



Finding a Good Read

A column to help you find intriguing books

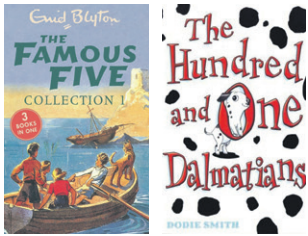
Erin

Numbers

You can't have books without words. Words are key. But numbers add a dash of fun.

Counting the number of books you've read each year can bring a real sense of achievement and a motivating competition - with yourself or others!

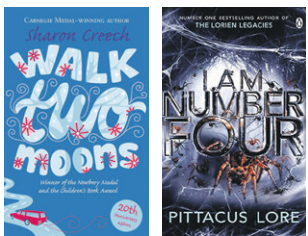
Sometimes the books with the greatest number of pages are extra memorable for the pride of knowing you finished them (or didn't, because you realised life is short, no judgement).



Children

Enid Blyton's classic series *The Famous Five* has been modernised for new readers, with some books turned into graphic novels.

Five Children and It (E. Nesbit), *101 Dalmatians* (Dodie Smith) and poetry collection *Now We Are Six* (A. A. Milne) have charmed audiences of all ages for decades.

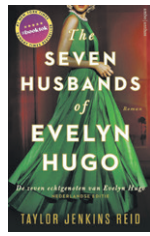


Young adult

Walk Two Moons (Sharon Creech) looks at the pain of loss, and mental health struggles are covered in *13 Reasons Why* (Jay Asher).

For a more upbeat time, Karen McManus' fun murder mysteries include *One of Us is Lying*, *One of Us is Next*, *One of Us is Back*, and *Two Can Keep a Secret*.

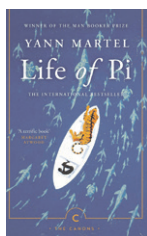
The 5th Wave (Rick Yancey) is about teens fighting off aliens, whereas it's the teen aliens battling for survival in *I am Number Four* (Pittacus Lore) and the other *Lorien Legacies* stories.



Moving through time

Taylor Jenkins Reid loves a numerical historical drama, with the *Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* and *Daisy Jones and the Six* recounting the lives of passionate, creative women. *Three Daughters of Eve's* (Elif Shafak) reflective protagonist is more academic, but just as compelling.

One Day (David Nicholls) recalls a changing friendship and *The 100-year-old Man Who Climbed Out a Window* (Jonas Jonasson) shows world history through a comic story (a device familiar to Forrest Gump fans).

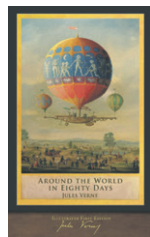


Global tales

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich (Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn) is set in a Soviet labour camp. Soviet occupation forms part of the story of Afghanistan's political change in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (Khaled Hosseini).

Life of Pi (Yann Martel) and *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (Gabriel García Márquez) are both exceptional examples of magical realism, telling emotional stories while examining what reality really is.

A Tale of Two Cities (Charles Dickens), set in London and Paris during the French Revolution, is much grittier realism.



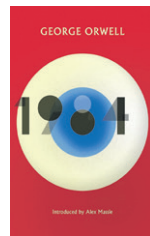
Adventure

Jules Verne is a master of challenging travels, voyaging *Around the World in 80 Days* and *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*.

The Thirty-Nine Steps (John Buchan) covers the exploits of a man about town, and *Three Men in a Boat* (Jerome K. Jerome) turned a serious travel guide into a comic novel.

The Two Towers (J. R. R. Tolkien) forms the second part of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. *The Three Musketeers* (Alexandre Dumas) brings French historical action and inspired lots of adaptations.

Offering adventures of a very different sort, the *50 Shades* trilogy (E. L. James) showed how popular fanfiction can become.



Anti-authoritarian

Totalitarian dystopias (that hate books!) feature in *1984* (George Orwell) and *Fahrenheit 451* (Ray Bradbury), while *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Ken Kesey) critiques oppressive institutions.

Slaughterhouse-Five (Kurt Vonnegut) is clear about its anti-war sentiment, while *Catch 22* (Joseph Heller) uses satire to make its points.



Crime

Reservoir 13 (Jon McGregor) investigates how a missing girl impacts a community.

Set in Botswana, the *No 1 Ladies Detective Agency* series (Alexander McCall Smith) is both popular and plentiful.

Queen of Crime Agatha Christie has endless gems to choose from, including *And Then There Were None*, *The Big Four*, *Five Little Pigs*, *One Two Buckle My Shoe*, *4.50 from Paddington*, *Third Girl* and *The Thirteen Problems*.

With thanks to PRG and Give a Book volunteer Erin.