
On the Beach	Shute, Nevil
Ceremony	Silko, Leslie Marmon
A Tree Grows in Brooklyn	Smith, Betty
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	Twain, Mark
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer	Twain, Mark
Some Things that Stay	Willis, Sarah
Native Son	Wright, Richard

Recommended Reading for High School Readers (Lexile 1000 – 1200)

Title	Author
A Death in the Family	Agee, James
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings	Angelou, Maya
Pride and Prejudice	Austen, Jane
Growing Up	Baker, Russell
Go Tell It on the Mountain	Baldwin, James
Jane Eyre	Bronte, Charlotte
Wuthering Heights	Bronte, Emily
Heart of Darkness	Conrad, Joseph
Whale Talk	Crutcher, Chris
Robinson Crusoe	Defoe, Daniel
David Copperfield	Dickens, Charles
Great Expectations	Dickens, Charles
A Tale of Two Cities	Dickens, Charles
Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass	Douglass, Frederick
An American Tragedy	Dreiser, Theodore
The Three Musketeers	Dumas, Alexandre
Like Water for Chocolate	Esquivel, Laura
The Great Gatsby	Fitzgerald, F. Scott
Cold Mountain	Frazier, Charles
Autobiography of a Face	Grealy, Lucy
Roots	Haley, Alex
Tess of the d'Urbervilles	Hardy, Thomas
A Farewell to Arms	Hemingway, Ernest
The Portrait of a Lady	James, Henry
A Separate Peace	Knowles, John
The Call of the Wild	London, Jack
The Sea Wolf	London, Jack
The Natural	Malamud, Bernard
Moby Dick	Melville, Herman
Gone With the Wind	Mitchell, Margaret
Small Avalanches and Other Stories	Oates, Joyce Carol
1984	Orwell, George
Animal Farm	Orwell, George
Soldier's Heart	Paulson, Gary
The Bell Jar	Plath, Sylvia
The Jungle	Sinclair, Upton
The Grapes of Wrath	Steinbeck, John
Of Mice and Men	Steinbeck, John
The Pearl	Steinbeck, John
Uncle Tom's Cabin	Stowe, Harriet Beecher
Gulliver's Travels	Swift, Jonathan
My Life and Hard Times	Thurber, James
The Thurber Carnival	Thurber, James
The War of the Worlds	Wells, H. G.
Ethan Frome	Wharton, Edith

The Forgotten	Wiesel, Elie
Our Town	Wilder, Thornton
The Glass Menagerie	Williams, Tennessee

Recommended Reading for Advanced Readers (Lexile 1300 – 1500)

Title	Author
The Good Earth	Buck, Pearl S.
Silent Spring	Carson, Rachel
Last of the Mohicans	Cooper, James Fenimore
Silas Marner	Eliot, George
The Sound and the Fury	Faulkner, William
The Scarlet Letter	Hawthorne, Nathaniel
Their Eyes Were Watching God	Hurston, Zora Neale
Into Thin Air	Krakauer, Jon
The Magic Mountain	Mann, Thomas
The Crucible	Miller, Arthur
Death of a Salesman	Miller, Arthur
Macbeth	Shakespeare, William
A Midsummer Night's Dream	Shakespeare, William
Walden	Thoreau, Henry David
The Color Purple	Walker, Alice

Recommendations by VLHS Faculty and Staff

VLHS Member	Title	Author	Lexile Measure
Renee Brenner	The Hunger Games	Collins, Suzanne	810
Ben Cooper	Dandelion Wine	Bradbury, Ray	880
	Haroun and the Sea of Stories	Rushdie, Salman	940
Barb Doyle	Les Miserables	Hugo, Victor	990
	Hamlet	Shakespeare, William	1390
	Twilight series	Meyer, Stephanie	720
	Nancy Drew mystery series	Keene, Carolyn	720
Kurt Hofmeister	Wooden: A Lifetime of Observations and Reflections On and Off the Court	Wooden, John	N/A
Jay Kaelberer	A Christmas Carol	Dickens, Charles	500 – 1080 (for original)
	Chronicles of Narnia series	Lewis, C. S.	940
Lisa Meyers	The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century	Friedman, Thomas L.	N/A
	Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in	Ehrenreich, Barbara	1340

	America		
	Half-Broke Horses: A True-Life Novel	Walls, Jeannette	1010
	The Help	Stockett, Kathryn	N/A
Tom Roekle	1984	Orwell, George	1170
Bess Winter	Anne of Green Gables	Mongomery, L. M.	970 (unabridged)
	Jane Eyre	Bronte, Charlotte	1040