



Book Club Resource Guide



Free Resources from
Howard County Library System

Thinking about starting a book club in your community?

We are here to help you organize a successful community book club. Below is a curated selection of free resources from the Howard County Library System (HCLS), including information on borrowing books from the library, suggested reading lists, book recommendation resources, where to find discussion guides, and much more.



Starting Your Book Club and Getting Organized

Things to Consider:

- Size of Book Club
- Frequency
- Location/Meeting Place
- Recruiting Members
- Establishing Roles

For more information on how to get started, please visit: bit.ly/community_bookclub

Selecting Books for Your Book Club

Come chat with an HCLS instructor about finding the next great read for your book club! Our instructors are always happy to assist.

We also offer various book lists to assist in choosing titles, including [Books for Discussion](#) available at bit.ly/community_bookclub, a list specifically designed and updated with book clubs in mind. You can also consult our [lists of recently purchased items](#), [bestsellers](#), and [award-winning books](#). All of these lists are available at hclibrary.org/books-movies-music/



Discover Book Recommendations Using HCLS Online Resources

Looking for your next book club pick? HCLS can help you discover the perfect title using our online research tools.

HCLS Online Book Recommendation Resources

Whether you're searching for popular bestsellers, hidden literary gems, or recommendations tailored to your group's interests, our resources are designed to guide your book selection. From reviews and ratings to thematic suggestions and genre explorations, you'll find everything you need to choose the ideal book for your next discussion. Plus, our knowledgeable staff is available to assist you in navigating these tools and finding the best options for your group.



Uncover top book picks with these book recommendation tools:



Books & Authors

Explore endless possibilities and combinations of books, authors, genres, and topics. Provides reading recommendations for similar titles that you have read previously as well as reading lists featuring different genres and awards.



NextReads

Are you looking for books to read in your favorite genres? Sign up for award-winning genre-based reading recommendations via e-newsletters.



NoveList

Adults and teens can find books of interest by searching for favorite authors or genres. Read book reviews and see best-of lists.

** Please use Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge when accessing this resource.



How to Locate HCLS Online Resources

Visit hclibrary.org and select "Research" to access our electronic resources. Click 'Browse by Alphabetical Listing' to view all resources. You will need your library card number to access these resources from home.



Getting Books for Your Book Club

Borrow print and electronic books from Howard County Library System for your book club with your library card.



Print Copies

Did you know you can check-out multiple print copies of a title for your book club onto your library card? While there may be a waitlist for newly released items, slightly older titles (i.e. a year or so old) may also offer enough copies for your book club members.

Digital Copies

Get access to free [e-books and e-audiobooks](#) with your library card! Try one of these great resources to start exploring a wide range of digital titles. If you need assistance, don't hesitate to [schedule a one-on-one session](#) with an HCLS instructor for personalized guidance.

Find your next book club read with these apps:



Libby

Download eBooks, eAudiobooks, or eMagazines to your computer, tablet, Kindle, or smartphone. Borrowing limit of 10 titles at a time and place up to 10 holds at a time. Lending period up to 21 days.



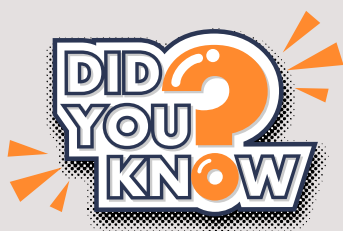
Hoopla

Stream and download eAudiobooks, eBooks, movies, television shows, and music albums from major publishers, Hollywood studios, and record companies. No holds lists and borrowing limit of 10 titles per calendar month. Lending period depends on format.



cloudLibrary

Browse, check out, download and read popular best-selling eBooks or listen to eAudiobooks. Borrowing limit of 8 titles, loan period of 21 days.



Plan Ahead by Suspending Hold Requests in Catalog

Know which title(s) you would like to read a few months in advance? After requesting books through the catalog, use the 'suspend hold' feature to ensure you get your titles on time. For more info, watch the YouTube video about this process by visiting bit.ly/hclsbook_suspend

Non-HCLS Book Club Resources

These resources are from the internet and are not affiliated with HCLS.



Online Book Club Resources

Finding the right resources online can be challenging, so a curated list of tools from the internet has been gathered to assist you in selecting the perfect book for your book club or offering additional support. We hope these resources make your selection process easier and more enjoyable!

Online Book Club Reading Guides and Discussion Materials



Publisher Reading Guides

Publishers often release reading group guides for some of their popular titles. Be sure to check if your book club pick has an existing reading group guide. Examples include: [Penguin Random House](#), [Simon & Schuster](#), [MacMillan](#), and [Knopf Doubleday](#).



Reading Group Guides

readinggroupguides.com

A website for book lovers that offers a place to share and discover commentary about books and authors. The site includes book reviews, author interviews, and lively book commentary on books from debut, midlist, and bestselling authors

Recommended Reading Lists and Awards

Award Lists

- Andrew Carnegie Medals for Excellence: ala.org/carnegie-medals
- Booker Prize: thebookerprizes.com
- National Book Award: nationalbook.org/national-book-awards
- National Book Critics Circle: bookcritics.org/awards
- PEN/Faulkner: penfaulkner.org
- Pulitzer Prize: pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-year
- Stonewall Book Awards: ala.org/rrt/award/stonewall

Reading Lists

- *Little Free Library Read in Color® Lists*: bit.ly/readincolor2024
- *American Library Association Notable Books List*: bit.ly/notable_booklist
- *PBS Great American Read List*: pbs.org/the-great-american-read/books

Book Review Journals & Websites

Please note that these resources are from the internet and are not affiliated with HCLS.



Booklist

booklistonline.com

A publication from the American Library Association which features reviews of recommended titles for all ages. Available for check-out in the Libby app.



Book Marks

bookmarks.review

A review aggregator that compiles ratings from at least three national or international outlets for fiction and nonfiction titles. Reviews are categorized as rave, positive, mixed, or pan and are featured on the Book Marks website.



BookPage

bookpage.com

Provides book reviews, author interviews, and lists of upcoming book releases. Every book featured is one they are excited to recommend to readers. A star signifies a book of exceptional quality within its genre or category.



Goodreads

goodreads.com

A book review site that compiles user's ratings of a title on a 5 star rating system. This site also allows you to log the books you have read and rate them.



Indie Next List

indiebound.org/indie-next-list

This monthly list features the top nominations from independent booksellers across the country, showcasing the best of the best debuts and new releases in all categories and genres.



Kirkus Reviews

kirkusreviews.com

Provides anonymous, pre-publication reviews for adult fiction and nonfiction titles. Notable for its unbiased approach, Kirkus includes both positive and negative reviews, with exceptional works marked by a Kirkus Star.



New York Times Book Review

nytimes.com

Provides book reviews, author interviews, as well as reading lists and bestseller lists. NYT's list of the top 100 books of the 21st Century is available at bit.ly/100BestBooks_21. Their list of Top 100 books of the 21st Century as voted by readers of NYT, is available at nyti.ms/4dagUFr. Requires digital NYT subscription or library card for access to article.



The StoryGraph

thestorygraph.com

The StoryGraph is a personalized reading platform that helps users track their reading habits, discover new books, and connect with a community of readers through customizable reading challenges and in-depth analytics.



Questions or Comments

Have a question or comment for Howard County Library System?
Contact askhcls@hclibrary.org for assistance.