

THE WELL READ LIBRARIAN: BOOK DISCUSSION RESOURCES

by Marissa Priddis



Youth Book Discussion Resources

Schuder, R. (2001). Eagle book club. *Library Talk*, 14(1), 17.

This article discusses the creation of a reading discussion group for third through sixth grade students at Point Elementary in St. Louis, Missouri. The article shares ideas for starting the group, ways to select books, and activities to try to get the students involved.

Ward, C. (1998). Having their say. *School Library Journal*, 44(4), 24.

This is another article featuring tips and ideas for beginning a youth discussion group, and outlines finding “discussable books,” ambiguous endings, scheduling, publicity, and how to ask the right questions in the group. The author also pulls together examples from successful programs around the country.

Young Adult Discussion Resources

Baden, M., & Purdy, R. (2006). Food for thought. *School Library Journal*, 52(2), 33.

This article gives an overview on the book discussion group “Café Book” at Edward E. Drew Jr. Middle School in Virginia. The club is a joint venture between school and public libraries to encourage middle school students to read and has drawn upwards of 40 students per meeting.

Rettberg, C. (2006). Teen book discussions go online. *Young Adult Library Services*, 5(1), 35-36.

This article discusses the combination of traditional book clubs with social networks available on the Web and highlights seven websites featuring discussions geared at young adults, including “Grouchy Café” and “Not Your Mother’s Book Club.”

Adult Book Discussion Resources

Robertson, D. (2002). OPRAH AND OUT: Libraries keep book clubs flourishing. *American Libraries*, 33(8), 52.

This article discusses the boom in book discussions following Oprah’s involvement in literature but maintains that libraries have successfully used the formula

for years and mentions formats libraries have used in the past: thematic series of discussions, visiting authors, groups meeting according to demographics, and cultural programs with a book discussion tie-in. The article also presents resources for book discussions in libraries.

Books About Book Discussion Groups

Dickerson, C. B. (2004). *Teen book discussion groups @ the library*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers.

This book contains a variety of information for teen book discussion groups, including discussion resources for 50 books, “surefire” suggestions for a successful discussion, suggested questions for productive conversations, and indices for author, title, and theme.

John, L. Z. (2006). *Running book discussion groups: A how-to-do-it manual for librarians*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers.

This book “provides a detailed step-by-step guide to the tasks and responsibilities librarians are likely to encounter as book-group leaders conducting booktalks both on-site and online.” The book contains ready to use discussion guides, title selection, One Book ideas, online forums, and more.

Website Resources

www.readinggroupguides.com

Reading Group Guides is a repository for hundreds of book guides, complete with author information, a summary of the work, and suggested questions for discussion.

www.readinggroupchoices.com

Reading Group Choices “selects discussible books and suggests discussion topics for reading groups. The company produces a printed guide annually that is distributed nationally to libraries, reading groups, book stores, community book festivals, and individuals. Its popular website offers interesting, informative, fun, and interactive material of interest to book clubs.”

http://www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=collection_readinglists_discussiongroup

The Seattle Public Library has put together a page with PDFs of recommended books, how to choose good books for discussion, coming up with good discussion questions, and how to find background information on an author.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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