

THE LEGACY OF TONI MORRISON

The first African American woman to win the Nobel Prize in literature, in 1993, Morrison was the author of 11 novels as well as children's books and essay collections



Nobel laureate Toni Morrison, a pioneer and reigning giant of modern literature, passed away on August 5, 2019. Her imaginative power in 'Beloved', 'Song of Solomon' and other works transformed American letters by dramatising the pursuit of freedom within the boundaries of race.

Few authors rose in such rapid, spectacular style. She was nearly 40 when her first novel, 'The Bluest Eye', was published. By her early 60s, after just six novels, she had become the first black woman to receive the Nobel literature prize – for her 'visionary force' and for delving into 'language itself' – a language she wanted to liberate from categories of black and white. In 2012, Barack Obama awarded her a Presidential Medal of Freedom.

"Her writing was not just beautiful but meaningful – a challenge to our conscience and a call to greater empathy," Obama wrote on his Facebook

page. He added, "She was as good a storyteller, as captivating, in person as she was on the page."

Morrison helped raise American multiculturalism to the world stage and helped uncensor her country's past, unearthing the lives of the unknown and the unwanted, those she would call "the unfree at the heart of the democratic experiment".

In her novels, history (black history) was a trove of poetry, tragedy, love, adventure and good old gossip, whether in small-town Ohio in 'Sula' or big-city Harlem in 'Jazz'.

She regarded race as a social construct, and through language, founded the better world her characters suffered to attain. Morrison wove everything from African literature and slave folklore to the Bible and Gabriel Garcia Marquez into the most diverse yet harmonious of literary communities.

"Narrative has never been merely entertainment for me," she said in her Nobel lecture. "It is, I believe, one of the principal ways in which we absorb

REMEMBER HER WORDS



ON WRITING

"A writer's life and work are not a gift to mankind; they are its necessity." (From 'The Source of Self-Regard' 2019)

ON IDENTITY

"We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measure of our lives." (From her Nobel lecture, 1993)

FROM HER NOVELS

"Freeing yourself was one thing. Claiming ownership of that freed self was another." ('Beloved' 1987)



THE READING LIST

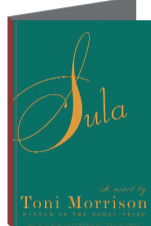
THE BLUEST EYE (1970)

Follows a year in the life of Pecola Breedlove, a young African American girl living in the 1930s who develops a hatred for her skin and eye colour, and prays for blue eyes.



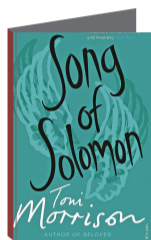
SULA (1973)

Chronicles the intertwined lives of two girls living in a black community in Ohio (US). The protagonists, Nel and Sula come from opposite kinds of families and lead very different ways of life.



SONG OF SOLOMON (1977)

Explores complicated questions such as whether we can ever know what truth is, the pursuit of wealth, and the tensions between freedom and slavery.



knowledge."

Winner of the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for 'Beloved', she was one of the book world's most regal presences, with her expanse of graying dreadlocks; her dark, discerning eyes; and warm, theatrical voice that was able to lower itself to a mysterious growl or rise to a humorous falsetto. "That handsome and perceptive lady," James Baldwin called her.

Her admirers were countless – from fellow authors, college students and working people to former presidents, like Barack Obama and Bill Clinton, to celebrities like Oprah Winfrey. They all idolised Morrison.

EXTRACTED FROM AN NYT FEATURE

What we could learn from the Nobel laureate

Author Harini Srinivasan reflects on how there is much to gain from reading Toni Morrison's expansive repertoire

The first time I heard of a writer named Toni Morrison was in 1993, when she was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, the first woman African-American author to win the coveted prize. The name stuck, but it was not until years later that I read her work. Powerful, piercing and with a rare perspective: her work opened a new world for me.

Morrison told tales – suppressed and unspoken – of black women, for the black people, bringing them into mainstream American literature. Seems all too simple today, but that was certainly not the case back then.

She had been through a lot in her life – poverty, racism, pressures that she faced as a single parent in the '60s. Facing these challenges and an extremely hostile environment from the largely white literary establishment, she made a mark – providing a voice to the marginalised and disenfranchised and in the process, becoming a role model for African American women across all walks of life.

Why would an author who wrote predominantly about her own experience and her people be relevant to us in a continent half a world away, one could ask?

It is in Morrison's own words that we can find the answer to this question. She said, "What was driving me to write was the silence, so many stories untold and unexamined." In a land like ours, where there are many diverse groups, some with a voice, some marginalised and oppressed, one can find in the silence, many untold stories. Her writing, and indeed her entire life, gives us the strength and the courage to explore those untold stories and bring out the inner lives of these disenfranchised groups into the mainstream.



Harini Srinivasan is an ex-civil servant and the bestselling writer of 'The Curse of Amanganga', 'Ek Confusing Love Story' and 'The Wizard Tales - Adventures of Bum-Bum'

MY BOOK SIBLING

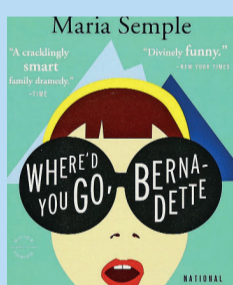
On the occasion of Rakshabandhan, Times NIE youth reporters tell us which fictional book character would they want for a sibling



JANE BENNET

I would love to have the eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Bennet of Longbourn, in Hertfordshire, from the book 'Pride and Prejudice'. I look up to her. She is an intelligent woman who always looks for the best in everyone. She preferred optimism to cynicism and believed in second chances. She would be the best eldest sister, with her wisdom, poise and courage to help us be the best versions of ourselves.

KRISHA SETHI, class XII, Bhavan Vidyalaya, Panchkula



BEE

Bee, from 'Where'd You Go Bernadette' would make an amazing sister. She is brazen, fearless and knows just how to see through people's disguises. Moreover, she knows how to have fun and loves her mother, Bernadette, unconditionally. I think the two of us could have some great times together, travelling to different places of the world, trying out new food and more. Antarctica would be so much fun with her, as she is not scared to take on scary adventures.

ARUSHA GOMBER, class X, GEAR Innovative Intl School, Bengaluru



DOBBY

He is the bravest house-elf in the wizarding world, and his friendship with Harry Potter makes him an ideal choice. Like most siblings (especially the

elder ones), Dobby is fiercely loyal and over-protective when it came to keeping Harry safe. Like when he redecorated the Dursleys' kitchen with cake; hid Harry's personal post and almost got him expelled from Hogwarts! His ways may not be perfect, but his intentions were pure.

AJITA SINGH, Class 11, Delhi Public School Ruby Park, Kolkata



AUTHORS OF INDIA

Manu S Pillai



The best-selling author, also a historian, is known for his debut non-fiction 'The Ivory Throne: Chronicles of the House of Travancore' which won the Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar in 2017. His next two, 'Rebel Sultans: The Deccan from Khilji to Shivaji' and 'The Courtesan, the Mahatma and the Italian Brahmin: Tales from Indian History' have also been bestsellers.

HITTING THE BOOKS

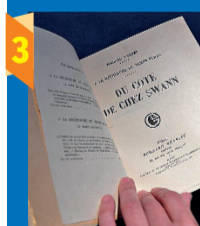
THE NEWS



The late J D Salinger is giving in to the digital revolution. Longtime Salinger publisher Little, Brown and Company has announced that for the first time, the entirety of Salinger's published work, including 'The Catcher and the Rye', will be available as e-books after August 13, 2019. AP



Israel's National Library has acquired a batch of previously unseen manuscripts belonging to author Franz Kafka after a lengthy legal saga. The library showcased the newly-obtained Kafka manuscripts, diaries and letters after their arrival from Switzerland. AP



Fans of French literary giant Marcel Proust will soon have the chance to read nine novellas from early in his career that were unearthed last year. The nine texts by the author of 'Swann's Way' were originally to be part of his first book, 'Les Plaisirs et les Jours' ('Pleasures and Days'), a collection of poems and short stories published in 1896. AFP



Which book has this quote?

- "Fairy tales are more than true: not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten."
- "Until I feared I would lose it, I never loved to read. One does not love breathing."
- "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."
- "You talk when you cease to be at peace with your thoughts."
- "Remember: the time you feel lonely is the time you most need to be by yourself. Life's cruelest irony."
- "Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn't."

ANSWERS

- 'Coraline' by Neil Gaiman
- 'The Fellowship of the Ring' by J.R.R. Tolkien
- 'The Prophet' by Kahlil Gibran
- 'Shampoo Planet' by Douglas Coupland
- 'Following the Equator: A Journey Around the World' by Mark Twain
- 'The Unpublished David Ogilvy'

MASTERCLASS

How to write

Here are some essential tips from the iconic advertiser, ad guru and author David Ogilvy



- Read the Roman-Raphaelson book on writing. Read it three times.
- Write the way you talk. Naturally.
- Use short words, short sentences and short paragraphs.

- Never use jargon words like reconceptualise, demassification, attitudinally, judgmentally.
- Never write more than two pages on any subject.
- Check your quotations.
- Never send a letter or a memo on the day you write it. Read it aloud the next morning – and then edit it.
- If it is something important, get a colleague to improve it.

FROM THE BOOK 'THE UNPUBLISHED DAVID OGILVY'

AUGUST 14, 2019

MUST SEE

MUST DO

TELEVISION



SURVIVAL GAMES, ANIMAL PLANET, 3.00 PM: Various species of animals living in wild and ferocious jungles develop unique strategies and tactics to survive and thrive.

SCIENCE ICONS, DISCOVERY SCIENCE, 5.00 PM: The host follows a number of scientists and researchers as they seek to answer some of the most fundamental questions about science.

INDIA'S WILDEST, NAT GEO WILD, 7.00 PM: A Bengal tiger traverses his territory on a quest to find a suitable mate.

WILDLIFE: ANIMALS GONE WILD, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL, 8.00 PM: Nature's wildest animals show how each triumph of survival is a treacherous one as the threat of new dangers is always present.

MOVIES ON TV

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END, &FLIX, 3.45 PM: Captain Barbossa, Will Turner and Elizabeth Swann must save Jack Sparrow and form an alliance with the pirates around the world to fight against the East India Company.

THE HITMAN'S BODYGUARD, STAR MOVIES, 6.23 PM: Michael Bryce, a protection agent, is tasked with protecting Darius Kincaid, one of



the world's most famous assassins.

THE TERMINATOR, MNX, 6.50 PM: A cyborg assassin is sent back in time to kill Sarah, a waitress, in a bid to stop her son who will wage a long war against his enemy in the future unless the course of history is altered.

1281: During Kublai Khan's second invasion of Japan his invading Chinese fleet of 3,500 vessels disappeared in a typhoon near Japan.

1862: Bombay High Court was established.

1880: The Cologne Cathedral in Cologne, Germany was completed after 632 years of rebuilding. It began in 1248.

1888: John Logie Baird, Scottish inventor and father of the television, was born in Helensburgh, Scotland.

1888: A patent for the electric meter was granted to Oliver B Shallenberger.

1945: It was announced by US President Truman that Japan had surrendered unconditionally. The surrender ended World War II.

1947: Pakistan became independent from British rule.

1947: Author Danielle Steel was born in NYC, New York.

1971: Bahrain proclaimed independence after 110 years of British rule.

1980: People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) was incorporated.

THIS DAY THAT YEAR