

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

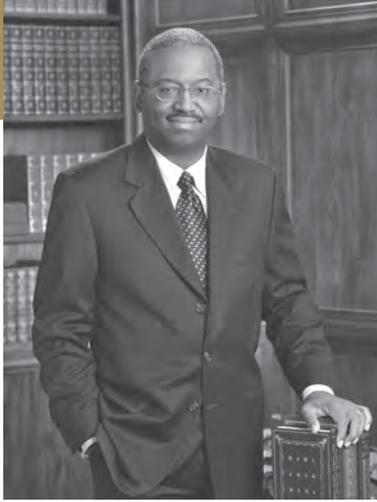


RECOMMENDED READING LIST



hen I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young.

~ *Maya Angelou*



“Reading opens doors and creates ideas by broadening our knowledge of the world.”

Dr. George C. Wright

President
Prairie View A&M University

Dear Readers:

It is with great pleasure that I present the Prairie View A&M University Recommended Reading List. As an historian and lifelong educator, I am convinced of the value and power of reading. Reading opens doors and creates ideas. We realize new dreams by reading about a fictional character or the success story of an entrepreneur who built a successful business. You can discover places in a book that would take years to actually visit.

I have been an avid reader all of my life, beginning in the fourth grade with short biographies of famous Americans, and books about exploration, inventors and military history. From there I started reading periodicals, such as *National Geographic* and *Sports Illustrated* every month, which I still do today. These readings broadened my knowledge of the world beyond Lexington, Kentucky, where I grew up.

As you might imagine, developing this list has been an enjoyable and painstaking journey. We received numerous suggestions from PVAMU faculty, staff, alumni and colleagues from other universities. Given the differences in preferences and interests, this list is in no way exhaustive. Nor is it meant to be. We hope you will view this as a starting place. Use this guide to mark books off your personal reading list and to add others that we did not include. Even the classifications (i.e., Pre-Freshman through Senior) are merely suggestions to help you start reading. Feel free to read from any level and in any order. **The most important outcome is that you READ!**

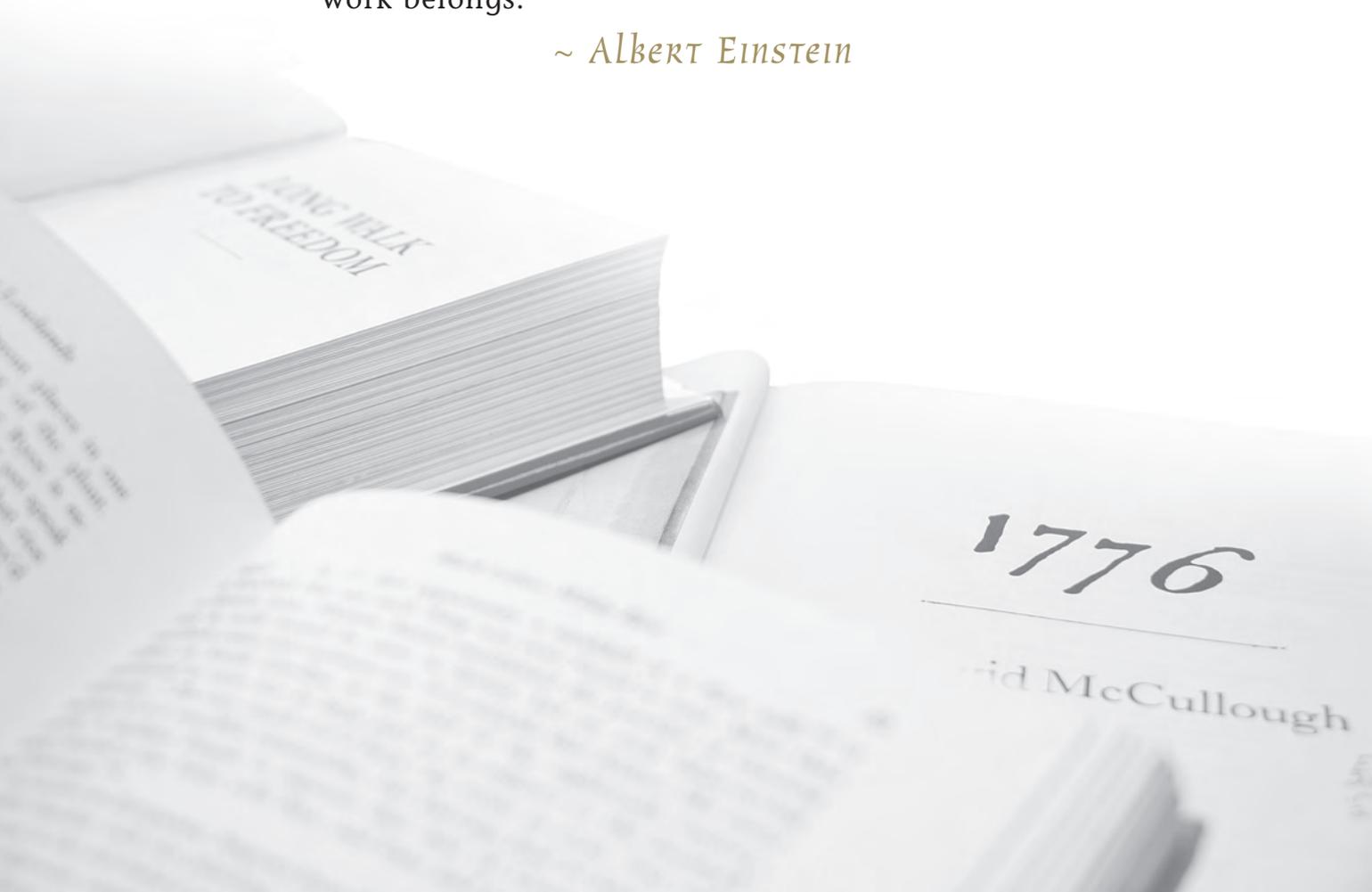
As President, I am committed to making sure that students receive much more than a degree. I want students to leave Prairie View with an education, one that includes many experiences that extend beyond the classroom. If students come to understand why making time to read outside of textbooks and assigned readings is so critical to their future, they will be taking a major leap toward becoming educated. Reading inspires and challenges us. Whether or not you are a Prairie View A&M student or a student at all, I hope you will take the opportunity to read and enjoy many of the titles from the list. Depending on your vantage point, you can find or lose yourself in a book. Either way, embrace the journey.

George C. Wright



ever regard study as a duty, but as the enviable opportunity to learn to know the liberating influence of beauty in the realm of the spirit for your own personal joy and to the profit of the community to which your later work belongs.

~ ALBERT EINSTEIN



Pre-Freshman

“We must go beyond the textbooks, go out into the bypaths and untrodden depths of the wilderness, and travel and explore and tell the world the glories of our journey.” *John Hope Franklin*

How to Read a Book

Adler, Mortimer J. and
Van Doren, Charles
Reference

Considered the most successful guide to reading comprehension, this book reveals techniques for becoming an active reader of various types of materials, from literature to science and mathematics.

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

Smith, Betty
American Literature (Fiction)

This moving account of young Francie Nolan growing up in turn-of-the-century Brooklyn emphasizes the value of family and education.

The Old Man and the Sea

Hemingway, Ernest
American Literature (Fiction)

Conveyed with simple power, this classic novel shows the life of a troubled Cuban fisherman and his battle with a giant marlin in the deep sea.

Jonathan Livingston Seagull

Bach, Richard
American Literature (Fiction)

This fable, built around the story of a seagull, reveals the importance of striving for a deeper purpose in life. By refusing to compromise his vision, the seagull learns the meaning of love and kindness.

The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours

Edelman, Marian Wright
Advice

Drawing from the experiences of her childhood, Dr. Edelman writes to her children, urging them to serve the community at large. This book serves as a reminder to everyone to live a life of principles, with an aim of making the world a better place.

Moby-Dick

Melville, Herman
American Literature (Fiction)

This compelling story of a sea voyage uses the human struggle with nature to reveal the ups and downs of pursuing life fulfillment.

House on Mango Street

Cisneros, Sandra
American Literature (Fiction)

This novel brilliantly delivers a young woman's transformation as she grows up discovering both the beauty and the unpleasantness of her Latino neighborhood.

The Diary of Anne Frank

Frank, Anne
Autobiography

Discovered in the attic where she spent the last years of her life, Frank's remarkable diary reveals the horrors of Jewish persecution during the Holocaust.

To Kill A Mockingbird

Lee, Harper
American Literature (Fiction)

Based in a small southern town, this powerful account of a young girl and her father depicts themes of misunderstanding and prejudice.

Freshman

“One’s mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.” *Oliver Wendell Holmes*

The Elements of Style

Strunk, William Jr. and White, E.B.
Reference

Contains rules of grammar and writing style concentrating on fundamentals, such as usage and principles of composition.

The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin

Franklin, Benjamin
Autobiography

Though written more than 200 years ago, Franklin’s autobiography remains an extremely useful guide for anyone who wants to be successful. It provides a moving account of his unique life, inventive style and personal philosophies.

The Purpose Driven Life: What on earth am I here for?

Warren, Rick
Practical Theology

This 40-day devotional uses Biblical principles to demonstrate that all humans were created for a purpose.

The Killer Angels

Shaara, Michael
History

With in-depth characterizations that cover the relationships of the main actors on both sides of the Battle of Gettysburg, Shaara’s Pulitzer Prize-winning novel covers three of the most important days of the Civil War.

Huckleberry Finn

Twain, Mark
American Literature (Fiction)

This novel is an adventure story of classic American humor and symbolism.

Long Walk to Freedom

Mandela, Nelson
Autobiography

The autobiography of Nelson Mandela reveals much about the history of the man who would become President of South Africa after serving 27 years in prison during that country’s apartheid regime.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Angelou, Maya
Autobiography

Demonstrating Angelou’s gift for storytelling, this autobiography beautifully portrays a youth filled with frustration, tragedy and the lessons learned from a grandmother and a close-knit community.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X

X, Malcolm
Autobiography

One of the key leaders during the Civil Rights Movement, Malcolm X becomes the rallying point for those seeking a more radical response to the approach advocated by Martin Luther King, Jr. This interesting look into the leadership and transformation of Malcolm X provides context for this complicated man.

The Coldest March: Scott’s Fatal Antarctic Expedition

Solomon, Susan
History

This entertaining and well-documented work seeks to explain the tragic deaths of Captain Robert Falcon Scott and his team during their attempt to become the first explorers to reach the South Pole.

Sophomore

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave

Douglass, Frederick
Autobiography

In this personal testimony of courage and determination, Douglass presents his life story in a manner that informs the reader of his journey from being a slave to statesman, writer and orator.

Angela's Ashes

McCourt, Frank
Biography

With a humorous and direct style, this story depicts the triumphs and tragedies of an Irish family whose journey to survive is an inspirational message of human perseverance.

The Souls of Black Folk

Du Bois, W.E.B.
Autobiography

A moving discussion of Du Bois' early life, this book also includes his views on race relations and the status of blacks at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary

Williams, Juan
Biography

Williams exposes Marshall's charisma and brilliant legal mind while honestly revealing his flaws and complicated relationships with other national figures, such as J. Edgar Hoover, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.

The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man

Johnson, James Weldon
American Literature (Fiction)

Told through the eyes of a black man who "passes" for white, this novel explores the complexity of race in American society.

The Prince

Machiavelli, Niccolo
Political Science

Although written in 1513, this practical treatise on leadership and power is still relevant today.

Born to Rebel: An Autobiography by Benjamin E. Mays

Mays, Benjamin E.
Autobiography

Chronicling the life of Benjamin Mays, this book begins with his birth as the son of sharecroppers and covers his rise to minister, educator and civil rights leader.

The White Nile

Moorehead, Alan
History

Full of historical details and compelling stories of heroism, emotion and violence, Moorehead's story focuses on European discovery, conquest and colonization of the Nile region in the second half of the nineteenth century.

“He that loves a book will never want a faithful friend, a wholesome counselor, a cheerful companion, an effectual comforter. By study, by reading, by thinking, one may innocently divert and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all weathers, as in all fortunes.” *Isaac Barrow*

**Black Boy:
A Record of Childhood and Youth**
Wright, Richard
Autobiography

A narrative of one young man’s coming of age in the South, this book remains an important text about what it meant to be black at the height of Jim Crow.

**Black Women in America,
2nd Edition**
Hine, Darlene Clark
History (African American)

This useful reference guide of African American women highlights their involvement in organizations, movements, arts, literature, culture and professions.

1776
McCullough, David
History

This book covers the turbulent beginning of the American Revolution in 1776 and explains how the upstart rebels led by George Washington nearly lost the war.

**Booker T. Washington:
The Making of a Black Leader,
1856-1901 (Vol. I)**

Harlan’s two-volume work demonstrates that Booker T. Washington successfully rallied to build libraries and schools for blacks at a time when the laws made no such provision. He also shows Washington’s complex personality and the opposition he faced from many black leaders, as well as his relationships with such powerful whites as Theodore Roosevelt and Andrew Carnegie.

**The Wizard of Tuskegee,
1901-1915 (Vol. II)**
Harlan, Louis
Biography

**The Last Climb:
The Legendary Everest
Expeditions of George Mallory**
Breashears, David and
Salkeld, Audrey
History

Revealing much about the men of the World War I generation, this fascinating book discusses the attempt by George Mallory and Andrew Irvine to be the first to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

**A People’s History of the
United States:
1492 to Present**
Zinn, Howard
History

Though Zinn’s book is a historical narrative of American History from Christopher Columbus to William Clinton’s presidency, its interpretation differs largely because the author relies on the voices of a wide range of people from diverse cultures and perspectives to tell the story.

JUNIOR

All Quiet on the Western Front

Remarque, Erich Maria
History

Depicted through the lives of young soldiers in the German Army during World War I, this novel captures the horrors of war.

John Adams

McCullough, David
Biography

This highly acclaimed study of the second president of the United States, who has been largely overlooked, demonstrates his political acumen.

Mirror to America

Franklin, John Hope
Autobiography

This autobiography of the renowned scholar, John Hope Franklin, chronicles 90 years of his life and America's progress toward racial equality.

Silent Spring

Carson, Rachel
Science

Affecting revolutionary changes in the environmental laws, Carson's path-breaking book informed the public of the harm caused by the indiscriminate use of pesticides.

The Known World

Jones, Edward P.
American Literature (Fiction)

Exploring the world of black slave owners in the antebellum South, this novel offers intricate plot lines, interesting characters and historical insight.

The Power of One

Courtenay, Bryce
English Literature

Set in a world where freedom remains elusive, this is the story of one man's realization that it takes only one person to change the world.

**The Peculiar Institution:
Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South**

Stampp, Kenneth
History

The starting point for virtually every book and article written on slavery over the last 50 years, Stampp's well-researched account showing the daily lives of slaves, the complex relationship between slave and master, and how slaves rebelled, remains the single best book on "America's peculiar institution": slavery.

**Norton Anthology of
African American Literature**

Gates, Henry Louis and
McKay, Nellie Y.
American Literature

This massive work gathers writings from six periods of black history: slavery and freedom; Reconstruction; the Harlem Renaissance; Realism, Naturalism and Modernism; the Black Arts Movement; and the period since the 1970s.

The Millionaire Next Door

Stanley, Thomas J. and
Danko, William D.
Advice

By following seven simple rules outlined in this book, one can join the ranks of American millionaires.

“The man who doesn’t read good books has no advantage over the man who can’t read them.” *Mark Twain*

**Eleventh Month, Eleventh Day,
Eleventh Hour: Armistice Day, 1918
World War I and Its Violent Climax**

Persico, Joseph
History

Through the voices of soldiers in the trenches, this riveting book chronicles the activities of British, American and German troops on the final ill-fated morning of The Great War.

The World As I See It

Einstein, Albert
Autobiography

Based largely on his dedication to science, Einstein shows his concern for humanity and his belief that we can live in a peaceful world.

Simple Justice

Kluger, Richard
History

Demonstrating how the *Brown* decision was built on the 14th amendment and prior legislation, Kluger’s work is a legal history of civil rights cases from the 1870s to the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* landmark decision.

Lonesome Dove

McMurtry, Larry
American Literature (Fiction)

McMurtry’s novel embraces heroes, outlaws, cowboys and Indians of the American Wild West. It also contains stories of romantic love.

**The Rise of
Theodore Roosevelt (Vol. I)**

Theodore Rex (Vol. II)

Morris, Edmund
Biography

Morris’ massive works examine Roosevelt’s accomplishments and provide insight into the man who transformed the office of the President.

**King Leopold’s Ghost:
A Story of Greed, Terror and
Heroism in Colonial Africa**

Hochschild, Adam
History

Tracing Leopold’s rule and the barbarous system that led to the systematic slaughter, slavery, torture and mass murder of Central Africans and his creation of the Congo Free State, this study delves into the essence of the economic and political systems established in Colonial Africa between 1885-1908.

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Baldwin, James
American Literature (Fiction)

With symbolism that strikes a balance between joy and despair, Baldwin’s novel personifies Harlem and the black experience during the Great Depression.

**The Crucible of Race: Black-White
Relations in the American South
Since Emancipation**

Williamson, Joel
History

Williamson presents a reinterpretation on black and white relations in the American South in the critical years after the Civil War to the 1920s, a time of unparalleled racial discord.

Senior

The Mismeasure of Man

Gould, Stephen Jay
Science

Gould's masterful book pointed out the flaws of "intelligence testing" and thoroughly dissected the motivation of those who judge intelligence, beginning in the nineteenth century.

Parting the Waters: America in the King years, 1954-1963 (Vol. I)

Pillars of Fire: America in the King years, 1963-1965 (Vol. II)

At Canaan's Edge: America in the King years, 1965-68 (Vol. III)

Branch, Taylor
History

This Pulitzer Prize-winning three-volume work presents an expansive portrait of King's journey to greatness and the events that helped shape the American social landscape from 1954 to his death in 1968.

A History of God: The 4000-year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam

Armstrong, Karen
History

A British journalist and former nun, Armstrong leads the reader in the search for God by showing how Judaism, Christianity and Islam overlap and influence one another.

White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812

Jordan, Winthrop
History

Presenting an intriguing and informative discussion on the roots of racial prejudice in American history, Jordan explains why Africans instead of Europeans or Native Americans were enslaved, the system of slavery and the foundation of early American society.

The Plague

Camus, Albert
Literature

Considered by some to be one of the best novels ever written, Camus reveals his notions about humanity, life and the battle against evil.

Invisible Man

Ellison, Ralph
Literature

Written as a book about race in America, Ellison's novel is about our reliance on outward appearance when dealing with each other. It also reveals his search for the truth.

The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century

Friedman, Thomas
History

An insightful book about historical forces that are changing the face of our economy and driving globalization, Friedman begins with the fall of the Berlin Wall and details nine other forces.

The Screwtape Letters

Lewis, C.S.
Philosophy

Delivered in a simply enjoyable way that reminds the reader about the little things, this book of letters, from a purported devil, is more about human nature than Christianity.

“A good head and good heart are always a formidable combination. But when you add to that a literate tongue or pen, then you have something very special.” *Nelson Mandela*

Civilization and Its Discontents

Freud, Dr. Sigmund
Psychology

Freud explores issues of human thought and fulfillment along with the importance of art and beauty in society.

**Sea of Glory:
America's Voyage of Discovery,
The U.S. Exploring Expedition,
1838-1842**

Philbrick, Nathaniel
History

Full of revelations on the United States Navy Exploring Expedition of 1838-1842, this book provides the untold story of the triumphs and hardships of the exploration age and the quest by America to become a world power.

**An American Dilemma,
The Negro Problem and
Modern Diplomacy (Vol. I & II)**

Myrdal, Gunnar
Sociology

Exploring the discrepancy between the American creed of respect for the inalienable rights to freedom, justice and opportunity for all, and the pervasive violations of the dignity of blacks, this groundbreaking two-volume work provides insight into the contradictions of American democracy as well as a study of black life in segregated America.

**Slaves Without Masters: The Free
Negro in the Antebellum South**

Berlin, Ira
History

In this expansive commentary on the social history of free people of color in the antebellum South, Berlin delivers the story of people caught between slavery and freedom; although they were free, they were denied basic rights due to the color of their skin.

**Maus I: A Survivor's Tale:
My Father Bleeds History (Vol. I)**

**Maus II: A Survivor's Tale:
Here My Troubles Began (Vol. II)**

Spiegelman, Art
Biography

Spiegelman's two-volume work uses a comic book format to accurately depict the horrors of World War II and his family's amazing struggle to survive the Holocaust.

**W.E.B. Du Bois:
Biography of a Race,
1868-1919 (Vol. I)**

**The Fight for Equality and
the American Century,
1919-1963 (Vol. II)**

Lewis, David Levering
Biography

This monumental biography detailing Du Bois' long and intense career provides gripping details of how the scholar and civil rights champion used his intellectual prowess to fight inequality.



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I have often reflected upon the new vistas that reading opened to me. I knew right there in prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life. As I see it today, the ability to read awoke in me some long-dormant craving to be mentally alive.

~ *Malcolm X*



Prairie View A&M University is the second-oldest public institution of higher education in Texas. Offering baccalaureate degrees in 50 academic majors, 37 master's degrees and four doctoral degrees, this Historically Black University has an established reputation for providing thousands of engineers, nurses, educators, architects and other professionals. A member of The Texas A&M University System, the University has been dedicated to fulfilling its land-grant mission of achieving excellence in teaching, research and service for more than 130 years.



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