BOOK CLUB 201

So you've started your book club. What's next?

How do you pick your book?

There are almost as many ways as there are book clubs on ways to choose a book, and no way is wrong if it makes your group happy. (Most people who are unhappy vote with their feet. If every session has less people, you might want to revisit how you are making your selections.) Don't worry if you get the occasional stinker as it can be fun to totally trash a book every now and then.

The easiest way to pick your book is to join an existing published book club. Here are some examples:

- **Reese Witherspoon's Book Club (Reese's Book Club):** Reese's list are written by women and she likes to pick ones with strong women characters. Her picks can run dark but usually tend towards happy or happy-ish ending.
- **Read with Jenna (Jenna Bush Hager):** Her list tends toward new books that are still only in hardback so they can be expensive, but her site has lots of extras - including 5 book suggestions if you like the one you just read.
- **Good Morning America (GMA) Book Club:** This list tends toward best sellers while they are still in hard back so it can be expensive, too. "The selections aim to prompt discussion and often feature debut novels, with the team focusing on compelling stories that can be discussed by a large, diverse audience."
- **Oprah's Book Club:** Oprah's book choices are ones that made her think. Unlike a lot of the clubs, her choices are not always new best sellers – which can be cheaper. She does choose some depressing books.
- **Belletrist (Emma Roberts):** Doesn't update every month. Is trying to appeal to women in their 20s.
- **GMA YA Book Club:** Like a lot of Y(oung) A(dult) books, these picks tend towards fantasy, romance, and fantasy romance. They don't always pick the first book of a series which can be confusing.
- **Barnes & Noble Book Club:** Their choices often come with their private editions that have extras BUT that means getting *their* hardback edition.

There are also lots of options using someone's Best Of [list] or Favorites List.

- LA Public Library's Darryl Maxwell always does a "best of the year". He tends to read a lot of Science Fiction, Mysteries, and the odd Non-Fiction. He will have often interviewed many of the authors on the list. lapl.org/collections-resources/blogs/lapl/authors/darylm
- America's favorite books as picked by a survey done by PBS's The Great American Read pbs.org/the-great-american-read/books/#/
- This link leads to Project Gutenberg's list of eBooks in order by times a title has been downloaded. Nice thing about this is it great for those who prefer to read an eBook; it's free, every member will be able to access it AND, if someone has an reading hurdle like needing a different font (some are designed to help those who are challenged by dyslexia) or need a larger font, the book can be customized to suit the individuals. gutenberg.org/browse/scores/top
- OCLC (a library organization) lists the top 500 and it is searchable by genre. oclc.org/en/worldcat/library100/top500.html
- UCLA has posted the Graduate Reading Lists for categories that range from 20th Century British/Irish Lit to Chicana/o and Visual Culture. english.ucla.edu/graduate-reading-list/
- A banned book can be interesting and make you feel like you are supporting free reading; the American Library Association, ALA, has a great page listing banned and challenged books though it tends to run over a year behind. https://www.ala.org/bbooks
- A ton of people have posted on YouTube and blogs their personal top 10. A lot of authors will tell you what inspired them or what's on their To Be Read pile. Pick someone.

Don't forget your public library! Come in-person to chat with a Librarian or check out our catalog. Another helpful online resource includes Goodreads.

Use our catalog. Especially for our newer titles, if you check the catalog entry for a book you like, one of the options is find similar titles. Both our website and Goodreads, goodreads.com/, will offer reviews of books; ours are by professionals and Goodreads are by readers like you. It might be helpful to start an account with Goodreads so you can keep track of what you have read and how the group felt about it – makes a handy requirement tool for prospective new members – and the more books you rate, the better it gets at recommending your next book.

Lastly, here are some links that Burbank Public Library staff use when asked by a patron for a suggestion:

- General
  - fantasticfiction.com/
  - hpb.com/ (this can get you multiple copies at great savings)
- Coming soon or about to be published:
  - libraryreads.org/
  - earlyword.com/
- Romance
  - smartbitchestrashybooks.com/
  - https://allaboutromance.com/
  - wocinromance.com/ (woman of color in romance sorted by genre)
  - npr.org/people/706642005/maya-rodale
  - http://www.sarahmaclean.net/ (Recommendations as well as her own books)
  - Twitter is a great resource for romance fans.
  - Kirkus reviews are also good for this genre.
- Crime & Mystery
  - stopyourekillingme.com/ (This one has new reviews as well as award winners)
  - https://crimereads.com/ (Includes True Crime)
- Horror
  - thisishorror.co.uk/
  - booksinthefreezer
  - audioboom.com/channels/4992746 (Does film & books)
- Science Fiction
  - worldswithoutend.com/ (This one has new reviews as well as award winners.)
  - reactormag.com/ (Affiliated with one of the biggest names in Sci/Fi publishing.)
  - isfdb.org/ The Internet Speculative Fiction Database (Has absolutely everyone, but doesn't make value judgements as such.)
  - locusmag.com/ (nice interviews as well as reviews)
- Reviewers
  - Library Journal libraryjournal.com/section/reviews
  - New York Times Book Review nytimes.com/section/books/review
- Reading Diversity: https://bookriot.com/
- Literary / Books in Translation: https://www.ndbooks.com/