“You don’t have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them.”

—RAY BRADBURY
The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the nation’s largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute’s mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development.

Arts Midwest connects people throughout the Midwest and the world to meaningful arts opportunities, sharing creativity, knowledge, and understanding across boundaries. One of six nonprofit regional arts organizations in the United States, Arts Midwest’s history spans more than 25 years.

Educational materials for American Literary Landmarks are made possible through the generous support of the Poetry Foundation.

Transportation for The Big Read is provided by Ford.

Support for The Big Read is provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The Big Read in the Pacific Northwest is supported, in part, by a grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation.
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The Big Read is the largest literary program in the history of the federal government. An initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts, in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest, The Big Read is designed to bring the transformative power of literature into the lives of Americans.

A 2004 NEA report, *Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America*, identified a critical decline in reading for pleasure among American adults. In 2005, The Big Read was created to address the issue directly by providing citizens with the opportunity to read and discuss a single book within their communities. By June 2009, more than 500 Big Read programs will have occurred across all 50 states, in cities small and large, rural and urban.

The purpose of The Big Read, like the purpose of literature itself, is pleasure. Not necessarily an easy pleasure, but a deliciously rich and complex one. A great book combines enlightenment with enchantment. Literature awakens our imagination and enlarges our humanity. It can even offer harrowing insights that somehow console and comfort us.

The prospect of an America where only a few people share a love of reading is just too lonely to bear. Even if statistics didn’t show that readers are more active in their own communities and more engaged in their own lives, the act of reading would still be an indispensable part of what makes us fully human.

It is for these reasons that we at the NEA invite you to join The Big Read. This catalogue features the books and poets included in The Big Read library. These great works of literature were selected by our Readers Circle—a group of distinguished librarians, professors, journalists, and fiction writers from across the country. We hope you’ll agree that each book selected for The Big Read has the potential to inspire, enlighten, and enchant.

Dana Gioia
Chairman
National Endowment for the Arts
The Institute of Museum and Library Services is proud to partner with the National Endowment for the Arts on The Big Read. IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Our involvement in this program promotes our mission to connect people to information and ideas.

We are encouraging libraries everywhere—in schools, on campuses, and in communities—to participate in The Big Read. Libraries are perfect partners positioned as centers of civic engagement for The Big Read. They are trusted places where groups come together to learn. And they have librarians—well-schooled experts who know about learning and literacy, and who know their communities and bring the diverse organizations contained therein to a single table. Such partnerships, focused on learning and literacy, unite people. Literacy and literature sharpen the imagination, promote empathy and learning, and hone critical thinking skills.

The Big Read is an outstanding initiative that benefits our entire nation. It has already united communities. We encourage your enthusiastic participation.

Anne-Imelda M. Radice, Ph.D.
Director
Institute of Museum and Library Services
The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, designed to revitalize the role of literature in American culture and bring the transformative power of literature into the lives of its citizens. Created by the NEA in cooperation with Arts Midwest, The Big Read brings together partners across the country to encourage citizens to read for pleasure and enlightenment.

An organization applying to participate must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or a division of state, local, or tribal government. Eligible applicants include such organizations as literary centers, libraries, museums, colleges and universities, art centers, historical societies, arts councils, tribal governments, humanities councils, literary festivals, and arts organizations. Applicant organizations must partner with a library (if the organization is not itself a library).

Community organizations participating in The Big Read develop and produce a well-planned and well-attended community-wide program with innovative, diverse activities and widespread community partnerships and participation. Programming should last approximately 4–6 weeks and focus on one book from the list of available Big Read titles.

Organizations selected to participate in The Big Read will receive a grant; financial support to attend a national orientation meeting; Reader’s, Teacher’s, and Audio Guides for their selected title; promotional materials for broad distribution; access to an online Organizer’s Guide for developing and managing Big Read activities; inclusion of the organization and its events on The Big Read Web site; and the prestige of participating in a highly visible national initiative.

To learn more about The Big Read, including current programming and grant application deadlines, visit www.NEABigRead.org.
International Partnerships for The Big Read

The Big Read’s international partnerships are designed to deepen dialogue and cultural understanding with other countries through the reading of great literature. In 2007, the first Big Read international partnership was formed with Russia. In coordination with the Open World Leadership Center and the Library for Foreign Literature in Moscow, a Russian delegation visited selected Big Read communities in the United States to learn how the program works. Subsequently, two regions in Russia, Ivanovo and Saratov, hosted Big Reads with programming centered on *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. In early 2008, communities in three states—Illinois, Indiana, and Pennsylvania—took part in the U.S. component of Big Read Russia by hosting Big Read programs celebrating Leo Tolstoy’s *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*.

As part of the Global Cultural Initiative undertaken with the U.S. Department of State and managed by Arts Midwest, the NEA expanded The Big Read to include Egypt. Between September 2008 and June 2009, four U.S. communities are reading Nobel laureate Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz’s *The Thief and the Dogs*. These grantees visited Egypt to learn about Mahfouz’s life and writing, as well as Egyptian literature, history, government, and customs. Three Egyptian organizations are collaborating on this program: the American University in Cairo, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, and the Egyptian Association for Educational Resources. Representatives of these Egyptian organizations visited the U.S. in spring 2008 to observe programming and learn how to adapt The Big Read for an Egyptian audience. Egyptian communities will conduct Big Reads around new translations of Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* and Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*, as well as a reissued translation of John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*. 
These Egyptian communities will also use many of The Big Read materials for these books, which will be translated into Arabic.

The Big Read with Mexico brought together partners on both sides of the border for a pilot program in September and October 2008. The book of Mexican literature, *Sun, Stone, and Shadows: 20 Great Mexican Short Stories*, was published expressly for The Big Read by Mexico’s Fondo de Cultura Económica. Its stories were selected with U.S. readers in mind. For the pilot program, the El Paso Public Library hosted the book’s editor and an author of one of the stories for activities in El Paso, Texas, and across the border in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College conducted Big Read activities in Brownsville, Texas, and in neighboring Matamoros, Mexico.

These three international titles—*The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, *The Thief and the Dogs*, and *Sun, Stone, and Shadows*—will remain permanent selections in The Big Read library and are open to all applicants. For grant application guidelines, including information about The Big Read’s current international partnership opportunities, visit [www.NEABigRead.org](http://www.NEABigRead.org).
How The Big Read Books Are Chosen

The National Endowment for the Arts is renowned for the panel process that informs all our grants, including national initiatives such as The Big Read. To select books for The Big Read, the NEA enlists a panel of literary experts and laypeople with a passion for literature to serve on the Readers Circle. The panelists make recommendations, which are then reviewed by the NEA’s Literature staff.

To give cities and towns even greater choice, the number of Big Read books has continued to increase as the program expands. Twenty-seven books embodying a broad array of traditions, cultures, and regions have been selected so far. Though The Big Read offers communities a diverse choice of reading, the one constant is literary excellence.

The Readers Circle

Wendell Berry
poet and novelist

Anne Fadiman
author and essayist

P.J. O’Rourke
essayist and humorist

Dr. James H. Billington
Librarian of Congress

Pico Iyer
journalist and novelist

Azar Nafisi
author and professor

Matthew Bruccoli
scholar and professor (1931-2008)

Mitchell Kaplan
former American Booksellers Association president

Marilyn Nelson
former Connecticut State Poet Laureate

James Lee Burke
author

Ted Kooser
former United States Poet Laureate

Kathleen Norris
author

Lan Samantha Chang
author and professor

Lorrie Moore
author

Maureen Corrigan
author, book critic, and professor

Mitchel Kaplan
former American Booksellers Association president

Aimee Mann
musician

Ted Kooser
former United States Poet Laureate

Michael Dirda
book critic

Margaret Atwood
author

Richard Rodriguez
author

Kathleen Norris
author

Kevin Starr
historian and former California State Librarian

Lorrie Moore
author

Pico Iyer
journalist and novelist

Azar Nafisi
author and professor

Marilyn Nelson
former Connecticut State Poet Laureate
Bless Me, Ultima
by Rudolfo Anaya

_Bless Me, Ultima_ (1972) by Rudolfo Anaya is a coming-of-age novel about pride and assimilation, faith and doubt. The summer before Antonio Juan Luna Márez turns seven, an old woman comes to live with his family in Guadalupe, New Mexico. This woman—called La Grande or Ultima—is a curandera, a traditional healer feared by many but respected by all. Ultima teaches Antonio, and their bond deepens as he endures several events that profoundly shake his understanding of his heritage and destiny. Antonio’s dreams often foreshadow the future and feature his three older brothers, just demobilized from World War II. These surreal dreams also reflect his existential questions: Why is there evil in the world? Why does God sometimes punish the good? Where will I go after death? How can I know the truth?

**THEMES:**
cultural identity, death, education, religion, tradition

**PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITY:**
- _La Llorona_, opera in three acts, libretto by Rudolfo Anaya

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

*Reader’s Guide available in Spanish*

“I was happy with Ultima . . . She taught me to listen to the mystery of the groaning earth and to feel complete in the fulfillment of its time. My soul grew under her careful guidance.”

— from _Bless Me, Ultima_
Fahrenheit 451

by Ray Bradbury

On October 19, 1953, a young Californian published a novel with the odd title Fahrenheit 451. In a gripping story both disturbing and poetic, Ray Bradbury took the materials of pulp fiction and transformed them into a visionary parable of a society gone awry, in which firemen burn books and the state suppresses learning. Meanwhile, the citizenry sits by in drug-induced and media-saturated indifference. One fireman, Guy Montag, secretly saves a few books from a burning house and begins to read deeply for the first time in his life. As his knowledge expands, his growing dissatisfaction leads him to leave home and join a resistance force of readers, each one responsible for memorizing—and therefore preserving—an entire book. More relevant than ever a half-century later, Fahrenheit 451 has achieved the distinction of being both a literary classic and a perennial bestseller.

THEMES:
censorship, courage, the effects of technology on society, honor, justice

FILM ADAPTATION:
• Fahrenheit 451 (1966, starring Oskar Werner and Julie Christie, directed by Francois Truffaut)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:
• Fahrenheit 451, play by Ray Bradbury (www.dramaticpublishing.com)
• Fahrenheit 451, film score by Bernard Herrmann
• Fahrenheit 451, professionally staged adaptation through the American Place Theater’s Literature to Life program

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio versions available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

Reader’s Guide available in Spanish

THE AUTHOR
Ray Bradbury was born in 1920, in Waukegan, Illinois. When his family drove across the country to California, young Ray would pile out of their car at every stop to explore the local library. With the publication of The Martian Chronicles in 1950, Bradbury ensured his own lasting place on library shelves. The author of more than 85 books, Bradbury lives in Los Angeles.

“It was a pleasure to burn. It was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and changed.”
—from Fahrenheit 451
My Ántonia
by Willa Cather

A beloved American classic, Willa Cather’s My Ántonia (1918) may be best summarized by its epigraph—“the best days are the first to flee.” The adult narrator, Jim Burden, looks back on his childhood through memories of his friend, Ántonia Shimerda, an inquisitive immigrant girl from Bohemia. Like Cather, 10-year-old Jim has left Virginia for Nebraska by train and is shocked by the barren prairie on his first wagon ride. With time, he comes to love the land and his immigrant neighbors, even after he leaves Nebraska to pursue his education in Boston and his career in New York. Although Jim hears rumors of Ántonia’s ruin, more than 15 years pass before he musters the courage to return to Nebraska and find out what really happened to her. The novel teems with romance, violence, tenderness, cruelty, and tragedy—all bustling side by side in a narrative at once elegant and compassionate.

THEMES:
friendship, the immigrant experience in America, memory, the taming of the land, youth

DOCUMENTARY FILM:
• Willa Cather: The Road Is All (PBS American Masters documentary)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITY:
• Music by Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904), the Bohemian composer whose Symphony No. 9 (“From the New World”) and String Quartet in F (the “American” Quartet) are said to draw on spirituals and Native American themes absorbed during an 1890s sojourn in Iowa and New York

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio version available
• large print edition available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“The author

Born in 1873 in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley, Willa Cather left nine years later to join her grandparents in the Nebraska territory. Her best-known novels—O Pioneers! (1913), The Song of the Lark (1915), and My Ántonia (1918)—all take place in Nebraska, but she lived most of her life in New York. She died in 1947 and is buried in Jaffrey, New Hampshire.

“There was nothing but land . . . I had never before looked up at the sky when there was not a familiar mountain ridge against it. But this was the complete dome of heaven.”
—from My Ántonia
Love Medicine
by Louise Erdrich

An impressive range of comic and tragic voices narrate Love Medicine (1984). Set between 1934 and 1984, the novel traces several generations of two interconnected families—the Kashpaws and the Lamartines. Their saga is told primarily by Chippewa men and women, some of whom live on the reservation near a fictional North Dakota town. The novel begins as June Kashpaw, drunk and disoriented, sets off on foot into a blizzard. She never makes it home. Her relatives gather to mourn and stitch together memories of June’s life. With these voices, Erdrich leads the reader through the interwoven lives of generations. Love Medicine is a powerful book about vibrant, complex characters and the enduring power of love.

THEMES:
anger, desire, faith, family, healing, tradition

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITY:
• Love Medicine, a theatrical adaptation by Meryl Friedman

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• abridged audio version available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“At times the whole sky was ringed in shooting points and puckers of light gathering and falling, pulsing, fading, rhythmical as breathing. All of a piece. As if the sky were a pattern of nerves and our thought and memories traveled across it. As if the sky were one gigantic memory for us all.”

— from Love Medicine

THE AUTHOR
Louise Erdrich was born in 1954 in Minnesota, the eldest of seven children. Erdrich’s heritage is Ojibwe, French, and German. Love Medicine (1984), her first novel, won the National Book Critics Circle Award. Erdrich has published several other novels, children’s books, collections of poetry, and works of nonfiction. She lives in Minnesota. She received an NEA Literature Fellowship in 1983.
“At his lips’ touch she blossomed for him like a flower and the incarnation was complete.”

— from *The Great Gatsby*

**The Great Gatsby**

by F. Scott Fitzgerald

F. Scott Fitzgerald’s 1925 novel *The Great Gatsby* is a tragic love story, a mystery, and a social commentary on American life. The novel concerns the wasteful lives of four wealthy characters as observed by the narrator, Nick Carraway. The story of Jay Gatsby’s desperate quest to win back his first love reverberates with themes at once characteristically American and universally human, among them the importance of honesty, the temptations of wealth, and the struggle to escape the past. Though Gatsby’s love, Daisy, pledged to wait for his return from World War I, she married wealthy Tom Buchanan. Gatsby still worships her as his golden girl and, having made a great fortune, sets out to win her back. In the novel’s famous conclusion, the characters collide, leaving human wreckage in their wake.

**THEMES:**
class, fidelity, living in the past, loyalty, temptation

**FILM ADAPTATION:**

**PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:**
- *The Great Gatsby*, theatrical adaptation by Simon Levy
- *The Great Gatsby*, opera by John Harbison, libretto by Murray Horwitz

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version available
- large print edition available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

**THE AUTHOR**

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1896. During World War I, Fitzgerald was stationed in Montgomery, Alabama, where he met his future wife, Zelda. After *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald took nine years to finish his next novel, *Tender Is the Night* (1934). He died of a heart attack in Hollywood in 1940 and is buried in Rockville, Maryland.
A Lesson Before Dying
by Ernest J. Gaines

Set in Louisiana in the 1940s, Ernest J. Gaines’s *A Lesson Before Dying* (1993) transports the reader into the pre-Civil Rights-era South, where the divide between races was deeper than the Mississippi. Jefferson, a young uneducated black man, is sentenced to death for a white storekeeper’s murder. The teacher at a former plantation’s schoolhouse, Grant Wiggins, is asked to help Jefferson die with dignity. Though Grant desperately wants to escape the poverty and racism of the parish, he is rooted to the area by a sense of duty and cannot break away. Using evocative narration and pitch-perfect dialogue, Gaines treats his characters and the Louisiana countryside with honesty and understanding. The result is an evocative look at the brutality of racism and the power of compassion.

**THEMES:**
duty, education, family, human dignity, racism

**FILM ADAPTATION:**
- *A Lesson Before Dying* (1999, starring Don Cheadle, directed by Joseph Sargent)

**PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITY:**
- *A Lesson Before Dying*, theatrical adaptation by Romulus Linney

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version available
- large print edition available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“You have the chance of being bigger than anyone who has ever lived on this plantation or come from this little town. You can do it if you try.”
—From *A Lesson Before Dying*

**THE AUTHOR**
Ernest J. Gaines was born on a plantation in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana. At 15, he joined his mother and stepfather in Vallejo, California. The author of other acclaimed novels such as *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* (1971) and *A Gathering of Old Men* (1983), he is Professor Emeritus of Creative Writing at University of Louisiana at Lafayette and lives in Oscar, Louisiana. He received an NEA Literature Fellowship in 1968.
The Maltese Falcon
by Dashiell Hammett

Dashiell Hammett’s third novel, *The Maltese Falcon* (1930), fulfilled his stated ambition to elevate the detective novel to the status of literature. Hammett’s clean prose and sharp ear for dialogue produced a compulsively readable novel that is at once a thriller, a love story, and a dry, acerbic comedy. A tough, independent detective in San Francisco, Sam Spade gets hired under false pretenses by the beautiful and mysterious Brigid O’Shaughnessy. After his partner turns up dead, Spade’s personal moral code dictates that “when a man’s partner is killed he’s supposed to do something about it.” He soon realizes the death is linked to a group of shady characters seeking an elusive jeweled falcon statuette once owned by the legendary Knights of Malta. The quest for the falcon and the killer has enough twists and surprises to keep the reader turning the pages, chasing the truth.

**THEMES:**
greed, honor, justice, loyalty

**FILM ADAPTATIONS:**
• *The Maltese Falcon* (1931, starring Ricardo Cortez)
• *Satan Met a Lady* (1936, starring Bette Davis)
• *The Maltese Falcon* (1941, starring Humphrey Bogart; adapted and directed by John Huston)

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
• unabridged audio version available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

Reader’s Guide available in Spanish

“My clients are entitled to a decent amount of secrecy.... As far as I can see, my best chance of clearing myself of the trouble you’re trying to make for me is by bringing in the murderers—all tied up.”

—from *The Maltese Falcon*
If people bring so much courage to this world the world has to kill them to break them, so of course it kills them. The world breaks every one and afterward many are strong at the broken places.”

—from A Farewell to Arms

A Farewell to Arms
by Ernest Hemingway

Ernest Hemingway is the notorious tough guy of modern American letters, but it would be hard to find a more tender and rapturous love story than A Farewell to Arms (1929). It also would be hard to find a more harrowing American novel about World War I. The tragic love story between an American ambulance driver, Lieutenant Frederic Henry, and his English nurse, Catherine Barkley, takes place in Italy and Switzerland. Badly wounded at the front, Frederic finds himself bedridden in a Milan hospital, where he and Catherine fall deeply in love. While Frederic recovers from surgery and prepares to return to action, Catherine discovers that she is pregnant. Though the couple escapes the war, there are dangers that cannot be anticipated or avoided. The final chapter is one of the most famous, and heartbreaking, conclusions in modern literature.

THEMES:
courage, death, honor, liberation, love, war

FILM ADAPTATIONS:
• A Farewell to Arms (1932, starring Gary Cooper and Helen Hayes)
• A Farewell to Arms (1957, starring Rock Hudson and Jennifer Jones)

DOCUMENTARY FILM:
• Ernest Hemingway: Rivers to the Sea (PBS American Masters documentary)

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio version available
• large print edition available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

The Author
Born in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1899, Ernest Hemingway served, like his hero in A Farewell to Arms, as an ambulance driver in World War I, received a severe wound, and fell in love with one of his nurses. His other classic works include The Sun Also Rises (1926) and For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940). He died in Ketchum, Idaho, in 1961.
Their Eyes Were Watching God

by Zora Neale Hurston

Zora Neale Hurston’s 1937 novel chronicles Janie Crawford’s journey from her grandmother’s plantation shack, to marriage, to the Florida Everglades—until a tragedy brings her back home. From this vantage point, Janie narrates her life story to her best friend, satisfying the “oldest human longing—self-revelation.” Hurston’s conviction that black culture is valuable and unique comes through in Their Eyes Were Watching God via its harmonious blend of folklore and black idiom. In Janie Crawford, Hurston rejects the 19th- and 20th-century stereotypes for women and creates a protagonist who—though silenced for most of her life—ultimately finds her own voice.

THEMES:
finding one’s voice, folklore, racism, religion, sexism

FILM ADAPTATION:
• Their Eyes Were Watching God (2005, starring Halle Berry, adapted by Suzan-Lori Parks)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:
• Jump at the Sun, radio play by Kathleen McGhee-Andersen (produced by L.A. Theatre Works)
• Mule Bone, play by Hurston and Langston Hughes
• Zora, professionally staged adaptation through the American Place Theater’s Literature to Life program

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio version available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“The wind came back with triple fury, and put out the light for the last time….They seemed to be staring at the dark, but their eyes were watching God.”

— from Their Eyes Were Watching God

THE AUTHOR
Zora Neale Hurston was born in 1891 in Notasulga, Alabama. Her lifelong passion to record the many voices of her people informed her fiction and anthropology, including Mules and Men (1935), Their Eyes Were Watching God (1937), and her autobiography, Dust Tracks on a Road (1942). Hurston died in poverty and obscurity in 1960, years before her books came back into print.
Catherine Sloper, the steadfast heroine of *Washington Square*, craves love—from the father disappointed in her lack of good looks and intellect, from the aunt raising the motherless girl, and especially from her handsome suitor, Morris Townsend. Her father, refusing to believe his unremarkable daughter could attract Townsend with anything other than her wealth, forbids the match and threatens to disinherit her. Faced with choosing between obedience to her father and marrying the man she loves, Catherine accompanies her father on an extended trip to Europe but tries to maintain her relationship with Townsend. Though the novel was not commercially successful when published in 1880, it gained popularity as Henry James’s literary reputation grew and has become a much-loved classic whose themes of loyalty and love still resonate with readers.

**THEMES:**
dignity, fidelity, honor, love, obedience, social expectations

**FILM ADAPTATIONS:**
- *The Heiress* (1949, adapted from *Washington Square*, starring Olivia de Havilland)

**PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:**
- *The Heiress*, 1947 play adapted by Augustus and Ruth Goetz
- *Washington Square*, ballet set to music by Charles Ives, choreography by Rudolf Nureyev, adapted by Nureyev and Jean-Claude Carrière

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version available
- large print edition available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

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**“She grew up a very robust and healthy child, and her father, as he looked at her, often said to himself that, such as she was, he at least need have no fear of losing her.”**
—From *Washington Square*
To Kill a Mockingbird
by Harper Lee

Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird (1960) is the rare American novel that can be discovered with excitement in adolescence and reread into adulthood without fear of disappointment. Few novels so appealingly or convincingly evoke the daily world of childhood. Scout Finch, the novel’s narrator, and her brother, Jem, live in the small, rural town of Maycomb, Alabama, where they attempt to lure a reclusive neighbor, Boo Radley, out of his house. When the children’s father, the attorney Atticus Finch, agrees to defend a black man falsely accused of raping a white woman, his decision angers the townspeople and endangers his family. Tying the stories together are his simple but profound words, “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view. . . . Until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.” For many young people, this funny and humane novel becomes their first big read, the grown-up story against which all later books will be measured.

THEMES:
justice, literacy, poverty, racism, responsibility

FILM ADAPTATION:
• To Kill a Mockingbird (1962, starring Gregory Peck, adapted by Horton Foote)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:
• To Kill a Mockingbird, stage adaptation by Christopher Sergel
• To Kill a Mockingbird, film score by Elmer Bernstein

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio version available
• large print edition available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“The one thing that doesn’t abide by majority rule is a person’s conscience.”
—from To Kill a Mockingbird
A Wizard of Earthsea
by Ursula K. Le Guin

_A Wizard of Earthsea_ (1968)—the first book of Ursula K. Le Guin’s Earthsea series—originated at the request of Le Guin’s publisher. Intended as a fantasy story for ages 11 and up, Le Guin created a world that has fascinated both children and adults. Influenced by Norse myths and Native-American legends, _A Wizard of Earthsea_ is a coming-of-age fantasy adventure. The hero is a young boy, Ged, with magical talents and a hunger for greater knowledge and power. When Ged fights a forbidden duel, he inadvertently summons a spirit from the dead. An attack from this spirit almost kills him, and a nameless evil shadow is unleashed and wanders Earthsea. The novel traces Ged’s growth as a man and a wizard, as he learns that wisdom comes from humility, silence brings strength, and the most powerful magic derives from learning one’s true name.

**THEMES:**
adolescence, the interrelationship of good and evil, the power of language

**FILM ADAPTATION:**
- _Gedo Senki_ (2006, based on _Tales from Earthsea_, directed by Goro Miyazaki)

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version available
- large print edition available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

**THE AUTHOR**
Born in Berkeley, California, Ursula K. Le Guin has written novels, short stories, children’s books, and poetry. Other major works include novels _The Left Hand of Darkness_ (1969) and _The Lathe of Heaven_ (1971). Her many honors include a National Book Award, five Nebula Awards, and five Hugo Awards. She lives in Portland, Oregon.

“For magic consists in this, the true naming of a thing.”
—from _A Wizard of Earthsea_
The Call of the Wild
by Jack London

The hero of The Call of the Wild is Buck, a St. Bernard/Scotch Shepherd dog abducted from his comfortable home as a pet in Northern California. Sold as a sled dog, Buck learns “the law of club and fang.” He courageously survives cruelty—from both his trainers and the wilderness—and rises to become the leader of the sled team. Buck’s primordial instincts return as he endures hunger and fatigue, learns to scavenge for food, and fights with his rival. Set during the Klondike Gold Rush of 1897–98 in Canada’s Yukon territory and Alaska, The Call of the Wild was serialized in The Saturday Evening Post during the summer of 1903. Despite its frequent classification as juvenile fiction, generations of adults have found London’s portrayal of humans and animals unforgettable and their struggle for survival in a hostile environment moving.

THEMES:
civilization vs. instinct, nature vs. nurture, socialism vs. individualism

FILM ADAPTATIONS:
• The Call of the Wild (1935, starring Clark Gable)
• The Call of the Wild (1976, adapted by James Dickey)

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio version available
• large print edition available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

Reader’s Guide available in Spanish

“Deep in the forest a call was sounding, and as often as he heard this call, mysteriously thrilling and luring, he felt compelled to turn his back upon the fire, and to plunge into the forest.”
— from The Call of the Wild

The development of resource materials for The Call of the Wild was made possible, in part, by a grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation.
The Thief and the Dogs
by Naguib Mahfouz

Naguib Mahfouz’s *The Thief and the Dogs* (1961) is equal parts crime thriller, morality tale, and political allegory. The novel begins with career criminal Said Mahran’s release from prison. He immediately sets off to settle a score and reunite with his young daughter, Sana. Rejected and disillusioned, Said’s quest for vengeance carries readers from the banks of the Nile River, through the boulevards and back alleys of Cairo, to Bab al-Nasr, a medieval gateway on the outskirts of the city. Mahfouz’s first use of the stream-of-consciousness technique, the novel is a ground-breaking work that allows intimate access to the thoughts, emotions, and motivations of a man consumed by rage and hell-bent on self-destruction.

**THEMES:**
Arabic culture, freedom, reconciliation, redemption, spiritual enlightenment, worldly temptations

**FILM ADAPTATION:**
- *Chased by the Dogs* (1962 film adaptation of *The Thief and the Dogs*, directed by Kamal El Sheikh)

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“Leaving his hideout made him all the more conscious of being hunted. He now knew how mice and foxes feel, slipping away on the run. Alone in the dark, he could see the city’s lights glimmering in the distance, lying in wait for him.”
—*from The Thief and the Dogs*

**THE AUTHOR**
Naguib Mahfouz was born in Cairo, Egypt, in 1911. After graduating from college, Mahfouz entered the civil service, holding a variety of posts until his retirement. A prolific and internationally distinguished writer, in 1988 he became the first Arab author to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. That same year Mahfouz received the Order of the Nile, Egypt’s highest honor, from President Hosni Mubarak. Naguib Mahfouz died in 2006 at the age of 94.
The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter
by Carson McCullers

Carson McCullers’s The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter (1940) is set in a small Georgia mill town in the late 1930s. John Singer, a deaf man, rents a room in the Kelly house after his companion, Spiros Antonapoulos, is sent away to an asylum. The amiable Singer becomes confidant to four of the town’s misfits—Mick Kelly, a teenage girl who dreams of becoming a musician; Benedict Mady Copeland, the town’s black doctor; Jake Blount, an alcoholic socialist; and Biff Brannon, the owner of the local café. Over the course of a year, the characters find solace in Singer, who pines for his friend, Antonapoulos. This tragic, small-town drama is so ambitious in its scope—presenting five radically different characters whose troubled lives intersect in the Depression-era South—it is hard to believe that The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter was the first book of a 23-year-old writer.

THEMES:
communication, isolation, loneliness, loss, racism, suffering

FILM ADAPTATION:
• The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter (1968, starring Alan Arkin)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITY:
• Beethoven’s Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Op. 55 (Eroica) (which holds Mick Kelly spellbound in the novel)

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio version available
• large print edition available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“The town was in the middle of the deep South. The summers were long and the months of winter cold were very few. Nearly always the sky was a glassy, brilliant azure and the sun burned down riotously bright.”

—from The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter
The Things They Carried
by Tim O’Brien

Tim O’Brien’s *The Things They Carried* (1990) is considered one of the finest books written about the Vietnam War. Merging memoir and fiction in interrelated stories, O’Brien examines the war from a variety of perspectives to make sense of his platoon’s experience. A narrator named “Tim O’Brien” recounts the plight of an isolated unit as they dodge sniper fire and their own misgivings, all while lugging memories of home through the jungles. O’Brien then undercuts the stories by claiming they never happened—challenging the book’s powerful sense of autobiographical authority. O’Brien’s unique storytelling style gets at the truth of war by mapping the emotional landscape of a battlefield without a front. The resulting book is brutal, sometimes funny, and always profound, presenting a new way of writing about war.

**THEMES:**
courage, death, fear, memory, storytelling, truth, war

**FILM ADAPTATION:**
- *A Soldier’s Sweetheart* (1998, starring Kiefer Sutherland, adapted by Thomas Michael Donnelly from the story “Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong” by Tim O’Brien)

**PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITY:**
- *The Things They Carried*, professionally staged adaptation through the American Place Theater’s Literature to Life program

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“The thing about a story is that you dream it as you tell it, hoping that others might then dream along with you, and in this way memory and imagination and language combine to make spirits in the head.”
—from *The Things They Carried*

**THE AUTHOR**
Born in 1946 and raised in Worthington, Minnesota, Tim O’Brien was drafted in 1968 and served in Vietnam as an infantryman for the U.S. Army until 1970. *The Things They Carried* (1990) was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award. O’Brien’s other works include the National Book Award winner *Going After Cacciato* (1979) and *In the Lake of the Woods* (1994), named Best Novel of the Year by *Time* Magazine. He teaches creative writing at Texas State University.
The Shawl
by Cynthia Ozick

In the opening pages of Cynthia Ozick’s *The Shawl* (1989), Rosa Lublin is a prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp during World War II, “a place without pity” where she witnesses her young daughter’s murder. The rest of the book takes place 30 years later in Miami, where Rosa lives “among the elderly, in a dark hole, a single room.” Still traumatized by her past suffering, Rosa struggles to reclaim at least a portion of the life stolen from her while clinging tenaciously to a mother’s dreams for what her child might have become. Though Ozick examines the brutality of which man is capable, ultimately the book testifies to the resilience of the human spirit. Readers should not be fooled by the slimness of *The Shawl*. Ozick’s prose is both intensely poetic and emotionally unsettling. The book—actually a short story, “The Shawl,” followed by a related novella, “Rosa”—carries the impact of a work many times its length, and each story earned the coveted Best American Short Story and O. Henry awards.

**THEMES:**
discrimination, genocide, grief, loss, poverty, resilience

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version of *The Shawl* available
- unabridged audio version of the short story “The Shawl” available, read by Cynthia Ozick (part of *The Best American Short Stories of the Century*)
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“Blue digits on the arm, what difference? They don’t call you a woman anyhow. Survivor.”
― from *The Shawl*
The Stories and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe

The work of Edgar Allan Poe remains among the most innovative and original contributions to American poetry and fiction. Poe almost single-handedly shaped what were then only emerging genres of horror and science fiction, and he all but invented the detective story. From “The Tell-Tale Heart” to “The Fall of the House of Usher,” Poe’s mastery of psychology and suspense plunges the reader right into the action. What Walt Whitman called Poe’s “intense faculty for technical and abstract beauty” comes alive on every page. Combining stylistic virtuosity with a deep understanding of the darkness of the human heart, Poe’s stories and poems feel as alive today as they did more than 150 years ago.

THEMES:
crime, death, mystery, psychology, revenge, romance

FILM ADAPTATIONS:
• *The Fall of the House of Usher/The Pit and the Pendulum* (1960 DVD double feature, starring Vincent Price, directed by Roger Corman)
• *The Masque of the Red Death/The Premature Burial* (1964 DVD double feature, starring Vincent Price, directed by Roger Corman)

DOCUMENTARY FILM:
• *Edgar Allan Poe: Terror of the Soul* (1995, PBS American Masters series)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:
• Poetry Out Loud recitation competition of Edgar Allan Poe’s poetry, www.poetryoutloud.org
• *The Bells*, choral symphony by Sergei Rachmaninov
• *The Fall of the House of Usher*, opera by Philip Glass

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio versions available for selected works
• large print editions available for selected works
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing, Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before . . .

—from “The Raven”
Housekeeping
by Marilynne Robinson

Marilynne Robinson’s *Housekeeping* (1981) begins with a train wreck on a lonely lake during a moonless night. Because her grandfather died in the crash and her mother later drowned in the same lake, the novel’s narrator, Ruth, has grown up with her sister under the care of a succession of female family members. Set in the fictional Idaho town of Fingerbone, the story’s lake is a powerful presence in all their lives. *Housekeeping* examines each character with precision and clarity, revealing the complex relationships of individuals caught between familial responsibility and the wish for freedom.

**THEMES:**
abandonment, adoption, grieving, nontraditional families, small-town life

**FILM ADAPTATION:**
• *Housekeeping* (1987, adapted and directed by Bill Forsyth)

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
• unabridged audio version available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“To crave and to have are as like as a thing and its shadow . . . and when do our senses know any thing so utterly as when we lack it?”
—from *Housekeeping*
The Grapes of Wrath
by John Steinbeck

John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) is both a great novel and a catalyst for change in American history. Capturing the plight of millions of Americans impoverished by the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression, Steinbeck awakened the nation’s comprehension and compassion. The novel begins with young Tom Joad’s return home from prison to find his family’s Oklahoma farmstead in ruins. The Joads soon set out for a better life in California, only to find a plantation economy whose bounty makes no provision for them except as occasional day laborers. Written in an amazing five-month burst of productivity, *The Grapes of Wrath*’s creation stands testament to perhaps its greatest theme: the dignity of hard work, done by hand and beset by doubt, with all one has, and for others to share.

**THEMES:**
the American Dream, ecology, immigration, individuals vs. corporations, redemption, tolerance

**FILM ADAPTATION:**
- *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940, starring Henry Fonda, directed by John Ford)

**PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:**
- *The Grapes of Wrath*, stage adaptation by Frank Galati
- *The Grapes of Wrath*, opera by Ricky Ian Gordon, libretto by Michael Korie

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

Readers’ Guide available in Spanish

“The author

Born in the California Central Valley in 1902, John Steinbeck endured decades of enmity from his hometown for its depiction in the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Grapes of Wrath*. The 1962 memoir *Travels With Charley: In Search of America* freshened and deepened Steinbeck’s already wide readership. That same year, he won the Nobel Prize for literature. He died in Manhattan in 1968.

“On the highways the people moved like ants and searched for work, for food. And the anger began to ferment.”

—from *The Grapes of Wrath*
The Joy Luck Club
by Amy Tan

Amy Tan’s *The Joy Luck Club* (1989) is itself a joyful study in luck. Initially intended as a short-story collection, the novel is a mother-daughter saga written by a woman whose own mother wanted her to be anything but a writer. The novel features four pairs of mothers and daughters. One of these mothers, Suyuan Woo, invented the original “Joy Luck Club” in China, before the Japanese invaded the city of Kweilin. After Suyuan reaches America, she resurrects the club with three other Chinese immigrants, and the four reinvent themselves in San Francisco’s Chinatown. These four mothers hope the mix of “American circumstances with Chinese character” will give their California-born daughters better lives. Through the power of storytelling, all eight women struggle to connect despite the ghosts and secrets of the past.

**THEMES:**
- fate
- hope
- memories
- parent-child relationships
- sacrifice

**FILM ADAPTATION:**

**PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITY:**
- *The Joy Luck Club*, film score by Rachel Portman

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- abridged audio version available
- large print edition available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“They see that joy and luck do not mean the same to their daughters, that to these closed American-born minds ‘joy luck’ is not a word, it does not exist.”

—*from The Joy Luck Club*
The Death of Ivan Ilyich
by Leo Tolstoy

The 1886 novella *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* dramatizes Leo Tolstoy’s central spiritual concerns. Although Ivan Ilyich Golovin is a Russian judge and official, he is also a middle-class everyman whose eventual death results from a trivial accident while he’s hanging a curtain in his home. As his disease progresses, Ivan Ilyich recognizes the hypocrisy of his society and the insincerity of his family, and ultimately confesses the futility of his life. Surrounded by his wife, daughter, colleagues, and doctors, Ivan Ilyich feels even more isolated and alone. As his physical pain increases, so does Ivan Ilyich’s emotional awareness of a horrifying truth: he has not lived a meaningful life. The power of the novella stems from Tolstoy’s psychological insight, sharp satire, and sensory realism.

**THEMES:**
conformity, death, hypocrisy, mortality

**FILM ADAPTATIONS:**
• *Ikiru* (1952, inspired by *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, directed and co-written by Akira Kurosawa)
• *A Question of Faith* (1979, starring Harry Andrews)
• *Ivans xtc* (2000, starring Danny Huston)

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
• large print edition available

“Ivan Ilyich’s life had been most simple and most ordinary and therefore most terrible.”
—from *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*

THE AUTHOR
Count Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy (1828–1910) was orphaned at nine. He later joined the army and served in the Crimean War. Between 1863 and 1869 Tolstoy wrote *War and Peace*, his epic of France’s 1812 invasion of Russia. *Anna Karenina* (1875–77) followed, as did his preoccupation with early Christianity subtly present in *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (1886).
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

by Mark Twain

Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) is a story of a mischievous boy growing up before the Civil War in a small Mississippi River town. Twain’s first full-length novel brims with the exultation of a world-class sprinter finding out he can run marathons, too. What many people mistake for a children’s novel is really a natural introduction—or re-introduction—to the pleasures of literature, whatever a reader’s age. As Twain himself wrote in his preface, “Although my book is intended mainly for the entertainment of boys and girls, I hope it will not be shunned by men and women on that account, for part of my plan has been to try to pleasantly remind adults of what they once were themselves, and of how they felt and thought and talked, and what queer enterprises they sometimes engaged in.”

**THEMES:**
childhood, education, family, racism

**FILM ADAPTATION:**
- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1938, starring Walter Brennan)

**DOCUMENTARY FILMS:**
- *Mark Twain* (3-1/2 hours, two-part documentary from Ken Burns)
- *Mark Twain Tonight!* (starring Hal Holbrook)

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version available
- large print edition available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

*Reader’s Guide available in Spanish*

“Like it? Well I don’t see why I oughtn’t to like it. Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?”
—*from The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
The Age of Innocence
by Edith Wharton

Edith Wharton’s The Age of Innocence (1920) begins at the opera on a January evening in the 1870s. In the audience is Newland Archer, an affluent New York lawyer in his 30s, “sincerely yet placidly in love” with beautiful May Welland. Newland never questions that his fiancée will be the perfect wife until May’s cousin, Countess Ellen Olenska, returns home suddenly after many years in Europe. From the moment Ellen enters the opera, she shocks Old New York, but when she wants to divorce her Polish husband, she risks public disgrace. With time, Newland not only falls in love with Ellen—despite his impending wedding to May—but also begins to see the hypocrisy of his world. Will he follow the wishes of his family and convince Ellen to remain in an oppressive marriage? Or will he risk his own name and encourage her to seek a divorce?

THEMES:
conformity, desire, divorce, duty, marriage, temptation

FILM ADAPTATION:
• The Age of Innocence (1993, starring Daniel Day-Lewis and Michelle Pfeiffer, adapted by Jay Cocks, directed by Martin Scorsese)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITY:
• Faust by Charles Gounod (1859, the opera that begins and ends the novel)

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio version available
• large print edition available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)
Our Town

First produced in 1938, Our Town remains Thornton Wilder’s most enduring play. At the dawn of the twentieth century, the Stage Manager guides the audience through three days in Grover’s Corners, New Hampshire: an ordinary day, a wedding day, and a burial. In Act Three, Wilder positions the deceased characters on stage as spectators of life in Grover’s Corners. One character gets to re-experience a single day of her life on earth. Unable to alter or prolong the day, she finds once-inconsequential details now crushingly precious and painfully brief. Wilder’s enduring characters ask us to consider our lives—our towns—and the sanctity of each mundane, fleeting day.

**THEMES:**
family, love, marriage, mortality, preciousness of life

**FILM ADAPTATIONS:**
- *Our Town* (1940, adapted by Thornton Wilder, starring William Holden, original score by Aaron Copland)
- *Our Town* (2003, PBS Masterpiece Theater Collection, starring Paul Newman, directed by James Naughton)

**DOCUMENTARY FILMS:**

**PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:**
- *Our Town*, opera in two acts based on the play (2006, composed by Ned Rorem, libretto by J.D. McClatchy)
- *Our Town*, film score by Aaron Copland

**PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENT:**
- Staged production of *Our Town*

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- large print edition available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“Good-by, Good-by, world. Good-by, Grover’s Corners. . . . Oh, earth, you’re too wonderful for anybody to realize you.”

—from *Our Town*
The Bridge of San Luis Rey

Thornton Wilder’s Pulitzer Prize-winning second novel, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* (1927), is set in eighteenth-century Peru. The novel begins as the narrator recalls the tragic collapse of a rope bridge that claimed five victims. Questioning why those five people perished, a Franciscan missionary, Brother Juniper, investigates the victims’ lives—a pursuit that jeopardizes his own. Beneath the novel’s deceptively simple premise stirs an unruly, timeless human question: Does life have an assigned course beyond individual control?

**THEMES:**
chance, destiny, familial and romantic love, retribution

**FILM ADAPTATIONS:**
- *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* (1944, starring Alla Nazimova and Donald Woods, adapted by Howard Estabrook, directed by Rowland V. Lee)
- *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* (2005, starring Kathy Bates, Gabriel Byrne, and Robert De Niro, adapted and directed by Mary McGuckian)

**ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:**
- unabridged audio version available
- National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“There is a land of the living
and a land of the dead and the
bridge is love, the only survival,
the only meaning.”
—from *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*

**SPECIAL JOINT PROGRAM**
The Big Read communities that select Thornton Wilder will create programming around both *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* and *Our Town*, including a production of *Our Town* performed by a local school drama department, community theater, or professional theater company.
Old School
by Tobias Wolff

In Tobias Wolff’s Old School (2003), the characters talk and think about literature as if their lives depend upon it. Wolff’s narrator, a secretly half-Jewish scholarship student from the Northwest, is nearing graduation at a classy all-boy prep school during the Kennedy era. The first three sections of the novel take the form of campus visits by the poet Robert Frost, the writer Ayn Rand, and novelist Ernest Hemingway, whose anticipated arrival drives Wolff’s hero-worshipping narrator to an act of desperation. The fourth section comes decades later as the adult narrator reckons with his earlier conduct while visiting the school as a guest writer himself. Old School examines the price of sacrificing integrity and the powerful allure of artistic fame.

THEMES:
education, fame, honor, integrity, plagiarism, truth

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITY:
• Poetry Out Loud recitation contest of Robert Frost’s poetry, www.poetryoutloud.org

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio version available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“Make no mistake, he said: a true piece of writing is a dangerous thing. It can change your life.”
—from Old School
Sun, Stone, and Shadows
20 Great Mexican Short Stories

Edited by Jorge F. Hernández

*Sun, Stone, and Shadows: 20 Great Mexican Short Stories* has the distinction of being the first book created expressly for The Big Read. Its stories, selected with U.S. readers in mind, represent a remarkable array of Mexico’s rich and vibrant literary history. This collection includes 20 tales of extraordinary quality, written by the finest Mexican authors born during the first half of the twentieth century—among them Rosario Castellanos, Carlos Fuentes, Octavio Paz, and Juan Rulfo. Through these pages, readers will tour the literary, historic, and geographic landscape of Mexico. *Sun, Stone, and Shadows* is a catalyst for cultural understanding and conversation between the people of Mexico and the United States.

**THEMES:**
Mexican culture, revolution, social justice, spirituality, surrealism

**FILMS RELATED TO MEXICAN AUTHORS OR CULTURE:**
- *Los Olvidados* (1950, written and directed by Luis Buñuel)
- *Viva Zapata!* (1952, starring Marlon Brando, written by John Steinbeck, directed by Elia Kazan)
- *Pedro Páramo* (1967, co-adapted by Carlos Fuentes from Juan Rulfo’s novel)
- *Old Gringo* (1989, adapted from Carlos Fuentes’s novel, *The Old Gringo*, directed by Luis Puenzo)

**PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:**
- Music by Mexican composers such as Carlos Chávez (1899–1978), Blas Galindo (1910–1993), José Pablo Moncayo (1912–1958), and Silvestre Revueltas (1899–1940)
- *Danzón No. 2*, referred to as the second Mexican national anthem, composed by Arturo Márquez (b. 1950)
- *Rappaccini’s Daughter*, composed by Daniel Catan, libretto by Juan Tover, based on a story by Nathaniel Hawthorne as retold by Octavio Paz

*The anthology, Sun, Stone, and Shadows, and Audio, Reader’s, and Teacher’s Guides available in English and Spanish*

**ANTHOLOGY WRITERS**
Inés Arredondo, Juan José Arreola, Juan de la Cabada, Rosario Castellanos, Salvador Elizondo, Carlos Fuentes, Elena Garro, Francisco Rojas González, Martín Luis Guzmán, Efrén Hernández, Jorge Ibargüengoitia, José Emilio Pacheco, Octavio Paz, Sergio Pitol, Juan García Ponce, José Revueltas, Alfonso Reyes, Juan Rulfo, Francisco Tario, and Edmundo Valadés

“This collection presents a dignified enclave of the best writers and tales of Mexico, whose translation into other languages will develop into a faithful photograph (whether in black and white, or color) of Mexico’s varied faces, its flavors and colors . . .”

—Jorge F. Hernández from *Sun, Stone, and Shadows*
In 2007, the National Endowment for the Arts created American Literary Landmarks, a new component of The Big Read, to celebrate great American poets and the nation’s historic poetry sites. In partnership with the Poetry Foundation, the NEA provided these sites with educational and promotional materials similar to those created for the national Big Read program, as well as grants to support programming. This pilot initiative originally featured two poets: Robinson Jeffers and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The pilot also will include the poet Emily Dickinson.

**ROBINSON JEFFERS**
The Big Read: The Poetry of Robinson Jeffers celebrated the poet and Tor House, Jeffers’s family home in Carmel, California. In 2008, three central California organizations received grants to host a range of activities about Jeffers’s life and work.

The Robinson Jeffers Tor House Foundation received a grant to support a month-long celebration of Jeffers throughout Monterey County. The National Steinbeck Center received a grant to support an exhibition showcasing Jeffers’s poetry. Also included in the center’s programming was a visit by Pablo Soler Frost, a Mexican writer and the translator of Jeffers’s poetry. A third grant went to the University of California, Santa Cruz, to host a symposium on the work of Jeffers featuring a staged reading of Jeffers’s adaptation of Medea, and readings by award-winning poets, including Adrienne Rich, Li-Young Lee, Gary Young, and Mark Jarman.

**HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW**
The Big Read: The Poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow launched in September 2007 with a grant to Longfellow’s Wayside Inn in Sudbury, Massachusetts, to support a community-wide program. Educational materials were also provided to two additional Longfellow historic sites: the Craigie-Longfellow House (Cambridge, Massachusetts) and the Wadsworth-Longfellow House (Portland, Maine).

**AMERICAN LITERARY LANDMARKS: 2009–2010 PROGRAMMING**
Beginning with 2009-2010 programming, interested organizations nationwide can apply to host a Big Read program featuring one of three poets: Dickinson, Jeffers, or Longfellow. In addition to receiving a grant to support programming, one of the major benefits of The Big Read for community organizations is the availability of high-quality educational and promotional materials provided at no cost. The American Literary Landmarks educational and promotional materials are made possible through the generous support of the Poetry Foundation.

To learn more about American Literary Landmarks, including current application guidelines and featured poems, visit [www.NEABigRead.org](http://www.NEABigRead.org).
The Poetry of Emily Dickinson

Emily Dickinson’s concise, powerful poems astutely examine pain, grief, joy, love, nature, and art. Over the course of her life, she wrote 1,789 poems, formally publishing only seven. Instead, Dickinson’s work was kept largely private, with the exception of sending her writing to trusted friends or confidants such as Thomas Wentworth Higginson. Dickinson lived most of her life at her family home in Amherst, Massachusetts, where she devoted herself to her garden and her poetry. She became increasingly reclusive during the last 25 years of her life. After her death, Dickinson’s younger sister, Lavinia, rescued the poems from her sister’s private chest and fought to get the poems published. Emily Dickinson is now widely admired as one of America’s most original and important poets.

THEMES:
dead, hope, inspiration, longing, love, nature, religion

FILM ADAPTATION:
• The Belle of Amherst (1976, starring Julie Harris, based on a play by William Luce)

DOCUMENTARY FILMS:
• Loaded Gun: Life, and Death, and Dickinson (2008, a PBS documentary)
• Emily Dickinson: A Certain Slant of Light (2006)
• Great Women Writers: Emily Dickinson (2000)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:
• Come Slowly, Eden: A Portrait of Emily Dickinson, a play by Norman Rosten
• 12 Poems of Emily Dickinson, a song cycle by Aaron Copland

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio versions available
• large print editions available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“Hope’ is the thing with feathers—
That perches in the soul—
And sings the tune without the words—
And never stops—at all—”
—from “Hope’ is the thing with feathers—”

Emily Dickinson lived with her family at the Homestead in Amherst, MA.
The Poetry of Robinson Jeffers

The poetry of Robinson Jeffers is emotionally direct, magnificently musical, and philosophically profound. Determined to write truthful poetry purged of ephemeral things, Jeffers cultivated a style at once lyrical, tough-minded, and timeless, while scarcely stirring from his beloved home, Tor House in Carmel, California. Living on the edge of the Pacific, he found wisdom, strength, and perspective from observing the forces of nature around him. Once shunned for his unpopular political views and harsh critiques of mankind’s egotism, Jeffers has regained popularity in recent years as environmentalism’s most forceful poet-advocate. Featured on the cover of Time magazine in 1932, Jeffers’s major works include the Roan Stallion, Tamar and Other Poems (1925), The Women at Point Sur (1927), and a 1946 adaptation of the Greek drama Medea.

THEMES:
animals, environment, man’s relationship to the earth, respect for nature

DOCUMENTARY FILM:
• Place for No Story (1973, KQED public television documentary)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:
• Medea, a play by Jeffers (1946)
• Medea, an opera by Alva Henderson based on Jeffers’s play
• “The Beaks of Eagles” by the Beach Boys from their album Holland (1973)

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“One light is left us: the beauty of things, not men; The immense beauty of the world, not the human world. Look—and without imagination, desire nor dream—directly At the mountains and sea. Are they not beautiful?”

—from “De Rerum Virtute”
The Poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was not only a major American poet, but he was also one of the most influential figures in our national cultural history. His work commanded a readership that is almost unimaginable today, even for best-selling novels. In unforgettable poetic language that appealed to millions of readers across all classes, Longfellow helped create many of the songs, stories, characters, and images by which the young United States knew itself. Longfellow’s greatest gifts were best suited to more public poetry—forceful clarity, evocative simplicity, emotional directness, and a genius for memorable (indeed often unforgettable) phrasing.

THEMES:
grief, love, memory, patriotism, the Revolutionary War, slavery, storytelling

FILM ADAPTATIONS:
• The Village Blacksmith (1922, directed by John Ford)
• Evangeline (1929, starring Dolores del Rio)
• Hiawatha (1952, starring Vince Edwards)

PERFORMANCE POSSIBILITIES:
• Music by Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904), the Bohemian composer whose Symphony No. 9 (“From the New World”) includes two movements inspired by Longfellow’s The Song of Hiawatha
• Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s “Hiawatha’s Wedding Feast,” a cantata
• “The Children’s Hour,” composed by Charles Ives, choreographed as a ballet by Jerome Robbins

ACCESSIBILITY MATERIALS:
• unabridged audio versions available for selected works
• large print editions available
• National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) resources available (www.loc.gov/nls/)

“Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time . . .”
— from “A Psalm of Life”

THE POET

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born on February 27, 1807, in Portland, Maine. Although his father wanted him to become a lawyer, Longfellow eventually became a professor of modern languages at Harvard. Tragically losing his first wife to miscarriage and his second wife to a fire, Longfellow raised his six children in his house in Cambridge, Massachusetts. His books of poetry and translations brought him popularity and fame during his lifetime, and he died at his home on March 24, 1882.
Through June 2009:

- More than 500 Big Read grants have been awarded to more than 360 different cities across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.
- More than 21,000 partner organizations have supported Big Read grantees.
- More than two million people have attended more than 17,800 Big Read events nationwide.
- Statewide Big Reads have been held in eight states (Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Montana, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Wyoming) as well as in the U.S. Virgin Islands.
Cities and States Hosting Big Read Programs

**MIDWESTERN REGION**
144 Big Read grants

**SOUTHERN REGION**
178 Big Read grants

**NORTHEASTERN REGION**
95 Big Read grants

**PUERTO RICO/VIRGIN ISLANDS**
3 Big Read grants
## The Big Read Grantees, 2006–2009

### Alabama
- Auburn University
  - Auburn, AL
- Gadsden Cultural Arts Foundation
  - Gadsden, AL
- Huntsville-Madison County Public Library
  - Huntsville, AL
- Jefferson County Library Cooperative
  - Birmingham, AL
- Ozark-Dale County Public Library
  - Ozark, AL

### Alaska
- Anchorage Public Library
  - Anchorage, AK
- Kachemak Bay Campus-Kenai Peninsula College-University of Alaska Anchorage
  - Homer, AK
- Sheldon Museum & Cultural Center
  - Haines, AK

### Arizona
- Phoenix Public Library Foundation
  - Phoenix, AZ
- Safford City – Graham County Library
  - Safford, AZ
- West Valley Arts Council
  - Avondale, AZ

### Arkansas
- Arkansas Center for the Book
  - Little Rock, AR
  - (statewide)
- Fayetteville Public Library
  - Fayetteville, AR
- Ozarka College
  - Melbourne, AR

### California
- Bakersfield Museum of Art
  - Bakersfield, CA
- Berkeley Public Library
  - Berkeley, CA
- Black Storytellers of San Diego
  - Chula Vista, CA
- Cal Poly Pomona Foundation
  - Pomona, CA
- California State University East Bay Foundation
  - Oakland, CA
- City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs
  - Los Angeles, CA
- City of Ventura Cultural Affairs Division
  - Ventura, CA
- Contra Costa County Library
  - Pleasant Hill, CA
- Corona Public Library
  - Corona, CA
- County of Los Angeles Public Library – East Los Angeles
  - Los Angeles, CA
- County of Los Angeles Public Library – Norwalk
  - Norwalk, CA
- County of Los Angeles Public Library – Santa Clarita
  - Santa Clarita, CA
- County of Los Angeles Public Library – South Gate
  - South Gate, CA
- Fresno County Public Library
  - Fresno, CA
- Friends of the Encinitas Library
  - Encinitas, CA
- Hayward Public Library
  - Hayward, CA
- The Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery
  - San Marino, CA
- Los Medanos College
  - Pittsburg, CA
- Mono County Libraries
  - Mammoth Lakes, CA
- Montalvo Arts Center
  - Saratoga, CA
- National Steinbeck Center
  - Salinas, CA
- Orange County Public Library
  - Santa Ana, CA
- PEN Center USA
  - Culver City, CA
- Peninsula Library System
  - San Mateo, CA
- Pleasanton Public Library
  - Pleasanton, CA
- Rancho Cucamonga Public Library Services
  - Rancho Cucamonga, CA
- Riverside Arts Council
  - Riverside, CA
- Robinson Jeffers Tor House Foundation
  - Carmel, CA
- Roseville Public Library
  - Roseville, CA
- Rural California Broadcasting Corporation/KRCB
  - Rohnert Park, CA
- Shasta Public Libraries
  - Redding, CA
- Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library
  - Stockton, CA
- University of California, Santa Cruz
  - Santa Cruz, CA
- University of Redlands
  - Redlands, CA
- Will & Company
  - Los Angeles, CA

### Colorado
- Adams State College
  - Alamosa, CO
- Arapahoe Library Friends Foundation
  - Englewood, CO
- Aspen Writers’ Foundation
  - Aspen, CO
- Aurora Public Library
  - Aurora, CO
- Delta County Public Library District
  - Paonia, CO
- Garfield County Public Library District
  - Rifle, CO
- Pueblo City-County Library District
  - Pueblo, CO
- El Centro Su Teatro
  - Denver, CO
- Weld Library District
  - Greeley, CO

### Connecticut
- The City of Norwalk
  - Norwalk, CT
- Hartford Public Library
  - Hartford, CT
- New Britain Museum of American Art
  - New Britain, CT
- Norwalk Public Library
  - Norwalk, CT
- Silas Bronson Library
  - Waterbury, CT
- The City of Bridgeport
  - Bridgeport, CT
- The Mattatuck Historical Society
  - Waterbury, CT
The New Haven International Festival of Arts & Ideas
New Haven, CT

DELAWARE
Delaware Division of Libraries
Dover, DE
(statewide)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Humanities Council of Washington, DC
Washington, DC

FLORIDA
Alachua County Library District
Gainesville, FL

Brevard County Libraries
Cocoa, FL

Communities in Schools of Putnam County
Palatka, FL

Daytona Beach Community College/DBCC Public Broadcasting
Daytona Beach, FL

Florida Center for the Book – Broward Public Library Foundation
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Florida Center for the Literary Arts at Miami Dade College
Miami, FL

Hendry County Library Cooperative
Clewiston, FL

Jacksonville Public Library Foundation
Jacksonville, FL

LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System
Tallahassee, FL

Marion County Public Library System
Ocala, FL

Orange County Library System
Orlando, FL

Pinellas Public Library Cooperative
Clearwater, FL

Suwannee River Regional Library
Live Oak, FL

Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative
Tampa, FL

West Florida Literary Federation
Pensacola, FL

Young Performing Artists
Wildwood, FL

GEORGIA
Armstrong Atlantic State University
Savannah, GA

Cherokee Regional Library System
LaFayette, GA

Cultural Arts Council of Douglasville/Douglas County
Douglasville, GA

Georgia College & State University
Milledgeville, GA

Golden Isles Arts and Humanities Association
Brunswick, GA

The Literary Center at the Margaret Mitchell House & Museum
Atlanta, GA

Live Oak Public Libraries
Savannah, GA

Muscogee County Friends of Libraries
Columbus, GA

National Black Arts Festival
Atlanta, GA

Savannah State University
Savannah, GA

Towne Lake Arts Center Woodstock, GA

University of Georgia/UGA Libraries
Athens, GA

Valdosta State University, Odum Library
Valdosta, GA

HAWAII
Hawai’i Capital Cultural District
Honolulu, HI
(statewide)

IDAHO
Madison Library District
Rexburg, ID

Marshall Public Library
Pocatello, ID

The Cabin
Boise, ID

ILLINOIS
Acorn Public Library District
Oak Forest, IL

Aurora Public Library
Aurora, IL

Bartlett Public Library District
Bartlett, IL

Beverly Arts Center
Chicago, IL

Champaign Public Library
Champaign, IL

Columbia College Chicago
Chicago, IL

Cook Memorial Public Library District
Libertyville, IL

Danville Area Community College
Danville, IL

DeKalb Public Library
DeKalb, IL

Fremont Public Library District
Mundelein, IL

Galesburg Public Library
Galesburg, IL

Illinois State Library
Springfield, IL

Oak Park Public Library
Oak Park, IL

Orland Park Public Library
Orland Park, IL

Peoria Public Library
Peoria, IL

Quad City Arts
Rock Island, IL

Rend Lake College
Ina, IL

Sandburg Days Festival
Galesburg, IL

Spoon River College Foundation
Canton, IL

Sterling Public Library
Sterling, IL

University of Illinois, Board of Trustees
Urbana, IL

INDIANA
Bloomington Area Arts Council
Bloomington, IN

Columbus Area Arts Council
Columbus, IN

Community Foundation of Morgan County
Mooresville, IN

Frankfort Community Public Library
Frankfort, IN
The Big Read Grantees, 2006–2009, continued

Harrison County Public Library
Corydon, IN

Jackson County Public Library
Seymour, IN

Kosciusko Literacy Services
Warsaw, IN

Muncie Public Library
Muncie, IN

New Castle-Henry County Public Library
New Castle, IN

TerraFirma
Auburn, IN

Vigo County Public Library
Terre Haute, IN

**IOWA**

African American Heritage Foundation
Cedar Rapids, IA

Ames Public Library
Ames, IA

Carnegie – Stout Public Library
Dubuque, IA

Hometown Perry, Iowa
Perry, IA

Perry Public Library
Perry, IA

Sioux City Public Library
Sioux City, IA

State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Department of Cultural Affairs
Des Moines, IA

Waukee Public Library
Waukee, IA

**KANSAS**

Bowlus Fine Arts Center
Iola, KS

Friends of the Dorothy Bramlage Public Library
Junction City, KS

Johnson County Library
Overland Park, KS

Johnson County Library
Shawnee Mission, KS

Kansas City, Kansas Public Library
Kansas City, KS

Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library
Topeka, KS

Wichita Public Library Foundation
Wichita, KS

**KENTUCKY**

Gateway Community and Technical College
Park Hills, KY

Kentucky Gateway Museum Center
Maysville, KY

Kentucky State University
Frankfort, KY

The Louisville Free Public Library Foundation
Louisville, KY

Olive Hill Adult Learning Center
Olive Hill, KY

Owensboro Community and Technical College
Owensboro, KY

Western Kentucky University Foundation
Bowling Green, KY

Williamsburg Action Team
Williamsburg, KY

**LOUISIANA**

East Baton Rouge Parish Library
Baton Rouge, LA

Houma Regional Arts Council
Houma, LA

Performing Arts Society of Acadiana
Lafayette, LA

Pirate’s Alley Faulkner Society
New Orleans, LA

Southern Food and Beverage Museum Foundation
New Orleans, LA

**MAINE**

Auburn Public Library
Auburn, ME

Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance
Portland, ME

Patten Free Library
Bath, ME

Victoria Mansion
Portland, ME

**MARYLAND**

Annapolis Charter 300 Committee
Annapolis, MD

College of Southern Maryland
La Plata, MD

Community Foundation of Washington County, MD
Hagerstown, MD

Harbel Community Organization
Baltimore, MD

MPT Foundation
Owings Mills, MD

Towson University
Towson, MD

Worcester County Library
Snow Hill, MD

**MASSACHUSETTS**

Amherst College and the Emily Dickinson Museum
Amherst, MA

Attleboro Public Library
Attleboro, MA

Longfellow’s Wayside Inn
Sudbury, MA

Pittsfield – Office of Cultural Development
Pittsfield, MA

Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association
Deerfield, MA

Shrewsbury Public Library
Shrewsbury, MA

UMass Memorial Health Care
Worcester, MA

University of Massachusetts Boston
Boston, MA

**MICHIGAN**

Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services
Dearborn, MI

Cromaine District Library
Hartland, MI

Detroit Public Library
Detroit, MI

Escanaba Public Library
Escanaba, MI

Genesee District Library
Flint, MI

Grand Rapids Public Library
Grand Rapids, MI

Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Suttons Bay, MI

Ironwood Carnegie Library
Ironwood, MI

Jackson Community College
Jackson, MI

Jackson District Library
Jackson, MI

Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Harbor Springs, MI
The Foundation at Monroe County Community College
Monroe, MI
Wayne-Metropolitan Community Action Agency
Wyandotte, MI
West Shore Community College
Scottville, MI

MINNESOTA
A Center for the Arts
Fergus Falls, MN
Carlton County Historical Society
Cloquet, MN
The Givens Foundation for African American Literature
Minneapolis, MN
Grand Rapids Area Library
Grand Rapids, MN
The Loft Literary Center
Minneapolis, MN
Marshall – Lyon County Library
Marshall, MN
St. Cloud State University, College of Education
St. Cloud, MN

MISSISSIPPI
College of Education, Mississippi Valley State University
Itta Bena, MS
DeSoto Arts Council
Hernando, MS
MS Gulf Coast Community College – Jefferson Davis Campus
Gulfport, MS
Starkville Reads
Starkville, MS
University of Southern Mississippi Department of English
Hattiesburg, MS

MISSOURI
Allied Arts Council of St. Joseph, MO
St. Joseph, MO
Foundry Art Centre
St. Charles, MO
Juanita K. Hammons Hall for the Performing Arts
Springfield, MO
Park University
Parkville, MO
Washington University in St. Louis
St. Louis, MO
West Plains Council on the Arts
West Plains, MO

MONTANA
Flathead County Library System
Kalispell, MT
Lewis & Clark Library
Helena, MT
Lincoln County Public Libraries
Libby, MT
Montana Historical Society
Helena, MT
(statewide)

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Center for the Book at the New Hampshire State Library
Concord, NH
Northeast Cultural Coop
Amherst, NH
Strawberry Banke Museum
Portsmouth, NH

NEW JERSEY
Burlington County Council, Boy Scouts of America
Rancocas, NJ
Caldwell Public Library
Caldwell, NJ
Jersey City Free Public Library
Jersey City, NJ
The Parsippany – Troy Hills Public Library System
Parsippany, NJ
United Way of Salem County
Salem, NJ

NEW MEXICO
Bernalillo County
Albuquerque, NM
Friends of the Public Library of Silver City
Silver City, NM
Georgia O’Keeffe Museum
Santa Fe, NM
High Plains Writing Project
Roswell, NM
Regents of New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, NM
The Santa Fe Opera
Santa Fe, NM

NEW YORK
African Voices Communications
New York, NY
Bronx Council on the Arts
Bronx, NY
Brooklyn Public Library
Brooklyn, NY
Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
Buffalo, NY
Columbia University in the City of New York
New York, NY
Dormann Library
Bath, NY
Foothills Performing Arts Center
Oneonta, NY
Heermance Memorial Library
Coxsackie, NY
Hudson Area Association Library
Hudson, NY
Just Buffalo Literary Center
Buffalo, NY
The Big Read Grantees, 2006–2009, continued

Long Island Arts Council at Freeport
Freeport, NY

Long Island Traditions
Port Washington, NY

The Mercantile Library Center for Fiction
New York, NY

Monroe County Library System
Rochester, NY

Orange Library Association
Florida, NY

Poughkeepsie Public Library District
Poughkeepsie, NY

Research Foundation of SUNY on behalf of SUNY Cortland
Cortland, NY

Research Foundation of SUNY on behalf of SUNY Fredonia, Reed Library
Fredonia, NY

Research Foundation of SUNY on behalf of SUNY New Paltz
New Paltz, NY

Society for the Preservation of Weeksville and Bedford Stuyvesant
Brooklyn, NY

Southeast Steuben County Library
Corning, NY

Upper Hudson Library System
Albany, NY

Westchester Arts Council
White Plains, NY

Wood Library Association
Canandaigua, NY

Writers & Books
Rochester, NY

NORTH CAROLINA
A-B Tech Community College Foundation for Together We Read
Asheville, NC

Bennett College for Women
Greensboro, NC

Caldwell County Public Library
Lenoir, NC

Foryth County Public Library
Winston-Salem, NC

Friends of the Cumberland County Public Library and Information Center
Fayetteville, NC

Iredell Friends of the Library
Statesville, NC

Johnston County Arts Council
Clayton, NC

Lenoir Community College
Kinston, NC

Livingstone College
Salisbury, NC

Montgomery Community College
Troy, NC

Pasquotank-Camden Library
Elizabeth City, NC

Piedmont Community College
Roeboro, NC

Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County
Charlotte, NC

Rowan Public Library
Salisbury, NC

Rutherford County Arts Council
Forest City, NC

Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History
Chapel Hill, NC

The Craven–Pamlico–Carteret Regional Library
New Bern, NC

NORTH DAKOTA
Dakota Prairie Regional Center for the Arts
New Rockford, ND

Shakespeare Club–Lake Region Library
Devils Lake, ND

The Jamestown Arts Center
Jamestown, ND

Turtle Mountain Community College
Belcourt, ND

OHIO
Center for Environmental Education, Natural History, and Conservation
Oxford, OH

Cuyahoga County Public Library
Parma, OH

Delaware County District Library
Delaware, OH

Greater Columbus Arts Council
Columbus, OH

Hiram College
Hiram, OH

Massillon Museum
Massillon, OH

Newark Public Library
Newark, OH

Northwest State Community College
Archbold, OH

Sandusky Library
Sandusky, OH

Southern Ohio Performing Arts Association
Portsmouth, OH

Southern State Community College Library
Sardina, OH

Toledo–Lucas County Public Library
Toledo, OH

Young Audiences of Northeast Ohio
Cleveland, OH

OKLAHOMA
Lawton Public Library
Lawton, OK

The Pioneer Library System
Norman, OK

Rose State College
Midwest City, OK

Stillwater Public Library
Stillwater, OK

OREGON
Fishtrap
Enterprise, OR

Friends of the St. Helens Public Library
St. Helens, OR

Libraries of Eastern Oregon
Fossil, OR

Oregon Alliance for Arts Education
Salem, OR

Woodburn Public Library
Woodburn, OR

Pennsylvania
Altoona Area Public Library
Altoona, PA

American Readers Theater
Shohola, PA

Arts Council of Erie
Erie, PA

August Wilson Center for African American Culture
Pittsburgh, PA
Easton Area Public Library
Easton, PA

Ephrata Public Library
Ephrata, PA

Franklin Public Library
Franklin, PA

Jump Street
Harrisburg, PA

Kittanning Public Library
Kittanning, PA

Lansdowne Public Library
Lansdowne, PA

Lycoming County Library System
Williamsport, PA

Montgomery County Community College Foundation
Blue Bell, PA

Scranton Public Library
Scranton, PA

Susquehanna County Literacy Program
Montrose, PA

**PUERTO RICO**

Museo de Arte de Ponce
Ponce, PR

**RHODE ISLAND**

Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Warwick, RI (statewide)

West Bay Collaborative
Warwick, RI

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

Anderson County Arts Center
Anderson, SC

Benedict College
Columbia, SC

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

Dakota Wesleyan University
Mitchell, SD

South Dakota Center for the Book
Brookings, SD

South Dakota Humanities Council
Brookings, SD

**TENNESSEE**

Adventure Science Center
Nashville, TN

The City of Franklin
Franklin, TN

Dixie Carter Performing Arts Center
Huntingdon, TN

E.G. Fisher Public Library
Athens, TN

Rhodes College
Memphis, TN

South Central Tennessee Workforce Alliance
Columbia, TN

YWCA Knoxville
Knoxville, TN

**TEXAS**

Communities in Schools Southeast Texas
Beaumont, TX

El Paso Public Library
El Paso, TX

Friends of Corpus Christi Public Libraries
Corpus Christi, TX

Friends of Marfa Public Library
Marfa, TX

Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce/Community Development Foundation
Waco, TX

Harris County Public Library
Houston, TX

Houston Library Board
Houston, TX

Huntsville Public Library
Huntsville, TX

Irving Public Library
Irving, TX

Latino Cultural Center, a division of the Office of Cultural Affairs, City of Dallas
Dallas, TX

Mesquite Arts Center
Mesquite, TX

Northeast Lakeview College
Live Oak, TX

San Antonio Public Library Foundation
San Antonio, TX

Texas A & M University Kingsville
Kingsville, TX

University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College
Brownsville, TX

University of Texas – Pan American
Edinburg, TX

Weatherford College
Weatherford, TX

Wiley College
Marshall, TX

**UTAH**

Cedar City Public Library
Cedar City, UT

Friends of Salt Lake City Public Library
Salt Lake City, UT

Orem Public Library
Orem, UT

Utah Arts Council
Salt Lake City, UT

**VERMONT**

Vermont Arts Council
Montpelier, VT (statewide)

**VIRGIN ISLANDS**

Virgin Islands Council on the Arts
St. Thomas, VI (statewide)

**VIRGINIA**

Amazement Square
Lynchburg, VA

Arlington Cultural Affairs Division
Arlington, VA

Barter Theatre
Abingdon, VA

The Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge
Staunton, VA

Hampton University
Hampton, VA

Lonesome Pine Regional Library
Wise, VA

Newport News Public Library System
Newport News, VA

Pamunkey Regional Library
Hanover, VA

Piedmont Arts Association
Martinsville, VA
The Big Read Grantees, 2006–2009, continued

Regent University Library
Virginia Beach, VA

Rockingham Library Association
Harrisonburg, VA

Virginia Foundation for the Humanities
Charlottesville, VA (statewide)

WASHINGTON
Bainbridge Public Library
Bainbridge Island, WA

King County Library System Foundation
Issaquah, WA

North Central Regional Library
Wenatchee, WA

Pat Graney Company
Seattle, WA

Sno-Isle Libraries
Marysville, WA

Spokane Public Library
Spokane, WA

Timberland Regional Library, Hoquiam
Hoquiam, WA

Timberland Regional Library, Tumwater
Tumwater, WA

Yakima Valley Libraries
Yakima, WA

WEST VIRGINIA
ArtsLink
New Martinsville, WV

Martinsburg-Berkeley County Public Libraries
Martinsburg, WV

WISCONSIN
Amery Public Library
Amery, WI

Irvin L. Young Auditorium
Whitewater, WI

Marathon County Public Library
Wausau, WI

Mead Public Library
Sheboygan, WI

Menomonie Public Library
Menomonie, WI

Milwaukee Public Library
Milwaukee, WI

Peninsula Players Theatre Foundation
Fish Creek, WI

St. Croix Falls Public Library/Festival Theatre
St. Croix Falls, WI

University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire Center for Service-Learning
Eau Claire, WI

University of Wisconsin-Richland Library
Richland Center, WI

Waukesha Public Library
Waukesha, WI

WYOMING
The Wyoming Center for the Book
Cheyenne, WY (statewide)
“The concept combines local leadership with national-caliber materials. . . . [Chairman] Gioia likes to cite the example of librarian Marie Pyko of Topeka, Kansas, whose Big Read efforts around Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God* had the participation of beauty salons, churches, and blogging students. What the NEA puts into the effort is the promotional and educational power. . . . There are guidebooks for readers and teachers for the books selected by the NEA’s team of 22 independent literary experts and specialists.”

—CNN, June 2006

“Industries and governors have complained that Americans are reading less just when today’s jobs call for people who read better. The National Endowment for the Arts, which organized the Big Read projects, believes that people who read more will make better citizens.”

—Washington Post, March 2006
A Great Nation Deserves Great Art.

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