

Proposed Core Literature Titles

The following summary is provided by the California Department of Education's "Recommended Literature List", and the top three Google searches of the book title and author name (e.g. Kitchen by Banana Yoshimoto) that produced a description of the title.

Kitchen

Proposed Grade Level: 12



Title: **Kitchen**
Author: **Banana Yoshimoto**
First Published: **1988**
Lexile: **710L**
Proposed Grade Level: **12**

Descriptions From Top 3 Google Searches:

<https://www.amazon.com/Kitchen-Black-book-Banana-Yoshimoto/dp/0802142443>

With the publication of *Kitchen*, the dazzling English-language debut that is still her best-loved book, the literary world realized that Yoshimoto was a young writer of enduring talent whose work has quickly earned a place among the best of contemporary Japanese literature. *Kitchen* is an enchantingly original book that juxtaposes two tales about mothers, love, tragedy, and the power of the kitchen and home in the lives of a pair of free-spirited young women in contemporary Japan. Mikage, the heroine, is an orphan raised by her grandmother, who has passed away. Grieving, Mikage is taken in by her friend Yoichi and his mother (who is really his cross-dressing father) Eriko. As the three of them form an improvised family that soon weathers its own tragic losses, Yoshimoto spins a lovely, evocative tale with the kitchen and the comforts of home at its heart.

In a whimsical style that recalls the early Marguerite Duras, "Kitchen" and its companion story, "Moonlight Shadow," are elegant tales whose seeming simplicity is the ruse of a very special writer whose voice echoes in the mind and the soul.

[Kitchen by Banana Yoshimoto \(goodreads.com\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1000000.Kitchen)

Banana Yoshimoto's novels have made her a sensation in Japan and all over the world, and *Kitchen*, the dazzling English-language debut that is still her best-loved book, is an enchantingly original and deeply affecting book about mothers, love, tragedy, and the power of the kitchen and home in the lives of a pair of free-spirited young women in contemporary Japan. Mikage, the heroine of *Kitchen*, is an orphan raised by her grandmother, who has passed away. Grieving, she is taken in by her friend Yoichi and his mother (who was once his father), Eriko. As the three of them form an improvised family that soon weathers its own tragic losses, Yoshimoto spins a lovely, evocative tale that recalls early Marguerite Duras. *Kitchen* and its companion story, "Moonlight Shadow," are elegant tales whose seeming simplicity is the ruse of a writer whose voice echoes in the mind and the soul.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kitchen_\(novel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kitchen_(novel))

In *Kitchen*, a young Japanese woman named Mikage Sakurai struggles to overcome the death of her grandmother. She gradually grows close to one of her grandmother's friends, Yuichi, from a flower shop and ends up staying with him and his [transgender](#) mother, Eriko. During her stay, she develops affection for Yuichi and Eriko, almost becoming part of their family. However, she moves out after six months as she finds a new job as a culinary teacher's assistant. When she finds that Eriko was murdered, she tries to support Yuichi through the difficult time, and realizes that Yuichi is probably in love with her. Reluctant to face her own feelings for him, she goes away to Izu for a work assignment, while Yuichi stays in a guest-house. However, after going to a restaurant to eat [katsudon](#), she realizes she wants to bring it to Yuichi. She goes to Yuichi's guest-house and sneaks inside his room in the middle of the night to bring him katsudon. There Mikage tells him she doesn't want to lose him and proposes to build a new life together.