Arthur C. Clarke
Childhood’s End
Best known for 2001: A Space Odyssey
Clarke asks big questions in this as well.
Here’s the plot: The Overlords appear over every city and are superior to humankind in every way. Benevolent, they make few demands: unify earth, eliminate poverty, and end war. Humankind eventually agrees, and a golden age begins. But at what cost?

Ray Bradbury
The Martian Chronicles
This is a must-read for any science fiction or fantasy fan, a crucial precursor to films like Avatar and Alien and books like Kim Stanley Robinson’s Red Mars and Dan Simmons’ Hyperion, and a haunting prophesy of humanity’s destiny to bring our old dreams and follies along with us wherever we go.

George Orwell
1984
1984 remains poignant years after its 1949 publication. The novel paints a bleak picture of a society in which all information is controlled by the government, also known as Big Brother. Orwell is also well known for Animal Farm.

Frank Herbert
The Dune series
A stunning blend of adventure and mysticism, environmentalism and politics, Dune won the first Nebula Award (1966), shared the Hugo Award, and formed the basis of what is undoubtedly the grandest epic in science fiction.

H.G. Wells
The Time Machine
The Time Machine is the first and greatest modern portrayal of time travel but it is only one of many masterworks by the Englishman including The War of the Worlds, The Wonderful Visit, The Island of Doctor Moreau, The Invisible Man, and The First Men in the Moon.

Aldous Huxley
Brave New World
Brave New World is a scorching vision of an unequal, technologically-advanced future where humans are genetically bred, socially indoctrinated, and pharmaceutically anesthetized to passively uphold an authoritarian ruling order—all at the cost of their freedom, humanity, and arguably their souls.

Jules Verne
Journey to the Center of the Earth
Verne is considered by many to be the father of science fiction. His most popular novels included Journey to the Center of the Earth, Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, and Around the World in Eighty Days.