CREATIVE WRITING LIST - Fiction

Note: In preparing for the creative writing comprehensive examination, the student is expected to become familiar with most of these works, meaning the student should become broadly aware of their themes and importance. The student is not expected to read all of them, nor is this list meant to serve as a definitive canon. Rather the student should think of it as a starting point for assembling a list of about 40 works in consultation with the major professor. These are also works that have proven influential or inspiring for other writers and thus serve as good springboards for writing.

Achebe, Chinua
*Things Fall Apart*

Agnon, S.Y.
*Twenty-One Stories*

Anderson, Sherwood
*Winesburg, Ohio*

Atwood, Margaret
*Dancing Girls and Other Stories*
*The Handmaid’s Tale*

Austen, Jane
*Pride and Prejudice*
*Emma*

Babel, Isaac
*Red Cavalry*, especially “My First Goose”

Baldwin, James
*Go Tell It On The Mountain*
*Giovanni’s Room*

Barnes, Djuna
*Nightwood*

Barth, John
*The Floating Opera*
*Lost in the Funhouse*

Barthelme, Donald
*Come Back, Dr. Caligari*
Sixty Stories

Barthelme, Frederick
Moon Deluxe
Two Against One

Barthelme, Steven
And He Tells the Little Horse the Whole Story

Beattie, Ann
Secrets and Surprises
The Burning House
Picturing Will

Borges, Jorge Luis
Labyrinths

Bowles, Paul
The Sheltering Sky

Boyle, T.C.
World’s End
Collected Stories

Bulgakov, Mikhail
The Master and Margarita

Butler, Octavia
Bloodchild

Calvino, Italo
Invisible Cities

Camus, Albert
The Plague
The Stranger

Capote, Truman
In Cold Blood
Breakfast at Tiffany’s

Carver, Raymond
Cathedral
Will You Please Be Quiet, Please
What We Talk About When We Talk About Love

Cather, Willa
*My Antonia*
*The Professor’s House*

Chandler, Raymond
*Farewell, My Lovely*
*The Long Goodbye*

Cheever, John
*The Stories of John Cheever*, especially “The Five-Forty-Eight” and “The Swimmer”

Chekhov, Anton
*Selected Stories*, especially “The Lady with the Pet Dog” and “In the Cart”
*The Cherry Orchard and Other Plays*

Cisneros, Sandra
*The House on Mango Street*

Coetzee, J.M.
*Waiting for the Barbarians*

Conrad, Joseph
*Nostromo*
*Lord Jim*
“Heart of Darkness”
*The Secret Agent*

Coover, Robert
*The Public Burning*
*Going for a Beer: Selected Short Fictions*

Cunningham, Michael
*The Hours*

Didion, Joan
*Play It as It Lays*
*A Book of Common Prayer*

DeLillo, Don
*White Noise*
The Names

Doctorow, E.L.
Ragtime

Dos Passos, John
USA

Dostoevsky, Fyodor
Notes from Underground
Crime and Punishment

Dubus, Andre
Selected Stories

Ellison, Ralph
Invisible Man

Erdrich, Louise
Tracks

Everett, Percival
Erasure

Faulkner, William
The Sound and the Fury
Go Down, Moses, especially “The Bear”
Absalom, Absalom!
Collected Stories

Fitzgerald, F. Scott
The Great Gatsby
The Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald

Ford, Madox Ford
The Good Soldier

Flaubert, Gustave
Madame Bovary

Fowles, John
The French Lieutenant’s Woman
Gaines, Ernest J.
A Lesson Before Dying

Gaitskill, Mary
Bad Behavior

Gardner, John
Grendel

Gass, William
In the Heart of the Heart of the Country

Genet, Jean
Our Lady of the Flowers

Gogol, Nikolai
Dead Souls

Golding, William
Lord of the Flies

Gordimer, Nadine
July’s People

Greene, Graham
The Quiet American
The Power and the Glory

Hannah, Barry
Airships

Hardy, Thomas
Jude the Obscure
Tess of the d’Urbervilles

Heller, Joseph
Catch-22

Hemingway, Ernest
The Sun Also Rises
A Farewell to Arms
The Complete Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway
Hempel, Amy  
*Collected Stories*

Hurston, Zora Neale  
*Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Ishiguro, Kazuo  
*Never Let Me Go*  
*The Remains of the Day*

James, Henry  
*The Portrait of a Lady*  
*The Golden Bowl*  
*The Ambassadors*

Johnson, Denis  
*Fiskadoro*  
*Jesus’ Son*

Joyce, James  
*Dubliners*  
*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*  
*Ulysses*

Kafka, Franz  
*The Complete Stories*, especially “The Metamorphosis,” “In the Penal Colony,” and “A Hunger Artist”  
*The Trial*  
*The Castle*

Kerouac, Jack  
*On the Road*

Kincaid, Jamaica  
*Annie John*  
*At the Bottom of the River*

Kingston, Maxine Hong  
*The Woman Warrior*

Lowry, Malcolm  
*Under the Volcano*

Mailer, Norman
The Naked and the Dead

Mann, Thomas
Death in Venice

Marquez, Gabriel Garcia
One Hundred Years of Solitude

Maupassant, Guy de
A Parisian Affair and Other Stories

McCarthy, Cormac
Blood Meridian
The Road
Suttree

McCullers, Carson
The Heart is a Lonely Hunter
The Ballad of the Sad Cafe

McPherson, James Alan
Elbow Room

Melville, Herman
Moby-Dick

Miller, Henry
Tropic of Cancer

Moore, Lorrie
Self-Help

Morrison, Toni
Beloved
The Bluest Eye
Sula

Munro, Alice
Runaway

Nabokov, Vladimir
Lolita
Pale Fire
Oates, Joyce Carol
High Lonesome

O’Brien, Edna
The Country Girls

O’Brien, Tim
The Things They Carried

O’Connor, Flannery
A Good Man is Hard to Find
Wise Blood

Ondaatje, Michael
The English Patient

Ozick, Cynthia
Collected Stories

Paley, Grace
Collected Stories

Pynchon, Thomas
Gravity’s Rainbow
The Crying of Lot 49

Rhys, Jean
Wide Sargasso Sea

Robinson, Marilynne
Housekeeping

Roth, Henry
Call It Sleep

Roth, Philip
Goodbye, Columbus

Rushdie, Salman
The Satanic Verses

Salinger, J.D.
The Catcher in the Rye
Nine Stories

Salter, James
Dusk and Other Stories
Light Years

Sartre, Jean-Paul
No Exit

Sebald, W.G.
Austerlitz
The Rings of Saturn

Silko, Leslie Marmon
Ceremony

Singer, Isaac Bashevis
Collected Stories, especially “Gimpel the Fool” and “The Magician of Lublin”

Smiley, Jane
A Thousand Acres
The Age of Grief

Smith, Zadie
White Teeth
On Beauty

Sterne, Laurence
Tristram Shandy

Thackeray, William
Vanity Fair

Tolstoy, Leo
War and Peace
Anna Karenina
The Death of Ivan Ilych

Turgenev, Ivan
Fathers and Sons

Vonnegut, Kurt
Slaughterhouse Five

Wallace, David Foster
Infinite Jest

Waugh, Evelyn
Brideshead Revisited

Welty, Eudora
Collected Stories

West, Nathanael
The Day of the Locust
Miss Lonelyhearts

Wharton, Edith
The Age of Innocence
Ethan Frome
The House of Mirth

White, Edmund
The Farewell Symphony

Williams, Joy
The Visiting Privilege

Wolff, Tobias
The Barracks Thief
This Boy’s Life

Woolf, Virginia
To the Lighthouse
Mrs. Dalloway
A Room of One’s Own
Selected Essays

Wright, Richard
Native Son

NON-FICTION

Abrams, M.H.
The Mirror and the Lamp

Adorno, Theodor
Aesthetic Theory

Barry, Lynda
What It Is

Barthes, Roland
Mythologies

Baudrillard, Jean
Simulacra and Simulation

Baxter, Charles
Burning Down the House

de Beauvoir, Simone
The Second Sex

Booth, Wayne
A Rhetoric of Fiction

Bloom, Harold
The Anxiety of Influence

Fanon, Franz
The Wretched of the Earth

Freud, Sigmund
Civilization and its Discontents

Frye, Northrop
Anatomy of Criticism

Fussell, Paul
The Great War and Modern Memory

Gass, William
Fiction and the Figures of Life
On Being Blue

Gardner, John
The Art of Fiction

Hills, Rust
Writing in General and the Short Story in Particular

Hitchens, Christopher
Arguably

Marx, Karl
The German Ideology
Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844

Nietzsche, Friedrich
The Birth of Tragedy
Beyond Good and Evil

O’Connor, Flannery
Mystery and Manners

Orwell, George
Homage to Catalonia
Collected Essays, especially “Inside the Whale,” “Politics and the English Language,” “Why I Write”

Percy, Walker
The Message in a Bottle

Roethke, Theodore
Straw for the Fire

Ruskin, John
Modern Painters

Said, Edward W.
Orientalism
Imperialism and Culture

Shklovsky, Viktor
“Art as Technique”

Singer, Peter
Animal Liberation

Sontag, Susan
“Regarding the Pain of Others,” “On Photography,” “Against Interpretation”

**Trilling, Lionel**  
*The Liberal Imagination*

**Walker, Alice**  
*The Color Purple*

**Wallace, David Foster**  
*Consider the Lobster*

**Welty, Eudora**  
*The Eye of the Story*

**Wilde, Oscar**  
*De Profundis and Other Prison Writings*

**Williams, Raymond**  
*The Country and the City*

**Wilson, Edmund**  
*Patriotic Gore*

**Wood, James**  
*How Fiction Works*

Classic and contemporary texts, as well as drama, may be added in consultation with the student’s Committee Chair. Examples include:

**Classic texts:** *The Book of Job*, Giovanni Boccaccio’s *The Decameron*, Voltaire’s *Candide*, Montaigne’s *Essays*, Goethe’s *The Sorrows of Young Werther*

**Contemporary texts:** Carmen Maria Machado’s *Her Body and Other Parties*, Justin Torres’ *We The Animals*, Jamel Brinkley’s *A Lucky Man*

**Drama:** Shaw’s *Pygmalion*, Beckett’s *Endgame* and *Waiting for Godot*, Brecht’s *Mother Courage and Her Children*, Ionesco’s *Rhinoceros*, Ruhl’s *Eurydice*