

Nineteenth Century Reading List


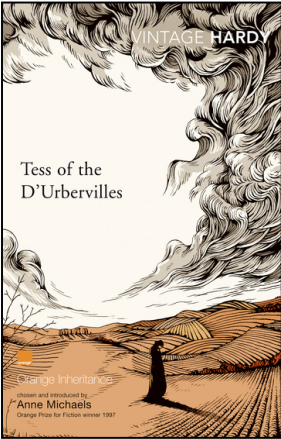
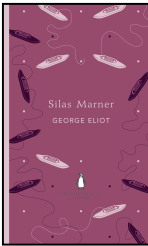


Dear pupils,

There are countless books that you can read written within this time period. Below is a list of the most popular authors. You will note that I have begun the list with my favourites before listing the remaining authors alphabetically. You may be daunted by the size of some of the novels, but do not give up. Firstly, there are many wonderful novellas and short stories that you may want to begin with. Moreover, you will find that the more you read, the less difficult you will find the language and so you will be better able to appreciate the tales for what they are. I hope you enjoy them as much as I have.

Ms Masud

KS4 Reading List, Nineteenth Century Literature: Miss Masud's Favourites

Author	Novel/s
<p>Edith Wharton</p> <p>Edith Wharton was born into a tightly controlled society known as 'Old New York' at a time when women were discouraged from achieving anything beyond a proper marriage. Wharton broke through these strictures to become one of America's greatest writers. She wrote over 40 books in 40 years, including authoritative works on architecture, gardens, interior design, and travel. Essentially self-educated, she was the first woman awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.</p>	<p>Ethan Frome</p>  <p>With this intensely moving short novel, Edith Wharton set out 'to draw life as it really was' in the lonely villages of the harsh New England mountains. Through the eyes of a visitor from the city, trapped for a winter in snowbound Starkfield, readers glimpse the hidden histories of this austere and beautiful land. Piecing together the story of monosyllabic Ethan Frome, his grim wife, Zeena, and Mattie Silver, her charming cousin, Wharton explores psychological dead-lock: frustration, longing, resentment, passion.</p> <p>This is without a doubt one on my favourite novellas; it is simply beautiful. It is for this reason that I have let this novella sneak onto the list even though it was written in 1911.</p> <p>Also to consider by Wharton: <i>The Age of Innocence</i> and <i>The House of Mirth</i>.</p>
<p>Thomas Hardy</p> <p>Hardy was an English author, novelist and poet, who although he always regarded himself as a poet, has proved to be a popular novelist.</p> <p>Hardy's huge popularity lies in what are known as the Wessex stories. These novels, plotted in a semi-fictional place called Wessex, outline the lives of people struggling against their passion and adverse conditions. Most of his works reflect his stoical glumness and sense of cataclysm in human life. As both poet and author, Hardy displayed his mastery in dealing with themes of disappointment in love and life, human suffering and all-powering fate.</p>	<p>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</p> <p>'Thomas Hardy's thrilling story of seduction, murder, cruelty and betrayal', <i>The Times</i></p> <p>Tess is an innocent young girl until the day she goes to visit her rich 'relatives', the D'Urbervilles, in hope that they might help her alleviate her own family's poverty. Her encounter with her manipulative cousin, Alec, leads her onto a path that is beset with suffering and betrayal. When she falls in love with another man, Angel Clare, Tess sees a potential escape from her past, but only if she can tell him her shameful secret...</p> <p>I read this novel when I was 17 and I can only simply say that I loved it; the emotions Hardy evokes endure to this day.</p>  <p>The Withered Arm</p> <p>This is one of Hardy's most famous short stories with a riveting plot and character development. It takes place over a number of years and is a story of love, jealousy, hate, obsession, the supernatural and witchcraft: all this in just thirty-two pages.</p> <p>Also to consider by Hardy: <i>Far From the Madding Crowd</i>, <i>Jude the Obscure</i>, <i>The Mayor of Casterbridge</i>.</p>
<p>George Eliot</p> <p>George Eliot was the pen name of Mary Ann Evans. She used a male pen name to ensure her works were taken seriously in an era when female authors were usually associated with romantic novels. Eliot was by no means a conventional woman. She was at the centre of a literary circle through which she met George Henry Lewes, with</p>	<p>Silas Marner</p> <p>'I think Silas Marner holds a higher place than any of the author's works,' Henry James.</p> <p>Although the shortest of George Eliot's novels, <i>Silas Marner</i> is one of her most admired and loved works. It tells the sad story of the unjustly exiled Silas Marner and how he is restored to life.</p> <p>It is a tender and moving tale of sin and repentance, holding the reader's attention until the last page.</p> 

whom she lived until his death in 1878. Lewes was married and their relationship caused a scandal. Her novels are celebrated for their realism and psychological insights.

Middlemarch

'One of the few English novels written for grown-up people', Virginia Woolf.

Wit, irony, pathos and brilliant insight into human nature colour every strand of plot and every beautifully drawn character. Foremost among these are Dorothea Booke, passionate to use her spirit and talent in a wider world than that typically afforded to women in the 1830s; Casaubon, the dry, jealous academic; Doctor Lydgate, who dreams of pioneering research in medical science; spoilt, pretty Rosamond Vincy who sees as 'a man whom it would be delightful to enslave'.

The novel centres on the web of relationships that connects us to each other and gives a powerful account of what it means to be a hero.



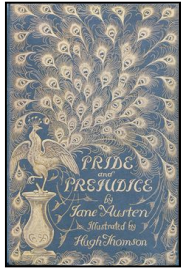
Also to consider by Eliot: *The Mill on the Floss* and *Adam Bede*.

Jane Austen

Austen was an English novelist who is now one of the most widely read writers in English literature. For example, since her first novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, was published it has sold more than 20 million copies worldwide and has never been out of print. Moreover, there have been countless adaptations in TV, film and spin-offs.


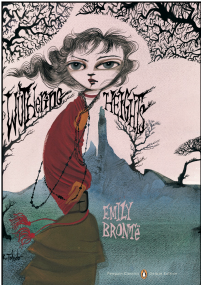
Pride and Prejudice

The novel opens with one of the most famous lines in English literature, pointing to Mrs. Bennet's one aim of finding a good match for each of her five daughters. However, do not fall into the trap of thinking that this, or any other of Austen's novels, is purely concerned with romance and marriage. The novel is full of brilliant encounters, alternatively comic and dramatic. You will remember Mr. Collins for a long time after finishing the novel.



Also to consider by Austen: *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*.

Alphabetical Order

Author	Novel/s
<p>Anne Brontë</p> <p>Anne Brontë was an English novelist and the youngest member of the Brontë literary family. Relatively little is known about her life, but this is not to say that her novels lack interest. Her life was cut short when she died of tuberculosis at the age of 29.</p>	<p><i>The Tenant of Wildfell Hall</i></p>  <p><i>The Tenant of Wildfell Hall</i> is a powerful and sometimes violent novel of expectation, love, oppression, sin, religion and betrayal. It portrays the disintegration of the marriage of Helen Huntingdon, the mysterious 'tenant' of the title, and her alcoholic husband.</p> <p>On its first publication in 1848, Anne Brontë's second novel was criticized for being 'coarse' and 'brutal'. <i>The Tenant of Wildfell Hall</i> challenges the social conventions of the early nineteenth century in a strong defence of women's rights in the face of psychological abuse from their husbands.</p> <p>Also to consider by Anne Brontë: <i>Agnes Grey</i>.</p>
<p>Charlotte Brontë</p> <p>Charlotte Brontë was the eldest among the Brontë sisters. A dominant and ambitious woman from a young age, she was someone who refused to blindly follow the norms the society demanded of women during her time. She was a fiercely independent woman who introduced to the literary world a new kind of heroine who defied age-old societal expectations to emerge as a courageous and virtuous individual in her own right.</p>	<p><i>Jane Eyre</i></p>  <p>Although the poor but plucky heroine is outwardly of plain appearance, she possesses an invincible spirit, a sharp wit and great courage. She is forced to battle against a cruel guardian, a harsh employer and a rigid social order. She becomes governess to the daughter of the mysterious and attractive Mr. Rochester...</p> <p>There is great kindness and warmth in this epic love story, which is set against the magnificent backdrop of the Yorkshire moors.</p> <p>Also to consider by Charlotte Brontë: <i>Villette</i> and <i>Shirley</i>.</p>
<p>Emily Brontë</p> <p>Emily Brontë's only novel has been regarded as a masterpiece. She was a person who preferred to be at home than going out and mingling with people. She was immersed in her own world and had no desire to venture beyond the threshold of her house. Apparently, her siblings were her only friends. She was an enigmatic figure and not much is known about her personal life - even her novel has a predominant mysterious setting.</p>	<p><i>Wuthering Heights</i></p>  <p>Although <i>Wuthering Heights</i> is now widely regarded as one of the most important classics of English literature, contemporary reviews for the novel were deeply divided, as it was considered controversial because its depiction of mental and physical cruelty was unusually stark. At times dark and sinister, the novel broke with many contemporary ideas as to how romantic literature should be composed. Though Emily would not live to experience it, <i>Wuthering Heights</i> rose to become a model of a romantic, gothic novel full of passion, jealousy and tragic love.</p>

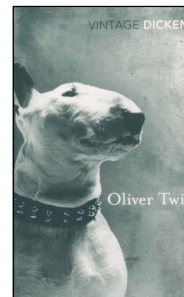
Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens was an English writer who was popular in his lifetime. He is much loved for his great contribution to classic English literature, creating some of the world's best-known characters. His epic stories, vivid characters and exhaustive depiction of contemporary life are unforgettable.

Oliver Twist

'The power of [Dickens] is so amazing, that the reader at once becomes his captive, and must follow him whithersoever he leads,' William Makepeace Thackeray.

For any reader wishing to delve into the works of Dickens, *Oliver Twist* is, without doubt, an essential title. It is a tale of ruin, murder, love and redemption in London's underworld and features some of the author's most enduring characters, such as Oliver himself (who dares to ask for more), the tyrannical Bumble, the diabolical Fagin, the menacing Bill Sikes, Nancy and 'the Artful Dodger'.



Also to consider by Dickens: *Bleak House*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Great Expectations*, *Hard Times*, *The Pickwick Papers* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

Arthur Conan Doyle

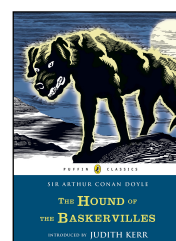
Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was a British writer and physician, most noted for his fictional stories about the detective Sherlock Holmes, which are generally considered milestones in the field of crime fiction. He was a prolific writer whose other works include fantasy and science fiction stories, plays, romances, poetry, non-fiction and historical novels.

The Hound of the Baskervilles

'Arthur Conan Doyle is unique ... Personally, I would walk a mile in tight boots to read him to the milkman,' Stephen Fry.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* gripped readers when it was first serialised and has continued to hold its place in the popular imagination to this day.

Could the sudden death of Sir Charles Baskerville have been caused by the gigantic ghostly hound that is said to have haunted his family for generations? Sherlock Holmes characteristically dismisses the theory as nonsense. Immersed in another case, he sends Dr. Watson to Devon to protect the Baskerville heir and observe the suspects at close hand. With its atmospheric setting on the ancient, wild moorland and its savage apparition, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is one of the greatest crime novels ever written. Rationalism is pitted against the supernatural and good against evil as Sherlock Holmes sets out to defeat a foe almost his equal.



Also to consider by Doyle: *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* and *The Lost World*.

Alexandre Dumas

Dumas was a French writer best known for his adventure novels. He began his career as a playwright producing several successful plays before moving on to write novels. The son of a French Army General, he grew up hearing stories of his father's bravery in the wars, which kindled in him a profound interest in historical events. The would-be author had an innate love for the words and read whatever books he could lay his hands on; he even taught himself Spanish through self-education. His works have been translated into nearly 100 languages and adapted into over 200 films.

The Three Musketeers

'Dumas is a master of ripping yarns full of fearless heroes, poisonous ladies and swashbuckling adventurers,' The Guardian.

When d'Artagnan goes to Paris to become a Musketeer, he embarks on a swashbuckling adventure with the legendary Porthos, Athos, and Aramis. If they wish to trump the nefarious Cardinal Richelieu, it's got to be 'all for one, one for all'.



Also to consider by Dumas: *The Man in the Iron Mask* and *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

Gustave Flaubert

Gustave Flaubert was a French writer considered to be one of the best western authors of his time. He was born and brought up in France and was a part of a rich family. He was not a brilliant student and studied under strict and controlled environment when he was young. He started taking interest in writing from the age of eight. He initially took interest in law and went to Paris, but soon he realised that he had no taste for Paris or law.

Madame Bovary



Castigated for offending against public decency, *Madame Bovary* has rarely failed to cause a storm. Flaubert's protagonist in particular has never ceased to fascinate. Romantic heroine or middle-class neurotic, flawed wife and mother or passionate protester against the conventions of bourgeois society, simultaneously the subject of Flaubert's admiration and the butt of his irony - Emma Bovary remains one of the most enigmatic of fictional creations.

Also to consider by Flaubert: *A Sentimental Education* and *A Simple Soul*.

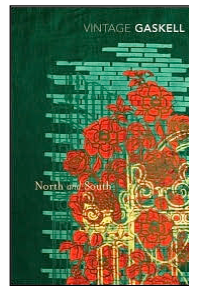
Elizabeth Gaskell

Elizabeth Gaskell was one of the leading female novelists of the Victorian era. Her work was characterised by powerful narratives and accuracy in social observations. She often wrote about the lives of the underprivileged sections of the society and was open in her sympathies towards the workers in the industrial sector. She was famous for creating dynamic female characters, and often emphasised on the roles women play in family and society.

North and South

'Pah! to Dickens. Eat your heart out, Little Nell. That Elizabeth Gaskell could write a death scene to make your socks melt,' The Scotsman.

Set in the mid-19th century, and written from the author's first-hand experience, *North and South* follows the story of the heroine's movement from the tranquil ways of southern England to the vital but turbulent north. Elizabeth Gaskell's skilful narrative uses an unusual love story to show how personal and public lives were woven together in a newly industrial society.



Also to consider by Gaskell: *Ruth*, *Wives and Daughters*, *Mary Barton* and *Cranford*.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Hawthorne was an American novelist and short story writer. His ancestors include John Hathorne the only judge involved in the Salem witch trials who never repented of his actions. Nathaniel later added a 'w' to make his name 'Hawthorne' in order to hide this relation.

The Scarlett Letter

Having been found guilty of adultery, Hester Prynne is forced to wear an embroidered scarlet letter 'A' as a punishment for her sin. While her vengeful husband embarks on a quest to discover the identity of her lover, she is left to face the consequences of her infidelity and find a place for herself and her illegitimate child in the hostile environment of seventeenth-century Puritan Boston. Nathaniel Hawthorne's tense narrative astonished readers with its unparalleled psychological depth when it first appeared, and the novel now stands as one of America's literary landmarks.



Also to consider by Hawthorne: *The House of the Seven Gables* and *A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys*.

Henry James

James was an American writer who spent most of his writing career in Britain. He is best known for a number of novels showing Americans encountering Europe and Europeans. James insisted that writers be allowed the greatest possible freedom in presenting their view of the world. James claimed that a text must first and foremost be realistic and contain a representation of life that is recognisable to its readers. Good novels, to James, show life in action and are, most importantly, interesting.

The Turn of the Screw



The Turn of the Screw is the classic gothic ghost story for which James is most remembered. Set in a country house, it is a chilling tale of the supernatural told by a master of the genre. Many critics have tried to determine the exact nature of the evil hinted at by the story. Henry James leaves the plot wide open so you make up your own mind about the unfolding events.

This well-crafted story throws up question after question as you go along.

Also to consider by James: *The Portrait of a Lady*, *The Golden Bowl*, *The Ambassadors* and *Daisy Miller*.

Guy de Maupassant

Widely regarded as the 'Father of Modern Short Story', Guy de Maupassant was one of the greatest French writers in the nineteenth century. His stories strikingly captured various aspects of day-to-day life in France during that time. Many of his stories were based on the Franco-Prussian War and the lives of innocent people who were caught in it.

Collected Short Stories (Various Editions)

There are various collections available which display his lively diversity, with tales that vary in theme and tone, ranging from tragedy and satire to comedy and farce.



In 'The Necklace', for example, Mathilde loses the necklace she borrowed from a friend and must pay back the loan. Will you be able to guess what happens at the end of the story?

Edgar Allan Poe

Poe was an American author, poet, editor, and literary critic, considered part of the American Romantic Movement. Best known for his tales of mystery and the macabre, Poe was one of the earliest American practitioners of the short story, and is generally considered the inventor of the detective fiction genre. He is further credited with contributing to the emerging genre of science fiction. He was the first well-known American writer to try to earn a living through writing alone, resulting in a financially difficult life and career.

Various Collections, e.g. Terrifying Tales



There are various collections of Poe's short stories. Regardless of the collection you choose, when it comes to Poe, you can expect the best of scary, gothic writing with something a little extra. In *Terrifying Tales*, for example, you will find a collection taking in murder and revenge, but also madness, death and psychological terror.


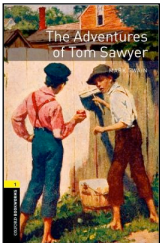
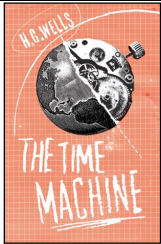
Mary Shelley

Mary Shelley was an English writer born in Somers Town, London. She was most renowned for her fictional writing and the ghastly themes she employed in her novels. Mary had a difficult childhood as she encountered a step-mother who was unfair to her. However, she learnt

Frankenstein

Begun when the author was only eighteen and conceived from a nightmare, *Frankenstein* is the deeply disturbing story of a monstrous creation, which has terrified and chilled readers since its first publication in 1818. Victor Frankenstein is an ambitious young man obsessed with 'natural philosophy' - the natural sciences. When his interest turns to theories on reanimation and 'the spark of life', his devotion pays off and he builds a being, a giant of sorts, and succeeds in giving him life. However, as this



<p>to deal with these disturbances by taking refuge in her writing and often spent her time dwelling in imagination.</p>	<p>huge creature stirs for the first time, Victor awakens from his single-minded working frenzy, and flees in horror from this primitive monster he's created. What follows is a battle for freedom, happiness - and vengeance. It becomes an all-out war that can only lead to tragedy...</p> <p>Also to consider by Shelley: <i>The Last Man</i>.</p>
<p>Leo Tolstoy</p> <p>Tolstoy was a Russian novelist who is regarded as the greatest Russian literary giant. Through his works, Tolstoy not only became one of the greatest writers ever known, but also a living symbol of someone in search of life's meaning. What is interesting to note is that Tolstoy's panache for writing enabled him to bring out masterpieces from everyday activities of people.</p>	<p>Anna Karenina</p> <p>'One of the greatest love stories in world literature,' Vladimir Nabokov.</p> <p><i>Anna Karenina</i> is one of the most loved and memorable heroines of literature. Her overwhelming charm dominates a novel of unparalleled richness and density. Tolstoy considered this book to be his first real attempt at a novel form, and it addresses the very nature of society at all levels: of destiny, death, human relationships and the contradictions of existence. Whilst it is a tragedy, and there is much that evokes despair, beside this is an abounding joy in life's many pleasures.</p>  <p>Also to consider by Tolstoy: <i>War and Peace</i> and <i>Death of Ivan Ilyich</i>.</p>
<p>Mark Twain</p> <p>Mark Twain is the pen name of Samuel Clemens who was an American author and humorist. Twain was born shortly after a visit by Halley's Comet, and he predicted that he would 'go out with it' too. He died the day after the comet returned.</p>	<p>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</p> <p>'The father of American literature,' William Faulkner.</p> <p>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer is a snapshot of a boy's childhood along the banks of the Mississippi River. Mischievous and full of energy, Tom enjoys childish pranks and pastimes with his friends, Huck Finn, the town outcast and Joe Harper, his best friend. However, at the town graveyard, Huck and Tom witness a murder, carried out by local vagabond Injun Joe. They vow never to tell a soul about what they have seen and so begins their journey into adulthood as Tom wrestles with his own morality, guilt and anxiety.</p>  <p>Also to consider by Twain: <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>, <i>A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court</i> and <i>The Innocents Abroad</i>.</p>
<p>H.G. Wells</p> <p>H.G. Wells was a prolific English writer in many genres, including the novel, history, politics, social commentary, and textbooks and rules for war games. He is now best remembered for his science novels, often being called the father of science fiction</p>	<p>The Time Machine</p> <p>A hugely imaginative work of early science fiction, <i>The Time Machine</i> is the first and greatest modern portrayal of time-travel. When a Victorian scientist propels himself into the year 802,701 AD, he is initially delighted to find that suffering has been replaced by beauty, contentment and peace. Entranced at first by the Eloi, an elfin species descended from man, he soon realises that this beautiful people are simply remnants of a once-great culture - now weak and childishly afraid of the dark. But they have every reason to be afraid: in deep tunnels beneath their paradise lurks another race descended from humanity - the sinister Morlocks. And when the scientist's time machine vanishes, it becomes clear he must search these tunnels, if he is ever to return to his own era...</p>  <p>Also to consider by Wells: <i>The Island of Doctor Moreau</i>, <i>The Invisible Man</i> and <i>The War of the Worlds</i>.</p>