SHORT STORIES FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS | UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

<http://www.shortstoryguide.com/short-stories-for-college-students-university-students/>

DIRECTIONS: Consider the following stories to read in a whole class or group setting. Most of the links should work, but if not, we can find these stories online.

***Sonny’s Blues | James Baldwin***

The narrator is a teacher in Harlem; he has managed to keep away from the bad influences around him. His brother, Sonny, is a jazz musician with a heroin problem. They haven’t stayed close over the years.

[Read “Sonny’s Blues”](http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/2B-HUM/Readings/Baldwin-Sonnys-Blues.pdf)

***A Hunger Artist | Franz Kafka***

A hunger artist – a professional faster – puts on public fasting exhibitions. The public responds enthusiastically at first, but eventually loses interest.

This allegory (or myth) could represent the misunderstood artist who isn’t appreciated by the public.

[Read “A Hunger Artist”](http://www.zwyx.org/portal/kafka/kafka_hunger_artist.html)

***The Story of an Hour | Kate Chopin***

A woman receives the news that her husband has been killed in a train accident. She processes the news over the next hour, experiencing a range of emotions.

[Read “The Story of an Hour”](http://www.shortstoryguide.com/story-hour-kate-chopin-summary-themes-questions/)

***Cathedral | Raymond Carver***

A woman and a blind man have kept in contact for ten years, mailing tapes to each other. His wife has recently died, so he’s going to visit her family. On the way, he’s going to spend a night at the woman’s place with her new husband. Her husband isn’t looking forward to the visit.

[Read “Cathedral”](http://www.giuliotortello.it/ebook/cathedral.pdf)

***Shiloh | Bobbie Ann Mason***

Leroy has been off work for four months since getting hurt. His wife, Norma Jean, supports them both by working at a drugstore. Leroy is glad to be home with his wife, but he’s worried that she’s drawing away from him—maybe his presence reminds her of their son who died as a baby.

[Read “Shiloh”](http://english204-dcc.blogspot.ca/2011/05/shiloh.html)

***The Yellow Wallpaper | Charlotte Perkins Gilman***

A woman is confined to the upstairs bedroom of a summer home by her doctor husband. She has “nervous depression” and a “hysterical tendency”. The confinement has an added negative effect on her mental health, which she documents in her journal.

[Read “The Yellow Wallpaper”](http://www.shortstoryguide.com/read-yellow-wallpaper-charlotte-perkins-gilman/)

***A Rose for Emily | William Faulkner***

A Southern spinster, Emily Grierson, has died. She had been a recluse, so the townspeople are curious about her and her house. The narrator recounts episodes from her life.

[Read “A Rose for Emily”](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~drbr/wf_rose.html)

***Miss Brill | Katherine Mansfield***

A middle-aged woman takes a weekly Sunday walk. She likes to observe and listen to people, but she overhears something that upsets her.

[Read “Miss Brill”](http://www.shortstoryguide.com/read-miss-brill-katherine-mansfield/)

***The Necklace | Guy De Maupassant***

Mathilde is married to a minor government official. They’re of modest means, but Mathilde has expensive tastes. When they get invited to a party, she borrows a necklace from a rich friend.

[Read “The Necklace”](https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/m/maupassant/guy/diamond-necklace/)

***Everyday Use | Alice Walker***

Mama is an African-American woman living in the Deep South. Her daughter, Dee, an educated woman who’s drawn to a traditional African identity, is coming for a visit.

[Read “Everyday Use”](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ug97/quilt/walker.html)

***Paul’s Case | Willa Cather***

Paul gets suspended from his Pittsburgh High School. His father wants him to be a responsible wage-earning family man when he grows up, but Paul is drawn to a life of wealth and glamour, so he decides to go to New York.

[Read “Paul’s Case”](https://genius.com/Willa-cather-pauls-case-a-study-in-temperament-annotated)

***A Worn Path | Eudora Welty***

An elderly African-American woman, Phoenix Jackson, walks through the Mississippi forest to get into town. She encounters many obstacles along the way.

[Read “A Worn Path”](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~drbr/ew_path.html)

***A Good Man is Hard to Find | Flannery O’Connor***

An extended family is headed to Florida for a vacation. The grandmother wants to go to Tennessee instead, so she talks about an escaped murderer – The Misfit – who is suspected to be on his way to Florida.

[Read “A Good Man is Hard to Find”](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~drbr/goodman.html)

***The Rocking-Horse Winner | D. H. Lawrence***

A middle-class woman, successful but perpetually short of money, lives with her two children. She is unlucky, but her son isn’t: when he rides his rocking-horse, he’s able to work himself into a state where he can pick the winner of a horse race.

[Read “The Rocking-Horse Winner”](http://www.classicshorts.com/stories/rockwinr.html)

***The Garden of Forking Paths | Jorge Luis Borges***

A German spy knows that his cover has been blown and he’s being pursued by English authorities. He has vital information to communicate to his government, so he comes up with a plan: he finds a man named Stephen Albert in the phonebook and heads for his home.

[Read “The Garden of Forking Paths”](http://art.yale.edu/file_columns/0000/1377/01-borges-03.pdf)

***Winter Dreams | F. Scott Fitzgerald***

Dexter Green is a fourteen-year-old caddy, working for pocket money. He quits one day when Judy Jones, a beautiful eleven-year-old, treats him as an inferior. Years later he goes into business and becomes a success. He has another meeting with Judy Jones.

[Read “Winter Dreams”](http://public.wsu.edu/~campbelld/engl494/winterdreams.pdf)

***Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been? | Joyce Carol Oates***

A rebellious fifteen-year-old girl encounters an older man in a parking lot. He later shows up at her place when she’s home alone to ask her to go for a ride with him.

[Read “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?”](http://brainstorm-services.com/wcu-2005/pdf/oates.pdf)

***The Swimmer | John Cheever***

On a summer Sunday, Neddy is hanging out at the Westerhazy’s pool. They’re talking about how they drank too much last night. He realizes he could make his way home by swimming the length of the pools in his neighborhood.

[Read “The Swimmer”](http://www.napavalley.edu/people/LYanover/Documents/English%20121/English%20121%20John%20Cheever%20The%20Swimmer.pdf)