

# MRS. SHUMAN'S EXTRA CREDIT READING LISTS

**T** **O GET CREDIT:** Choose a book, read it, and drop me Gradebook message when you have completed it. We'll set up a few minutes to discuss the book by phone. For Multicultural Lit and Brit Lit, you could be on your way to having "Honors" attached to the name of your class! (See honors details in course descriptions on my website.) AP students can start each semester with extra credit. Be in touch through Gradebook email anytime! I look forward to talking about books with you.

## MULTICULTURAL LIT & COMP LIST

**All reading from this list is optional. You may earn up to 300 points per semester.**

**If you'd like to read something from the AP/BL list below, drop me a note and we'll discuss!**

*See book descriptions way below.*

*Black Count, The* by Tom Reiss (100 pts)

*Boy Who Harnessed the Wind, The* by William Kamkwamba (100 pts)

*Boys in the Boat, The* by Daniel James Brown (100 pts)

*C. S. Lewis: A Life* by Alister McGrath (100 pts)

*Chosen, The* by Chaim Potok (100 pts)

*City of Thorns: Nine Lives in the World's Largest Refugee Camp* by Ben Rawlence (100 pts)

*Coach Wooden and Me* by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (100 pts)

*Daughters of Islam* by Miriam Adeney (100 pts)

*Death of a King: The Real Story of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Final Year* by Tavis Smiley (100 pts)

*Design of Everyday Things, The* by Donald A. Norman (100 pts)

*Endurance* by Alfred Lansing (100 pts)

*Extraordinary, Ordinary People* by Condoleezza Rice (100 pts)

*Faithful Women and Their Extraordinary God* by Noël Piper (100 pts)

*Gifted Hands* by Ben Carson (100 pts)

*Gone: A Girl, a Violin, a Life Unstrung* by Min Kym. (100 pts)

*Great Quake, The: How the Biggest Earthquake in North America Changed Our Understanding of the Planet*  
by Henry Fountain (100 pts)

*Hard Times* by Charles Dickens (100 pts)

*I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* by Malala Yousafzai (100 pts)

*It's a Jungle Out There, Life Is a Jungle, and Jungle Calls* by Ron Snell (200 pts for all)

*Life in Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina* by Misty Copeland (100 pts)

*Midsummer Night's Dream, Julius Caesar, Othello, Taming of the Shrew* by Shakespeare\* (100 pts each)

*One Thousand Gifts* by Ann Voskamp (100 pts)

*Oswald Chambers: Abandoned to God* by David Macasland (100 pts)

*Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell (100 pts)

*Places in Between, The* by Rory Stewart (100 pts)

*Rebel with a Cause* by Franklin Graham (100 pts)

*Screwtape Letters, The* by C. S. Lewis (100 pts)

*Spaceman: An Astronaut's Unlikely Journey to Unlock the Secrets of the Universe*  
by Mike Massimino (100 pts)

LIST CONTINUED . . . .

*There Is No Me Without You* by Melissa Faye Green (100 pts)  
*Three Among Wolves: A Couple and Their Dog Live a Year with Wolves in the Wild*  
 by Helen Thayer (100 pts)  
*Through Gates of Splendor* by Elisabeth Elliot (100 pts)  
*Till We Have Faces* by C. S. Lewis (100 pts) **Please email me for useful explanatory notes!**  
*Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* by Scott McCloud (100 pts)

## AP ENGLISH AND BRITISH LIT LIST

**All reading from this list is optional. You may earn up to 300 points per semester.**

**BL students can receive honors credit if six books are read**—see BL course description for honors details.

*See descriptions of books, way below.*

*Barracoon; The Story of the Last “Black Cargo”* by Zora Neale Hurston (100 pts)  
*Becoming* by Michelle Obama (100 pts)  
*Bend, Not Break* by Ping Fu (100 pts)  
*Black Count, The* by Tom Reiss (100 pts)  
*Boy Who Harnessed the Wind, The* by William Kamkwamba (100 pts)  
*Boy Who Invented Television, The* by Paul Schatzkin (100 pts)  
*Boys in the Boat, The* by Daniel James Brown (100 pts)  
*C. S. Lewis: A Life* by Alister McGrath (100 pts)  
*Chosen, The* by Chaim Potok (100 pts)  
*City of Thorns: Nine Lives in the World's Largest Refugee Camp* by Ben Rawlence (100 pts)  
*Coach Wooden and Me* by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (100 pts)  
*Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky (200 pts)  
*Daughters of Islam* by Miriam Adeney (100 pts)  
*Death of a King: The Real Story of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Final Year* by Tavis Smiley (100 pts)  
*Design of Everyday Things, The* by Donald A. Norman (100 pts)  
*Endurance* by Alfred Lansing (100 pts)  
*Extraordinary, Ordinary People* by Condoleezza Rice (100 pts)  
*Faithful Women and Their Extraordinary God* by Noël Piper (100 pts)  
*Farming of Bones, The* by Edwidge Danticat (100 pts) **AP students only**  
*Gifted Hands* by Ben Carson (100 pts)  
*Gone: A Girl, a Violin, a Life Unstrung* by Min Kym. (100 pts)  
*Great Quake, The: How the Biggest Earthquake in North America Changed Our Understanding of the Planet*  
 by Henry Fountain (100 pts)  
*Hard Times* by Charles Dickens (100 pts)  
*I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*  
 by Malala Yousafzai (100 pts)  
*It's a Jungle Out There, Life Is a Jungle, and Jungle Calls* by Ron Snell (150 pts for all—they aren't long)  
*Life in Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina* by Misty Copeland (100 pts)

*Macbeth, Julius Caesar, Othello, Taming of the Shrew, Midsummer Night's Dream, The Tempest* by Shakespeare\*\* (75 pts per play)

*One Thousand Gifts* by Ann Voskamp (100 pts)

*Oswald Chambers: Abandoned to God* by David Macasland (100 pts)

*Outcasts United* by Warren St. John (100 pts) **For students not taking Multicultural Lit**

*Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell (100 pts) **For students not taking AP Lang**

*Places in Between, The* by Rory Stewart (100 pts)

*Rebel with a Cause* by Franklin Graham (100 pts)

*Reading with Patrick: A Teacher, a Student, and a Life-Changing Friendship*  
by Michelle Kuo (100 pts)

*Screwtape Letters, The* by C. S. Lewis (100 pts)

*Spaceman: An Astronaut's Unlikely Journey to Unlock the Secrets of the Universe*  
by Mike Massimino (100 pts)

*Sword and the Shield, The: The Revolutionary Lives of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.*  
by Joseph E. Peniel (100 pts)

*There Is No Me Without You* by Melissa Faye Green (100 pts)

*Three Among Wolves: A Couple and Their Dog Live a Year with Wolves in the Wild*  
by Helen Thayer (100 pts)

*Till We Have Faces* by C. S. Lewis (100 pts) **Please email me for useful explanatory notes!**

*Unashamed* by Lecrae Moore (100 pts)

*Underground: A Human History of the Worlds beneath Our Feet* by Will Hunt (100 pts)

*Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* by Scott McCloud (100 pts)

\*\*For Shakespeare, try a version with footnotes and summaries for extra help! Consider editions in the New Folger Library, published by Washington Square Press. Do not simply read a summary of the plot—read the actual play. You may listen to an audio recording as you read.

## **MRS. SHUMAN'S NOTES ON EACH BOOK**

*Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*— This brief account was recently discovered and then published in 2018. Zora Neale Hurston sat many hours with a gentleman named "Cudjo" who became enslaved 50 years after the slave trade was outlawed in the U.S., captured and smuggled out of Africa when he was 19. She gives context as he storytells through his youth, capture, enslavement, freedom, and old age. Though predictably tragic in places, there is a balance of hope and dignity found in Cudjo's love for his African culture and the family raises later in Alabama.

*Becoming*— Former First Lady Michelle Obama tells her life story, giving personal perspective on her early days, her love of family, her improbable educational achievements, her life as a business professional, her marriage to Barack Obama, campaigning for his presidency, and their years in the White House.

*Bend, Not Break*— Ping Fu grew up during the Cultural Revolution in China. I didn't know anything about this time period before reading the book, but was really caught up in her story, which is rather like a dystopia at first (think *The Giver* or *1984*, but her story is true!). Ms. Fu started a 3-D printing corporation here in the US, with a new life in serious contrast to her incredible past of being indoctrinated into the Revolution's crazy world.

*Black Count, The*—Tom Reiss tells a story of General Alexander Dumas, who served with honor in the French Revolution though he was the son of a black slave and born in Haiti. Dumas's son went on to write *The Count of*

*Monte Cristo and The Three Musketeers*, basing many exciting scenes on the real adventures of his father. Reiss writes that the general "rose higher in the white world than any man of his race would before our time" before he met an enemy he could not defeat . . . This newly researched book is a good read for those who like true adventure stories.

*Boy Who Harnessed the Wind, The*— You will like this book if you like TED talks and STEM classes, if you are interested in African life today (this takes place in Malawi), or you just like an amazing story about a student your age. The son of Christian parents, William is like my step-son Kris; he always has bolts and washers and bits of this and that in his pockets, and loves to see how things work. How can someone like this change a whole village, and maybe a whole country?

*Boy Who Invented Television, The*— If you like the concept of inventing something no one else could figure out as well as you (even at age 14), you will like this account of how Phil Farnsworth could "see" how to build a television. Sending sound through radio waves was one thing, but to send *pictures* into receivers elsewhere was puzzling great scientists around the world. Phil, growing up in the country, looked at how he plowed a field in order to get a vision for how to transmit such a picture. This biography takes you through the science, the high points, and the struggles of a brilliant man who even figured out fusion in his day, though his plans are now lost.

*Boys in the Boat, The*— Rowing is traditionally considered a rich man's sport, but in 1936 an Olympic team from Seattle was unlike any elite crew that had ever won the US Olympic preliminary competitions. This was a time of national poverty, the Dust Bowl, and the clandestine plans of Adolf Hitler to make the 1936 games show off the wealth of his visions. This book is incredibly interesting, focusing on one tough rower and his hardworking crew in this very interesting time of history. You don't have to know rowing to enjoy the book.

*C. S. Lewis: A Life* is a rather new, thorough study of Lewis based on recently accessed family letters as well as interviews with those from Lewis's past. It challenges some myths about the famous writer, as well as explaining well how and why he wrote the seven Narnia stories and the famous Mere Christianity. This is a very readable book—fans of Lewis and those interested in the writing process and England during the world wars would appreciate the clear approach.

*Chosen, The*— This friendship story of two Jewish boys in Brooklyn near the end of WW2 reveals different perspectives of two devout groups regarding what was next for the forming of a Jewish nation. I learned much about discussions in this faith as well as life at this time of history, thanks to Chaim Potok who is a rabbi as well as popular American author.

*City of Thorns: Nine Lives in the World's Largest Refugee Camp* is a nonfiction account of the plight of half a million people who live in Dadaab, a 30-square-mile make-shift city in the desert of Kenya. Unable to legally work or build permanent homes, residents of Dadaab have resorted to a hard life for almost 30 years. Excellent read for anyone working with refugees in Clarkston or elsewhere.

*Coach Wooden and Me*— Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is the NBA's all time leading scorer and a Basketball Hall of Fame inductee. Coach Wooden has been called the "greatest coach in basketball history," and both Wooden and Abdul-Jabbar have received Presidential Medals of Freedom. In the middle of the accolades is a heart-felt story of 50 years of partnership between a wise coach and a hard-working athlete, both wanting to affect culture for good, and both with love for basketball and baseball.

*Crime and Punishment*— Everyone I know who has read this book has believed it worth his time. Good theme of redemption. Try giving characters easy-to-remember nicknames to keep up with them in this Russian story—you may also find a helpful list online or in preface material that will give names and alternate names for each character. The *Wall Street Journal* counted it first in a list of crime thrillers.

*Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges with Muslim Women*— Though I have read a number of books about Middle Eastern life and perspectives, this one was particularly good since it challenged some of my cookie-cutter ideas of what “missions” means. I believe it helpful for Christian women wanting to understand and communicate with Muslim neighbors.

*Death of a King*—Dr. King's usual biographical material is pulled from his "I have a dream" time period, but much went on in his last year of life that has not been told. Smiley writes a well researched and interesting chronology of the last 12 months, giving dignity to King's final vision and purpose.

*Design of Everyday Things, The*— Do you get frustrated with mechanical things that do not work intuitively? Donald Norman writes a readable book of observations and guidelines, concluding that "humans do not always err. But they do when the things they use are badly conceived and designed." If you like to discover how things work, or invent/design things yourself, or just want to appreciate those who do, you will enjoy this book; it has even been included for reading in a GA Tech design class.

*Endurance*— This is the story of Ernest Shackelton’s survival as his trip across Antarctica goes against his plan. An eventful tale of 28 men and their various motivations to stay alive, and a beautiful account of a cold wasteland. Lansing’s most famous book has scenes you will not forget. A book the Shumans read out loud with each other.

*Extraordinary, Ordinary People*— Former Secretary of State and first Black woman to hold that office, Condoleezza Rice tells her story about growing up in Birmingham, Alabama, during the Civil Rights era. High school students would also appreciate her inside looks into political office, attending and teaching at Stanford University, and foreign policy.

*Faithful Women and Their Extraordinary God*— Five rather short but well-written bios of historic and contemporary women from various cultures: Sarah Edwards, Liliias Trotter, Gladys Aylward, Esther Ahn Kim, and Helen Roseveare. My husband couldn’t help reading the last chapter out loud. The author tells their stories and then gives her own brief take-aways.

*Farming of Bones, The*— Set in the Dominican Republic and Haiti in 1937. Women might be more comfortable readers of this novel. Though I try to keep summer reading positive, the struggle of Haitians in this time is worth knowing. If you have worked with refugees in Atlanta, you might be up for walking with Amabelle through her difficult story. **For AP reading only.**

*Gifted Hands*— Long a favorite on this reading list, this is the story of Dr. Ben Carson’s difficult childhood and surprising rise to being one of the best-known neurosurgeons in modern medicine. Faith in God, excellent mentors, and hard work are all given credit, and the last section of the book highlights some of his famous surgeries.

*Gone: A Girl, a Violin, a Life Unstrung*— This is an autobiography of a child prodigy violinist and relates the relationship between a musician and her instrument, as well as why she became a violinist for life. Her million-dollar violin was stolen several years ago and made international news, and the recovery of the violin comes near the end of the book. Along with reading the book, you should hear some of the music she mentions, since the actual pieces are keyed to sections of the book and available for listening.

*Great Quake, The: How the Biggest Earthquake in North America Changed Our Understanding of the Planet*— Henry Fountain spent years investigating how the 1964 Alaskan earthquake affected not only people’s lives, the terrain, and local business, but also the study of how earthquakes come about on our planet. If you are science-minded—you will enjoy this book. If you aren’t but want to appreciate geology and other earth sciences, you can learn easily as you read a very readable account of this record-breaking event in American history and theories attached to it. We enjoyed reading it out loud!

*Hard Times*— A shorter Dickens novel. One of my friends really likes this one, so I started it three times. This summer's road trip was the winning situation; I listened to a library copy with reader Patrick Tull. This time I could follow who was who because Tull has a voice for everyone, and keeps the story going. The tale is a sometimes-dark fight between the idea that all we need for understanding are facts/science/math and the idea that imagination/the arts/wonder/questioning are intrinsic to a worthwhile life. Try this with the audio, at least to get started. I finished by reading pages, and really enjoyed the book and message.

*I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*— If you have not heard of this young woman, who turned 18 in July 2015, you can skim her Wiki bio. What she tells of her family's struggles in Pakistan gives a view of what has been happening in the Middle East in the last few years. She published a new prologue in June 2015. I learned from this smart young author who does not whine as she tells her story.

*Life in Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina*— Misty Copeland, the American Ballet Theatre's first black principal dancer, tells of her challenge to move from a child of little privilege on through the hard choices that led her to the ABT. Very readable for those who are curious about the life of a professional ballerina or who wonder how Copeland persevered as an African American in a traditionally white field.

*One Thousand Gifts*— Hard to find good things to think about when you are angry? Mrs. Voskamp's journal-style writing deals honestly with her disappointments with God, even the death of her sister. Her beautiful writing style includes original words (Gerard Manley Hopkins comes to mind) and juxtaposes tones as she finds joy as a young Christian wife and mother on a Canadian farm.

Oswald Chambers' biography— A real surprise for me! I expected an elder-statesman type of man, but found a young man talented in the arts, who focused his life and went for what was important to him in his search for truth. Brings new energy to his devotions I have read for years.

*Outcasts United*— How do you coach a soccer team that speaks many languages, and has no place to practice? This is the readable story of a town, a group of refugees, and a soccer coach who gave up her family's expectations in order to make a difference in the lives of some kids in Clarkston, GA. Required reading for freshmen at GA State and GA Tech a few years ago. **For those not taking Multicultural Lit.**

*Outliers*— One out of a best-selling series of Gladwell books; this one looks at what creates success based on empirical data and observation. You'll be surprised at the interesting examples, from hockey stars to plane crashes to feuding families in Kentucky and lawyers in Manhattan. **For those not taking AP Lang.**

*Places in Between, The*— Stewart's nonfiction account of a journalist's walk across Afghanistan without the protection of his Western identity. Even if you have read only a little about the Middle East, this will inform and intrigue you. Includes a dog story and sketches by the author, too. There is a quite small amount of "language."

*Reading with Patrick: A Teacher, a Student, and a Life-Changing Friendship*—Michelle Kuo graduates from a prestigious college and chooses to go with Teach for America to a small town in Mississippi which is poor in many ways due to jobs going away when major employers left. Kuo teaches in a school where few if any of her African-American students have ever met anyone from her Asian-American heritage. Patrick is one student she keeps up with after she goes on to finish law school; he ends up in jail in a broken justice system. Mrs. Shuman loved this book for how literature can lay out common ground, and how it's true that everyone is smart—we need to learn how to care and communicate. A small amount of "language."

*Rebel with a Cause*— Franklin Graham's very readable autobiography. It was hard for Franklin to find his own life in the shadow of a "Christian Great" such as his father, Rev. Billy Graham. A famous traveling father and a determined and creative mom make for quite a set of boundaries for a young man too rebellious for his own

safety! Graham's story continues through the beginnings of Samaritan's Purse. Hard not to share some of this with your family . . . .

Ron Snell's "jungle trilogy"— Nonfiction stories my family has read out loud three times now, laughing sometimes while amazed at what two brothers learn in their rainforest life and trips back to the States. This is an autobiographical account of a missionary kid and his brother growing up in Peru with a "risk-everything," ex-military father and a careful mom. These are fast-moving adventures that continue through Ron's college days in Chicago ("snakes in the dorm" and other great stories).

*Screwtape Letters, The*— Take your time with this series of letters from a Satanic, fallen angel to his fledgling assistant who is charged with making a new believer fail. It's short, but its fantastic concept of evil vs. good will leave you re-thinking what tempts Christians to fall as well as survive in a world designed by a good God.

Shakespeare's plays— Grab some friends and read these aloud? Take your time and use a Folger edition if possible to have summaries and footnotes available. Watch for quotable quotes and timeless themes. Listen along with an audio version if you wish.

*Spaceman: An Astronaut's Unlikely Journey to Unlock the Secrets of the Universe*— I have had a NASA employee in my immediate family, but I didn't understand what the "big deal" about space travel was until reading this book. Mike Massimino's story of being tethered alone in space while repairing the Hubble telescope had me outside looking at the stars within days of finishing the book. It is no easy thing to become an astronaut, but Massimino is humorous and descriptive, and you will enjoy and appreciate space study after reading this.

*Sword and the Shield, The*—Peniel's recent book parallels the lives of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. as they occupy similar time frames in the Civil Rights Era. The author/researcher carefully parallels their biographies, which gives context to this time period. Yes, they were very different in many ways, but this text gives a more complete view of the men, their goals, their deaths, and their effect on our history.

*There Is No Me Without You* blends history, medical research, personal account, and biography to tell the story of an African woman's involvement in the growing orphan crisis in Ethiopia, and what we can do about it. Author is from Decatur—very readable and personal in approach. Another book the Shumans read out loud.

*Three Among Wolves* is an amazing, true story of a couple who are dropped off far away from human habitations and then walk days farther up north to areas where wolves are free to roam. They camp out with their own part-wolf dog named Charlie for months at a time, allowing him to be their alpha so they can interact at a distance with wolf families. They hope to prove that wolves are not crazy attackers of everything, but are communal with other animals. The author was (earlier) the first woman to trek alone to the magnetic north pole, and she and her husband have walked across massive deserts and hiked into the iciest places. Great reading!

*Through Gates of Splendor*— Five young missionary men were killed together in the Ecuadorian jungle in the 1950s. United States citizens, whether they were church-goers or not, stopped to learn the biographies of these men who wanted to bring the Gospel to native Ecuadorans known for murdering those outside of their tribal boundaries. This book is written by the wife of one of the most quoted men, Jim Elliot. There are many photos included, used in magazines famous in the 50s. If you don't know this classic missionary story, it is a must-read!

*Till We Have Faces* is the last novel that Lewis wrote before his death, and is a fantasy story of friendship and faith. My students usually like the story, but are lost on the overall relevancy to Lewis's faith. I'd love to talk to you about this! **Please email me for useful, brief, explanatory notes!**

*Unashamed*— Learn the engaging backstory of rapper and Grammy-winning artist Lecrae. He has a long struggle to faith in Christ, and eventually finds clear answers to many questions: Why even be a Christian?

What does it mean for a Christian to affect culture? Why bother being in culture, when there is a Christian audience one could make happy?

*Underground: A Human History of the Worlds beneath Our Feet*— Justin Davidson, an architecture critic for *New York* magazine, says of this book: “Will Hunt is an irresistible guide. I followed *Underground’s* global tour of subterranean cultures with astonishment and joy, happy to meet a cast of cataphiles, compulsive diggers, ochre priests, spelunkers, and various seekers of the dark. I will never look at a hole in the ground in quite the same way again.” Mrs. Shuman says, “My husband and I enjoyed reading this book aloud, finding ourselves under Paris, in caves in Australia, and in train tunnels in NYC. We learned a lot about why people have lived, visited, and worked beneath the surface.”

*Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*— McCloud draws every frame of this book and it is a good read whether one likes comics or not! He gives context to this art form found in many cultures and time periods, and breaks understanding of comics into idea/purpose, form, idiom, structure, craft, and surface. Just a couple of frames illustrating a particular style are objectionable, and the reader can move quickly on from them. This is a book packed with art and analysis of style, all in comic form.