

## Book Discussion Kits – Mystery, Fantasy, Horror, Westerns

### ***Mystery & Suspense***

[\*Before I Go to Sleep\*](#) by S. J. Watson - Without her husband's knowledge, Christine, whose memory is damaged by a long-ago accident, is treated by a neurologist who helps her to remember her former self through journal entries until inconsistencies begin to emerge, raising disturbing questions.

[\*Case Histories\*](#) by Kate Atkinson - As private detective Jackson Brodie investigates three cold cases, startling connections and discoveries emerge and Jackson finds himself inextricably caught up in his clients' lives.

[\*Club Dumas\*](#) by Arturo Perez-Reverte - In this intellectual thriller a rare-book specialist, called in to authenticate a Dumas manuscript, is drawn into a web of mystery.

[\*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time\*](#) by Mark Haddon - Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, a mathematically-gifted, autistic teenager investigates the murder of a neighbor's dog, meanwhile uncovering family secrets.

[\*The Daughter of Time\*](#) by Josephine Tey - A 20th-century policeman sees a picture of Richard III and reinvestigates Richard's role in the murder of the princes in the Tower using all available information about Richard's time. Voted the number one mystery novel of all time by the Crime Writers Association.

[\*Defending Jacob\*](#) by William Landay - Andy Barber has been an assistant district attorney in his suburban Massachusetts county for more than twenty years when he is blindsided by his fourteen-year-old son being charged with the murder of a fellow student.

[\*The Emperor of Ocean Park\*](#) by Stephen Carter - Set in two privileged worlds: the upper crust African American society of the Eastern seaboard—families who summer at Martha's Vineyard—and the inner circle of an Ivy League law school. A riveting novel of suspense with the saga of a unique family.

[\*Gaudy Night\*](#) by Dorothy L. Sayres - This famous Harriet Vane mystery takes place at the all female Shrewsbury College at Oxford, where a powerful argument for women's status as men's intellectual equals is unfolding.

[\*Gone Girl\*](#) by Gillian Flynn - When a woman goes missing on her fifth wedding anniversary, her diary reveals hidden turmoil in her marriage, while her husband, desperate to clear himself of suspicion, realizes that something more disturbing than murder may have occurred.

[\*A Judgement in Stone\*](#) by Ruth Rendell – When a housekeeper carries out a modern "Valentine's Day Massacre" on the family that employs her, the investigation uncovers evidence of a personal tragedy that precipitated the crime. Often deemed the greatest work of one of the world's great crime novelists.

[\*In the Woods\*](#) by Tana French - Twenty years after witnessing the violent disappearances of two companions from their small Dublin suburb, detective Rob Ryan investigates a chillingly similar murder that takes place in the same woods, a case that forces him to piece together his traumatic memories.

[\*A Killing in the Hills\*](#) by Julia Keller - Three elderly men are gunned down over their coffee at a local diner, and seemingly half the town is there to witness the act. Was it random? Or was it connected to the spate of drug violence plaguing poor areas of the country just like Acker's Gap?

[\*The Maltese Falcon\*](#) by Dashiell Hammett - Considered the author's finest work, this mystery novel introduces Sam Spade, the prototype of the hard-boiled detective.

[Maisie Dobbs](#) by Jacqueline Winspear - Maisie Dobbs entered domestic service in 1910 at thirteen. When her remarkable intelligence is discovered by her employer, Maisie is educated and in 1929 she hangs out her shingle: M. Dobbs, Trade and Personal Investigations.

[Motherless Brooklyn](#) by Jonathan Lethem - A P.I. who suffers from Tourette's Syndrome tries to find out who killed the man who rescued him and three other misfits from a Brooklyn orphanage. Winner of the National Book Critics Award.

[Obedience](#) by Will Lavender - The students of Winchester University's class on Logic and Reasoning are given a strange assignment by the creepy Professor Williams, to follow a series of clues to find a missing girl who will be murdered if she has not been found by the end of the term.

[Ordinary Grace](#) by William Kent Kruger - Looking back at a tragic event that occurred during his thirteenth year, Frank Drum explores how a complicated web of secrets, adultery, and betrayal shattered his Methodist family and their small 1961 Minnesota community.

[Rebecca](#) by Daphne Du Maurier - A young bride arriving at Manderley, is drawn into the life of the first Mrs. De Winter, the beautiful Rebecca, dead, but not forgotten.

[Special Topics in Calamity Physics](#) by Marisha Pessl - In her final year of high school at the elite (and unusual) St. Gallway School, Blue falls in with a charismatic group of friends and their captivating teacher. But when a shocking death leads to a confluence of mysteries, Blue is left to make sense of it all.

[A Taste for Death](#) by P. D. James - Inspector Adam Dalgliesh, investigates the murder of a member of the peerage who is found with his throat slit in the vestry of a church.

[A Thief of Time](#) by Tony Hillerman - An investigation of the despoiling of an ancient Anasazi ruin where two corpses appear amid stolen goods and bones.

## **Science Fiction & Fantasy**

[The Alchemist](#) by Paulo Coelho - A fable about undauntingly following one's dreams, listening to one's heart, and reading life's omens features dialogue between a boy and an unnamed being.

[Brave New World](#) by Aldous Huxley - In the year 632 A.F. (After Ford, the deity) dawns a world of tomorrow in which capitalist civilization has been reconstituted through scientific and psychological engineering, where the people are genetically designed to be passive, and useful to the ruling class.

[Changing Planes](#) by Ursula Le Guin - From the Grand Mistress of speculative fiction comes *A Gulliver's Travels* for the 21st century that is deeply thought provoking and heartbreakingly poignant.

[Ella Minnow Pea](#) by Mark Dunn - Ella finds herself acting to save her friends, family, and fellow citizens from the encroaching totalitarianism of the Nollop Island's Council, which has banned the use of certain letters of the alphabet as they fall from a memorial statue of Nevin Nollop.

[Ender's Game](#) by Orson Scott Card - In order to develop a secure defense against a hostile alien race's next attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. Winner of the Hugo and Nebula Awards.

[The Eyre Affair](#) by Jasper Fforde - In Great Britain, circa 1985, time travel is routine, cloning is a reality, and literature is taken very, very seriously. An ingenious fantasy that unites intrigue with English literature in a delightfully witty mix.

[Fahrenheit 451](#) by Ray Bradbury - Fireman Guy Montag loves to rush to a fire and watch books burn up. Then he meets a seventeen-year old girl who tells him of a past when people were not afraid, and a professor who tells him of a future where people could think.

[Flatland](#) by Edwin Abbott - Flatland, a place of two dimensions peopled by a hierarchy of geometrical forms, is the home of narrator A. Square, who takes readers along on a tour of his bizarre homeland that provides a hilarious satire on Victorian society.

[A Game of Thrones](#) by George R. R. Martin - The aristocratic Stark family faces its ultimate challenge in the onset of a generation-long winter, the poisonous plots of the rival Lannisters, the emergence of the Neverborn demons, and the arrival of barbarian hordes.

[The Giver](#) by Lois Lowry - A Newbery Award winner depicting a future society and the young boy who realizes the truth about his world and struggles with its duplicity.

[The Handmaid's Tale](#) by Margaret Atwood - A speculative allegory focusing on a world dominated by militaristic fundamentalists, with selective women designated for breeding purposes.

[Herland](#) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman - Utopian novel about a fictitious society of women who reproduce by asexual means resulting in an ideal society that is free of conflict and war.

[Kindred](#) by Octavia Butler - A modern black woman is snatched abruptly from her home in California and transported to the antebellum South where she must save the life of her white, slave-owning ancestor.

[The Little Prince](#) by Antoine de Saint-Exupery - (available in English, French and Spanish) - An aviator whose plane is forced down in the Sahara Desert encounters a little prince from a small planet who relates his adventures in seeking the secret of what is important in life.

[The Martian](#) by Andy Weir - After a bad storm cuts his team's Mars mission short, injured astronaut Mark Watley is stranded. Now he's got to figure out how to survive without air, shelter, food, or water on the harsh Martian landscape until the next manned mission in four years.

[Never Let Me Go](#) by Kazuo Ishiguro - A reunion with two childhood friends draws Kath on a nostalgic odyssey into the supposedly idyllic years of their lives at an isolated private school and a dramatic confrontation with the truth about their childhoods and about their lives in the present.

[The Night Circus](#) by Erin Morgenstern - When Prospero the Enchanter discovers that he has a young daughter, Celia with extraordinary magical talents, he wastes no time in setting up a competition between her and Marco, the protégé of his longtime adversary.

[Slaughterhouse-Five](#) by Kurt Vonnegut - A fictional account of Vonnegut's experience as a prisoner of war during World War II and, in his words, —is about the inhumanity of many of man's inventions to man.

[The Sparrow](#) by Mary Doria Russell - Brilliant first novel about the discovery of extraterrestrial life and the voyage of a party of Jesuit missionaries to Alpha Centauri.

[Station Eleven](#) by Emily St. John Mandel – Twenty years after a devastating flu pandemic a small troupe of actors and musicians moves between the settlements of the altered world performing Shakespeare, dedicating themselves to keeping the remnants of art and humanity alive.

[Time and Again](#) by Jack Finney - In this cult fiction classic, a man is recruited for a secret government project and transported to 1880s New York City.

[The Time Traveler's Wife](#) by Audrey Niffenegger - (Regular and Large Print) The timelessness of love takes on new meaning in this fantastical romance about, a reluctant time traveler Henry, and Clare, whose lives intersect in many non-chronological ways.

[Wicked](#) by Gregory Maguire - There are two sides to every story. We've heard Dorothy's in L. Frank Baum's classic —The Wizard of Oz. Now we hear from the Wicked Witch of the West.

## **Horror**

[Carrie](#) by Stephen King - The Master of Horror's debut novel, Carrie is the story of a misunderstood high school girl, her extraordinary telekinetic powers, and her violent rampage of revenge.

[Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus](#) by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley - This 19th Century classic is a timeless terrifying tale of one man's obsession to create life – and the monster that became his legacy.

[The Haunting of Hill House](#) by Shirley Jackson - A tale of subtle, psychological terror has earned its place as one of the significant haunted house stories of the ages.

[The Strain](#) by Guillermo del Toro - A vampiric virus infects New York and spreads outward, threatening the city and then the world, as a CDC doctor and a Holocaust survivor fight to save humanity.

## **Western**

[All the Pretty Horses](#) by Cormac McCarthy - The National Book Award-winning story of three friends who set out in 1949 to cross the Rio Grande in search of the cowboy life.

[Angle of Repose](#) by Wallace Stegner - A Pulitzer Prize-winning story recounting the lives of four generations living in the American West.

[One Thousand White Women](#) by Jim Fergus - A colorful assembly of women, under the auspices of the U.S. government, travel to the western prairies in 1875 to intermarry among the Cheyenne Indians, a covert and controversial "Brides for Indians" program intended to help assimilate the Indians.

[The Red Pony](#) by John Steinbeck - The classic story of a boy's journey to manhood under the joys and hardships of ranch life, focused around the life and death of his red pony.