

Reading Challenge List

This year, you will be asked to complete 3 of the following reading challenges.

1. **Read something with pictures** in it. It can be a biography, graphic novel, nonfiction text etc.
2. **Read a book that's written like a diary** - [*The Perks of Being a Wallflower*](#), [*Why We Broke Up*](#), [*Go Ask Alice*](#).
3. **Found an author you like? Read all the books s/he has written.** Yep - I've read every book John Green has authored and I'm totally fangirling by anxiously awaiting his next work of art.
4. **Read a book that you fake read or skimmed** in previous years. Actually explore the way the author crafted the story you read about in SparkNotes or were told about by the student who sat next to you while you wrote that BS essay.
5. **Re-read a book.** Maybe it's something that you didn't understand the first time you attempted it. Maybe you're at a different point in your life now and want to look at the book from your new, more mature perspective. I can tell you that [*The Catcher in the Rye*](#) reads much differently when you're 16 than it does when you're 30.
6. **Read a book that a celebrity recommended.** That way, when you bump into him/her, you'll have a conversation starting point. You can try [Reese Witherspoon](#), [Emma Watson](#), [Florence Welch](#) (of Florence and the Machine), [Jimmy Fallon](#).
7. **Read something outside of your comfort zone.** Do you tend to stick to a certain type of book? I get stuck in suspense and award-winners. Try to read something you wouldn't normally pick up. I'll suck it up and try Sci-Fi. Who knows, I just might like it.
8. **Read a classic.** Your parents have been bugging you to do this for years. Now's your chance to pick one up and show them how smart you really are. These books have carved out niches in literary movements, fostered societal change, caused individuals to reflect on their behaviors, and been deemed timeless to generation after generation. Find out why Shakespeare, the Brontes, Hemingway, and Wharton are still on the bookshelves.
9. **Read something on the "banned books" list.** See if you agree that these forbidden gems contain content that is "just too much" for your sheltered little mind.
10. **Read a play.** There are tons of amazing playwrights out there, and reading a play is a completely unique experience. Here is a [top ten list from Goodreads](#). My personal favorite, however, is [*Arsenic and Old Lace*](#).

11. **Read a book of poetry.** There are many out there. It doesn't have to be a collected anthology by multiple authors, either. Try reading one by a single author or one that tells a story and is written in verse. I originally picked up [Rob Hunter's anthology *September Swim*](#) because he is my parents' VT neighbor, and discovered that he's a really good poet.
12. **Read a series.** These reading experiences allow you to live in the author's world for an extended period time. They introduce you to a variety of conflicts and plot elements and can be EPIC! I was up all night finishing [The Hunger Games](#) trilogy. LITERALLY. UP. ALL. NIGHT. Our family has collectively read and then viewed all of the [Harry Potter series](#). We are secretly awaiting the owls who will deliver our acceptance letters for Hogwarts.
13. **Read a book that another author (or your favorite author) says is their favorite book or a book that inspired them in some way.** I mean, could there be a more reliable source for a book recommendation?
14. **Read a book that your favorite teacher (other than me ☺) says "changed their life."**
15. **Email a current or previous teacher** and ask them for a book recommendation and read it. (FYI - Mr. Basbagill currently recommends [A Confederacy of Dunces](#). This also fulfills challenge #32)
16. **Have a favorite fictional bookworm? Read a book that s/he is seen reading.** Here is the [Rory Gilmore Reading Challenge](#), a [Lisa Simpson book list](#), a list of what [Bella from the Twilight series](#) is reading, as well as lists for: [Margot Tenenbaum](#) (*The Royal Tenenbaums*), [Daria Morgendorffer](#) (*Daria*), [Don Draper](#) (*Mad Men*), [Matilda Wormwood](#) (*Matilda*), [Stewie Griffin](#) (*Family Guy*), [Sawyer](#) (*Lost*), [Lucas Scott](#) (*One Tree Hill*).
17. **Read one of the books on any of the [Bookmark to Blog](#) reading challenges.** They range from keyword to motif to food of the month.
18. **Read a book based on its cover.** Pick solely on visual appeal.
19. **Read a book based solely on its title.** Choose word combinations that interest you.
20. **Read a book with a family member.** Ask Grandma Edna, Uncle Tommy, third cousin Daryl, or your niece Sophia what they want to read and then explore it with them.
21. **Read a book from another course curriculum.** Choosing Poetry over Sci-Fi next year? Has perusing your older brother's college syllabus sparked your interest? Pick a book from one of those courses and read it.
22. **Read a book that is referenced in a book that you have read.** Finished the [Twilight series](#)? Now's the time to pick up [Wuthering Heights](#) and read about the original love triangle that inspired Meyers to have Bella caught between Edward and Jacob.

23. **Read a book from a “Best Of” list.** There are tons: [New York Times Bestsellers](#), [Best YA Literature of 2014](#) according to GoodReads, [Best YA Literature according to Rolling Stone](#), [Best Books of 2014 according to NPR](#), [Best Summer Books by Publisher’s Weekly](#), etc.
24. **Read a book written by someone when they were under the age of 25.** Try [The Tiger’s Wife](#) -Tea O’Brecht wrote it when she was 23. It also fulfills challenge # 29 as well. [Side Effects May Vary](#) was written by Julie Murphy, a 28 year old woman originally from CT. I’m willing to let those 3 years slide for a local girl .
25. **Read a book written by someone when they were over the age of 65.** Katherine Anne Porter published her only novel, [Ship of Fools](#), at age 72. James Arruda Henry learned to read and write when he was in his mid-nineties. He published his autobiography [In A Fisherman’s Language](#) at the age of 98–going on to have it be a bestseller in his town and being featured in *People*. Harriet Doerr published her first novel, [Stones for Ibarra](#), at age 73. She was awarded a National Book Award for this work.
26. **Read a collection of short stories** (either by one person or an anthology by many people).
27. **Read a book published by an indie press.** Here is what [Goodreads suggests](#). Or try [Best Indie Books](#).
28. **Read a book by or about someone that identifies as LGBTQ.** Try [Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe](#). Or [The 57 Bus](#). I loved them.
29. **Read a book by a person whose gender is different from your own.**
30. **Read a book that takes place in another country or continent.** You can also take part in this really cool [Read Around the World Challenge](#) that has a subset of mini challenges if you’re up to it!
31. **Read a book that is by or about someone from an indigenous culture** (Native Americans, Aborigines, etc.). Sherman Alexie and Isabel Allende are great authors to start with.
32. **Having a “book snob” moment? Challenge yourself to a [National Book Award](#), [Man Booker Prize](#), [Pen Faulkner](#) or [Pulitzer Prize](#) winner** from the last decade. I highly recommend [Less by Andrew Sean Greer](#).
33. **Read a book that is a retelling of a classic story** (fairytale, Shakespearean play, classic novel, etc.). [Goodreads has a list](#) (of course) but many people have loved [Wicked](#) - so much so that they made it into a Broadway play.
34. **Listen to an audiobook.** Many authors have read their works. You can get your read on in the car, in the halls, or as you pretend to pay attention during math class!

35. **Read a book that was originally published in another language.** [Gabriel Garcia Marquez](#) is one of my absolute favorites for this. Read [The Odyssey](#) and fulfill challenge #9 as well. If you are a student of French, try Camus' [The Stranger](#).
36. **Read a book that you would consider a guilty pleasure** and then realize that good entertainment is nothing to feel guilty about. I think I categorize [Gillian Flynn](#) this way. Her books keep you on the edge of your seat.
37. **Read a book published before 1850.** Try [Twain](#), [Bronte](#), [Stoker](#), [Austen](#), [Dickens](#), [Whitman](#), [Stowe](#), or [Shelly](#).
38. **Read a book published this year.** Here's Good Read's [top 200 published in 2018](#). *The Telegraph* has a list of the [top 19 YA titles](#), *Seventeen* has a list of [the top 15 YA titles](#), and YALSA has a list of the [top books of 2018](#).
39. **Read a [self-improvement book](#)** (can be traditionally or non-traditionally considered "self-improvement").
40. **Read a book in our Margin Notes Project** and help continue a written dialogue among readers.
41. **Read a book with more than 500 pages.** [War and Peace](#) anyone?
42. **Read a book that was published the year you were born.** Books from when I was born are now considered antiques....
43. **Read a book with nonhuman characters.** Try [Animal Farm](#) by George Orwell, [Good Omens](#) by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett, or [Grasshopper Jungle](#) by Andrew Smith.
44. **Read a book that contains magic.** I recommend [The Night Circus](#) by Erin Morgenstern, or any of the Harry Potter series.
45. **Read a book with a [single word](#) as a title.** [Divergent](#), [Dune](#), and [Uglies](#) certainly qualify.
46. **Read a book with [a number in its title](#).** Get your dystopia on with [1984](#), engage your inner Dickens with [A Tale of Two Cities](#), travel across the globe with [A Thousand Splendid Suns](#), compare Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* to Lessing's [The Fifth Child](#), get caught up in the suspense of [Nineteen Minutes](#), or spend [Seven Years in Tibet](#).
47. **Read a book that your mom or dad loves.** It will make their day and give you some insight into them as well. Plus, if you make them happy, you can always use that as leverage for extra allowance money or the keys to the car.
48. **Read a funny book.** [David Sedaris](#) is hysterical, [Amy Poehler's book](#) scored high on the laugh-o-meter, Tina Fey's [Bossypants](#) kept me in stitches, and both [Running with Scissors](#) and

[*The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*](#) had me laughing in quiet places loud enough that people around me thought I was disturbed. For real.

49. **Read a nonfiction book.** [Neil DeGrasse Tyson](#) has some cool scientific theories. [*The Perfect Storm*](#) is for all you sailors out there, or you can look at the data that shows you exactly why McDonald's is bad for you by reading [*Fast Food Nation*](#).
50. **Read a book that became a movie.** Then come tell me the thousand ways that the book was better. [Here is a link](#) to some interesting ones to consider including [*The Shawshank Redemption*](#), [*Girl Interrupted*](#), [*A River Runs Through It*](#), and [*The Green Mile*](#). Want something more recent? Try [*Gone Girl*](#) or [*The Fault in Our Stars*](#).
51. **Read a book that you can finish in one day.** Pick this one based on the length of the book and the length of your day!
52. **Create your own reading challenge...** Did I miss something? Let me know, let's keep this going!