

Book Discussion Kits - Prizewinners

[*Alias Grace*](#) by Margaret Atwood - The fictionalized account of one of the most notorious women of the nineteenth century who was convicted of murdering her employer and his mistress.

Scotiabank Giller Prize

[*All the King's Men*](#) by Robert Penn Warren - Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, this classic is generally regarded as the finest novel ever written on American politics. It is the story of Willie Stark, a back-country lawyer whose idealism is overcome by his lust for power.

Pulitzer Prize

[*All the Pretty Horses*](#) by Cormac McCarthy - The National Book Award-winning story of three friends who set out in 1949 to cross the Rio Grande in search of the cowboy life.

National Book Award, National Book Critics Circle Award

[*The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*](#) by Michael Chabon - In 1939 New York City, Joe Kavalier, a refugee from Hitler's Prague, joins forces with his Brooklyn-born cousin, Sammy Clay, to create comic-book superheroes inspired by their own fantasies, fears, and dreams.

Pulitzer Prize

[*Americanah*](#) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie - A young woman from Nigeria leaves behind her home and her first love to start a new life in America, where despite her academic success she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time.

National Book Critics Circle Award

[*Angela's Ashes: A Memoir*](#) by Frank McCourt - The Pulitzer Prize-winning memoir of childhood in the slums of Limerick, Ireland, told with humor, compassion and forgiveness.

Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award, Los Angeles Times Book Prize

[*Angle of Repose*](#) by Wallace Stegner - A Pulitzer Prize-winning story recounting the lives of four generations living in the American West.

Pulitzer Prize

[*Atonement*](#) by Ian McEwan - On a hot summer day in 1935, a young girl witnesses a moment's flirtation between her older sister and the son of a servant, bringing about a crime that will change all their lives.

National Book Critics Circle Award, Los Angeles Times Book Prize

[*Behind the Beautiful Forevers*](#) by Katherine Boo - A bewildering age of global change and inequality is made human through the dramatic story of families striving toward a better life in Annawadi, a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport.

National Book Award, Los Angeles Times Book Prize

[*Bel Canto*](#) by Ann Patchett - A celebrated American soprano has just finished a recital in the home of the vice-president of a poor South American country when terrorists burst in, taking the international guests hostage.

Women's Prize for Fiction (Orange Prize), PEN/Faulkner Award, Book Sense Fiction Award

[*Beloved*](#) by Toni Morrison - After the Civil War ends, Sethe longingly recalls the two-year-old daughter whom she killed when threatened with recapture after escaping from slavery 18 years before.

Pulitzer Prize

[*Between the World and Me*](#) by Ta-nehisi Coates - In a letter to his adolescent son, Coates shares with his son—and readers—the story of his awakening to the truth about his place in the world through a series of revelatory experiences, asking the question of what is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden?

National Book Award, Indies Choice Award, Kirkus Prize

[*Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*](#) by Ben Fountain – Three minutes and forty-three seconds of intense warfare with Iraqi insurgents has transformed the eight surviving men of Bravo Squad into America's most sought-after heroes. Now they're on a media-intensive nationwide tour, including the halftime show at a Dallas Cowboys game.

National Book Critics Circle Award, Los Angeles Times Book Prize

[*The Blind Assassin*](#) by Margaret Atwood - Winner of the Booker Prize, this brilliant novel within a novel tells the story of two sisters as a romance, a mystery and a fantasy all combined.

Man Booker Prize

[*Blood, Bones & Butter*](#) by Gabrielle Hamilton - The owner of the prestigious Manhattan restaurant Prune describes her inadvertent education as a very reluctant chef.

Indies Choice Nonfiction Award

[*The Book Thief*](#) by Mark Zusak - Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel--a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.

Book Sense Fiction Award

[*The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics*](#) by Daniel James Brown - The improbable, intimate account of how nine working-class boys from the American West showed the world at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin what true grit really meant.

Indies Choice Nonfiction Award

[*The Bridge of San Luis Rey*](#) by Thornton Wilder - In this Pulitzer Prize winning classic, a bridge collapses in eighteenth-century Peru and five die. Who were they? And what cosmic ironies led them to their fate?

Pulitzer Prize

[*The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*](#) by Junot Diaz - Living with an old-world mother and rebellious sister, an urban New Jersey misfit dreams of becoming the next J. R. R. Tolkien and believes that a long-standing family curse is thwarting his efforts to find love and happiness.

Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award

[*Brooklyn*](#) by Colm Toibin - Leaving her home in post-World War II Ireland to work as a bookkeeper in Brooklyn, Eilis Lacey discovers a new romance in America with a charming blond Italian man before devastating news from home threatens her happiness.

Costa Book Award

[*Brother, I'm Dying*](#) by Edwidge Danticat - From the award-winning author of "The Dew Breaker" comes her first work of nonfiction: a deeply affecting story of home and family set in America and Haiti, of two men's lives and deaths, and of a daughter's great love for them both.

National Book Critics Circle Award

[*The Buddha in the Attic*](#) by Julie Otsuka – The story of a group of young women brought from Japan to San Francisco as “picture brides” from their arduous journeys by boat, and their tremulous first nights as new wives; from their experiences raising children who would later reject their culture and language, to the deracinating arrival of war.

PEN/Faulkner Award

[*Canada*](#) by Richard Ford - The story unfolds around 15-year-old Dell Parsons, whose world collapses when his parents are jailed for a bank robbery, his twin sister flees, and he is transported across the border by a family friend to an obscure town in Canada.

Andrew Carnegie Fiction Medal

[*Case Histories*](#) by Kate Atkinson - As private detective Jackson Brodie investigates three cold cases, startling connections and discoveries emerge and Jackson finds himself inextricably caught up in his clients' lives.

Costa (Whitbread) Book Award

[Changing Planes](#) by Ursula Le Guin - From the Grand Mistress of speculative fiction comes *A Gulliver's Travels* for the 21st century that is deeply thought provoking and heartbreakingly poignant.

Locus Award

[A Confederacy of Dunces](#) by John Kennedy Toole - A Pulitzer Prize-winning novel of a mother and son voicing insights and injunctions regarding their lives in back alley New Orleans.

Pulitzer Prize

[A Constellation of Vital Phenomena](#) by Anthony Marra - In war-torn Chechnya, a doctor watches as Russian soldiers abduct his neighbor, who has been accused of aiding Chechen rebels. He later rescues the neighbor's 8-year-old daughter, then colludes with another doctor to form an unlikely family amid the daily violence.

John Leonard Prize, Indies Choice Award

[The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time](#) by Mark Haddon - Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, a mathematically-gifted, autistic teenager investigates the murder of a neighbor's dog, meanwhile uncovering family secrets.

Los Angeles Times Book Prize, Costa (Whitbread) Book Award, Commonwealth Writers Prize

[Cutting for Stone](#) by Abraham Verghese - Twin brothers born in Ethiopia of a secret union between a beautiful Indian nun and a brash British surgeon are bound together by a preternatural connection and a shared fascination with medicine,

Indies Choice Fiction Award

[Disgrace](#) by J. M. Coetzee - In post-apartheid South Africa, a fifty-two-year-old college professor who has lost his job for sleeping with a student tries to relate to his daughter, Lucy, who works with an ambitious African farmer.

Man Booker Prize, Commonwealth Writers Prize

[The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood](#) by Rebecca Wells - A tale of four southern women and their daughters who find identity and acceptance through their lifelong friendships.

Book Sense Fiction Award

[Ender's Game](#) by Orson Scott Card - In order to develop a secure defense against a hostile alien race's next attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. Winner of the Hugo and Nebula Awards.

Hugo Award, Nebula Award

[Euphoria](#) by Lily King - Frustrated by his research efforts and depressed over the death of his brothers, Andre Banson runs into two fellow anthropologists, a married couple, in 1930s New Guinea and begins a tumultuous relationship with them. The story is loosely based on events in the life of Margaret Mead.

Kirkus Prize

[The Forgotten Waltz](#) by Anne Enright - During a peaceful snowfall in a suburb in Dublin, a woman remembers her younger days spent with her lover in various hotel rooms.

Carnegie Medal

[Founding Brothers: the Revolutionary Generation](#) by Joseph Ellis - An illuminating study of the intertwined lives of the founders of the American republic--Adams, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Madison, and Washington.

Pulitzer Prize

[A Game of Thrones](#) by George R. R. Martin - The aristocratic Stark family faces its ultimate challenge in the onset of a generation-long winter, the poisonous plots of the rival Lannisters, the emergence of the Neverborn demons, and the arrival of barbarian hordes.

Locus Award

[*Gilead*](#) by Marilynne Robinson - (Regular and Large Print) Nearing death, the Reverend John Ames writes a letter to his son chronicling three generations of his family, a story that stretches back to the Civil War and reveals uncomfortable family secrets.

Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award

[*The Giver*](#) by Lois Lowry - A Newbery Award winner depicting a future society and the young boy who realizes the truth about his world and struggles with its duplicity.

Newbery Medal

[*The God of Small Things*](#) by Arundhati Roy - In 1969 in Kerala, India, Rahel and her twin brother, Estha, struggle to forge a childhood for themselves amid the destruction of their family life. Winner of the Booker Prize for best fiction.

Man Booker Prize

[*The Good Earth*](#) by Pearl S. Buck - This great modern classic depicts life in China through one Chinese peasant and his family at a time before the vast political and social upheavals transformed an essentially agrarian country into a world power.

Pulitzer Prize

[*The Good Lord Bird*](#) by James McBride - Mistaken for a girl on account of his delicate features and sackcloth smock, 12-year-old slave Henry Shackleford is liberated by abolitionist John Brown and accompanies the increasingly fanatical Brown on his crusade to end slavery.

National Book Award

[*The Grapes of Wrath*](#) by John Steinbeck - A Pulitzer Prize-winning novel spotlighting the struggle of a dust bowl family who migrate to California to become migrant workers.

Pulitzer Prize

[*The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*](#) by Mary Ann Shaffer - An account of a writer's relationship with the members of a unique book club formed on the isle of Guernsey as an alibi to protect its members from arrest at the hands of the Nazis during WWII.

Indies Choice Award

[*Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*](#) by Jared Diamond - Diamond offers a convincing explanation of the way the modern world came to be and stunningly dismantles racially based theories of human history.

Pulitzer Prize

[*H is for Hawk*](#) by Helen Macdonald - When naturalist Helen Macdonald's beloved father died suddenly, she was devastated. An experienced falconer, she resolved to purchase and raise one of the most vicious predators, the goshawk, as a means to cope with her loss. Thus Mabel came into her life.

Samuel Johnson Award, Costa Book Award

[*The Handmaid's Tale*](#) by Margaret Atwood - A speculative allegory focusing on a world dominated by militaristic fundamentalists, with selective women designated for breeding purposes.

Governor Generals Award, Los Angeles Times Book Prize

[*Home*](#) by Marilynne Robinson - Returning to Gilead to care for her dying father, Glory Boughton is joined by her long-absent brother, with whom she bonds throughout his struggles with alcoholism, unemployment, and their father's traditionalist values.

Women's Prize for Fiction (Orange Prize), Los Angeles Times Book Prize

[*Hotel du Lac*](#) by Anita Brookner - After jilting her fiancé, Edith Hope retreats to a Swiss Hotel where she ponders her relationship with a married lover and reflects on life-at-large.

Man Booker Prize

[The Hours](#) by Michael Cunningham - Virginia Woolf is brought back to life in an intertwining of her story with those of two more contemporary women who are struggling with the conflicting claims of love, hope and despair.

Pulitzer Prize, PEN/Faulkner Award

[I Feel Bad About My Neck: And Other Thoughts on Being a Woman](#) by Nora Ephron - From the screenwriter who brought us *When Harry Met Sally* comes a hilarious, candid look at issues that concern women.

Book Sense Nonfiction Award

[In the Woods](#) by Tana French - Twenty years after witnessing the violent disappearances of two companions from their small Dublin suburb, detective Rob Ryan investigates a chillingly similar murder that takes place in the same woods, a case that forces him to piece together his traumatic memories.

Edgar First Novel Award, Anthony First Novel Award, Macavity First Novel Award

[Independence Day](#) by Richard Ford - A tale of an "everyman" sorting out his life in the midst of a 4th of July celebration.

Pulitzer Prize, PEN/Faulkner Award

[Invisible Man](#) by Ralph Ellison - The classic novel of the experiences of a young black man during the Depression as he travels from the Deep South to Harlem portray the invisibility of his life.

National Book Award

[Just Kids](#) by Patti Smith - National Book award winner details Smith's earlier years in New York City, where she meets Robert Mapplethorpe and they begin their journey together trying to make it as artists.

National Book Award

[The Known World](#) by Edward P. Jones - When a black slave owner dies, his widow Caldonia mismanages their Virginia plantation with disastrous results.

Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award, IMPAC Dublin Literary Award

[The Lacuna](#) by Barbara Kingsolver - The story of Harrison William Shepherd, a man caught between two worlds -- Mexico and the United States in the 1930s, '40s, and '50s -- and whose search for identity takes readers to the heart of the twentieth century's most tumultuous events.

Women's Prize for Fiction (Orange Prize)

[A Lesson before Dying](#) by Ernest Gaines - The story of a black man unjustly accused of a killing and a teacher who must struggle with the universal question of how to live and die with dignity in segregated Louisiana.

National Book Critics Circle Award

[Let the Great World Spin](#) by Colum McCann - A rich vision of the pain, loveliness, mystery, and promise of New York City in the 1970s comes alive in the voices of the city's people, unexpectedly drawn together by hope, beauty, and the "artistic crime of the century"--a mysterious tightrope walker dancing between the Twin Towers.

National Book Award, IMPAC Dublin Literary Award

[Life After Life](#) by Kate Atkinson - As she grows up during the first half of the twentieth century in Britain Ursula Todd dies and is brought back to life again and again. With a seemingly infinite number of lives it appears as though she has the ability to alter the history of the world, should she so choose.

Costa Book Award, Indies Choice Fiction Award

[Life of Pi](#) by Yann Martel - Pi Patel, a zookeeper's son, sets sail for America. When the ship sinks, he escapes on a life boat and is lost at sea with a dwindling number of animals until only he and a hungry Bengal tiger remain.

Man Booker Prize

[Like Water for Chocolate](#) by Laura Esquivel - A bittersweet romance set in Mexico, where romance and sensuality are combined with magical realism in the celebration of food.

Book Sense Fiction Award

[Lives of Girls and Women](#) by Alice Munro - This classic female coming-of-age novel is both the story of strong-willed Del Jordan, from schoolchild to passionate young woman, and an evocative portrait of small-town rural Ontario in the 1940s.

Nobel Prize

[The Lover](#) by Marguerite Duras - An adolescent French girl living with her family in pre-World War II Indochina in the waning days of France's colonial empire has a scandalous and tumultuous affair with the son of a wealthy Chinese businessman.

Le Prix Goncourt

[Maisie Dobbs](#) by Jacqueline Winspear - Maisie Dobbs entered domestic service in 1910 at thirteen. When her remarkable intelligence is discovered by her employer, Maisie is educated and in 1929 she hangs out her shingle: M. Dobbs, Trade and Personal Investigations.

Agatha Award, Macavity Award

[March](#) by Geraldine Brooks - From Louisa May Alcott's beloved classic Little Women, Geraldine Brooks has taken the character of the absent father, March, who has gone off to war. Spanning the vibrant intellectual world of Concord and the sensuous antebellum South, March adds adult resonance to Alcott's optimistic children's tale.

Pulitzer Prize

[The Marriage Plot](#) by Jeffrey Eugenides - Madeleine Hanna breaks out of her straight-and-narrow mold when she enrolls in a semiotics course and falls in love with charismatic loner which is complicated by the resurfacing of man who is obsessed with the idea that Madeleine is his destiny.

Indies Choice Award

[The Martian](#) by Andy Weir - After a bad storm cuts his team's Mars mission short, injured astronaut Mark Watley is stranded. Now he's got to figure out how to survive without air, shelter, food, or water on the harsh Martian landscape until the next manned mission in four years.

Indies Choice Award

[The Master](#) by Colm Toibin - Nineteenth-century writer Henry James is heartbroken when his first play performs poorly in contrast to Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" and struggles with subsequent doubts about his sexual identity.

IMPAC Dublin Literary Award, Los Angeles Times Book Prize, Stonewall Book Award

[The Meursault Investigation](#) by Kamel Daoud - This work revisits Albert Camus's The Stranger from the Arab perspective. The narrator, Harun, recalls the murder of his older brother, Musa, who is all but anonymous in Camus's work, and the heavy consequences of this act.

Le Prix Goncourt

[Middle Passage](#) by Charles Richard Johnson - This is a picaresque tale, historical romance, sea yarn, slave narrative, and philosophical novel about Rutherford Calhoun, a newly freed slave and irrepressible rogue.

National Book Award

[Middlesex](#) by Jeffrey Eugenides - Calliope's friendship with a classmate and her sense of identity are compromised by the adolescent discovery that she is a hermaphrodite, a situation with roots in her grandparents' desperate struggle for survival in the 1920s.

Pulitzer Prize

[Midnight's Children](#) by Salman Rushdie - A family saga set against the vast, colorful background of the India of this century.

Man Booker Prize

[*The Moor's Last Sigh*](#) by Salman Rushdie - Booker Prize-winning author Salman Rushdie combines a ferociously witty family saga with a surreally imagined and sometimes blasphemous chronicle of modern India and flavors the mixture with peppery soliloquies on art, ethnicity, religious fanaticism, and the terrifying power of love.

Costa (Whitbread) Book Award, American Book Award

[*Motherless Brooklyn*](#) by Jonathan Lethem - A P.I. who suffers from Tourette's Syndrome tries to find out who killed the man who rescued him and three other misfits from a Brooklyn orphanage.

National Book Critics Circle Award

[*My Name is Red*](#) by Orhan Pamuk - In sixteenth-century Istanbul, a furor erupts when the Sultan hires a group of artists to illuminate a great book in the European style at a time in which all figurative art is considered Islamic heresy, but the situation becomes worse when one of the miniaturists vanishes.

IMPAC Dublin Literary Award

[*Nickel and Dimed: On \(Not\) Getting by in America*](#) by Barbara Ehrenreich - Determined to find out how anyone could make ends meet on \$7 an hour, the author left behind her middle class life as a journalist to try to sustain herself as a low-skilled worker.

Los Angeles Times Book Prize

[*The Night Circus*](#) by Erin Morgenstern - When Prospero the Enchanter discovers that he has a young daughter, Celia with extraordinary magical talents, he wastes no time in setting up a competition between her and Marco, the protégé of his longtime adversary.

Locus Award

[*No Ordinary Time: Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt The Home Front in World War II*](#) by Doris Kearns Goodwin - A Pulitzer Prize-winning account of the lives of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt.

Pulitzer Prize

[*Olive Kitteridge*](#) by Elizabeth Strout - At the edge of the continent, in the small town of Crosby, Maine, lives Olive Kitteridge, a retired schoolteacher who deplores the changes in her town and in the world at large but doesn't always recognize the changes in those around her.

Pulitzer Prize

[*One of Ours*](#) by Willa Cather - The Pulitzer Prize-winning narrative of the making of a young American soldier in World War I.

Pulitzer Prize

[*Ordinary Grace*](#) by William Kent Kruger - Looking back at a tragic event that occurred during his thirteenth year, Frank Drum explores how a complicated web of secrets, adultery, and betrayal shattered his Methodist family and their small 1961 Minnesota community.

Edgar Best Novel Award

[*Peace Like a River*](#) by Leif Enger - The quiet 1960s midwestern life of the Land family is upended when son Davy kills two teenage boys who have come to harm the family.

Book Sense Fiction Award

[*Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*](#) by Annie Dillard - A series of essays that combines scientific observation, philosophy and personal meditation with beautifully written prose.

Pulitzer Prize

[*The Poisonwood Bible*](#) by Barbara Kingsolver - A story of a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family on a mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. A suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction.

Book Sense Fiction Award

[*Reading Lolita in Tehran*](#) by Azar Nafisi - A glimpse into women's lives in revolutionary Iran; the story of the author and the women invited into her home to read and discuss forbidden works of Western Literature.

Book Sense Nonfiction Award

[*The Red Tent*](#) by Anita Diamant - (Regular and Large Print) A fictional retelling of Genesis stories of the daily life of women, as told by Dinah, daughter of Jacob and Leah.

Book Sense Fiction Award

[*Redeployment*](#) by Phil Klay - A collection of short stories by a former Marine captain and Iraq veteran focuses on the complexities of life for soldiers on the front lines and after, exploring themes ranging from brutality and faith to guilt and survival.

National Book Award

[*The Remains of the Day*](#) by Kazuo Ishiguro - The fictional account of an aging butler recalling his life at Darlington Hall which includes intrigue of world politics and upper-class English society.

Man Booker Prize

[*Remembering Babylon*](#) by David Malouf - A compelling tale of a young Australian left for dead who is brought up by the Aborigines, and the bigotry he faces when he returns to Australian society.

Los Angeles Times Book Prize, IMPAC Dublin Literary Award

[*The Road*](#) by Cormac McCarthy - America is a barren landscape of smoldering ashes, devoid of life except for those people still struggling to scratch out some type of existence. Amidst the destruction, a father and his young son walk, always toward the coast, but with no real understanding that circumstances will improve once they arrive.

Pulitzer Prize

[*Room*](#) by Emma Donoghue - A five-year-old narrates a story about his life growing up in a single room where his mother aims to protect him from the man who kidnapped her when she was a teenager and has held her prisoner for seven years.

Indies Choice Fiction Award, Commonwealth Writers Prize

[*Runaway*](#) by Alice Munro - (Large Print) These short stories all concern Canadian woman facing pivotal moments in their lives, even if they're not aware of it at the moment.

Scotiabank Giller Prize

[*Salvage the Bones*](#) by Jesmyn Ward - Enduring a hardscrabble existence as the children of alcoholic and absent parents, four siblings from a coastal Mississippi town prepare their meager stores for the arrival of Hurricane Katrina while struggling with such challenges as a teen pregnancy and a dying litter of prize pups.

National Book Award

[*Seabiscuit: an American Legend*](#) by Laura Hillenbrand - The spellbinding true story of this marvelous animal, the world he lived in, and the men who staked their lives and fortunes on his dazzling career.

Book Sense Nonfiction Award

[*The Sense of an Ending*](#) by Julian Barnes – Tony Webster, a middle-aged man, contends with a past he never thought much about—until his closest childhood friends return with a vengeance: one of them from the grave, another maddeningly present.

Man Booker Prize

[*Slaves in the Family*](#) by Edward Ball - A National Book Award-winning family biography traces the Ball family history back to their arrival in America as well as the slave families owned by and related to the Ball's.

National Book Award

[*The Snow Child*](#) by Eowyn Ivey - A childless couple working a farm in the brutal landscape of 1920 Alaska discover a little girl living in the wilderness, with a red fox as a companion, and begin to love the strange, almost-supernatural child as their own.

Indies Choice Fiction Award

[*Snow Falling on Cedars*](#) by David Guterson - A murder trial of a Japanese American for the murder of a fellow fisherman reveals the racism of a small community.

PEN/Faulkner Award, Book Sense Fiction Award

[So Big](#) by Edna Ferber – The unforgettable story of Selina Peake DeJong, a gambler's daughter, and her struggles to stay afloat and maintain her dignity and her sanity in the face of marriage, widowhood, and single parenthood.

Pulitzer Prize

[Station Eleven](#) by Emily St. John Mandel – Twenty years after a devastating flu pandemic a small troupe of actors and musicians moves between the settlements of the altered world performing Shakespeare, dedicating themselves to keeping the remnants of art and humanity alive.

Arthur C Clarke Award

[The Stone Diaries](#) by Carol Shields - A fictional account of one woman's life presented through diary entries revealing her childhood, marriage, motherhood, and widowed years.

Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award, Governor Generals Award

[The Sympathizer](#) by Viet Thanh Nguyen - A communist double agent, a half-French, half-Vietnamese army captain, comes to America after the Fall of Saigon, and while building a new life with other Vietnamese refugees in Los Angeles is secretly reporting back to his communist superiors in Vietnam.

Pulitzer Prize, Andrew Carnegie Fiction Medal, Edgar Award

[A Taste for Death](#) by P. D. James - Inspector Adam Dalgliesh, investigates the murder of a member of the peerage who is found with his throat slit in the vestry of a church.

Macavity Award

[A Thief of Time](#) by Tony Hillerman - An investigation of the despoiling of an ancient Anasazi ruin where two corpses appear amid stolen goods and bones.

Macavity Award

[This Boy's Life](#) by Tobias Wolff - This unforgettable, bestselling memoir by a gifted writer introduces the young Toby Wolff, by turns tough and vulnerable, crafty and bumbling, and ultimately winning.

Los Angeles Times Book Prize

[A Thousand Acres](#) by Jane Smiley - A saga of a farmer and his two daughters as their secrets erupt and unravel the family's carefully constructed world.

Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award

[Three Junes](#) by Julia Glass - A family portrait during three separate Junes spanning ten years. Paul McLeod is a recent widower hoping to find a new life in the Greek islands; Fenno McLeod is a New York bookstore owner dealing with the death of a close friend, and Fern is a pregnant dreamer unsure of her future.

National Book Award

[The Tiger's Wife](#) by Tea Obreht - A young doctor living in an unnamed country, crosses the border in search of answers about the death of her beloved grandfather, who raised her on tales from the village he grew up in, and where in 1941, a tiger escaped from the zoo in a nearby city and befriended a mysterious deaf-mute woman.

Women's Prize for Fiction (Orange Prize)

[Tinkers](#) by Paul Harding -The history and final thoughts of a dying grandfather surrounded by his family. George Washington Crosby repairs clocks for a living and on his deathbed revisits his turbulent childhood as the oldest son of an epileptic smalltime traveling salesman.

Pulitzer Prize

[A Visit from the Goon Squad](#) by Jennifer Egan - Working side-by-side for a record label, former punk rocker Bennie Salazar and the passionate Sasha hide illicit secrets from one another while interacting with a motley assortment of equally troubled people from 1970s San Francisco to the post-war future.

Pulitzer Prize, National Book Critics Circle Award, Los Angeles Times Book Prize

[Waiting](#) by Ha Jin - An ambitious and dedicated Chinese doctor, Lin Kong finds himself torn between two very different women--the educated and dynamic nurse with whom he has fallen in love and the traditional, meek, and humble woman to whom his family married him when they were both very young.

National Book Award, PEN/Faulkner Award

[Water for Elephants](#) by Sara Gruen - Ninety-something-year-old Jacob Jankowski remembers his time in the circus as a young man during the Great Depression, and his friendship with Marlena, the star of the equestrian act, and Rosie, the elephant, who gave them hope.

Book Sense Fiction Book of the Year

[We Need to Talk About Kevin](#) by Lionel Shriver - The mother of a teenage boy who killed seven fellow students in a high-school shooting writes a series of letters to her estranged husband on their son's upbringing and questions what she fears may be her own part in the tragedy.

Women's Prize for Fiction (Orange Prize)

[White Teeth](#) by Zadie Smith - Set in post-war London, this novel of the racial, political, and social upheaval of the last half-century follows two families--the Joneses and the Iqbals, both outsiders from within the former British empire--as they make their way in modern England.

Costa (Whitbread) Book Award, Commonwealth Writers Prize, Guardian First Book Award

[The White Tiger](#) by Aravind Adiga - The white tiger of this novel is Balram Halwai, a poor Indian villager whose great ambition leads him from a driver and servant to a wealthy Indian family to the zenith of Indian business culture, the world of the Bangalore entrepreneur.

Man Booker Prize

[Who Asked You?](#) by Terry McMillan - Already burdened with the dramas of her other adult children, her senile husband and her interfering sisters, BJ finds herself caring for her grandchildren when one of her daughters disappears.

NAACP Image Fiction Award

[Wild: from Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail](#) by Cheryl Strayed - At twenty-six, Cheryl Strayed thought she had lost everything. With nothing more to lose, with no experience or training, driven only by blind will, she hiked more than a thousand miles of the Pacific Crest Trail.

Indies Choice Nonfiction Award

[World's Fair](#) by E. L. Doctorow - A story of New York of the 1930's as the country deals with a looming depression and war on the horizon, as told through the eyes of a young boy.

National Book Award

[The Worst Hard Time](#) by Timothy Egan - Timothy Egan's critically acclaimed account of the dust storms that terrorized the High Plains in the darkest years of the Depression, following a dozen families and their communities through blinding black dust blizzards, crop failure, and the death of loved ones.

National Book Award

[The Year of Magical Thinking](#) by Joan Didion - Didion explores with electric honesty and passion a private yet universal experience. Her portrait of a marriage-- and a life, in good times and bad-- will speak directly to anyone who has ever loved a husband, a wife, or a child.

National Book Award

[The Yellow Birds](#) by Kevin Powers - In the midst of a bloody battle in the Iraq War, two soldiers, bound together since basic training, do everything to protect each other from both outside enemies and the internal struggles that come from constant danger.

Guardian First Book Award

[You Have Given Me a Country](#) by Neela Vaswani - Combining memoir, history, and fiction, the book follows the paths of the author's Irish-Catholic mother and Sindhi-Indian father on their journey toward each other and the biracial child they create.

American Book Award

[Zeitoun](#) by David Eggers - The tribulations of Syrian-born painting contractor Abdulrahman Zeitoun, who, while aiding in rescue efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, was inexplicably arrested by military personnel and swept into a bureaucratic maelstrom of civil injustices.

Los Angeles Times Book Prize, American Book Award