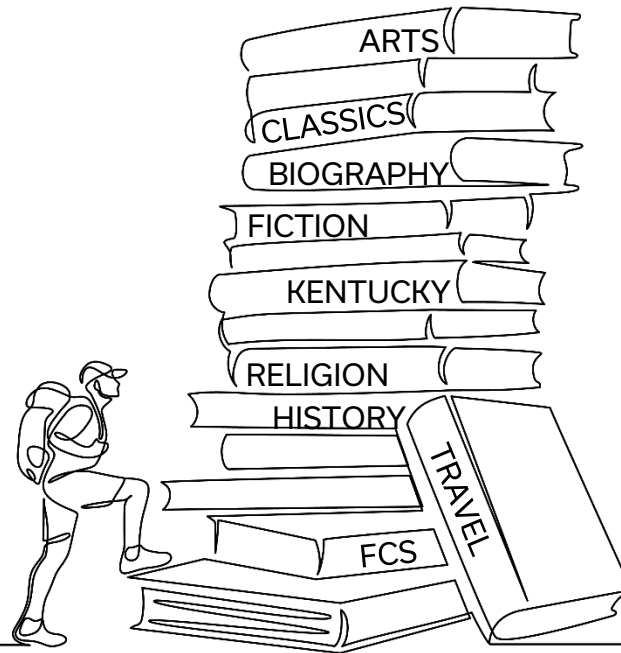


Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association



Cultural Arts and Heritage

• Book List • 2026 – 2027

- For enjoyment from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 •

Preface

The KEHA Cultural Arts and Heritage Educational Program promotes reading. Extension Homemakers may participate by reading at least one book from six of these nine categories (listed below). This is only a suggested list. You may choose your own titles and your local public librarian may have other suggestions. Have fun!

Keep a record of the books read and submit the record to the club Cultural Arts and Heritage chairperson. The club chairperson should forward that information to the county chair or to the extension agent. Qualified readers may receive the Cultural Arts Reading Award Bookmark recognition at the county level. Counties are responsible for printing their own bookmark. The bookmark is available for download on the KEHA Cultural Arts and Heritage web page.

Thank you to everyone who contributed titles to this year's list, including UK Libraries and the Scott County Public Library. This Book List resets every year; however, some titles may be repeated if they are suggested for the new list.

Kelly May, KEHA State Advisor & Cindy Moore, Cultural Arts & Heritage State Chairperson



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ARTS

Ain't Nobody's Fool: The Life and Times of Dolly Parton *by Martha Ackmann (2025).*

This biography chronicles the life of country legend and philanthropist Dolly Parton, from her humble beginnings in the Smoky Mountains to her international stardom.

Brooklyn Tweed's Knit & Crochet Blankets: Projects to Stitch for Home and Away

by Jared Flood (2024). Brooklyn Tweed is one of the top design houses in the U.S. and this book reflects their ethos of sustainability, ethical practices, and U.S. based production. With a host of top-notch contributors and lovely designs for both knitting and crocheting, everyone looking for blankets both large and small should find inspiration.

Every Valley *by Charles King (2024).* This book explores the desperate lives and troubled times that led to the creation of Messiah. It highlights the role of Charles Jennens, who wrote the words later set to music. Composer George Frideric Handel transformed these texts into one of the most famous oratorios in history. The story reveals how faith, art, and historical context came together to produce an acting musical masterpiece.

The Joy of Home *by Ashley Gilbreath (2023).* Interior designer Ashley Gilbreath's style is easy and elegant, with respect for southern tradition and family. Her collection of beautifully curated photos highlight warmth and practicality, with an eye for beauty.

Mona's Eyes *by Thomas Schlessner (2025).* Blends art history with storytelling to follow ten-year-old Mona and her beloved grandfather who have only 52 Wednesdays to visit 52 works of art and commit to memory "all that is beautiful in the world" before Mona loses her sight forever.

Sacred Spaces: The Awe-inspiring Architecture of Churches and Cathedrals *by Guillaume de Laubier (2023).* This is a stunning architectural tour through transcendent photography of the world's most imposing, beautiful, or touching places of worship.

Watercolor Wanderlust: the Ultimate Guide to Painting Beautiful Landscapes *by Hannah Pickerill (2024).* This lovely book contains 20 comprehensive tutorials for landscape watercolor paintings for mountains, forests, deserts, seascapes, etc. This is excellent for beginners or those who just want to expand their craft in a different direction.

BIOGRAPHY

American Pontiff: Pope Leo XIV and His Plan to Heal the Church *by Paul Kengor (2026)*. Noted Catholic historian Paul Kengor presents a nuanced portrait of Pope Leo XIV, the first American to hold the position. Robert Francis Prevost's sudden election to the chair of St. Peter stunned the world in May 2025 and Kengor not only looks into the new Pope's past, but also at the first 40 days of his pontificate to assess where he may be intending to lead.

Baldwin: A Love Story *by Nicholas Boggs (2025)*. This is the first major biography of James Baldwin in over three decades, and draws on new archival material, original research, and interviews. It focuses on how his personal relationships shaped his life and work and helps us better understand the public and private lives of one of the major literary figures of the twentieth century.

Cancer is Complicated: and Other Unexpected Lessons I've Learned *by Clea Shearer (2025)*. This memoir follows the journey of entrepreneur Clea Shearer, founder of The Home Edit. Her company she had worked so hard to grow was just acquired by Hello Sunshine and her Emmy-nominated show Get Organized had just finished its second season when she was diagnosed with cancer. This warm, honest, and straightforward conversation about the most frightening experience of her life will help anyone who is enduring difficult circumstances.

Dark Horses: A Memoir of Redemption *by Arthur Hancock (2024)*. Bourbon County horseman Arthur Hancock shares his life growing up on Claiborne Farm, under the stern hand of his famous father, Bull Hancock, and his struggle to find his own voice. Noted not only as a great horseman in his own right, Arthur is also a well-respected musician and it was this calling that defined his struggle.

Memorial Days *by Geraldine Brooks (2025)*. This memoir by the author of *Horse* focuses on the time following her husband's sudden death, when she travels to a remote island off the coast of Australia to give herself time to mourn. It is a portrait of her late husband writer Tony Horwitz, their partnership, and the grieving process.

Midnight in Moscow *by John Sullivan (2024)*. This memoir reflects on the author's service as the U.S. ambassador to Russia during a time of rising tensions. He provides a firsthand account of being on the diplomatic front lines when Russian invasion of Ukraine began. The book offers insight into Russian politics, diplomacy, and the lingering influence of a Soviet-era mindset. Through personal experiences, it gives readers a deeper understanding of international relations during a critical moment in history.

Once Upon a Time: The Captivating Life of Caroline Bessette-Kennedy *by Elizabeth Beller (2025)*. This is an intimate and sympathetic portrait of the John Kennedy's bride who tragically died with him in a plane crash shortly after their marriage. Caroline's life was full and meaningful before she connected with John, and this biography shows her life's full impact.

Paper Girl *by Beth Macy (2025)*. Beth Macy, the award-winning journalist behind *Dopesick*, returns with a memoir of growing up in Urbana, Ohio. She seeks to understand how the town that once helped lift her out of poverty has become a community strained by economic decline, political polarization, and the collapse of local institutions.

Skinning Catfish in Mary's Kitchen. Tales of Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping, and Life in the Woods *by Will Brantley (2026)*. Collection of hunting and fishing tales, life spent outdoors, travel the world hunting and fishing.

Strangers: A Memoir of Marriage *by Belle Burden (2026)*. Collapse of 20-year marriage. Explores themes of betrayal, self-discovery, and transformation.

FAMILY and CONSUMER SCIENCES

All the Cool Girls Get Fired: How to Let Go of Being Let Go and Come Back on Top *by Laura Brown (2025)*. Today's job market changes rapidly and sometimes good people find themselves let go, laid off, or even fired from a job they love. Brown pilots those who are on the receiving end of bad job news with humor, actionable advice, and practicality. This is not just advice for job hunting and emotional balance but a re-shifting of personal insight and growth.

Anxious Generation *by Jonathan Haidt (2024)*. The Anxious Generation by Jonathan Haidt argues that the rise in teen mental illness is due to a "great rewiring" of childhood from play-based to phone-based, driven by smartphones and social media, which has harmed children's development by replacing real-world exploration with online risks like social comparison, sleep deprivation, and addiction.

Baking and the Meaning of Life: How to Find Joy in 100 Recipes *by Helen Goh (2025)*. With the debut of her first solo cookbook, Goh shares her distinctive approach to baking informed by her multicultural heritage with 100 delicious desserts of all kinds as well as savory bakes. Drawing on her upbringing in Malaysia and Australia, her acclaimed work with Ottolenghi where she specialized in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern flavors, and even her active psychotherapy practice, Goh not only shares her favorite baking recipes, but also reflections on life, sharing how baking can bring us together and add meaning and joy to both significant and everyday moments.

Galette! Sweet and Savory Recipes as Easy as Pie *by Rebecca Firkser (2025).*

Discover the basics of this rustic, freeform tart. A galette requires a few simple ingredients and minimal equipment - - which means any home cook can create this versatile pastry. A galette can be sweet or savory, filled with any imaginable combination of fruits or veggies, meats, cheeses, and spices. Great for a party, they also come together quickly and can be prepared in advance.

The Simple Path to Wealth: Your Road Map to Financial Independence and a Rich, Free Life *by J. L. Collins (2025).* This is a simple book that may have a profound effect on your life and your view of your assets. Drawing from 50 years of investing experience and the letters the author wrote to his daughter, this book provides solid advice for making your money count.

The Sirens' Call: How Attention Became the World's Most Endangered Resource *by Chris Hayes (2025).* Explores the role of attention in our lives and its commodification in today's world. He explains how our ability to focus has been systematically harvested and sold as part of the "attention economy" and concludes that the "siren call" of digital life is not inevitable but a conscious choice that we can resist.

Ultra-processed People: Why We Can't Stop Eating Food That Isn't Food *by Chris van Tulleken (2025).* Medical doctor Chris van Tulleken examines the trends in popular foods that have become ubiquitous on grocery shelves and through the fast-food line. As people struggle with weight and various health problems arising from diet, he looks at how these foods affect our brains, our desires, and how to live life around them.

FICTION

Broken Country *by Clare Leslie Hall (2025).* Set in a tight-knit English village, this book traces the rekindling of a forbidden love and the devastating chain of events that leads to a shocking courtroom reckoning.

The Correspondent *by Virginia Evans (2026).* The Correspondent is a novel that follows Sybil Van Antwerp, a 73-year-old retired lawyer and mother, as she uses her letter-writing to navigate the complexities of aging, family dynamics, and her past relationships. As she faces the decline of her vision and the emotional challenges of her life, Sybil's letters reveal her thoughts on love, loss, and the passage of time, ultimately exploring themes of identity and self-reflection.

The Extraordinary Deaths of Mrs. Kip *by Sara Brunsvold (2022).* A cub reporter for the Kansas City Star is assigned to write a biography of a hospice patient, Clara Kip. As she learns about Mrs. Kip's life, she discovers the powerful story behind her Mrs. Kip's ordinary existence. Through this journey, the reporter begins to reflect on her own life and faith. Includes meaningful life lessons about purpose, legacy, and trusting God.

Frozen River by *Ariel Lawhon (2023)*. This historical novel of a midwife in mid-eighteenth-century New England is based on the surprisingly detailed journal of a real midwife. Staying fairly true to the story, Lawhon enhances a mystery hinted at within the pages of the journal, adding a bit of suspense to an already fascinating story. The look at early colonial legal matters, and the role and rights of women during this period make this book a fascinating and important read.

The Girls of Good Fortune by *Kristina McMorris (2025)*. Oregon, 1888. Amid the subterranean labyrinth of the notorious Shanghai Tunnels, a woman awakens in an underground cell, drugged and disguised. Celia soon realizes she's a "shanghaied" victim on the verge of being shipped off as forced labor, leaving behind those she loves most. Explores the complexity of family and identity, the importance of stories that echo through generations, and the power of strength found beneath the surface.

Guardian and a Thief by *Megha Majumdar (2025)*. Guardian and a Thief is a tense, near-future literary thriller set in a climate-ravaged Kolkata, where a mother has just seven days to recover the stolen passports her family needs to escape, even as her path collides with a starving young thief fighting to save his own family.

Heartwood by *Amity Gaige (2025)*. This gripping literary thriller follows a hiker who vanishes on the Appalachian Trail and the search-and-rescue team that is racing to find her. It weaves a suspenseful story about resilience, connection, and the wilderness that both shelters and threatens.

The Hounding by *Kenobe Purvis (2025)*. Based on a true event set in a small, eighteenth-century village in England in which a group of sisters were accused of turning into dogs with tragic results from their fearful neighbors. Purvis shares the story of this family, their community, and the mysterious details surrounding the claims with finesse and nuance, bringing the characters to extraordinary life. The ending will leave the reader wondering what really happened, which makes this novel more thought-provoking.

My Beloved by Jan Karon (2025). In this new Mitford Novel, Father Tim writes a heartfelt love letter to his wife, but it unexpectedly goes missing. The letter begins circulating among his astonished neighbors, who read its deeply personal message. As it passes from person to person, it begins to impact their lives in meaningful ways. The story highlights themes of love, community, and the quiet influence of shared words.

The Names by Florence Knapp (2025). What is in a name? Does a name shape a future, a life? When Cora sets off to register the birth of her latest child, her controlling husband expects her to name the child after himself, but at the office, she hesitates. This extraordinary novel is really three distinct stories, each based on a different name given to a child and which lead to different outcomes. A thought-provoking and very discussable read.

The Secret Sewing Society by *Siobhan Curham (2026)*. Set in Ukraine during World War II and in the present time, this novel weaves two timelines. It follows a group of women who use their sewing circles as a cover for acts of resistance against occupying forces. In the present, another storyline uncovers their hidden history and sacrifices. Highlights courage, resilience, and the enduring impact of women's roles in wartime.

Theo of Golden by *Allen Levi (2023)*. An elderly, wealthy man decides to hire Theo, a quiet and observant editor, to record the stories of seemingly ordinary people in his small town. As Theo meets everyone, he uncovers meaningful and often overlooked moments from their lives. Through these encounters, the project reveals the beauty and significance found in everyday experiences.

This Promised Land by *Cathy Gohlke (2025)*. Ginny Pickering Boyden receives a shocking letter revealing that she has inherited her family's Christmas tree farm. One nephew has been struggling to keep the failing farm running, while another arrives with his three children, bringing tension and uncertainty. As they are forced together, the family must confront past hurts and differences. The story explores whether they can come together to restore both the land and their relationships.

Wild Dark Shore by *Charlotte McConaghy (2025)*. A woman washes ashore on a remote island near Antarctica inhabited by only a family who take her in and try to restore her. She is, however, not telling the whole truth about why she is there, nor is the family telling her their secrets either, which she learns when she discovers a freshly dug grave and sabotaged radios. This romantic mystery is full of twists you will not see coming.

HISTORY

1929 by *Andrew Ross Sorkin (2025)*. 1929, published in Oct 2025, details the collapse from early 1929 to the middle of the Great Depression, highlighting the battle between Wall Street and Washington. Sorkin explores the era's greed, speculation, and key figures, drawing parallels to modern financial risks.

Beast in the Clouds: The Roosevelt Brothers' Deadly Quest to Find the Mythical Giant Panda by *Nathalia Holt (2025)*. The stunning true story of Theodore Roosevelt's sons and their 1929 Himalayan expedition to prove the existence of the panda bear to the western world.

Declaring Independence: Why 1776 Matters by *Edward Larson (2026)*. 1776 was a pivotal year in American history, with a seismic shift from a group of English colonists demanding their rights as citizens to a clamor to separate from the mother country. Outlines this important change, tracing the shifts in literature and thinking. A timely reminder in this 250th year of American Independence.

Everything Is Tuberculosis by *John Green (2025)*. Tuberculosis (TB) has shadowed humanity for millennia and is now recognized as a disease fueled by poverty, injustice, and inequity. When author John Green met Henry Reider, a young TB patient at Lakka Government Hospital in Sierra Leone in 2019, the encounter transformed him into a passionate advocate for treatment access and healthcare equity. Green describes how TB has shaped our world, while confronting the sobering reality that this curable, preventable disease still claims over a million lives each year.

The Girl Bandits of the Warsaw Ghetto: the True Story of the Five Courageous Young Women Who Sparked an Uprising by *Elizabeth Hyman (2025)*. Not many people know how hard the Jews trapped in the Warsaw ghetto fought back against Nazi suppression, and fewer still know the story of the young women at the heart of the story. Not only were they instrumental in the ghetto uprising, but they also sabotaged the Nazis and aided Jews in hiding across Europe.

The Library of Lost Maps: An Archive of a World in Progress by *James Chesire (2025)*. Narrates the discovery of a hidden library dedicated to preserving 19th and 20th century maps that have shaped our world historically, scientifically, and ecologically. This fascinating historical work is filled with gorgeous maps and plates.

Motherland: A Feminist History of Modern Russia, From Revolution to Autocracy by *Julia Ioffe (2025)*. On returning to Russia after leaving with her family in 1990, Ioffe was shocked to see fewer independent women. The large numbers of doctors, physicists, and ex-military women were replaced by a larger number of women taking on traditional female roles. Ioffe provides the history of what Soviet and Russian women were capable of, and a reminder of what women can be.

The Queen's Cook by *Tessa Afshar (2024)*. Set in the heart of ancient Persia, this story unfolds during a time when an edict threatens the Jewish people. Rebekah, the daughter of an impoverished lord, seeks employment in Queen Esther's royal court. As she becomes part of the palace, she is drawn into the tension and danger surrounding a plot against Esther and her people. The novel weaves faith, courage, and purpose into a powerful retelling connected to the biblical story of Esther.

The Sound of Light by *Sarah Sundin (2023)*. A story of the Danish resistance during World War II, focusing on how these people resisted the German forces during the occupation beginning in 1940. A great work of fiction is historical fiction.

We the People: A History of the U.S. Constitution by *Jill Lepore (2025)*. Explores why the U.S. Constitution has become so difficult to amend. Traces centuries of efforts by ordinary Americans to reshape the document, most of which have failed despite thousands of proposed amendments. Argues that amendments are meant to be central to democracy, allowing change without violence. This thought-provoking book invites readers to consider the possibilities of an "amended America."

The Women by *Kristin Hannah (2024)*. This book is about nurses during the Vietnam War. It follows one particular nurse, Frances "Frankie" McGrath, and what she saw and endured during the war. The story also explores the challenges she faced after returning home. It is an in-depth look at the experiences of Vietnam veterans, especially the nurses, and highlights their often-overlooked contributions.

KENTUCKY

All These Ghosts by *Silas House (2025)*. This is House's first full-length collection of poems, intermingling his Appalachian roots, and his connection to the natural world.

American Bloodlines: Reckoning with Lynch Culture by *Sonya Lea (2025)*. Tells the story of Rainey Beatha, a young Black man and the victim of the last documented public execution in the United States, which took place in Owensboro, Kentucky in 1936. Two of the spectators were Lea's own grandparents. Combines memoir with reportage and cultural criticism. The essays in this collection grapple with our complicity in these atrocities—including the agreement in our silences—and demonstrate how we, as descendants, might take responsibility and bring new scrutiny to ancestral and communal crimes.

Colton Gentry's Last Act by *Jeff Zentner (2024)*. Disgraced country musician Colton Gentry retreats to his small Kentucky hometown, rediscovering community, forgiveness, and the music he thought he'd lost for good.

Dead Man Blues by *Silas House (2025)*. A venture into the murder mystery genre, this whodunit paints a vivid and gritty picture of Kentucky in the 1950s. Set in a small town, a once a respected member of the community, who now resides on a houseboat with only his dog for company, discovers two bodies. He teams up with his former best friend, and the man who stole his wife, to find the killer.

Gay Poems for Red States by *Willie Edward Taylor Carver, Jr. (2023)*. Gay Poems for Red States is a powerful collection in which Kentucky poet Willie Edward Taylor Carver Jr. reflects on growing up queer in rural Appalachia, capturing the beauty, pain, and resilience woven into life in the Commonwealth.

Goat-Footed Gods by *Kathleen Mason Driskell (2025)*. This slim volume of poetry by poet, essayist, and teacher Kathleen Driskell combines her love of nature and fascination with the path to the sacred. In this collection she revisits her childhood along with the legend of the Goatman of Pope Lick, a supposedly dangerous cryptid living outside of Louisville, Kentucky, intertwining the two in a unique combination.

Good Women by *Halle Hill (2023)*. Good Women delves into the lives of twelve black women across the Appalachian South. It offers a sharp, heartfelt collection of stories about Southern and Appalachian women navigating faith, family, desire, and survival.

Kentucky's Packhorse Librarians by *Nicki Jacobsmeyer (2025)*. For all of those who fell in love with The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek this actual history of the packhorse librarians of eastern Kentucky will be very meaningful. Although the program ended in 1943, its impact on the region has been felt for decades since. These librarians delivered not just printed books, but scrapbooks filled with recipes and helpful articles, bringing education, entertainment and practical knowledge to remote areas of Kentucky during some of our most challenging years.

Spirit of the Bluegrass: Strange, Surprising, and Sentimental Stories from Kentucky by *Marvin Bartlett (2025)*. For thirty-five years, television journalist Marvin Bartlett has traveled the Commonwealth looking for unusual stories that distill what it is to be a Kentuckian. This is a book of travel, stories, and history as told by a natural storyteller.

Starling House by *Alix E. Harrow (2023)*. In *Starling House*, Harrow crafts a dark, enchanting tale rooted in a fictional Kentucky community, where a working-class heroine uncovers buried histories, dangerous magic, and the power of claiming your own story.

RELIGION and SPIRITUALITY

Chicken Soup for the Soul: Angels and the Miraculous: 101 Inspirational Stories of Faith, Miracles and Answered Prayers (2023). These stories of ordinary people touching the miraculous and the divine will inspire and uplift readers.

Dominion: How the Christian Revolution Remade the World by *Tom Holland (2024)*. Tom Holland, noted historian of the ancient world, turns his attention to the history of Christianity and its profound effect on the world in terms of thought, philosophy, ethics, and history.

Do the New You: 6 Mindsets to Become Who You Were Created to Be by *Steven Furtick (2024)*. New York Times best-selling author and pastor Steven Furtick discusses how to find God's plan for your life, change your mindset to align with His plan, and get from today to where you are meant to be.

Gradually, Then Suddenly: How to Dream Bigger, Decide Better, and Leave a Lasting Legacy by *Mark Batterson (2025)*. Reveals that every area of life—from personal growth to professional development to spiritual transformation—follows the same pattern: gradually then suddenly. What we perceive as overnight success is the result of little decisions compounding over time. Drawing from compelling biblical examples, fascinating historical stories, and hard-won leadership insights, Batterson demonstrates that God uses long obedience in the same direction to prepare us for those moments of major progress.

How Great is Our God: Living a Worship-Led Life in a Me-Driven World *by Chris Tomlin (2024)*. Grammy award winning musician Chris Tomlin walks through his worship songs and show how each is more than just music. Each is a devotional meditation that will direct the mind and soul to a higher plane but more importantly, placing worship at the center of mind and emotion helps eliminate self-centeredness that creeps into everyday life.

I Just Wish I Had a Bigger Kitchen: And Other Lies I Think Will Make Me Happy *by Kate Strickler (2025)*. I Just Wish I Had a Bigger Kitchen is a funny, tender memoir about building a life through food, family, and imperfect spaces. Strickler details how the chronically dissatisfied can swap comparison for contentment with practices that boost gratitude and foster connection.

Whispers from the Mountain *by Josh Rogers (2026)*. Fourmile, Kentucky ghost tales. They are memories, warnings, and echoes of a world where the line between the living and the dead is thin as creek fog.

TRAVEL

America the Beautiful? One woman in a borrowed Prius on the road most traveled *by Blythe Roberson (2023)*. Examines Americans' obsession with freedom, travel, and the open road. To fill her own sense of adventure, she quits her day job and sets off on a Great American Road Trip to visit America's national parks. Along the way she meets new friends on their own quests, learns to cope while missing the comforts of home, and comes to understand the limits and possibilities of going to nature to prove to yourself that you are, in fact, free.

The Best American Food and Travel Writing 2024 *(2023)*. This collection of essays pairs food with the adventure of finding it, from exotic journeys to the simple roadside stand. Food grounds us to our place in the world and can be a vehicle for some of our grandest and most memorable adventures.

Kentucky: Off the Beaten Path *by Jackie Sheckler Finch (2023)*. If you are tired of the tourist traps and the usual places, this guide will take you to the hidden, the nearly forgotten, and the utterly cool places few people know. Learn unusual history, see gorgeous nature, and explore some of the quirky places that make Kentucky special.

On the Hippie Trail: Istanbul to Kathmandu and the Making of a Travel Writer *by Rick Steves (2025)*. Famed travel writer Rick Steves revisits his legendary 300,000-mile trek along the Hippie Trail in 1978. The story comes from the candid journals he kept while navigating political unrest, wild bus rides, and the transformative power of travel.

The Place of Tides by *James Rebanks (2025)*. In this reflective memoir, Rebanks joins an elderly woman on a tiny Arctic-circle island for her last season caring for eider ducks, finding in her fierce independence and ancient traditions a transformative lesson in purpose, resilience, and renewal.

The Travel Bible for Rookies: The Travel Handbook with Tips How to Travel Like a Professional by *Gilles Kroger (2023)*. If you have not traveled for a while or are planning a trip to an unfamiliar part of the world, this book will have something useful inside. Even if you are well-travelled, you may discover some tips and tricks or new information that will save you on your next adventure.

A Travel Guide to the Middle Ages: The World Through Medieval Eyes by *Anthony Bale (2023)*. The ancient and medieval world was filled with intrepid travelers who relied on stories and guides to get them safely to their destination and home again. Recounts the advice medieval travelers would have encountered such as cures for seasickness, the exchange rate between currencies, and basic customs. Also includes travel tales of the imagination and those of real, but very distant places, including the impressions of visitors encountering western Europe for the first time.

CLASSICS and OLD FAVORITES

All the King's Men by *Robert Penn Warren (1946)*. Perhaps loosely based on the life of senator Huey B. Long, this is the story of Willie Stark, populist governor in the 1930s South. The lyrical writing and compelling characters make this one of the most read and acclaimed novels of the 20th century.

Animal Farm by *George Orwell (1945)*. A farm is taken over by its overworked, mistreated animals. With flaming idealism and stirring slogans, they set out to create a paradise of progress, justice, and equality. Thus, the stage is set for one of the most telling satiric fables ever written; a razor-edged fairy tale for grown-ups that records the evolution from revolution against tyranny to totalitarianism.

And Then There Were None by *Agatha Christie (1939)*. Who doesn't love a good mystery? Agatha Christie is the acknowledged queen of the genre and this class novel from her pen is one of her best. First there were ten visitors to a mysterious weekend on a little-known island, invited there by an eccentric millionaire, but by the end, well, the title says it all. This is the original of the locked room mysteries, the one often imitated, but never bettered.

Ethan Frome by *Edith Wharton (1911)*. The lives of a discouraged farmer and his hypochondriac wife are turned upside down when an enthusiastic young cousin comes to live with them.

The Sport of Kings by *C.E. Morgan (2016)*. Follows generations of an old Kentucky family who have tied their fortunes to a carefully curated bloodline of racehorses. Their future may change however with the arrival of a talented but angry young Black man, who has an agenda – and a legacy of his own. Rich language, deeply drawn characters, and a plot rooted in recognizable places in the Bluegrass make this a classic.

Stoner by *John Williams (1965)*. Stoner follows William Stoner, a quiet farm boy who leaves rural Missouri for college and discovers a lifelong devotion to literature. He spends a lifetime wrestling with love, duty, and disappointment, reflecting the pull between working-the-land roots and the promise of education.

Wuthering Heights by *Emily Brontë (1847)*. A novel of impossible desires, violence and transgression is a masterpiece of intense, unsettling power. It begins in a snowstorm, when Lockwood, the new tenant of Thrushcross Grange on the bleak Yorkshire moors, is forced to seek shelter at Wuthering Heights. There he discovers the history of the tempestuous events that took place years before: the intense passion between the foundling Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw, her betrayal of him and the bitter vengeance he now wreaks on the innocent heirs of the past.