Recommended Literature List for English Language Arts

In order to be successful on ABCTE’s English Language Arts certification exam, a teaching candidate will be expected to have a strong understanding of and familiarity with the plots, characters, themes, and settings of major American and international works from antiquity through to our current period. The English Language Arts exam is also likely to include questions that assess a teaching candidate’s knowledge of literary genres, literary periods and historical contexts. English Language Arts teaching candidates are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with a breadth of literary work from across genres and periods in preparation for the exam.

As you prepare to take the ABCTE examination in the subject area of English Language Arts, we invite you to examine and consider the following authors and their selected works. This anthology represents the authors and some of their literary works upon which our content experts and development teams drew in creating the exam in English Language Arts, which assesses, among other skills, a candidate’s mastery of the English, American and European literary traditions, as well as the rich traditions of antiquity.

The works cited below, representing a broad range of genres and exceptional literary expression spanning many cultures, have withstood the test of time from 600 B.C. to 1970. In addition to high school readings for young readers, we have included classic literature that is high quality, demanding, vocabulary-rich, and content-heavy. Naturally, you will not be expected to memorize the entire plot in detail of each novel listed below, nor commit each poem identified in the list to memory. However, a working familiarity with these authors and their works will provide you both with useful historical knowledge and literary context as you prepare to take the exam, as well as a durable literary framework for teaching literature as you move forward in your teaching career.

This list can be daunting. Therefore, we recommend the following advice:

- Tackle the short items first (poems, letters, speeches, etc.) to get a larger breadth of works read. Then, follow with longer works.
- Type in the work followed by “analysis” in Google to see perspective and interpretation.
- For longer works that you have read in your past, refresh your memory with CliffsNotes or SparksNotes.
- If you have not read the work, use Google, the CliffsNotes or SparksNotes to set the stage for the work before reading through it. It will help with the understanding of the work.
Drama

Aristophanes
   The Clouds

Samuel Beckett
   Waiting for Godot

Anton Chekhov
   The Cherry Orchard

Euripides
   Heracles

Federico Garcia Lorca
   Blood Wedding

Lorraine Hansberry
   A Raisin in the Sun

Henrik Ibsen
   An Enemy of the People, A Doll's House

Christopher Marlowe
   The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus

Arthur Miller
   Death of a Salesman

Eugene O'Neill
   Long Day's Journey Into Night, Ah, Wilderness!

Jean-Paul Sartre
   No Exit

William Shakespeare
   Hamlet, Macbeth, Julius Caesar, King Lear, Othello, Romeo and Juliet, The Tempest, Henry IV, Part Two, A Midsummer Night's Dream

George Bernard Shaw
   Pygmalion, Man and Superman

Sophocles
   Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone, Philoctetes

August Strindberg
   Miss Julie
Oscar Wilde
   *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Thornton Wilder
   *Our Town*

Tennessee Williams
   *The Glass Menagerie*

**Poetry**

Anonymous
   *Beowulf*

Matthew Arnold
   "Dover Beach"

W. H. Auden

Elizabeth Bishop
   "The Armadillo," "The Fish"

William Blake

Gwendolyn Brooks
   "We Real Cool"

Elizabeth Barrett Browning
   "How do I love thee?"

Robert Browning

William Cullen Bryant
   "Thanatopsis"
Lord George Gordon Byron
   *Don Juan*, Canto 1, "She walks in Beauty," "So we'll go no more a-roving"

Samuel Taylor Coleridge
   "Kubla Khan; or, A Vision in a Dream: A Fragment," "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," "Work without Hope," "Frost at Midnight"

E.E. Cummings
   "Buffalo Bill's," "in Just- spring," "I sing of Olaf glad and big," "the Cambridge ladies who live in furnished souls," "next to of course god america i"

Emily Dickinson
   "Safe in their Alabaster Chambers," "There's a certain Slant of Light," "The soul selects her own Society," "A Bird came down the Walk," "After great pain, a formal feeling comes," "I like to see it lap the Miles," "Much madness is divinest Sense," "I died for Beauty--but was scarce," "I hear a Fly buzz--when I died--," "Because I could not stop for Death," "I dwell in Possibility," "The Brain--is wider than the sky," "At half-past three, a single bird," "A Narrow Fellow in the Grass"

John Donne

Paul Lawrence Dunbar

John Dryden
   "Mac Flecknoe," "Absalom and Achitophel"

T.S. Eliot

Ralph Waldo Emerson
   "Concord Hymn," "Good-bye, proud world," "The Snow-Storm"

Robert Frost

Allen Ginsberg
   "Howl"

Thomas Gray
   "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College"
Thomas Hardy

Robert Hayden
"Middle Passage," "Those Winter Sundays"

George Herbert

Robert Herrick
"Delight in Disorder," "Upon Julia's Clothes," "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time," "His Prayer to Ben Jonson"

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.
"Old Ironsides"

Homer
The Iliad, The Odyssey

Gerard Manley Hopkins

A. E. Housman
"To an Athlete Dying Young," "Terrence, This is Stupid Stuff"

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey
"Love That Doth Reign and Live Within My Thought" (Surrey's version of Petrarch's Rime 140), "Epitaph on Sir Thomas Wyatt"

Langston Hughes
"Theme for English B," "Harlem," "Life is Fine," "Mother to Son," The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "A Dream Deferred"

Ben Jonson
"On My First Daughter," "To John Donne," "On Giles and Joan," "On My First Son," "To the Memory of … William Shakespeare…," "Volpone"

Philip Larkin
"Church Going," "Dockery and Son," "Posterity"

Richard Lovelace
"To Lucasta, Going to the Wars"
John Keats

Rudyard Kipling
 "If," "On the Road to Mandalay," "The Recessional"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Andrew Marvell
 "To His Coy Mistress"

John Milton
 Paradise Lost

Wilfred Owen
 "Dulce et Decorum Est," "The Parable of the Old Man and the Young"

Sylvia Plath
 "Lady Lazarus," "Mirror," Ariel (a book of poetry)

Edgar Allen Poe
 "The Raven," "Annabel Lee"

Ezra Pound

Arthur Rimbaud
 "The Drunken Boat" ["Le Bateau Ivre"], "Dawn" ["Aube"], "Ophelia" ["Ophelie"]

Theodore Roethke
 "My Papa's Waltz," "Root Cellar," "Child on top of a Greenhouse"

William Shakespeare
 Sonnets # 18, 29, 30,55,65,71,73,87,97,106,116,129,130,147 (See Shakespeare under Drama)

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Sir Philip Sidney
 From Astrophil and Stella: Sonnets # 1, 2, 5, 10, 16, 52, 69, 71, 74, 81
Edmund Spenser
   Selections from Book 1 of *The Faerie Queene*: Cantos 1, 2

Wallace Stevens
   "Sunday Morning," "The Emperor of Ice-Cream," "The Snow Man"

Alfred Lord Tennyson

Dylan Thomas
   "Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night"

Virgil
   *Aeneid* excerpts, including Book I (Aeneas arrives in Carthage), Book II (The Fall of Troy), Book IV (Aeneas Abandons Dido), Book VI (Aeneas in the Underworld), Book VIII (The Shield of Aeneas)

Walt Whitman

John Greenleaf Whittier
   "The Barefoot Boy," "Barbara Frietchie"

William Carlos Williams
   "The Red Wheelbarrow," "This is Just to Say," "Danse Russe," "Spring and All"
William Wordsworth

Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder
"The Long Love that in My Thought Doth Harbor," "Whoso List to Hunt," "They Flee from Me"

William Butler Yeats

**Fiction**

Chinua Achebe
*Things Fall Apart*

Sherwood Anderson
*Winesburg, Ohio*

Anonymous
*The Arabian Nights*

Anonymous
*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

Jane Austen
*Pride and Prejudice*

James Baldwin
*Nobody Knows My Name*, "Sonny's Blues"

Charles Baudelaire
"Correspondences" ["Correspondances"], "Spleen" ["Spleen"], "The Jewels" ["Les Bijoux"]

Thomas Berger
*Little Big Man*

Jorge Luis Borges
"The Circular Ruins," "The Library of Babel"
Charlotte Bronte
   Jane Eyre

Emily Bronte
   Wuthering Heights

Bulfinch
   Bulfinch's Mythology

Mikahil Bulgakov
   The Master and Margarita

John Bunyan
   The Pilgrim's Progress, Part I

Albert Camus
   The Stranger

Lewis Carroll
   Alice in Wonderland

Willa Cather
   My Antonia

Miguel de Cervantes
   Don Quixote

Anton Chekhov
   “The Lady with the Little Dog,” “My Life,” “The House with a Mansard”

Chaucer
   Selected Canterbury Tales, including in Middle English, General Prologue, Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale

Joseph Conrad
   Heart of Darkness, Lord Jim

James Fenimore Cooper
   The Last of the Mohicans

Stephen Crane
   Red Badge of Courage, "The Open Boat"

Dante
   Selections from Inferno: Cantos 1-17, 26-28, and 31-34
Daniel Defoe
   *Robinson Crusoe*

Alexis De Tocqueville
   *Democracy In America*

Charles Dickens
   *Great Expectations, Hard Times*

Fyodor Dostoevsky
   *Crime and Punishment, The Brothers Karamazov*

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
   *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*

Theodore Dreiser
   *Sister Carrie*

George Eliot
   *The Mill on the Floss*

Ralph Ellison
   *Invisible Man*

Euripides
   *The Trojan Woman*

William Faulkner
   *The Sound and the Fury, Light in August, "Barn Burning," "The Bear"*

Henry Fielding
   *Joseph Andrews, Tom Jones*

F. Scott Fitzgerald
   *The Great Gatsby*

Gustave Flaubert
   *Madame Bovary*

E. M. Forster
   *A Passage to India*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
   *Faust, Part 1*

William Golding
   *Lord of the Flies*
Oliver Goldsmith
   *The Vicar of Wakefield*

Thomas Hardy
   *Tess of the d’Urbervilles, Jude the Obscure* (See listing also under Poetry)

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Ernest Hemingway

Zora Neale Hurston
   *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Aldous Huxley
   *Brave New World*

Washington Irving
   *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, Rip Van Winkle*

Henry James
   *Washington Square, Daisy Miller*

Samuel Johnson

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

Franz Kafka
   *The Metamorphosis,* "The Hunger Artist"

Rudyard Kipling
   *The Man Who Would Be King,* "Just So Stories" (See also listed under Poetry)

D.H. Lawrence
   *Sons and Lovers,* "Rocking Horse Winner"

C. S. Lewis
   *The Chronicles of Narnia*
Sinclair Lewis
   *Main Street, Babbitt*

Jack London
   *The Call of the Wild, White Fang*

Sir Thomas Malory

Guy de Maupassant
   "The Necklace," "Bel-Ami"

Herman Melville
   *Billy Budd, "Bartleby the Scrivener"

Jean-Baptiste Poquelin Moliere
   *The Misanthrope*

Lucy Maud Montgomery
   *Anne of Green Gables*

Vladimir Nabokov
   "Signs and Symbols," "A Bad Day," "The Duel"

Flannery O'Connor
   "A Good Man is Hard to Find," "Everything that Rises Must Converge," "Good Country People," "Parker's Back"

O. Henry
   "Gift of the Magi," "The Last Leaf," "Man About Town," "The Ransom of Red Chief"

George Orwell
   *1984, Animal Farm, "Politics and the English Language"*

Ovid
   *Metamorphoses, Book I, including The Creation, The Four Ages, Jove’s Intervention, The Flood, Jove and Io, Orpheus and Eurydice, Narcissus and Echo*

Edgar Allen Poe

Alexander Pope
   "An Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," "Essay on Man," "The Rape of the Lock"
Edmond Rostand
   *Cyrano de Bergerac*

Sir Walter Scott
   *Ivanhoe*

Mary Shelley
   *Frankenstein*

Isaac Bashevis Singer
   "Gimpel the Fool"

Alexander Solzhenitsyn
   *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, The Gulag Archipelago, Chapter 1, Volume II, "The Fingers of Aurora"*

John Steinbeck
   *Of Mice and Men*

Robert Louis Stevenson
   *Treasure Island, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Kidnapped*

Jonathan Swift
   *Gulliver's Travels, A Modest Proposal*

Booth Tarkington
   *Penrod*

William Makepeace Thackeray
   *Vanity Fair*

James Thurber
   *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*

J. R. R. Tolkien
   *The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings*

Leo Tolstoy
   *Anna Karenina, The Death of Ivan Ilych*

Mark Twain
   *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses," "The War Prayer"*

Francois-Marie Arouet Voltaire
   *Candide*
Evelyn Waugh
   *Brideshead Revisited, The Loved One*

H. G. Wells
   *The Island of Dr. Moreau*

Edith Wharton
   *The Age of Innocence*

Virginia Woolf
   *To the Lighthouse*

Richard Wright
   *Black Boy*

**Non-Fiction Texts, Essays, Biographies and Memoirs**

Matthew Arnold
   *Culture and Anarchy* (See also under Poetry)

Aristotle
   *Poetics*

St. Augustine
   *The Confessions, Books I-VI*

Marcus Aurelius
   *Meditations*

Francis Bacon
   Essays: "Of Truth," "Of Marriage and Single Life," "Of Plantations," "Of Studies" from Novum Organum (section on "The Idols")

Edmund Burke
   "On American Taxation," "On Moving His Resolutions for Conciliation with America"

Cicero
   *The Nature of the Gods*

W. E. B. Du Bois
   *The Souls of Black Folk*

Jonathan Edwards
   "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"
Ralph Waldo Emerson  

Anne Frank  
*The Diary of Anne Frank*

Benjamin Franklin  
*Poor Richard's Almanac, Autobiography*

Sigmund Freud  
*Civilization and Its Discontents*, "A Philosophy of Life," "Analysis Terminable and Interminable", "On Creativity and the Unconscious," "The Relation of the Poet to Daydreaming"

Edward Gibbon  
*The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapters XV and XVI

Herodotus  
Excerpts from Books VII and VIII of *The Histories*: The Persian Wars, including sections on The Battle of Thermopylae, Themistocles and Athens

Horace  
"The Art of Poetry"

David Hume  
"On Miracles"

Niccolo Machiavelli  
*The Prince*

Karl Marx  
*The Communist Manifesto, On the Jewish Question*

John Stuart Mill  
"On Liberty"

Michel de Montaigne  
Essays: "Of Cannibals," "Of the Education of Children," "Of the Custom of Wearing Clothes," "That the Relish of Good and Evil Depends in a Great Measure upon Opinion"

Friedrich Nietzsche  
"On Truth and Falsity in their Ultramoral Sense," *Beyond Good and Evil, On the Geneology of Morals, Ecce Homo*

Thomas Paine  
*Common Sense*
Plato

*Apology, The Symposium, The Republic*: Parts III, IV, V, VII (sections on “The Ideal and the Real,” “The Good as the Ultimate Object of Knowledge,” “The Divided Line” and “The Similie of the Cave”), and IX.

Plutarch

*Lives of the Ancient Greeks and Romans: Dion, Cato the Younger, Pompey, Julius Caesar, Antony, Cicero, Demosthenes, The Comparison of Cicero and Demosthenes*

Jean Jacques Rousseau

"A Dissertation on the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality of Mankind"

Percy Bysshe Shelley

"A Defence of Poetry" (See also listing under Poetry)

Henry David Thoreau

The first two chapters of *Walden*, "Civil Disobedience," "A Plea for Captain John Brown"

Thucydides


Booker T. Washington

*Up From Slavery*

Elie Weisel

*Night*
United States History: Speeches and Political Text

Frederick Douglass  
Speech at Rochester (1852), Speech at Canandaigua (1857)

Patrick Henry  
Speech at Virginia Convention (1775), "Give me Liberty or Give me Death"

Thomas Jefferson  
Declaration of Independence, Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, First and Second Inaugural Addresses, Letter to Peter Carr

Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Letter from a Birmingham Jail, “I Have a Dream”, Address to Memphis Sanitation Workers (“I've Been to the Mountaintop”)

Abraham Lincoln  
First and Second Inaugural Addresses, The Emancipation Proclamation, The Gettysburg Address, Letter to Mrs. Bixby

George Washington  
Farewell Address

Statements and speeches by:  
Sitting Bull, Red Cloud, Geronimo, Chief Joseph, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, The Seneca Falls Convention

Religious Studies Reference Texts

The Bible  
Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus: Chapters 3-6, pages 12-20 and 32-34, Psalms 8-24, 102-104, and 137, Daniel  

The Quran

Tao Te Ching
Additional Recommended Classic Literature for Young Readers

The Classic Literature for Young Readers list includes authors, books, and poems that teaching candidates who plan to work in middle or high school should be familiar with. These texts are particularly appropriate for grades 6 through 9. Some books on this list may be more suitable for teachers to recommend as outside reading than for in-class study.

Louisa May Alcott
   Little Women

Rudolfo Anaya
   Bless Me, Ultima

Ray Bradbury
   Fahrenheit 451, The Illustrated Man

Pearl S. Buck
   The Good Earth

Sandra Cisneros
   The House on Mango Street

Charles Dickens
   A Christmas Carol

Alexandre Dumas
   The Count of Monte Cristo

Hermann Hesse
   Siddhartha

Helen Keller
   The Story of My Life

Harper Lee
   To Kill a Mockingbird

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
   "The Children’s Hour," "Paul Revere’s Ride"

Lucy Maud Montgomery
   Anne of Green Gables

Carl Sandburg
   "Chicago," "Fog"
Robert W. Service
"The Cremation of Sam McGee"

Betty Smith
A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

Ernest Thayer
"Casey at the Bat"

James Thurber
"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty"

Mark Twain
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Prince and the Pauper

Jules Verne
Around the World in Eighty Days

H. G. Wells
The Time Machine

Laura Ingalls Wilder
Little House on the Prairie

Johann David Wyss
The Swiss Family Robinson