

1. **Are You There God? It's Me Margaret** by Judy Blume Margaret, who has a Christian mother and a Jewish father, struggles to understand her developing body and her relationship with religion, speaking directly to God about the uncertainties that come with adolescence
2. **The Outsiders** by S.E. Hinton The book details the conflict between two rival gangs divided by their socioeconomic status: the working-class "Greasers" and the upper-class "Socs" (pronounced /'soʊfɪz/—short for *Socials*). The story is told in first-person perspective by teenage protagonist Ponyboy Curtis.
3. **A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man** by James Joyce, published in 1916. A *Künstlerroman* written in a modernist style, it traces the religious and intellectual awakening of young Stephen Dedalus, Joyce's fictional alter ego, whose surname alludes to Daedalus, Greek mythology's consummate craftsman. Stephen questions and rebels against the Catholic and Irish conventions under which he has grown, culminating in his self-exile from Ireland to Europe.
4. **Carmen** a novella by Prosper Mérimée, written and first published in 1845. It has been adapted into a number of dramatic works, including the famous opera of the same name by Georges Bizet. Inspired by real, scandalous tales collected by the author of the original 1845 novella while traveling in Spain, *Carmen* is a dramatic tale of love, jealousy and tragedy. It tells the story of a hopeless soldier, Don José, who is seduced by Carmen, a fiery gypsy woman with an appetite for smuggling.
5. **Catch-22** satirical novel by American writer Joseph Heller, published in 1961. The work centers on Captain John Yossarian, an American bombardier stationed on a Mediterranean island during World War II, and chronicles his desperate attempts to stay alive.
6. **Giovanni's Room** by James Baldwin David, a young American man whose girlfriend has gone off to Spain to contemplate marriage, is left alone in Paris and begins an affair with an Italian man, Giovanni. The entire story is narrated by David during "the night which is leading me to the most terrible morning of my life," when Giovanni will be executed. Baldwin tackles social isolation, gender and sexual identity crisis, as well as conflicts of masculinity within this story of a young bisexual man navigating the public sphere in a society that rejects a core aspect of his sexuality.

7. **Everything Sad Is Untrue** by Daniel Nayeri is the mostly true story of Khosrou, who becomes Daniel, and the two lives he has lived in just 11 years. First, there's his life back in Iran, where his family was wealthy, where he went hunting for leopards and where his parents' veins were filled with the blood of divinity. A sprawling, evocative, and groundbreaking autobiographical novel told in the unforgettable and hilarious voice of a young Iranian refugee. It is a powerfully layered novel that poses the questions: Who owns the truth? Who speaks it? Who believes it?
8. **Overstory** by Richard Powers The book is about nine Americans whose unique life experiences with trees bring them together to address the destruction of forests. It is an ambitious environmental fable that explores our relationship with nature, the psychology of why we're so bad at acting on climate change, our perception of time, the meaning of hope, and so much more.