

# Kentucky Extension Homemaker's Association

## Cultural Arts and Heritage



## **Book List**

### **2022-2023**



## **Preface**

The KEHA Cultural Arts and Heritage Program area annually sponsors a reading program. Extension Homemakers may participate by reading one book from six of these nine categories: the arts, biography, family and consumer sciences, fiction, history, Kentucky, religion and spirituality, travel and classics and old favorites. Keep a record of the books read and submit the record to the club Cultural Arts and Heritage chair. The club chair should forward that information to the county chair or to the extension agent. Qualified readers may receive the Cultural Arts Reading Award Bookmark recognition at the county level. Counties are responsible for printing their own bookmark. The bookmark is available for downloading on the KEHA Cultural Arts and Heritage web page.

This is only a suggested list. You may choose your own titles. Your local public librarian many have other suggestions. Local libraries usually belong to the Kentucky Library Network, which allows individuals to borrow books from other libraries through interlibrary loan. If you cannot find the book you wish to read at your local library, ask about this service.

**Kelly May (KEHA State Advisor)**

**Kim Henken (Outgoing KEHA State Advisor)**

## Arts

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### **50 Women in Theater** by Cheryl Robson (2021).

An exploration of the lives and work of 50 women who have defined the post-war theater. Through exclusive interviews with these creators, we learn how women rose from supporting roles to calling the shots on stage.

### **Art & Crime** by Stefan Koldehoff & Tobias Timm (2022)

In the notoriously secretive global art world, crime is an ever-present phenomenon. In this largely unregulated market, and with the value of many pieces ranging into the hundreds of millions, crime is more rampant than ever. Art experts Koldehoff and Timm tell thrilling and disturbing tales of high-stakes, brazen art crimes while offering suggestions for needed change in the art market and museums.

### **Chasing Me to My Grave: An Artist's Memoir of the Jim Crow South** by Winfred Rembert with Erin I. Kelly (2021)

“In this fascinating remembrance of his life story and the art he has made, Winfred Rembert recalls his encounters with racism, the American prison system, and the innovative means by which he spun lived experiences into art by expressively painting them onto leather.”-ARTnews

### **How to Tell a Story: The Essential Guide to Memorable Storytelling from the Moth** by Meg Bowles, et al. (2022)

From the people of The Moth, a Peabody award winning radio hour and podcast, this book guides readers on methods to uncover and craft their own unique stories, just like Moth storytellers Rosanne Cash, Neil Gaiman, Elizabeth Gilbert, Padma Lakshmi, Darryl “DMC” McDaniels, Hasan Minhaj, John Turturro, and more. For help with wedding toasts, addressing colleagues at a business event, writing a eulogy, preparing for a job interview and more, *How to Tell a Story* is an empowering, easy-to-follow guide connecting readers to their storytelling goals.

### **Inspired: Understanding Creativity: a Journey through Art, Science, and the Soul** by Matt Richtel (2022)

In this book, author Matt Richtel examines the mysteries of human creativity, the sources of inspiration, the secrets of the masters, and how readers can maximize their own creative potential. Driving home the message that creativity is more accessible than many imagine, Richtel invites all readers to engage in the creative process and address blocks to find their inspiration and skill.

### **A Little Devil in America: Notes in Praise of Black Performance** by Hanif Abdurraqib (2021).

A collection of essays which celebrate the contributions African-Americans have made to America's performing arts landscape.

**Music is History** by Questlove (2021).

“Spanning 50 years of modern music, The Roots’ founding member Questlove covers a lot of ground in his sixth book – drawing lines between Dr. Dre, Tears For Fears, OutKast and Prince, frequently examining why certain pieces of art become embroidered into the tapestry of history while others fade away.”-NME

**The Pianist from Syria** by Aheem Ahmad trans. Emmanuel Bergmann (2019).

Born a second-generation Palestinian refugee, the son of a blind violinist & carpenter who recognized his son’s talent & taught the boy to play the piano & love music. This astonishing account of the pianist’s life in war-torn Syria & his ultimate escape to Germany offers a deeply personal perspective of the most devastating refugee crisis of this century.

**The Secret Lives of Color** by Kassia St. Clair (2021)

*The Secret Lives of Color* tells the unusual stories of seventy-five shades, dyes, and hues. From blonde to ginger, the brown that changed the way battles were fought to the white that protected against the plague, Picasso's blue period to the charcoal on the cave walls at Lascaux, acid yellow to kelly green, and from scarlet women to imperial purple, these surprising stories run like a bright thread throughout history.

## **Biography**

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**Black, White, and the Grey: The Story of an Unexpected Friendship and a Beloved Restaurant** by Mashma Bailey and John O. Morisano (2021).

This collaborative autobiography details how a black chef and a white businessperson transition from business partners to dear friends while opening a new restaurant in a building that was formerly occupied by a segregated Greyhound bus station.

**Eleanor in the Village: Eleanor Roosevelt’s Search for Freedom and Identity in New York’s Greenwich Village** by Jan Jarboe Russel (2021).

A vivid account of a critical chapter in the life of Eleanor Roosevelt, when she moved to New York’s Greenwich Village, shed her high-born conformity, and became the progressive leader who pushed for change as America’s first lady.

**The Moment of Lift: How Empowering Women Changes the World** by Melinda Gates (2019).

"Part memoir, part call to action, Gates's passionate narrative underscores her determination to leave a positive mark on this world. She inspires and emboldens in this eloquently argued work."—Publishers Weekly

**Nanaville: Adventures in Grandparenting** by Anna Quindlen (2019).

Before mommy blogs were even invented, Anna Quindlen became a go-to writer on the joys and challenges of motherhood in her nationally syndicated column. Now she is taking the next step

and going full Nana in the pages of this lively and moving book about her grandchildren, her children, and her new and remarkable role.

**Never Simple: A Memoir** by *Liz Scheier* (2022)

Liz Scheier tells the story of her relationship with her mother, a complicated and mentally ill woman, both loving and abusive. *Never Simple* describes Scheier's story from difficult childhood to the realization that much of her life and her mother's had been a lie. How she survives and ultimately attempts to save her mother is a painful and sweet reminder of the complexities of relationships.

**Sentence: Ten Years and a Thousand Books in Prison** by *Daniel Genis* (2022)

The memoir of Daniel Genis, aka "the Apologetic Bandit" relates his story of a heroin-addicted NYU graduate arrested for robbing victims at knifepoint while also apologizing to them for his actions. This book tells the vivid tale of life and survival in the New York penal system with an empathetic and witty voice.

**The Storyteller** by *Dave Grohl* (2021)

Musician Dave Grohl shares stories of his life, from growing up in Virginia to his days in bands like Scream, Nirvana, and the Foo Fighters. Presented as a series of tales rather than a single long narrative, Grohl leaves the reader with the impression of having had a series of chats about life – the life of a rock star.

**The Woman They Could Not Silence** by *Kate Moore* (2021).

The stunning true account of one woman who fought back against a tyrannical husband, a complicit doctor, and 19<sup>th</sup> century laws that gave men power to silence and confine their wives to mental institutions.

## **Family & Consumer Sciences**

**Gather at Home: Over 100 Simple Recipes, DIYs, and Inspiration for a Year of Occasions** by *Monika Hibbs* (2020).

Over the years, the author has learned just how important it is to slow down and savor life's simple, everyday moments, in addition to the holidays and milestones. Divided by seasons, the author suggests extra-special touches to make every moment a well-crafted one that will show your family and friends just how much you care.

**It's Always Freezer Season: How to Freeze Like a Chef with 100 Make-Ahead Recipes** by *Ashley Christensen* (2022)

Make your freezer work for you by turning it into a fully provisioned pantry stocked with homemade staples. With 100 make-ahead recipes, Ashley Christensen teaches us how to save time and energy creating delicious and seemingly complex meals on even the tightest schedule.

**Kentucky Heirloom Seeds: Growing, Eating, Saving** by *Bill Best and Doree Adams* (2022).

Practical advice for the homemaker on how to make the most of Kentucky's native heirloom produce varieties.

**Lessons from Lucy: The Simple Joys of an Old, Happy Dog** by *Dave Barry* (2019).

Barry, a nationally-syndicated humorist, shows how to age gracefully taking cues from his dog, Lucy. Through 7 charming "Lessons from Lucy", Barry explores themes of community, morality, and the joys of living a simpler life.

**Maybe You Should Talk to Someone: A Therapist, Her Therapist, and Our Lives Revealed** by *Lori Gottlieb* (2019).

A hilarious and thought-provoking book that takes us behind the scenes of a therapist's world, where her patients are looking for answers and so is she.

**Nature Play Workshop for Families: A guide to 40+ Outdoor Learning Experiences in All Seasons** by *Monica Wiedel-Lubinski* (2020)

Filled with beautiful photographs, Wiedel-Lubinski's guide invites children to step away from electronic devices and into nature for hands-on, education play. With recommendations from nature-based educators, families learn about the world around them through wildlife observation, gardening, artwork, and journaling - all inspired by nature.

**Organizing for the Rest of Us: 100 Realistic Strategies to Keep Any House Under Control** by *Dana K. White* (2022)

Decluttering expert and self-proclaimed 'recovering slob' Dana White outlines affordable and unintimidating ways to declutter and get organized. With her 100 tips, she covers the basics of organization, better ways to think about clutter, and our relationships with things. Chip away at bigger problems by breaking them down into bite-size jobs to tackle clutter, let go of perfectionism, and still get organized.

**Radical Sewing: Pattern-free, sustainable fashions for all bodies** by *Kate Weiss* (2021).

Kentucky Master Clothing Volunteer, Kate Weiss, provides simple tips for setting up a sewing space where you can incorporate her techniques for modifying your existing wardrobe or create new pieces. Her uncomplicated approach to this [often intimidating] craft inspires might inspire you to try something new.

**Taste: My Life through Food** by *Stanley Tucci* (2021)

Italian American actor, director, and author Stanley Tucci discusses the intersection of food and life while sharing numerous stories and recipes beloved by his family and friends. Wryly humorous and pasta-heavy, *Taste* highlights the joys of sharing food with family.

## **Fiction**

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**Anthem** by *Noah Hawley* (2022)

Noah Hawley's newest novel is a magical and political thriller, focused on Judge Margot Burr-Nadir's across-party-lines nomination to the Supreme Court, which coincides with her daughter's sudden mysterious disappearance. With many of today's ills intensified in this narrative, Hawley builds a timeless and all-to-real tale of an apocalyptic society in which our youth are both in danger and the only ones who can fix this broken world.

**The Cape Doctor** by *E.J. Levy* (2021).

This fictionalized account of a young Irish girl's transformation to that of a young man in order to obtain a medical degree in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is nothing short of astounding. Graduating at the top of the Edinburgh's college of medicine, she trains in London and accepts a military position in Cape Town, South Africa. Here she leads an accomplished but lonely life masquerading as a man.

**Dragonfly** by *Leila Meacham* (2019).

During World War II, five Americans head to Nazi-occupied France on a secret mission for the OSS, but only four return. Twenty years later, a clue is found in a history book indicating that the missing team member might have survived after all.

**The Enlightenment of Bees** by *Rachel Linden* (2019).

After a break-up with her longtime boyfriend, Mia West impulsively joins a friend on a humanitarian trip. As she makes true connections with the people she is serving, she learns more about herself.

**The Girl From the Channel Islands** by *Jenny Lecoat* (2020).

Based on a true story of courage and hope during World War II. A young Jewish Polish girl takes refuge on Jersey Island off the coast of France. The Germans invade this island and hardships mount as the war continues. Hiding in plain sight, Hedy works as a translator for the Germans. Through a unlikely relationship with a sympathetic German officer, Hedy finds the subsistence and protection needed for her survival.

**Keeping Lucy** by *T. Greenwood* (2019).

Based on incredible true events, this novel captures the transformation of women's roles in the early 1970s and tells the breathtaking story of just how far a mother's love can take her.

**The Mad Woman's Ball** by *Victoria Mas* (2021)

This work of historical fiction tells the story of Paris' Salpetriere Asylum, a facility run by hypnotist Dr. Charcot to treat women deemed 'mad' by society. Each year, the Lenten Ball, also known as the Madwomen's Ball, sees the asylum opened to the public, and the patients on display in their finery for one night only. While the public comes to gawk at the spectacle, the women imprisoned hope for escape. A tale of abuse and misunderstanding, spiritualism and societal expectations, the Mad Women's Ball is a dark exploration of society's treatment of 'inconvenient' women.

**Memory House** by Rachel Hauck (2019).

Two women, who have had their lives destroyed by disaster, find healing in a special house. Beck Holiday is a New York City cop who must face her anger and become open to leave to heal from the impacts of losing her father in the 9/11 attacks.

**The Midnight Library** by Matt Haig (2020).

The Midnight Library houses a collection of an infinite number of books, each one describing a different reality – the way your life is, or ways your life could have turned out, had you made different choices. Matt Haig’s main character, Nora Seed finds herself in a position to decide whether to make changes to alter her life and in doing so, discovers what makes life worth living.

**Miss Eliza’s English Kitchen: a Novel of Victorian Cookery and Friendship** by Anna Abbs (2021).

Based on the true story of the first modern cookery writer, this is a spellbinding novel about female friendship, the struggle for independence, and the pleasures and solace of food.

**Recitatif** by Toni Morrison (2022).

In *Recitatif*, Nobel-winning author Toni Morrison keeps her two main character’s races ambiguous throughout the story. The tale is designed as "an experiment in the removal of all racial codes from a narrative about two characters of different races for whom racial identity is crucial." We know that one character is white and one is Black, but we do not know which – Twyla or Roberta – is which. A story about two childhood shelter roommates who repeatedly, inadvertently cross paths throughout their lives

**The Summer Cottage** by Viola Shipman (2019).

This novel emphasizes the astounding importance of home, and underscores the importance of a loving family and of having a generous heart. Grab a glass of sweet tea and enjoy!

**The Women’s March: a Novel of the 1913 Woman’s Suffrage Procession** by Jennifer Chiaverini (2021).

This historical novel focuses on three inspirational women who bravely risked their lives and liberty in the fight to win the vote.

## **History**

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**About Time: A History of Civilization in Twelve Clocks** by David Rooney (2021).

A history of time itself. Or rather, how humans have kept time through the eons. By searching for the deeper context behind clocks; we learn lessons about social order, the impacts of industrialization on our lives, and what it even actually means to “keep time”.

**D-Day Girls: The Spies Who Armed the Resistance, Sabotaged the Nazis, and Helped Win World War II** by Sarah Rose (2019).



The story of the women recruited by Britain's elite spy agency to sabotage the Nazis, shore up the Resistance, and pave the way for Allied victory in World War II.

**The Eagles of Heart Mountain** by *Bradford Pearson* (2021).

Located in northwestern Wyoming, Heart Mountain Relocation Center was a Japanese American internment camp with a peak population of 14,000 between 1942 and 1945. The quiet resistance of the prisoners at the facility is explored through the camp's high school football team who went undefeated in 1943.

**Empire of Pain: The Secret History of the Sackler Dynasty** by *Patrick Radden Keefe* (2021)

This meticulously researched book explores how one family (the owners of Purdue Pharma) has played a key role in the origins of America's ongoing opioid crises. Through a wide-array of primary source materials, the devastation of the crisis is made abundantly clear.

**The Man Who Hated Women: Sex, Censorship, and Civil Liberties in the Gilded Age** by *Amy Sohn* (2021).

Anthony Comstock, the lobbyist known for his work on the Comstock Act (which made it a federal crime to send any form of "obscene" material through the mail), is well known to history as a deeply misogynistic individual. Sohn explores the depths of Comstock's hatred for women through eight female activists who sought to foil him at every turn.

**The Nineties** by *Chuck Klosterman* (2022).

Chuck Klosterman identifies just what it was about the 1990s that made the decade so revolutionary. The fall of the Berlin Wall, the rise of the internet, Seinfeld, Nirvana, Oprah, and Alan Greenspan – Klosterman examines these events and phenomena in the context of time. Going well beyond simple nostalgia, this book analyzes cultural, media, and political shifts of the era.

**Twice Forgotten: African-Americans and the Korean War, an Oral History** by *David P. Cline* (2021).

Seventy oral histories illustrate the story of the Korean War, or "the Forgotten War" as it was labeled even before it had ended. This work presents the conflict as experienced by some 600,000 Black men and women who served. What it was like, how it felt to fight for freedom that was not fully theirs and what it cost them is presented in their own words.

**Watergate: A New History** by *Garrett M. Graff* (2022).

According to *Kirkus Reviews*, this is "the best and fullest account of the [Watergate] crisis, one unlikely to be surpassed anytime soon." With newly-made-public documents and transcripts, Graff fills in previous holes of just what exactly occurred in the dark corners of Washington politics and in the press during one of the most chaotic periods of government. Fast-paced, thrilling, and with well-drawn characters, Graff creates a gripping and well-researched narrative of events.

**Woman of No Importance** by *Sonia Purnell* (2019).

The never-before-told story of Virginia Hall, the American spy who changed the course of World War II. Hall, “The Madonna of the Resistance” operates at a time in which Female spies behind enemy lines were practically unheard of. With a novelistic style, Purnell paints a vivid image of Hall’s fierce persistence.

## **Kentucky**

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**The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek** by *Kim Michele Richardson* (2019).

An inspiring tale of the power of Literature that casts librarians as heroes. Cussy Carter is a 19 year-old with blue skin who lives in Eastern Kentucky. Delivering books on horseback as part of the Pack Horse Library Project, Cussy comes face-to-face with both the beautiful (and horrifying) facets of Appalachian life.

**Chasing the Cats: a Kentucky Basketball Journey** by *Jamie H. Vaught* (2020).

Written through the eyes of student managers, broadcasters, players, and coaches, veteran sportswriter Jamie H. Vaught shares some of his earliest Wildcat memories and along with many remarkable stories about the UK men's basketball program over the past 70 years.

**Groundskeeping** by *Lee Cole* (2022).

Aspiring writer Owen Callahan returns to live in Kentucky in this tale of class and identity and their interaction with family dynamics across generations. Owen takes a job at a local college where he meets accomplished writer in residence and Bosnian immigrant Alma Hazdic. Their ensuing relationship reveals both connections and divisions among characters.

**Heartwood** by *Nikky Finney* (2021).

Kentucky poet Nikky Finney presents multiple characters who are the “heartwood,” or center, of their small Kentucky communities. Themes of anger and connection, goodness and difference are addressed.

**Resistance in the Bluegrass** by *Farah Alexander* (2022).

A people’s history of civil disobedience in the bluegrass state from 1960 to 2020. Alexander, challenges readers to consider ways that they too can stand up for what they believe is right in the commonwealth.

**The Taking of Jemima Boone: Colonial Settlers, Tribal Nations, and the Kidnap That Shaped America** by *Matthew Pearl* (2020).

On a quiet midsummer day in 1776, thirteen-year-old Jemima Boone and her friends Betsy and Fanny Callaway disappear near the Kentucky settlement of Boonesboro, the echoes of their faraway screams lingering on the air. The author explores the little-known true story of the

kidnapping of legendary pioneer Daniel Boone's daughter and the dramatic aftermath that rippled across the nation.

**Tobacco Harvest: an Elegy** text by *Wendell Berry*, *Photography* by *James Baker Hall* (2022).

Take a journey to a bygone era of Kentucky's agricultural heritage. Through a collection of photographs and essays, the authors capture the surprising beauty of many hands at work collecting a tobacco harvest.

**Wildflowers and Ferns of Red River Gorge and the Greater Red River Basin** by *Dan Dourson and Judy Dourson* (2021).

Over one thousand color images and illustrations are presented in this geological and cultural history of the Red River Gorge, focusing on the region's diverse flora. Accessible to both the casual hiker and the experienced naturalist, over 1500 species are covered in this work that celebrates the impressive biodiversity of the Gorge and its watershed.

## **Religion**

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**90 Minutes in Heaven** by *Don Piper, with Cecil Murphey* (2004).

This autobiography details the aftermath of a Baptist Minister Don Piper's serious 1989 car accident. With no signs of life, he was presumed dead by paramedics at the scene, and Piper was left undisturbed while first responders tended to others. During this time Piper had a 90-minute spiritual experience that culminated when he awoke to find a fellow pastor praying over his body at the scene. Piper recounts his grueling recovery process filled with pain and hopelessness, that ultimately made him a stronger, more thankful person.

**God is a Black Woman** by *Christina Cleveland* (2022).

Cleveland—a theologian and social psychologist—explores our cultural “white male God” through the lens of her own crisis of faith. This celebration of blackness and the divine feminine reveals the ways that God can transcend race, gender, and our society's legacy of oppression.

**Life at the Crossroads of Science, Nature, and Spirit** by *Lyanda Lynn Haupt* (2021).

This text examines the intersection of science, nature, and spirit, providing tools for readers to reconsider their relationship with the natural world. How people affect nature and how nature impacts people is discussed and examined through the lens of cutting-edge science.

**The Peacemaker's Path: Multifaith Reflections to Deepen Your Spirituality** by *Jerry Zehr* (2021).

Daily readings illustrate commonalities amongst faith traditions with the intent to move away from the increasing polarization of our society. Featuring wisdom from Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, and Native American spiritualities, Sikhism, Taoism, and Zoroastrianism, the author encourages readers to find community in faith.

**Planted with a Purpose: God Turns Pressure into Power** by *T. D. Jakes* (2020).

Bishop Jakes wrestles with the age-old question, "Why do the righteous suffer?" This book will inspire you to have hope, even in your most difficult moments.

**The Stranger in the Lifeboat** by *Mitch Albom* (2021)

Nine strangers are adrift in the ocean after a deadly ship explosion. On the third day of their predicament they pull a strange man from the sea who claims he is "the lord". This story of faith is equal parts mystery, adventure, and reflection on the nature of souls.

## **Travel**

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**Kentucky Bourbon Country: The Essential Travel Guide** by *Susan Reigler* (2020).

Ninety-five percent of American bourbon production occurs in Kentucky, where nearly seventy distilleries boast some of the finest whiskeys available. With over two hundred full color photographs, Reigler updates this third edition with practical advice and little-known facts about the area for those considering a pilgrimage to Kentucky to explore the Urban Bourbon Trail.

**Maiden Voyages : Magnificent Ocean Liners and the Women Who Traveled and Worked Aboard Them** by *Sian Evans* (2021).

This book captures the golden age of ocean liners through the stories of the women whose transatlantic journeys changed the shape of society on both sides of the globe. Some travelled for leisure, some for work; others to reinvent themselves or find new opportunities. You'll read about Violet Jessop (nicknamed, "The Unsinkable Stewardess"), who survived the Titanic disaster; and first-class travelers like Marlene Dietrich, Wallis Simpson, and Josephine Baker.

**National Geographic Guide to National Parks of the United States** published by *the National Geographic Society* (2021).

This guide is filled with more than 300 dazzling photographs and 80 full-color maps, and offers expert travel advice for visiting the country's 62 national parks from Alaska to the Virgin Islands.

**Park Life: Around the World in 50 Parks** by *Tom Chesshyre* (2021)

Urban parks provide peace and calm amid the chaos of the city. Travel writer Tom Chesshyre takes readers on a journey around the world to examine these green escapes amongst the concrete and bustle.

**The Ride of Her Life : the True Story of a Woman, Her Horse, and Their Last-chance Journey Across America** by *Elizabeth Letts* (2021).

This is the triumphant true story of a woman who rode her horse across America in the 1950s, fulfilling her dying wish to see the Pacific Ocean. Between 1954 and 1956, Annie Wilkins, traveled more than 4,000 miles, through America's big cities and small towns, meeting ordinary people and celebrities--from Andrew Wyeth to Art Linkletter and Groucho Marx.

**South to America** by *Imani Perry* (2022)

With stories of immigrant communities, artists, opportunists, enslaved peoples, unsung heroes, and her own family and lived experience, Imani Perry presents the American South with familiar yet fresh eyes. From the perspective of a Black woman returning to Alabama after years away, this literary journey examines the region and its culture in all its uniqueness and complexity.

### **World Travel: An Irreverent Guide** by *Anthony Bourdain* (2021)

Anthony Bourdain's unique perspective provides a fun and practical education for readers about some of his favorite locations. This book presents his advice on what to be sure to see as well as what to avoid. Several essays penned by Bourdain's friends, colleagues, and family lend additional texture to the guide, offering rich glimpses into locations from Borneo to Tanzania.

## **Old Favorites**

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### **Breakfast at Tiffany's** by *Truman Capote* (1958)

Even aficionados of Audrey Hepburn's classic portrayal of New York society girl Holly Golightly will find exciting plot twists and turns in Truman Capote's original novella. Most editions of this text come bundled with three additional short stories which are certain to haunt you in their portrayal of the old deep south.

### **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** by *Douglas Adams* (1979)

This hilarious sci-fi novel is lengthy, but an easy read. With a consistently sarcastic protagonist Arthur from Earth joined by a depressed robot and multiple interstellar hitchhikers in space, the goal is to discover the answer to life, the universe, and everything. Armed with a guide emblazoned with the words DON'T PANIC on the cover, Arthur and his travel mates struggle through issues of logic, time, and physics to arrive at the ultimate answer.

### **The Hustler** by *Walter Tevis* (1959)

From the author of *The Queen's Gambit*, *The Hustler* inspired the classic film of the same name starring Paul Newman. It tells the story of Fast Eddie Felson, a pool player who hustles players in small towns to raise the funds to participate in a major game against the legendary Minnesota Fats. This gritty tale explores themes of winning and losing, and the true cost of each.

### **The Last Days of Ptolemy Grey** by *Walter Mosley* (2010)

A moving reflection on age and memory; this novel tells the story of Ptolemy Grey, a 91 year-old man with dementia who has been forgotten by his family. When Ptolemy learns about a procedure that will restore his cognitive function at the price of ensuring his imminent death, he has to decide whether or not to answer a call to action.

### **Mindfulness in Plain English** by *Henepola Gunaratana* (1991)

The world is a chaotic place; and sometimes it seems impossible to catch a breath for even a brief moment. Bhante Gunaratana (a Theravada Buddhist monk) teaches us how to become more

aware of the world around us, and ultimately, how to tame our response to its natural state of disorder.

**Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats** by *T.S. Eliot* (1939)

T.S. Eliot's poetic voice shines clearly in this slender book of poetry. Although Eliot is mostly known as a writer of "serious" works; this lighthearted collection of character portraits eventually became the basis for the libretto of Andrew Lloyd Weber's musical "Cats".

**Siddhartha** by *Herman Hesse* (1922)

This thought provoking novel explores one man's spiritual journey from childhood to old age. As Siddhartha wanders ancient Nepal he encounters Brahmins, wandering ascetics, courtesans, the Buddha, and finally, his true self.

**What to Listen for in Music** by *Aaron Copland* (1953)

In this instructional text, the famed composer of "Appalachian Spring" and "Fanfare for the Common Man" reduces the daunting world of classical music into its building blocks. He then pieces these components back together into a harmonious whole. This book is guaranteed to give you the urge to buy tickets to the nearest orchestra's next concert.

**The Westing Game** by *Elli Raskin* (1978)

Eccentric, game-loving millionaire Samuel Westing dies and in his will outlines a series of mysterious and dangerous games to be played by 16 strangers to determine who will inherit his fortune. Accessible for young readers, but still enjoyable for adults, Raskin's clever and humorous mystery is an easy and enjoyable read.