



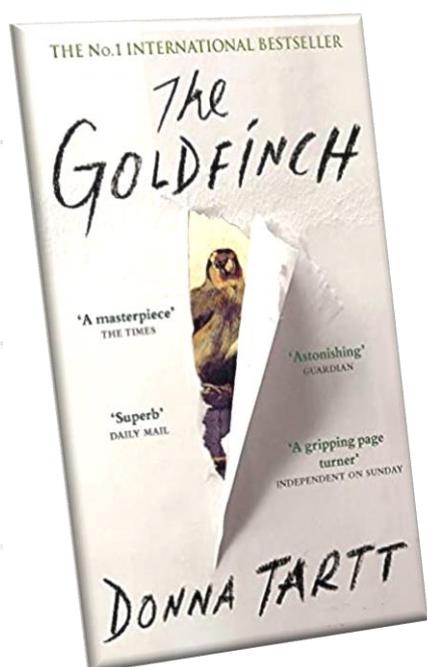
# April Showers

Read for Hours!

*For some, April showers mean the dawning of spring, but for any bookworm, this means the dawning of days at home spent reading. At the Learning Curve we have created a book list which is full of longer reads, these rainy days provide the perfect opportunity to dig into these ridiculously long books.*

*What better way to relax than by curling up with a good book and listening to the sound of rain hitting the window? Whether you're settling in with a mystery, romance or non-fiction title, reading is the perfect way to spend a gloomy rainy day.*

*All of these books are available from the library and can be borrowed once restrictions are lifted and our Click & Collect Service resumes.*



## **The Goldfinch**

By Donna Tartt

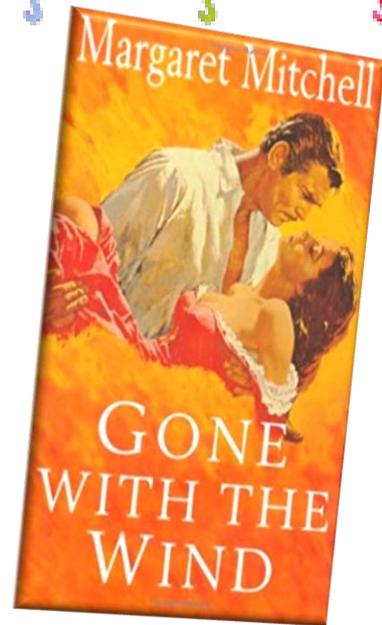
*Aged thirteen, Theo Decker, son of a devoted mother and a reckless, largely absent father, survives an accident that otherwise tears his life apart. Alone and rudderless in New York, he is taken in by the family of a wealthy friend. He is tormented by an unbearable longing for his mother, and down the years clings to the thing that most reminds him of her: a small, strangely captivating painting that ultimately draws him into the criminal underworld. As he grows up, Theo learns to glide between the drawing rooms of the rich and the dusty antiques store where he works. He is alienated and in love - and his talisman, the painting, places him at the centre of a narrowing, ever more dangerous circle.*



## Gone with the Wind

By Margaret Mitchell

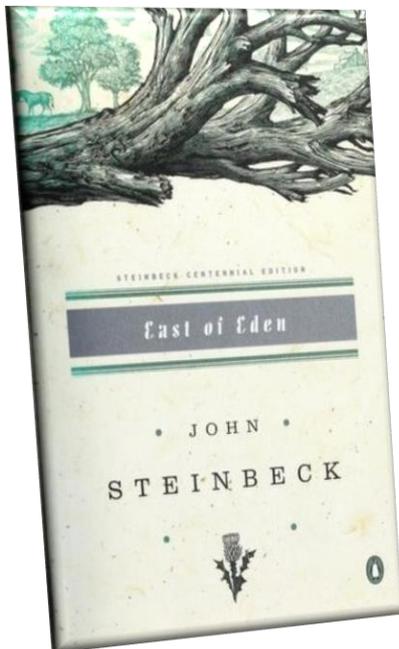
Set against the dramatic backdrop of the American Civil War, Margaret Mitchell's magnificent historical epic is an unforgettable tale of love and loss, of a nation mortally divided and a people forever changed. Above all, it is the story of beautiful, ruthless Scarlett O'Hara and the dashing soldier of fortune, Rhett Butler.



## East of Eden

By John Steinbeck

Adam Trask came to California from the East to farm and raise his family on the new rich land. But the birth of his twins, Cal and Aaron, brings his wife to the brink of madness, and Adam is left alone to raise his boys to manhood. One boy thrives nurtured by the love of all those around him; the other grows up in loneliness enveloped by a mysterious darkness.

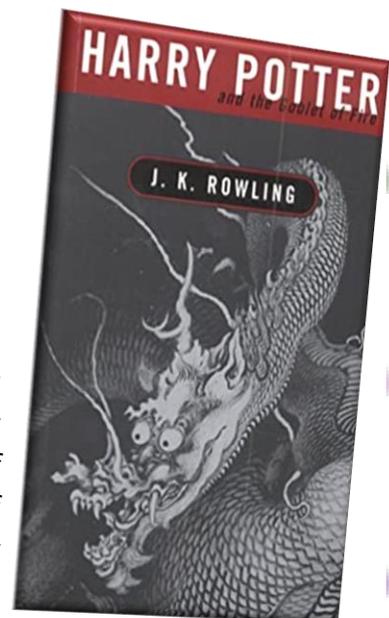


This sprawling and often brutal novel follows the intertwined destinies of two families—the Trasks and the Hamiltons—whose generations helplessly re-enact the fall of Adam and Eve and the poisonous rivalry of Cain and Abel.

## Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

By J. K. Rowling

Harry Potter is midway through his training as a wizard and his coming of age. Harry wants to get away from the pernicious Dursleys and go to the International Quidditch Cup with Hermione, Ron, and the Weasleys. He wants to dream about Cho Chang, his crush (and maybe do more than dream). He wants to find out about the mysterious event that's supposed to take place at Hogwarts this year, an event involving two other rival schools of magic, and a competition that hasn't happened for hundreds of years. He wants to be a normal, fourteen-year-old wizard. But unfortunately for Harry Potter, he's not normal - even by wizarding standards. And in his case, different can be deadly.

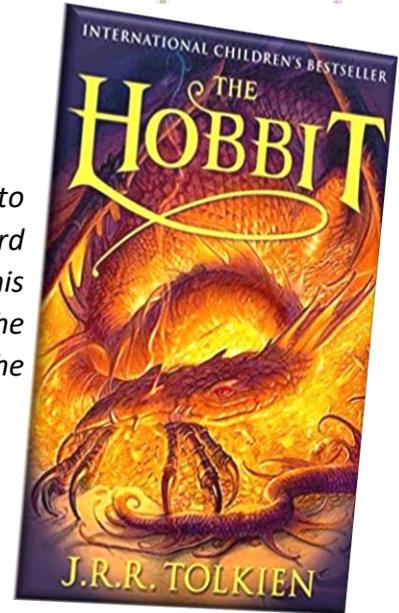




## The Hobbit

By J. R. R. Tolkien

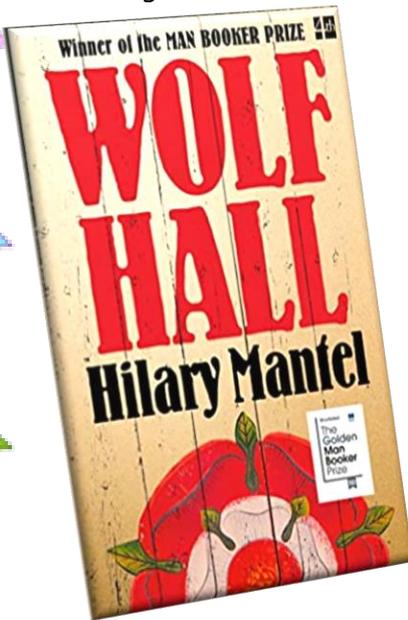
*Bilbo Baggins enjoys a quiet and contented life, with no desire to travel far from the comforts of home; then one day the wizard Gandalf and a band of dwarves arrive unexpectedly and enlist his services – as a burglar – on a dangerous expedition to raid the treasure-hoard of Smaug the dragon. Bilbo's life is never to be the same again.*



## Wolf Hall

By Hilary Mantel

*England in the 1520s is a heartbeat from disaster. If the king dies without a male heir, the country could be destroyed by civil war. Henry VIII wants to annul his marriage of twenty years and marry Anne Boleyn. The pope and most of Europe opposes him. Into this impasse steps Thomas Cromwell: a wholly original man, a charmer and a bully, both idealist and opportunist, astute in reading people, and implacable in his ambition. But Henry is volatile: one day tender, one day murderous. Cromwell helps him break the opposition, but what will be the price of his triumph?*



## The Book Thief

By Markus Zusak

*It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will be busier still.*

*By her brother's graveside, Liesel's life is changed when she picks up a single object, partially hidden in the snow. It is The Gravedigger's Handbook, left behind there by accident, and it is her first act of book thievery. So begins a love affair with books and words, as Liesel, with the help of her accordion-playing foster father, learns to read. Soon she is stealing books from Nazi book-burnings, the mayor's wife's library, wherever there are books to be found.*

*But these are dangerous times. When Liesel's foster family hides a Jew in their basement, Liesel's world is both opened up, and closed down.*

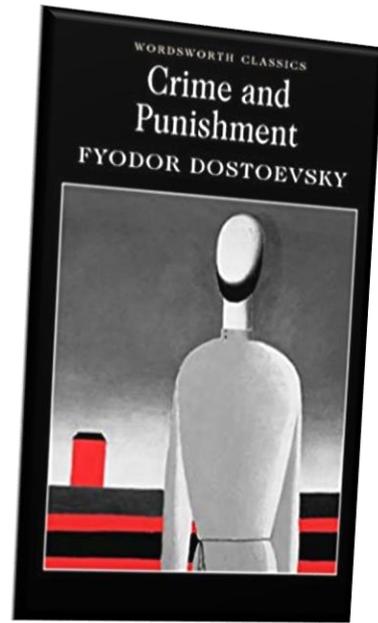




## Crime and Punishment

By Fyodor Dostoevsky

Raskolnikov, a destitute and desperate former student, wanders through the slums of St Petersburg and commits a random murder without remorse or regret. He imagines himself to be a great man, a Napoleon: acting for a higher purpose beyond conventional moral law. But as he embarks on a dangerous game of cat and mouse with a suspicious police investigator, Raskolnikov is pursued by the growing voice of his conscience and finds the noose of his own guilt tightening around his neck. Only Sonya, a downtrodden prostitute, can offer the chance of redemption.



## Jane Eyre

By Charlotte Bronte

Orphaned as a child, Jane has felt an outcast her whole young life. Her courage is tested once again when she arrives at Thornfield Hall, where she has been hired by the brooding, proud Edward Rochester to care for his ward Adèle. Jane finds herself drawn to his troubled yet kind spirit. She falls in love. Hard.

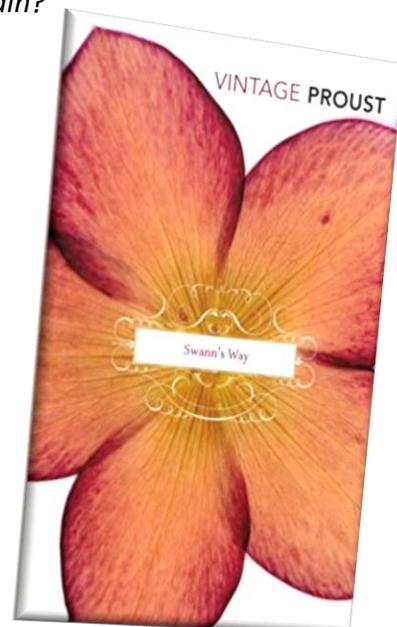
But there is a terrifying secret inside the gloomy, forbidding Thornfield Hall. Is Rochester hiding from Jane? Will Jane be left heartbroken and exiled once again?



## Swann's Way

By Marcel Proust

In the opening volume of Proust's great novel, the narrator travels backwards in time in order to tell the story of a love affair that had taken place before his own birth. Swann's jealous love for Odette provides a prophetic model of the narrator's own relationships. All Proust's great themes - time and memory, love and loss, art and the artistic vocation - are here in kernel form.

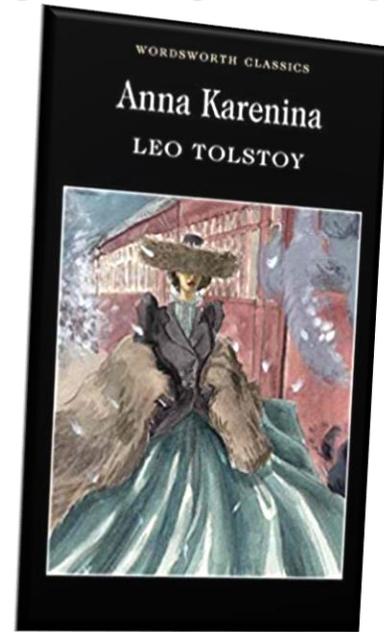




## Anna Karenina

By Leo Tolstoy

Acclaimed by many as the world's greatest novel, *Anna Karenina* provides a vast panorama of contemporary life in Russia and of humanity in general. In it Tolstoy uses his intense imaginative insight to create some of the most memorable characters in all of literature. Anna is a sophisticated woman who abandons her empty existence as the wife of Karenina and turns to Count Vronsky to fulfil her passionate nature - with tragic consequences. Levin is a reflection of Tolstoy himself, often expressing the author's own views and convictions.



## Bleak House

By Charles Dickens

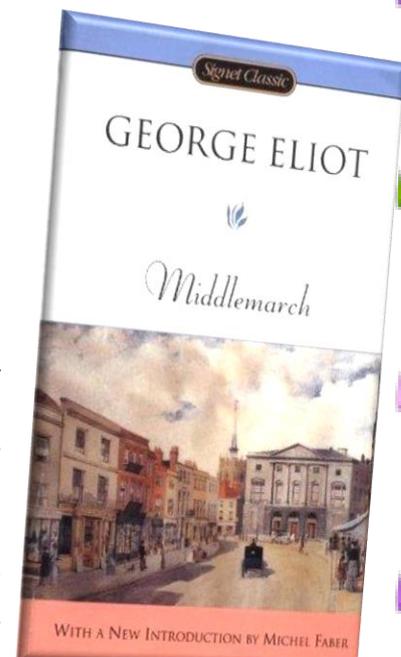
*Bleak House* opens in the twilight of foggy London, where fog grips the city most densely in the Court of Chancery. The obscure case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce, in which an inheritance is gradually devoured by legal costs, the romance of Esther Summerson and the secrets of her origin, the sleuthing of Detective Inspector Bucket and the fate of Jo the crossing-sweeper, these are some of the lives Dickens invokes to portray London society, rich and poor, as no other novelist has done.



## Middlemarch

By George Eliot

Taking place in the years leading up to the First Reform Bill of 1832, *Middlemarch* explores nearly every subject of concern to modern life: art, religion, science, politics, self, society, and human relationships. Among her characters are some of the most remarkable portraits in English literature: Dorothea Brooke, the heroine, idealistic but naive; Rosamond Vincy, beautiful and egoistic; Edward Casaubon, the dry-as-dust scholar; Tertius Lydgate, the brilliant but morally-flawed physician; the passionate artist Will Ladislaw; and Fred Vincy and Mary Garth, childhood sweethearts whose charming courtship is one of the many humorous elements in the novel's rich comic vein.

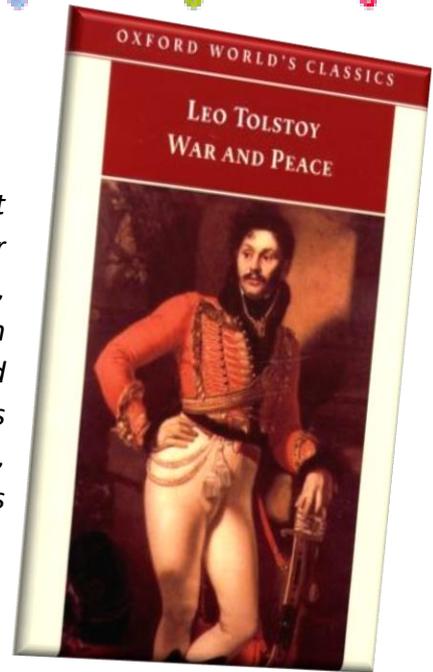




## War and Peace

By Leo Tolstoy

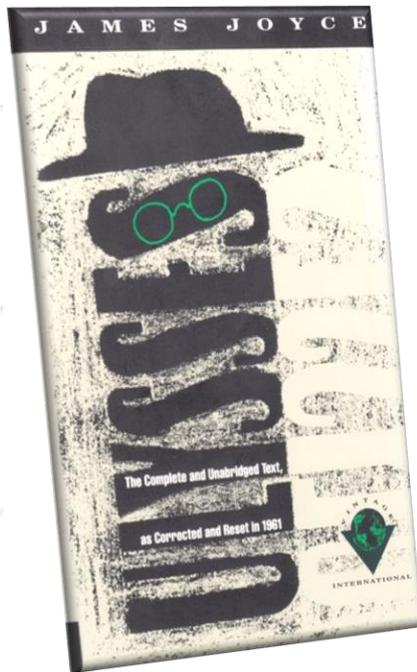
*In Russia's struggle with Napoleon, Tolstoy saw a tragedy that involved all mankind. Greater than a historical chronicle, War and Peace is an affirmation of life itself, 'a complete picture', as a contemporary reviewer put it, 'of everything in which people find their happiness and greatness, their grief and humiliation'. Tolstoy gave his personal approval to this translation, published here in a new single volume edition, which includes an introduction by Henry Gifford, and Tolstoy's important essay 'Some Words about War and Peace'.*



## Ulysses

By James Joyce

*Loosely based on the Odyssey, this landmark of modern literature follows ordinary Dubliners in 1904. Capturing a single day in the life of Dubliner Leopold Bloom, his friends Buck Mulligan and Stephen Dedalus, his wife Molly, and a scintillating cast of supporting characters, Joyce pushes Celtic lyricism and vulgarity to splendid extremes. Captivating experimental techniques range from interior monologues to exuberant wordplay and earthy humour. A major achievement in 20th century literature.*



## Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

By J. K. Rowling

*There is a door at the end of a silent corridor. And it's haunting Harry Potter's dreams. Why else would he be waking in the middle of the night, screaming in terror? Harry has a lot on his mind for this, his fifth year at Hogwarts: a Defence against the Dark Arts teacher with a personality like poisoned honey; a big surprise on the Gryffindor Quidditch team; and the looming terror of the Ordinary Wizarding Level exams. But all these things pale next to the growing threat of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named - a threat that neither the magical government nor the authorities at Hogwarts can stop.*

