

## Reading List 9th-10th

### Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

Pip, a young orphan living with his sister and her husband in the marshes of Kent, sits in a cemetery one evening looking at his parents' tombstones. Suddenly, an escaped convict springs up from behind a tombstone, grabs Pip, and orders him to bring him food and a file for his leg irons. Pip obeys, but the fearsome convict is soon captured anyway. The convict protects Pip by claiming to have stolen the items himself.

<http://m.sparknotes.com/lit/greatex/summary/>

### A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare

A Midsummer Night's Dream was written in a highly creative period in Shakespeare's career, when he was moving away from the shallow plots that characterized his earlier drama and discovering his more mature style. Most critics believe the play was written for and performed at an aristocratic wedding, with Queen Elizabeth I in attendance. Scholars estimate the play was written in 1595 or 1596 (when Shakespeare was 31 or 32 years old), at approximately the same time as Romeo and Juliet and Richard II. Obvious plot links exist between A Midsummer Night's Dream and Romeo and Juliet, and critics disagree about which play was written first. Not only do both dramas emphasize the conflict between love and social convention, but the plot of "Pyramus and Thisbe," the play-within-the-play of A Midsummer Night's Dream, parallels that of Romeo and Juliet. Critics have wondered if Romeo and Juliet is a serious reinterpretation of the other play, or just the opposite: Perhaps Shakespeare is mocking his tragic love story through the burlesque of "Pyramus and Thisbe."

<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/m/a-midsummer-nights-dream/about-a-midsummer-nights-dream>

### Pygmalion by George B. Shaw

Pygmalion both delighted and scandalized its first audiences in 1914. A brilliantly witty reworking of the classical tale of the sculptor Pygmalion, who falls in love with his perfect female statue, it is also a barbed attack on the British class system and a statement of Shaw's feminist views. In Shaw's hands, the phoneticist Henry Higgins is the Pygmalion figure who believes he can transform Eliza Doolittle, a cockney flower girl, into a duchess at ease in polite society. The one thing he overlooks is that his 'creation' has a mind of her own. Adapted into the Oscar-winning musical film My Fair Lady starring Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison in 1964, Pygmalion

Read more at <https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/60335/pygmalion/#X6ZcpuehoeQ33AX0.99>

### Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

Guy Montag is a fireman. In his world, where television rules and literature is on the brink of extinction, firemen start fires rather than put them out. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden.

Montag never questions the destruction and ruin his actions produce, returning each day to his bland life and wife, Mildred, who spends all day with her television "family." But then he meets an eccentric young neighbor, Clarisse, who introduces him to a past where people didn't live in fear and to a present where one sees the world through the ideas in books instead of the mindless chatter of television.

When Mildred attempts suicide and Clarisse suddenly disappears, Montag begins to question everything he has ever known. He starts hiding books in his home, and when his pilfering is discovered, the fireman has to run for his life.

<http://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Fahrenheit-451/Ray-Bradbury/9781451673265>