

Bestseller





Reading Log



	Name of Author	Title of Book	finished	I liked the book	checked by teacher
1	J.K. Rowling	The Tales of Beedle the Bard	30.10.10	★ ★ ★	1/12/10 R
2	Kurt Vonnegut	Slaughterhouse Five	2.11.10	★ ★ ★	1/12/10 R
3	Wars Dirie	Desert Flower	28.12.10	★ ★ ★ ★	6/2/11 R
4	Jennifer Brown	Hate List	2.1.11	★ ★ ★	6/2/11 R
5	Sylvia Plath	The Bell Jar	9.1.11	★ ★ ★ ★	6/2/11 R
	Well done!	Go on reading. There are many more interesting books!		Super	
6	John Green	Paper Towns	22.1.11	★ ★ ★ ★	6/2/11 R
7	A.M. Homes	The End of Alice	10.4.11	★ ★ ★ ★	8/2/12 R
8	Kazuo Ishiguro	Never Let Me Go	6.5.11	★ ★ ★	8/2/12 R
9	Jodi Picoult	House Rules	9.5.11	★ ★ ★ ★	8/2/12 R
10	Margaret Atwood	The Handmaid's Tale	4.6.11	★ ★ ★ ★	8/2/12 R
	Excellent!	You are a very good reader. You'll certainly find more good books in our library!		Awesome	
11	Helen Fielding	Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason	22.7.11	★ ★	8/2/12 R
12	Tish Cohen	The Truth about Delilah Blue	24.7.11	★ ★ ★	8/2/12 R
13	Nick Hornby	A Long Way Down	27.7.11	★ ★	8/2/12 R
14	Alice Sebold	The Lovely Bones	29.10.11	★ ★ ★	8/2/12 R
15	Benjamin Black	Elegy for April	9.11.11	★ ★	8/2/12 R
	Fantastic!	You are a real readoholic!!! You can be proud of yourself!!!		#1	
16	Katie Crouch	Men and Dogs	28.11.11	★ ★ ★ ★	8/2/12 R
17	Jodi Picoult	Nineteen Minutes	11.3.12	★ ★ ★	
18	Walter Dean Myers	Shooter	26.3.12	★ ★ ★ ★	
18	Lionel Shriver	We need to talk about Kevin	3.4.12	★ ★ ★ ★	
20	Deborah Bray Hadlock	The dissociative identity disorder Sourcebook	29.4.12	★ ★ ★	
	It's unbelievable!!!	Your teacher's personal comment:			

Quotes



Before you kill somebody, make absolutely sure he isn't well connected.

Slaughterhouse Five, p. 109

I looked round me at all the rows of neat little heads with the same silver glow on them at the front and the same black shadow on them at the back, and they looked like nothing more or less than a lot of stupid moon-brains.

The Bell Jar, p. 45

Chuck Pauson did not participate in organized sports, because to do so would distract from the larger goal of his life: to one day be convicted of homicide.

Paper Towns, p. 17

I kept looking. I wasn't sure what to say. A man can live a long and adventurous life without ever being spoken to by Lacey Pemberton, and when the rare opportunity does arise, one does not wish to misspeak.

Paper Towns, p. 119

I know who you are and I know what you did. Doesn't my address mean anything? Her street. I live on her street. How could you not have noticed?

The End of Alice, p. 165

I just got up one morning and told Keppers I wanted to start my training to become a career. It was surprisingly easy.

Never let me go, p. 199

Don't think I'm a bad mother; I'm just a realistic one.

House Rules, p. 53

There is more than one kind of freedom, said Aunt Lydia. Freedom to and freedom from. In the days of the anarchy, it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from. Don't underestimate it.

The Handmaid's Tale, p. 34

You want your mother? She'll come with a kidnapping on the side. Sorry, no substitutions to the order. Menu items are unchangeable.

The Truth about Delilah Blue, p. 336

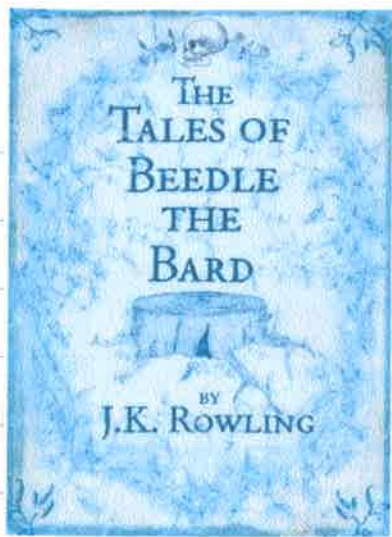
There was a pause, while we both allowed the complete stupidity of this observation to float around

A Long Way Down, p. 119

It was only when Gichetty mentioned something else that every hair on Hal's neck stood up.

"The guy built dollhouses," Ralph Gichetty said.

The Lovely Bones, p. 261



The Tales of Beedle the Bard

Written by Joanne K. Rowling



CONTENT

This book contains five stories written down by Beedle the Bard that are as popular among wizard children as Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty are among young Muggles. After each tale Professor Dumbledore writes a few words about the background and the meaning of the stories which are called "The Wizard and the Hopping Pot", "The Fountain of Fair Fortune", "The Warlock's Hairy Heart", "Babbitty Rabbitty and her Cackling Stump" and "The Tale of the Three Brothers".

BOOK REVIEW

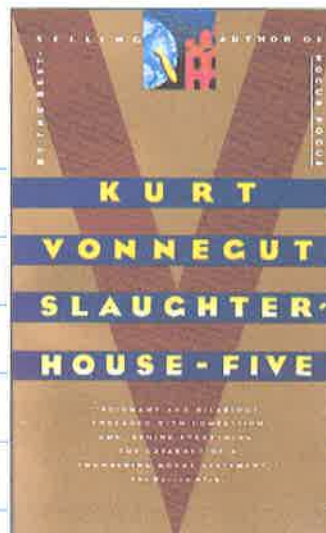
It's been a while since I've read the last Harry Potter book and to be honest, I miss it a little. When I found "The Tales of Beedle the Bard" in the library it didn't take me long to decide that I'd read it. The stories aren't anything special but I liked them because they reminded me of the tales I used to read when I was younger. A real highlight for me were the notes of Professor Dumbledore because after each tale he gave a little background info and also told some interesting and funny tales related to it. My favourite tale is "The Fountain of Fair Fortune", mainly because of its last sentence which changes the whole story. I really like it when there's a totally unexpected plot twist at the end of a story or a book as long as it is not something totally illogical, because it makes you rethink everything you've thought so far.

It's good that you 'feed' your Harry Potter addiction.



Slaughterhouse Five

Written by Kurt Vonnegut



Entry 1 after the first 5 chapters

So far I don't really like the book because I just have the feeling that there is one major thing about the story which I don't get. I don't have any problems language-wise and I can also easily follow the plot. Even when Billy Pilgrim travels through time I'm not easily confused, because date and place where he travels are always mentioned but I still have the feeling that there is one main fact beyond the plot level that I don't understand and so what I'm reading doesn't make a lot of sense to me. However, one thing that was pretty remarkable so far is how unemotional and neutral Billy Pilgrim describes all the horrible things that happen to him and all the disgusting things that are part of war. I'm now hurrying towards the end of the book, because I really want to know how the story ends so that maybe I can understand better what the book actually is about.

Entry 2 after reading the whole book

I think the book managed really well to show how useless war is and that there are much more negative consequences than positive ones. One thing I'd really like to know is, if Billy Pilgrim is sane or insane. Because though he claims several times that he really did come unstuck in time before he hit his head in the plane crash, the first time he travelled

through time was after he went to war. Since he was really young and had to experience so many horrible things during war, it is very likely that this terror triggered some kind of mental disorder that made him believe he could travel through time, or that he had been captured by aliens.

In the end it doesn't even really matter if Billy Pilgrim is sane or insane, because the main purpose of the book, to show the absurd side of war, is fulfilled either way.

A very good example for this is the saying "So it goes" after every death mentioned in the story. While reading this became a rather normal thing because you got so used to it.

However, Billy Pilgrim's character and his story didn't really "touch" me, because it was just a little too absurd. What made the book personal was that the author also included himself and his own life in the book, which made it much easier to relate to the story.

Now that I've finished the book I kind of regret that I didn't read it more consciously because I bet I missed some good details since I didn't highly concentrate throughout the whole book.

I don't know if I ^{can} would recommend the book, because though it has a good content and a convincing message, I personally just didn't really like the story.

Very thoughtful comments!

K. Vonnegut believes that nothing comprehensible could be written about a massacre as horrible as the Dresden bombing.



So, it's no surprise that his novel emerges as a jumbled report of Billy's life, whose traumatic experiences cause him to struggle with sanity. Vonnegut tells an untellable tale, trying hard to find out more about the postwar trauma

Reading Project: Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut

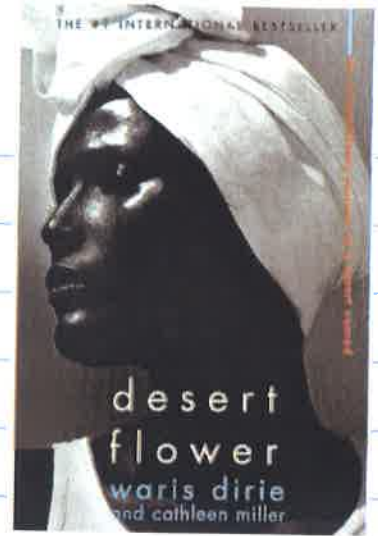
Discuss the following points and take notes.

1. Discuss the major themes of the novel.
 - a. Time and Memory
 - b. Narrative versus non-narrative and anti-narrative: Vonnegut is interested in protecting his novel from becoming a conventional war narrative. How does he do it? Does he write about heroes?
 - c. Acceptance – "So it goes"
2. Describe Billy Pilgrim. Who is he? Is he an active or passive character, a hero or victim of strong higher forces? Do you think he is schizophrenic?
3. Discuss the influence of science-fiction.
4. Vonnegut cannot deal with such a terrible disaster straightforwardly. What does he do? How does he play with conventions?
5. What is the message of the book?

- 1a) The story is not told chronologically, told in bits and pieces, there is no such thing as time, it is all there and you only see parts of it (moments → Tralfamadorians)
 - b) anti-narrative: not told in chronological order, no heroes, Billy Pilgrim doesn't act like a hero
 - c) Acceptance that one's perception of the time is changing (so death doesn't really exist)
2. Billy Pilgrim is a passive character, doesn't really seem to be affected by anything that happens to him, doesn't seem to care, victim of higher forces, I think he is schizophrenic, can't cope with the experience of war
 3. Billy Pilgrim uses the science-fiction as an excuse of why he is so confused ("the aliens made me come unstuck in time")
 4. He tells it in episodes but not from too close or too far away, he doesn't just give you facts, gives the reader emotions Billy Pilgrim does not have
 5. Antiwarbook, focus on the happy part of life because you can't change anything

Desert Flower

Written by Waris Dirie



CONTENT

In the book "Desert Flower", Waris Dirie tells the story how she became one of the most celebrated models in the world. She was born in Somalia and her family travelled around the country as nomads. At the age of five, she was circumcised and due to this horrible experience she has dedicated her life to fight against the brutal ritual of FGM. At the age of 14 she ran away from her family because of an arranged marriage and spent several days in the desert until she finally reached the capital Mogadishu where she could stay with relatives. When her uncle offered her to come to London with him to work there as a servant, this changed her life.

BOOK REVIEW

This book impressed me in many ways. If it had been a fictional story I would have thought that some things were just too good to be true, on the other hand also incredibly horrible for anyone to write down. What Waris Dirie has experienced in her life and the journey she completed is incredible. I have great sympathy with her for all the things she had to endure and also the highest admiration for what she managed to accomplish.



Yes, what a great book!

HATE LIST

Written by Jennifer Brown



CONTENT

Valerie Leftman has to go back to high school five months after her boyfriend Nick opened fire on their school cafeteria and shot several people on their "hate list" - a list of people who made their life hell and who they hated for treating them that way. Valerie started the list but had no idea that Nick was actually going to start shooting these people so she tried to stop him and got shot herself before Nick committed suicide. Now she has to go back to school and face the consequences.

BOOK REVIEW

I think that the topic of the book is actually a good one and also the way the author chose to tell the story (there are always some chapters in between about the day of the shooting and then it goes back to the present) is interesting to read, but though the author really focused on Valerie's thoughts and feelings, I just couldn't bring myself to feel with her. There were some moments - but unfortunately just moments - where I really got into the story, but then, as I read on that was it, I just read about it and couldn't bring myself to actually caring about what happened to Valerie next. The ending of the story also disappointed me.

There are many more interesting books waiting for you. ☺





The Bell Jar

Written by Sylvia Plath



CONTENT

The book tells the story of 19-year-old Esther Greenwood. After she wasn't admitted to the writing course in college she applied for she sees her dreams and hopes for the future shattered. Depressed and without anything to live for anymore she tries to commit suicide, but she is saved and put into a clinic where they try to help her and give her the right treatment so that one day she can go on with her life.

BOOK REVIEW

While reading I really noticed the change of atmosphere in the story. The first part is rather superficial and there were a lot of Esther's sarcastic comments that made me smile. The second part was much more serious, but I also liked it because it really concentrated on Esther's emotions and fears.

The book was pretty difficult for me to read because the English was quite complicated and sometimes I lost track of what was happening and had to go back to find out what exactly Esther was talking about, because she often spoke of things that had already happened before the actual story. When I read that the book was partly autobiographical this made me think about the author's life in comparison to Esther's.

Great job!



Have you also seen the film?

Paper Towns

Written by John Green



CONTENT

Quentin Jacobson has been in love with Margo Roth Spiegelman since he was nine years old. As children, they were friends, but now in highschool they aren't close any more, though they are neighbors. Quentin's life suddenly changes when Margo suddenly disappears, not for the first time, because he thinks that she has left clues for him to find her. However, the more he finds out, the clearer it seems to him that he actually knows nothing about Margo.

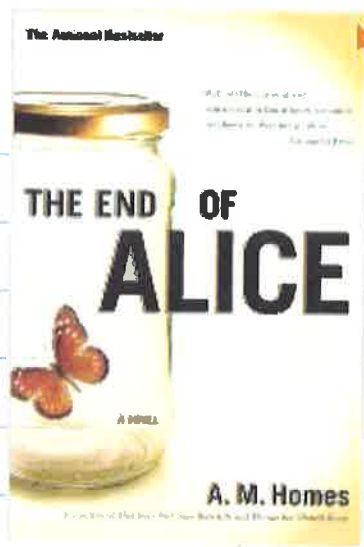
BOOK REVIEW

John Green's writing style reminds me of Laurie Ralse Anderson, who is one of my favorite authors. I really enjoyed reading the book, because it was easy and many things made me smile. The story started out as a normal highschool "boy-has-crush-on-girl"-story, but later it also turned out to have some rather philosophical aspects.

What I really liked was the way the characters were described. There were not that many direct descriptions, but through the way they act and what they say you get a really good impression of ^{what} how they are like. I think I'm definitely going to read more books by John Green because I love his writing style and I'm also interested in the topics he talks about.

You could start tutoring literature classes at university.





The End of Alice

Written by A.M. Homes



CONTENT

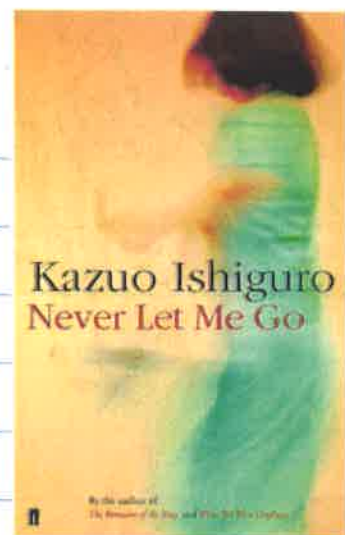
The story is told by a pedophile murderer who is in prison. As he talks about life in prison he also includes other stories, he reveals the secret of his horrible childhood and how he met and fell in love with the little girl Alice. During his time in prison he also receives letters from a 13-year old girl who lives on the same street Alice used to live on.

BOOK REVIEW

I read this book for the "Scandals in Literature" course, so I expected it to be shocking and disgusting. However, what surprised me, was, that it was told in rather beautiful, sometimes even poetic language, that was a strong contrast to the actual content of the book. When I started reading, the way the story was told really confused me, not only because of the language, but also because the narrator switched from stories of his past to present and the letters of the girl were also included. The quick changes in setting and time sometimes made it difficult to follow, but after some time I got used to it. I can say that this book is one of the most disgusting books I've ever read, but at the same time it is scarily fascinating and you want to read on because you really want to know what happened to Alice.

NEVER LET ME GO

Written by Kazuo Ishiguro



CONTENT

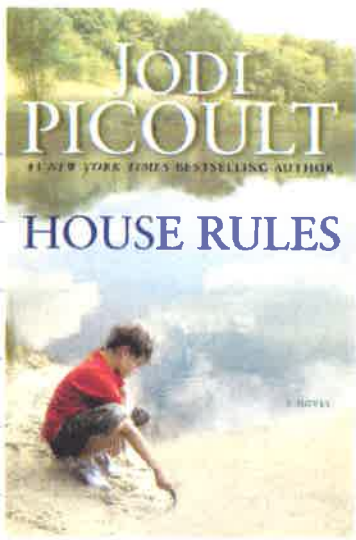
Kathy, Tommy and Ruth grew up together at Hailsham, a school deep in the English countryside. Very early they learn about what their future is going to be like: they are going to be donors and most likely going to "complete" after their third donation. They are clones and have to live the life that was already laid out for them.

BOOK REVIEW

I did not really like the book. I can't exactly describe it, but while reading something just felt wrong in the story, though I can't exactly say what it was. The story is told by Kathy, and sometimes it was really boring for me to read, because she often mentioned really unimportant events from her time at Hailsham where I couldn't help myself but thinking "and what's the point of it all?". I think as soon as you start ^{asking} yourself this question repeatedly while reading a book, it is no good sign. I had already seen the movie before, and it had left me thinking the same thing, so I read the book, hoping to find further explanations for the development of the story, but I didn't. After I put the book down, I was left with as many questions as I had before.

I like your honesty,





House Rules

Written by Jodi Picoult



CONTENT

When Jacob Hunt is diagnosed with Asperger's, a form of autism, at the age of two, life changes for him, his single mother and his younger brother. He can't stand loud noises, bright lights or being touched by other people, sometimes he can even get violent when he is provoked. At the age of 18, Jacob is fascinated by forensics and turns up at crime sites unexpectedly. Then, one day, Jacob's social skills tutor Jess is found dead - and Jacob is arrested for murder.

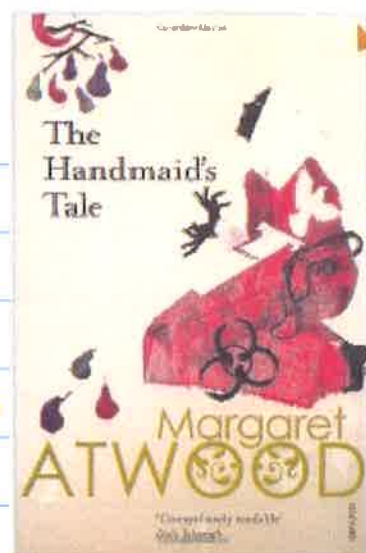
BOOK REVIEW

What I really like about the way Jodi Picoult writes books is that she always tells the story through different people's point of view. You think you've already heard everything about a certain event, but then another character tells you something totally different and you get another perspective. I don't know much about autism, but the way Jacob thinks and acts is portrayed quite reasonably, I think that the author really did a lot of research on the topic. The book was easy to read but never boring and I always wanted to find out what would happen next. That Jodi Picoult doesn't tell you the verdict annoyed me at first, but I think she had her reasons for it.



The Handmaid's Tale

Written by Margaret Atwood ★★★★★



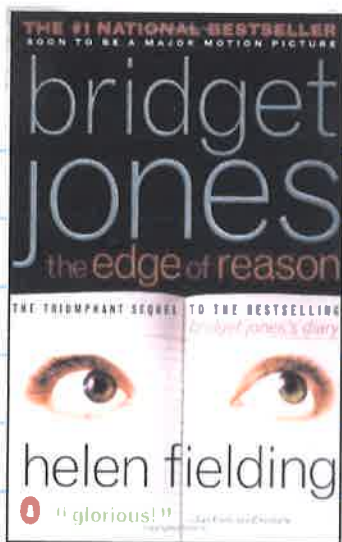
CONTENT

Offred lives in the Republic of Gilead and her purpose is clear: she is a handmaid, that means she is responsible for reproduction. She has the duty to sleep with the Commander and to have children. If she refuses to do so, she will be hanged or shipped off to die in one of the colonies of radiation.

BOOK REVIEW

When I started reading I was quite confused, because I had no idea where and when the story was set, but as soon as this became clearer, I started to enjoy the story. There were a lot of ideas in the book that made me think and after a certain time they also made me want to read on because I really wanted to know what would happen next. The only thing I didn't like about the book was, that part of the story just seemed to unrealistic, and that it just never would happen this way. However, as soon as I left my first doubts aside, I started to really get into the story and I somehow liked it, though it was pretty strange.





bridget jones: the edge of reason

Written by Helen Fielding ★★

CONTENT

After Bridget Jones has found her perfect boyfriend Marc Darcy, she begins to think that he might not be that perfect, after all he often meets a very attractive woman called Rebecca, who hates Bridget, and he also never invites her over to stay at his place. One thing leads to another and they split up, but after Bridget is arrested in Thailand for drug possession she needs Marc's help again, because he is a successful lawyer.

BOOK REVIEW

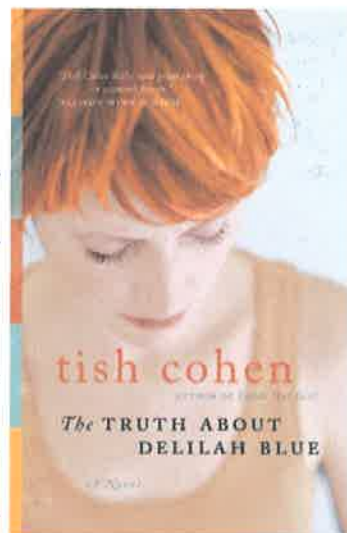
I didn't really like the book. It was easy to read because you didn't really have to concentrate to keep track of what was happening and so I often read it on the bus or on the tram but it was hard to actually sit down at home and read it, because the story wasn't interesting. Some parts were quite fun to read and from time to time I also had to laugh out loud, but still after a while the story kind of got on my nerves because it was always the same things she wrote about over and over again. I was happy when the story was over.

I see what you mean. 😊



The Truth about Delilah Blue

Written by Tish Cohen



CONTENT

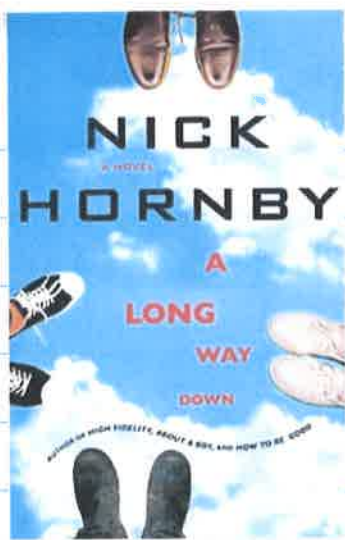
Ever since her father moved her from Toronto to L.A. at the age of eight, claiming her mother no longer wanted to be part of their family, Delilah Blue has been an outsider who couldn't understand why her mother wouldn't want her any more. Now, at the age of 20, she is an art student and broke and suddenly her mother reappears to tell her a secret that will change everything.

BOOK REVIEW

In the beginning the book rather bored me, but after a while it got interesting. What surprised me at first was that Delilah's secret was revealed quite early since I had thought finding out "The Truth about Delilah Blue" would be the big finale. I was wrong about that part, because as it turned out, the major part of the book was about Delilah coping with the truth she had found out.

Though the story had some boring parts, it is a quick read, and once I started to get into the story, I also liked it a lot more.





A LONG WAY DOWN

Written by Nick Hornby



CONTENT

one New Year's Eve, four people find their way to the top of a fifteen-story building in London. They have a common purpose for being there, but very different reasons that brought them this far. There is Maureen, who has a disabled son, Martin, who just came out of prison, Jess, whose sister disappeared years ago, and JJ, the American whose band split up.

BOOK REVIEW

I didn't exactly not like the book, but there was something about it, that got on my nerves.

I think my problem was that I never really got into the story, because no matter how much I tried, I just couldn't bring myself to truly care about the four main characters. I have to admit that I didn't even feel very sorry for them, although they all had quite big problems and were planning to commit suicide.

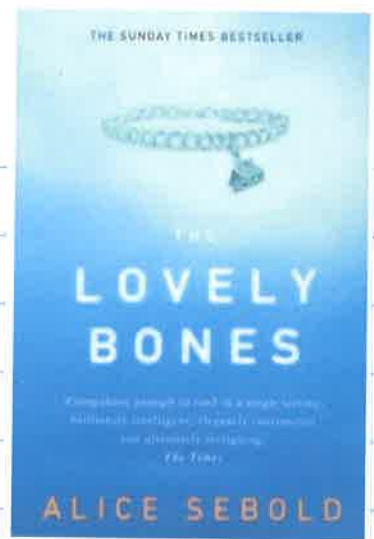
What I liked about the book was the way it was written, and the different perspectives made it more interesting to read.

I think you need more challenging books.



The Lovely Bones

Written by Alice Sebold



CONTENT

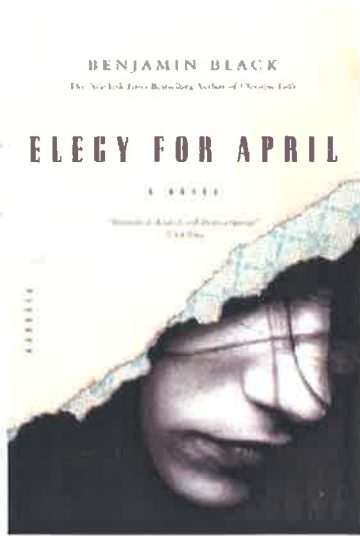
"My name is Salmon, like the fish; first name, Susie. I was 14 years old when I was murdered on December 6, 1973." So begins the story of Susie Salmon who is watching life on earth continue without her from her new home in heaven. She focuses on her family and friends who try to cope, but also on her killer who is trying to cover up his tracks.

BOOK REVIEW

At first I liked the book a lot because it didn't have long introductions but started right with the action. However, after some time it felt like the story got "stuck" and nothing interesting happened anymore. I put the book down and it took me more than a month before I could bring myself to read on. While at first I liked the way the book was written all the small details and unnecessary anecdotes Susie talked about started getting on my nerves. I have to say that the story wasn't at all like I expected it to be and so I was a bit disappointed.



... and more thrilling books
not far away ☺



Elegy for April

Written by Benjamin Black



CONTENT

When she doesn't hear from her friend April in more than three weeks, Phoebe Griffin suspects the worst. She has to ask her father for help to find April, because April's family doesn't seem too concerned about her disappearance. After blood is found in April's apartment, Phoebe contacts the police.

BOOK REVIEW

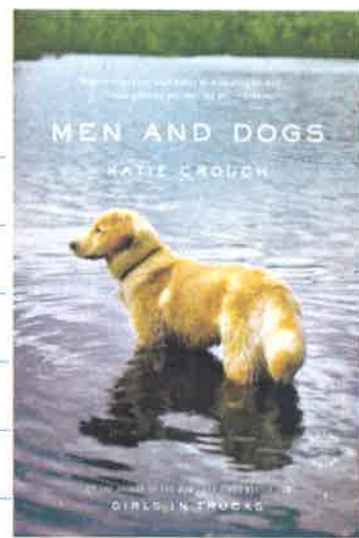
I really shouldn't have read this book, it was a waste of time. The story wasn't too spectacular and the way it was written really annoyed me. There were so many uninteresting descriptions, so many unnecessary details that slowed the action down until I didn't want to go on reading any more because it was just too boring. I finally finished the book by skipping pages full of useless descriptions and details that didn't enrich the story but made it tiring to read. The story never "touched" me, I could hardly bring myself to care about the characters at all. I can't even say how I feel about the ending because the truth is - I don't feel anything, I just don't care about it.



Well, I hope you find more books which you can fully enjoy.

Men and Dogs

Written by Katie Crouch ★★★★★



CONTENT

Hannah's father disappeared when she was eleven years old. He went fishing on a little boat and never came back, but no body was found. Now, at 35, Hannah still believes that her father is alive and out there somewhere. She has managed to build up a successful company in San Francisco but when she goes back to visit her family in South Carolina, the past comes back to haunt her.

BOOK REVIEW

The first quarter of the book was a little boring to read, but then it got more exciting. I even started to care about the characters, which hasn't happened for a very long time.

The story itself wasn't too spectacular and there's also no big surprise in the end, but I still liked reading it because the characters were described in a thoughtful, but not boring way and I could really relate to them.

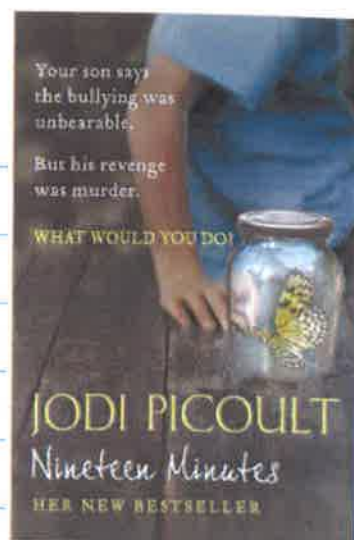
The language was also interesting because a large part of the story is written in the present tense and that was quite unusual to read.

The ending is very open, but I didn't really mind, because if she had actually found her father it wouldn't have fitted to the tone of the story.



Nineteen Minutes

Written by Jodi Picoult



CONTENT

On March 6, 2007 something terrible happens in the town of Sterling, New Hampshire: 17-year old Peter Houghton enters his high school with four loaded guns and shoots 19 people. Ten die, the others are injured seriously. The book shows the events that lead up to the shooting and describes the trial afterwards.

BOOK REVIEW

What I liked very much about the story was that it shows all the different aspects of the shooting. You just can't hate Peter, although you know he is a murderer, because you really feel what he was going through when he was bullied all the years before the incident. On the other hand you can't see him as just the victim, because he destroyed the lives of many people. It's easy to identify with the characters because the situations are portrayed very realistically.

The story isn't told in a chronological order, there are always time flashes into the past and back to the present, which makes it very interesting to read because slowly you get all the background information that also changes the way you judge the more recent events.

In my opinion the ending was a bit too positive, but I guess after all the dramatic events most readers want an optimistic ending.

Pritz Award-winning Author of MONSTER
WALTER DEAN MYERS

SHOOTER

SHOOTER



Written by Walter Dean Myers ★★★★★

CONTENT

17-year old Leonard Gray was always an outsider at Madison High School. He dressed himself in black clothes and loved guns. Once he threatened a teacher and vandalized a church. But do these facts really explain why he came to school one morning with a Kalashnikov and murdered a fellow student before committing suicide?

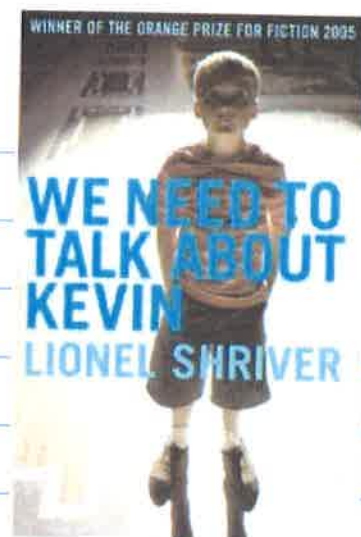
BOOK REVIEW

The book is probably written for younger readers, but I liked it anyway because of its unusual writing style. The book is built up like the report the School Safety Committee publishes after the incident, examining the causes for the shooting. It includes various interviews of the shooter's two best friends, newspaper articles, police and medical reports and Leonard's journal.

I really liked this, because it was more interesting to read than if the story had been told by an all-knowing narrator. In this way, the facts were presented and you get to make up your own mind about the reasons for the shooting and the background of the witnesses' testimonies. Another thing I liked was, that different fonts were used to make the report as realistic as possible.

We need to talk about Kevin

Written by Lionel Shriver



CONTENT

Eva never really wanted to be a mother and when her son kills nine people in a school shooting she fears that it might be her unloving upbringing that caused Kevin to become a murderer. Two years after the incident she tries to cope by writing letters to her estranged husband, reliving all the years up to the shooting.

BOOK REVIEW

In the beginning I really had to force myself to read on, but after some time I got into the story and didn't want to put the book down.

The book deals with school shootings in an entirely different way than the two previous ones I've read, because this time it wasn't bullying that caused the shooting but rather an acutely planned and executed massacre.

I couldn't really decide on a side in the nature vs. nurture question; the storytelling was just too subjective to form a clear opinion on whether it was all Eva's fault or if Kevin was just "born evil". The ending surprised me, although I had suspected something like this already for some time.