

***Banned and Contested Literature: Engaging with the Taboo***

University of Washington

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*“There are worse crimes than burning books. One of them is not reading them.”—Joseph Brodsky*

*“Yes, books are dangerous. They should be dangerous—they contain ideas.”—Pete Hautman*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In English 111, we will use literature as our primary object of study to develop the skills of critical thinking, meaningful engagement with a variety of cultural texts, and good writing at the college level. Our course will primarily focus on critically reading and writing about fiction by authors from diverse backgrounds who have often been considered transgressive, taboo, and even banned or censored.

Regardless of your discipline and future career goals this course will provide the tools and skills to think critically about the world, cultures, cultural products and landscapes you navigate while preparing you to articulate your thinking through written language. Your career at UW and beyond will require you to produce a diverse range of writing that varies in research methods, argument form, organization, tone, complexity, and styles for different audiences. However, in the context of any academic discipline you will be asked to clearly articulate your ideas and provide compelling scholarly evidence to support your claims. As such, this class will do its best to prepare you with the academic toolkit you need to be successful in UW academics. The goals of English 111 are to:

- Write for different audiences and different contexts;
- Synthesize complex texts and enter into an academic dialogue with those texts;
- Craft complex, analytic, persuasive arguments; and
- Develop a set of writing habits and strategies for revising your work.

***Banned and Contested Literature: Engaging with the Taboo***

This section of 111 will investigate literary and cultural products that are often considered taboo, forbidden, transgressive, provocative, and have been banned or contested. Engaging with this literature will allow us to cultivate skills and methods of rhetorical analysis and scholarly writing at the college level. In this class we have four themed weeks dedicated to representations in literature that often lead to texts being banned or contested:

1. Representations of sexuality / gender
2. Representations of state violence / surveillance
3. Representations of race
4. Representations of state religion / power

We will engage in complex discussion topics such as:

...What rhetorical situations/writing makes literature taboo, transgressive, or provocative?

...Is the taboo always bad?

...Can literature be dangerous? Who decides?

...Are there limits to what children or students can be exposed to in the classroom?

...Should all literary or cultural products be available for consumption?

...Should books be banned? Can we be offended by literature?

...Does literature reinforce or challenge prejudice and stereotypes?

...How does fiction connect with reality? How does power operate in literature?

How does provocative literature shape our understanding of the world? My own identity?

We will continually reengage these questions as we work to analyze literature in service of developing skills as researchers and writers at the college level. What I ask is that we all work to be respectful and open to the views of others throughout the quarter (This includes the authors and the content/themes of the texts!). The more we commit to the thoughtful discussion of the texts, open engagement with writing, and sharing of ideas the more enjoyable and fruitful this course will be. I can promise that if we all participate it won't be boring!

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Regular access to the Canvas course website (canvas.uw.edu) and to your UW email
- Regular access to laptop/tablet in class
- A note-taking medium (electronic or otherwise)
- *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* by Marjane Satrapi (2004)
- Purchase (or borrow from the library) a copy of a self-selected text from an approved list

## SUGGESTED

- *Contexts for Inquiry: Reading and Researching at the University of Washington* (white cover version; without readings)

## ASSESSMENT AND POLICIES

The course goals outlined above will be accomplished through a sequence of 5 formal essays or writing assignments. These will vary in length and deadlines can be found on the course calendar portion of the syllabus. Along with the five formal assignments, you will be required to produce final portfolio of carefully selected and revised works prefaced by a critical reflective piece that demonstrates how your best work meets the UW English 111 outcome goals. Your success in this course depends not only on your writing, but also on your **ability to actively participate as an intelligent, thoughtful, and caring member of our writing community in every single class.** Toward the end of the course, having completed all of the formal assignments you will be asked to submit a **portfolio** of your work along with a **critical reflection** (where you think metacognitively about your work, writing process, and make a detailed argument explaining how you've met all of the course goals).

### Portfolio (70%)

Toward the end of the course, you will be asked to compile and submit a portfolio of your work along with a critical reflection. The portfolio will include the following: the major paper, three shorter assignments, and a critical reflection that explains how the selected portfolio demonstrates the four outcomes for the course. In addition to the materials you select as the basis for your portfolio grade, your portfolio must include a compendium of all of the formal writing you were assigned in the course (all five assignments prior to revision). A portfolio that does not include all the above will be considered "Incomplete" and will earn a grade of 0.0-0.9. The grade for complete portfolios will be based on the extent to which the pieces you select demonstrate the course outcomes (see pp. 5-6). **The portfolio will be worth 70% of your final grade.**

### Participation (30%)

The rest of your grade will be determined by your participation in and out of the classroom. Your participation grade consists of these components:

- **In-class participation and collaboration (10%).** You and I will collaborate in assessing your in-class participation periodically in the quarter via self-assessments that you will submit to me for review. (See below for more information.)
- **Out-of-class work and communication (10%).** As we prepare for the course assignments, we will read, answer critical reading questions, generate drafts, and respond to each other's work. To receive full credit for your work, please post all written out-of-class assignments before class on the day they are due. Please note that on-time submission of Short Assignments and Major Papers also counts toward this portion of your grade. (See below for more information.)

- **Conferences (10%).** You and I will meet twice during the quarter for individual conferences to discuss your drafts and progress. Each time, I will ask you to come prepared with a draft, a draft plan, and/or a list of questions for me. To earn full credit for conferencing, please attend both meetings, come prepared, and take notes.

### *ACTIVE PARTICIPATION*

**I expect everyone to come to class prepared—meaning that you have thoroughly read any assigned material and completed any activities or documents assigned.** I do not expect you to completely understand every assigned reading or activity, but I do expect you to read everything carefully and do your best, which may mean making a list of your questions about the reading or assignment. Please also note that being physically present in class is not enough; you must also be mentally present. **Sleeping, engaging in distracting behaviors (such as arriving late to class, interrupting discussions, inappropriately using technology, doing work for other classes, etc.), or refusing to participate in class activities and discussions is unacceptable and will result in a loss of participation grade points.** If it is difficult for you to stay awake, concentrate, or sit still at your desk, you may stand up or move around, provided you do so in a non-distracting way. Please note that recurring **absences** will harm your participation grade because you will not be able to make-up in-class activities/assignments.

### *EXTRA CREDIT:*

You will have the opportunity to earn extra participation credit by either going to the writing center (OWRC or CLUE) or forming your own peer review groups with fellow students. If meeting with a writing center tutor, you should get the name and signature of that tutor (along with the date and time of the meeting) and submit a paragraph outlining the experience. What kind of feedback did you work on? What did you ask the tutor to look for in your paper? How do you plan on incorporating this feedback into this (and subsequent) writing? You are also encouraged to form peer review groups, modeled on the peer review workshops we do in class. These groups need not consist of only members of our class, but I would encourage you to try and work with ENGL 111 students (present or past) who understand the course outcomes. You will be asked to submit a write up paragraph similar to the one required for Writing Center visits.

### *SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:*

All papers must be double-spaced and in 12 pt Times New Roman font with 1 inch margins. Papers will be submitted electronically to Canvas by 11:59 pm on the due date unless told otherwise.

### *CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:*

We will be spending a lot of time together in our classroom and engaging each other in thoughtful discussion. With that in mind, we need to be mindful of how we behave and treat each other. As the student, you will need to:

- ✓ Put forth your best effort on a daily basis
- ✓ Be respectful of each other's ideas, beliefs, and questions
- ✓ Bring a laptop and other course materials with you every day
- ✓ Come to class prepared (complete readings, bring discussion/clarification questions)
- ✓ Communicate with me about any concerns or challenges with the class
- ✓ Maintain an open mindset to new challenges and experiences

### *PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES*

- Cell phones should not be out during class time (except during breaks).
- Laptops/tablets are required for regular in-class work. It is expected that you will stay on task and use it productively.
  - **Using technology in an inappropriate way will result in deductions from your participation grade for each instance.** You are welcome to consult with me during the quarter about points lost due to inappropriate uses of technology.

### *LATE WORK*

Late work will only be accepted if you can demonstrate that you have encountered a valid obstacle before the deadline (i.e., that you've been working on the project in good faith, but have run into some problems). If you feel you may be unable to complete an assignment on time, you should contact me as soon as possible, but ***no later than 24 hours before the due date***. After reviewing all the work you've done on the assignment, we will set a new deadline together. **In all other cases, late work will cause you to lose 2 points from your participation grade per day past the deadline, beginning on the day the assignment was due and will not receive written feedback from the instructor.**

### *ACADEMIC INTEGRITY*

Plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, is presenting someone else's ideas or writing as your own. In your writing for this class, you are encouraged to refer to other people's thoughts and writing--as long as you cite them. As a matter of policy, any student found to have plagiarized any piece of writing in this class will be immediately reported to the College of Arts and Sciences for review.

### *COMPLAINTS*

If you have any concerns about the course or your instructor, please see the instructor about these concerns as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with the instructor or not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the following Expository Writing Program staff in Padelford A-11: Director Candice Rai, (206) 543-2190 or [crai@uw.edu](mailto:crai@uw.edu) or Assistant Directors AJ Burgin, [aburgin@uw.edu](mailto:aburgin@uw.edu); Jacki Fiscus, [jfiscus@uw.edu](mailto:jfiscus@uw.edu); Ann Shivers-McNair, [asmcnair@uw.edu](mailto:asmcnair@uw.edu). If, after speaking with the Director or Assistant Directors of the EWP, you are still not satisfied with the response you receive, you may contact English Department Chair Brian Reed, (206) 543-2690.

## **UNIVERSITY RESOURCES**

### *ACCOMMODATIONS*

If you need accommodation of any sort, please let me know so that I can work with the UW Disability Resources for Students Office (DRS) to provide what you require. This syllabus is available in large print, as are other class materials. More information about accommodation may be found at <http://www.washington.edu/students/drs/>.

### *WRITING RESOURCES*

I encourage you to take advantage of the following writing resources available to you at no charge. **If you attend a writing conference, write me a one-page, double-spaced summary of whom you worked with, what paper you focused on, and what you learned and I will add a point to your participation grade.**

- The CLUE Writing Center in Mary Gates Hall is open Sunday to Thursday from 7 p.m. to midnight. The tutors can help you with your claims, organization, and grammar. You do not need to make an appointment, so arrive early and be prepared to wait. More information at <http://depts.washington.edu/aspuw/develop/writing-center/>
- The Odegaard Writing and Research Center is in in Odegaard Undergraduate Library room 121 and is open Sunday noon – 9 p.m. and Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. This writing center provides a research-integrated approach to writing instruction. Make an appointment on the website: <http://depts.washington.edu/owrc>

### *CAMPUS SAFETY*

Preventing violence is everyone's responsibility. If you're concerned, tell someone.

- Always call 911 if you or others may be in danger.

- Call 206-685-SAFE (7233) to report non-urgent threats of violence and for referrals to UW counseling and/or safety resources. TTY or VP callers, please call through your preferred relay service.
- Don't walk alone. Campus safety guards can walk with you on campus after dark. Call Husky NightWalk 206-685-WALK (9255).
- Stay connected in an emergency with UW Alert. Register your mobile number to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text and voice messaging. Sign up online at [www.washington.edu/alert](http://www.washington.edu/alert).

For more information visit the SafeCampus website at [www.washington.edu/safecampus](http://www.washington.edu/safecampus).

## OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

The Expository Writing Program Outcomes appear on the following page. Below is the rubric by which I will assess whether your portfolio demonstrates the outcomes:

### Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

- **Outstanding:** Offers a very highly proficient, even memorable demonstration of the trait(s) associated with the course outcome(s), including some appropriate risk-taking and/or creativity.
- **Strong:** Offers a proficient demonstration of the trait(s) associated with the course outcome(s), which could be further enhanced with revision.
- **Good:** Effectively demonstrates the trait(s) associated with the course outcome(s), but less proficiently; could use revision to demonstrate more skillful and nuanced command of trait(s).
- **Acceptable:** Minimally meets the basic outcome(s) requirement, but the demonstrated trait(s) are not fully realized or well-controlled and would benefit from significant revision.
- **Inadequate:** Does not meet the outcome(s) requirement; the trait(s) are not adequately demonstrated and require substantial revision on multiple levels.

O U T C O M E S   F O R   E X P O S I T O R Y   W R I T I N G   P R O G R A M   C O U R S E S  
U n i v e r s i t y   o f   W a s h i n g t o n

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### 1. To demonstrate an awareness of the strategies that writers use in different writing contexts.

- The writing employs style, tone, and conventions appropriate to the demands of a particular genre and situation.
- The writer is able to demonstrate the ability to write for different audiences and contexts, both within and outside the university classroom.
- The writing has a clear understanding of its audience, and various aspects of the writing (mode of inquiry, content, structure, appeals, tone, sentences, and word choice) address and are strategically pitched to that audience.
- The writer articulates and assesses the effects of his or her writing choices.

### 2. To read, analyze, and synthesize complex texts and incorporate multiple kinds of evidence purposefully in order to generate and support writing.

- The writing demonstrates an understanding of the course texts as necessary for the purpose at hand.
- Course texts are used in strategic, focused ways (for example: summarized, cited, applied, challenged, re-contextualized) to support the goals of the writing.
- The writing is intertextual, meaning that a “conversation” between texts and ideas is created in support of the writer’s goals.

- The writer is able to utilize multiple kinds of evidence gathered from various sources (primary and secondary – for example, library research, interviews, questionnaires, observations, cultural artifacts) in order to support writing goals.
- The writing demonstrates responsible use of the MLA (or other appropriate) system of documenting sources.

### 3. To produce complex, analytic, persuasive arguments that matter in academic contexts.

- The argument is appropriately complex, based in a claim that emerges from and explores a line of inquiry.
- The stakes of the argument, why what is being argued matters, are articulated and persuasive.
- The argument involves analysis, which is the close scrutiny and examination of evidence and assumptions in support of a larger set of ideas.
- The argument is persuasive, taking into consideration counterclaims and multiple points of view as it generates its own perspective and position.
- The argument utilizes a clear organizational strategy and effective transitions that develop its line of inquiry.

### 4. To develop flexible strategies for revising, editing, and proofreading writing.

- The writing demonstrates substantial and successful revision.
- The writing responds to substantive issues raised by the instructor and peers.
- Errors of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics are proofread and edited so as not to interfere with reading and understanding the writing.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Keep in mind that the schedule is subject to change, but consider it to be accurate unless I inform you otherwise.

**Note that additional out-of-class work may be assigned in class that is not detailed on this schedule. All homework is due on Canvas before the next class meeting unless specifically noted.** SA = Short Assignment, MP = Major Paper

**\*\*Note:** Sometime between weeks 2-5, you will need to come to at least one office hour for a brief **15-minute conference**. I will pass a sign-up sheet around by the end of the first week. To facilitate this conference, be prepared to discuss: reading log entries/the book you've been reading, 3 questions about the class, the content of the class, and/or the text you are reading. Missing this conference will result in deduction from your participation grade.

<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>In-Class Activities</b>	<b>Homework</b>
Tues 1/5	Introductions and course overview	<p><b>Writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro paragraph (Canvas)</li> <li>• Complete reading/discussion board questions on canvas for Ballentine article</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “About Banned and Challenged Books”—ALA (Canvas)</li> <li>• “Censored on Sexual Grounds” (Canvas)</li> <li>• “Freshman Skipping <i>Fun Home</i> for Moral Reasons” by Claire Ballentine (Canvas)</li> </ul>
Thurs 1/7	<p>Select Independent Reading Project</p> <p>Discuss reading logs and SA 1</p> <p>Discuss Ballentine article</p>	<p><b>Writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary paragraph (canvas)</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Summaries, Paraphrases (Canvas)</li> <li>• <i>And Tango Makes Three</i> (Canvas)</li> <li>• “Gay Penguins Have No Place...”-Telegraph (found in Links)—be sure to read comments below article as well</li> <li>• “Capturing Children’s Minds...”—Focus on the Family (Canvas)</li> <li>• “Picture Books Reflecting...”—Rowell (Canvas)</li> </ul> <p><b>Misc:</b>  <b>Books need to be selected and approved by class on Tuesday 1/12</b></p>
<b>WEEK 2</b>	<b>Representations of Gender and Sexuality</b>	
Tues 1/12	<p>Review SA 1</p> <p>Discussion of <i>And Tango Makes Three</i>: what is provocative/taboo about this particular text? Are there limits to what children should be exposed to in the classroom? (outcome 1)</p> <p>Understanding synthesis</p>	<p><b>Writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete reading/discussion questions (Discussion board on Canvas)</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Brokeback Mountain” by Annie Proulx (Canvas)</li> <li>• “Social-Cultural and Critical Responses to Brokeback Mountain” by Wayne S Wooden (Canvas)</li> </ul>
Thurs 1/14	Discussing the rhetoric of “Brokeback Mountain”: Is this text/story dangerous? Who is Annie Proulx’s audience?	<p><b>Writing:</b>  <u>Reading Log # 1 uploaded to Canvas by Sunday 1/17 by 11:59 pm</u></p>

	Story vs film: practice visual rhetoric with excerpts from the film	<p><b>SA 1 due Saturday 1/16 by 11:59 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson (Canvas)</li> <li>• Read “The Lottery Letters” New Yorker article (Canvas)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 3</b>	Representations of State Surveillance and Violence	
Tues 1/19	<p>Discuss “The Lottery”: how does provocative or contested literature hold up over time?</p> <p>Claims and close-reading</p> <p>Assign SA 2</p> <p>Begin viewing: <i>The Lottery</i></p>	<p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Censorship and ‘The Lottery’” by Edna Bogert</li> <li>• “The Censoring of ‘The Lottery’” by Bill Brown</li> </ul>
Thurs 1/21	<p>Review importance of visual rhetoric</p> <p>Watch <i>The Lottery</i></p>	<p><b>Writing:</b>  <u>Reading Log # 2 uploaded to Canvas by Sunday 1/24 by 11:59 PM</u>  <b>SA 2 due Saturday 1/23 by 11:59 PM</b></p> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction and Chapter 10 of <i>The Autobiography of Malcolm X</i> (Canvas)</li> <li>• “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King Jr. (Canvas)</li> <li>• “Civil Rights Movement Overview” (Canvas)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 4</b>	Representations of Race	
Tues 1/26	<p>Malcolm X and MLK:  Is rhetoric dangerous? What does dangerous writing look like?</p> <p>Reading/writing skill: reverse outline</p>	<p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Hegemonic Framing of Malcolm X and MLK in NE Papers” by Josh Grimm</li> </ul>
Thurs 1/28	<p>Discuss Grimm article: How does this influence our own interpretation of the two texts?</p> <p>Complex claims</p> <p>Introduce research project--overview of library resources;</p>	<p><b>Writing:</b>  <u>Reading Log # 3 due Sunday 1/31 by 11:59 PM</u></p> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Persepolis</i> by Marjane Satrapi introduction-102</li> <li>• “Historical Context of Persepolis” (Canvas)</li> </ul>



	Assign SA 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board of Education Letter (Canvas)</li> <li>Chicago Teacher’s Union Statement (Canvas)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 5</b>	Representations of Religion and the State	
Tues 2/2	Discussion of Persepolis: why is the text written as a graphic novel? Is it worth studying and teaching in schools?	<p><b>Writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin preliminary research for sources about your selected text</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finish <i>Persepolis</i></li> <li>“God Looked Like Marx” <i>New York Times Book Review</i> (Canvas)</li> </ul>
Thurs 2/4	Discussion: how does literature shape my own understanding of my identity and subject position? Are there limits to what children should be exposed to in the classroom?  Complex claims	<p><b>Writing:</b> <u>Reading Log # 4 Due Sunday 2/7 by 11:59 pm</u> <b>SA 3 due Saturday 2/6 by 11:59 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Freedom to Teach: Implications of the Removal of Persepolis from Chicago Schools” by Sarah McNicol (Canvas)</li> <li>“Sex, Violence, and Radical Islam...” by Noah Berlasky (Canvas)</li> <li>Research</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 6</b>	Research	
Tues 2/9	Persepolis wrap-up: making a sample argument in book review form	<p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research</li> </ul>
Thurs 2/11	Revision focus: skill building day, transition day into individual project  Using your reading logs to inform SA 4 and MP 1: how will they influence/structure your argument?  Prep for presentations	<p><b>Writing:</b> <b>SA 4 due by class time on Monday 2/16 (bring presentation materials to class)</b></p> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 7</b>	Research Continued	
Tues 2/16	Proposal presentations  Begin drafting complex claims for MP 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work on major paper</li> <li>Read “Shitty First Drafts” (Canvas)</li> </ul>
Thurs 2/18	Peer review complex claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Draft of MP due in class on Monday 2/23 (minimum of 3 pages)</b></li> </ul>

<b>WEEK 8</b>	Research/Portfolios	
Tues 2/23	Peer Review of Major Paper draft in class Reverse Outlining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise major paper</li> <li>• <i>FYI</i>: readings to guide revision: <i>CFI</i> 12-14, 450-453, 469-474,</li> </ul>
Thurs 2/25	Introduce Portfolios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Major paper due Saturday 2/27 by 11:59 PM</b></li> <li>• Read sample portfolio (on Canvas under links) and grade it</li> <li>• Complete portfolio planning worksheet</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 9</b>	Portfolios	
Tues 3/1	Portfolios	<b>Writing:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit portfolio link</li> <li>• Write a draft of at least one critical reflection and bring to class</li> </ul>
Thurs 3/3	Portfolio work	Work on portfolios
<b>WEEK 10</b>		
Tues 3/8	Conferences	Work on portfolios
Thurs 3/10	Course wrap-up, final notes/strategies for portfolios	

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**folios Due on Canvas Tuesday March 15 by 11:59 pm**

## List of Possible Texts for Individual Project

You are expected to complete the text you select by week five and complete the four required reading logs (one a week). I would suggest breaking the text you select into four chunks and complete a reading log for each portion.

Each text can be selected by only one person on a first come first serve basis. Email me your top two choices and I will respond with the one that has not yet been claimed. The list will be posted as a discussion board on Canvas and as texts are selected I will remove them from the list. Please be sure to check the discussion board before emailing me. If there is a text you want to do that is not on this list, check with me first.

### **You are required to have a text selected by Tuesday, January 12**

A final note, texts are grouped by the theme in which they are most often viewed as provocative/taboo/controversial, but there will definitely be some overlap. You do not have to focus solely (or at all) on the theme associated with the specific text. That being said, if you see several themes intersecting in one text, try to limit your focus to no more than two themes.

#### **Gender and sexuality:**

*Howl* by Allen Ginsberg  
*Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel  
*50 Shades of Grey* by E.L. James  
*Gossip Girl* by Cecily Von Ziegesar  
*The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison  
*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie  
*Forever* by Judy Blume  
*Perks of Being a Wildflower* by Stephen Chbosky  
*The Chocolate Wars* by Robert Cormier  
*Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison  
*Lolita* by Vladimir Nabokov  
*Push* by Sapphire  
*Naked Lunch* by William S. Burroughs  
*Orlando: A Biography* by Virginia Woolf  
*Go Tell it on the Mountain* by James Baldwin

#### **Representations of Race:**

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain  
*Beloved* by Toni Morrison  
*Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison  
*Native Son* by Richard Wright  
*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee  
*Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe  
*The Color Purple* by Alice Walker  
*The Spook who Sat by the Door* by Sam Greenlee  
*Corregidora* by Gayl Jones  
*Pimp: The Story of My Life* by Iceberg Slim  
*The Coldest Winter Ever* by Sister Souljah  
*Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie  
*The Brief and Wondrous life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz  
*White Teeth* by Zadie Smith  
*Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad

*Soul on Ice* by Eldridge Cleaver

**The State and Violence:**

*American Psycho* by Bret Easton

*In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote

*1984* by George Orwell

*Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley

*Lord of the Flies* by William Golding

*Animal Farm* by George Orwell

*Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury

*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey

*The Diary of Anne Frank* by Anne Frank

*Slaughterhouse Five* by Kurt Vonnegut

*Catch-22* by Joseph Heller

*Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe

*Fight Club* by Chuck Palahniuk

*The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

*The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood

*House of Spirits* by Isabel Allende

**Religion:**

*Harry Potter Series* by J.K. Rowling

*Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver

*Scarlett Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

*The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown

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

*The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman

*On the Origin of the Species* by Charles Darwin

*The Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie

*Bless Me Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya