

# Five books that could transform your life

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**Must reads:** In England, 46% of people aged between 16 and 24 do not read in their spare time.

Is reading the deepest intellectual experience? Today is World Book Day, and to celebrate it we look at amazing works that deserve a place on everyone's shelves.

## What's happening?

Zara walks into the bookshop and looks around. There are books in the window; books on tables; books on shelves. How can anyone possibly choose?

To help, here is a list of five books everyone should read this year:

## Find out more

**Captivating creatures:** Katherine Rundell's *The Golden Mole* looks at 22 amazing animal species that are at risk of dying out.

**Weathering war:** *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie follows the fortunes of five people trying to find safety during a war in West Africa in the 1960s.

**Dark dystopia:** Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* imagines the US as a horrifying state in which women no longer have any **human rights**.

**Delightful diary:** Dodie Smith's *I Capture the Castle*, Cassandra Mortmain tells the reader about her life in a run-down castle. Things get interesting when a group of rich Americans neighbours arrive!

**Imagining marvels:** John Wyndham's story *The Chrysalids* is set in a future world that has faced nuclear war. When David Storm and several other children discover they are **telepathic**, they have to run away from their families.

## Is reading the deepest intellectual experience?

### Some say

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Yes! Through the pages of a book, you can go anywhere in the world and live as any person. You will never be bored when you can find an adventure in the pages.

### Some people say

*"I like the person I become when I read a lot of books. I dislike the person I become when I spend a lot of time on social media."*

**Johann Hari (1979 –), British-Swiss journalist**

*What do you think?*

## Others think

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No! When you read, you are simply taking in the author's idea. Debating is much better because you have to think about your own thoughts and views too.

### Six steps to discovery

#### 1. Connect

**How do you feel about this story?** - Do you have a favourite book?

#### 2. Wonder

**What questions do you have?** - For example: Which is the most popular fiction book of all time?

#### 3. Investigate

**What are the facts?** - Pick out one thing we know for certain from this story and one thing we cannot say for sure.

#### 4. Construct

**What is your point of view?** - What is one book you would recommend to your whole class?

#### 5. Express

**What do others believe?** - In pairs, take it in turns to describe the last book you read to each other. Can you persuade the other to read it?

#### 6. Reflect

**What might happen next?** - You are offered a job on a newspaper. Write a review of a book you have read recently.

### Glossary

**Human rights** - The basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. They apply regardless of where you are from, what you believe or how you choose to live your life. Some have called for animals and even natural phenomena like rivers to have some form of human rights.

**Telepathic** - Able to read the thoughts of another person.