

# Worldbuilding: Science Fiction and Creative Writing

Book List and Summer Reading, 2021-2022

Mr. Shelton, Oldfields School

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## Required texts:

The following books are required for this class; any edition of each will be fine. More details are available on our website:

- Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
- Carol Emshwiller, *The Mount*
- Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*
- *The Wesleyan Anthology of Science Fiction*
- *New Suns: Original Speculative Fiction by People of Color*
- Additional readings and materials will be provided free of charge in class.

## Summer reading expectations:

Please choose one of the four books below to read over the summer. After classes begin, there will be a writing assignment involving both the book you chose and a book that we will all read together. As you read, you may want to take notes or add bookmarks when you find something interesting. Significant details for each book are listed below to help you choose.

All students who enroll on or before August 20, 2021 must read one of the books assigned for this course and complete this summer reading assignment.

All students who enroll on or after August 21, 2021 should begin reading their summer reading upon enrollment and email the teacher for details about assignment expectations.

All new and returning students should bring a copy of their chosen book with them on the first day of class.

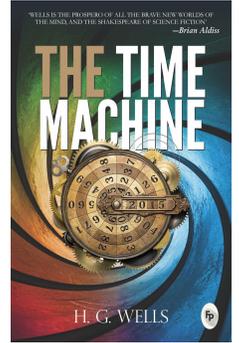
## Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein: or The Modern Prometheus* (1818)

- This is an amazing story and is often misunderstood in popular culture. *Frankenstein* is widely considered the first science fiction novel.
- This is an epistolary novel (a story presented through a series of letters or documents), which will be a point of discussion in class.
- Reading level: Moderately difficult due to old-fashioned setting and language (you will understand the vocabulary but may be challenged by the style). This is recommended if you are interested in the story and are a strong reader.
- This book is in the public domain (no copyright), so you can find free versions online and inexpensive printed copies.



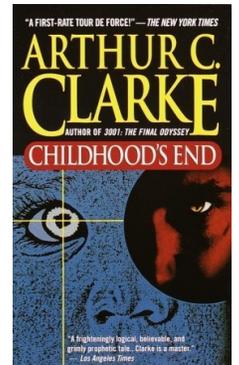
### H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine* (1895)

- This is an excellent introduction to H.G. Wells, who wrote a number of classic science fiction books. He also coined the term “time travel.”
- This story uses an interesting framing device (which will be a point of discussion in class) in that the narrator is not the protagonist of the story.
- Reading level: Somewhat challenging due to old-fashioned language and setting but still accessible for all reading levels. This book is relatively short.
- This book is in the public domain (no copyright), so you can find free versions online and inexpensive printed copies.



### Arthur C. Clarke, *Childhood's End* (1953)

- Arthur C. Clarke co-wrote the influential film *2001: A Space Odyssey* and had a major impact on the field of science fiction. This story is about a benevolent alien invasion of Earth, where the aliens are trying to help us develop rather than conquer us.
- The story has bold, interesting concepts and (like much of Clarke’s fiction) goes much deeper than you expect at first.
- Reading level: Easy to follow and understand. This is accessible for all reading levels, although its complex themes make it more challenging than you might expect.



### Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?* (1968)

- Philip K. Dick wrote many novels and short stories about the nature of reality, perception, and humanity. Many of his works have been adapted into movies and TV shows; this book is the basis for the movie *Blade Runner*, although there are significant differences between the book and the movie.
- Like many of the author’s stories, this novel centers on how to tell if something is authentic (alive/human) or artificial (simulated/robotic).
- Reading level: Easy to follow and understand. This is accessible for all reading levels, although its thought-provoking, larger themes can be disturbing at times. You should know that Philip K. Dick is not known for happy endings.

