



Read This Next: 500 of the Best Books You'll Ever Read

Howard Mittelmark , Sandra Newman

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Read This Next is a guide to more than 500 great books, many of which you have not yet read. (On average, 481.) After you have read even one of these books, you will be amazed you survived without it this long. Multiply that by 481, and you get a lifetime of value for just \$14.99 or even more value if you don't have long to live.

Each book is set among surprising anecdotes, funny discussion questions, and witty commentary by the authors, designed to bring out each book's best qualities. You'll find categories that include both old favorites like Love, Work, and Family and the unexpected delights of lists like Death, Drugs, and Apocalypse.

Furthermore, *Read This Next* is itself a book! Not only does that make the total number of great new books you get 482, but it is a neat postmodern trick that not just anyone could pull off. Please note: \$14.99 divided by 481 is ONLY 3 CENTS! What else can you buy for three cents nowadays?

If you have ever enjoyed reading a book, you will enjoy reading *Read This Next* and the books it leads you to. If you don't--this month only!--you can have your 3 cents back! (To people trying to cash in by buying multiple copies for the refund: well, you are too smart for us.)

Read This Next: 500 of the Best Books You'll Ever Read Details

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From Reader Review Read This Next: 500 of the Best Books You'll Ever Read for online ebook

Susan says

Book lovers always love getting new reading recommendations, and I certainly love reading these books-about-books and "discovering" new authors and books. Despite the fact that I am obviously predisposed to loving this book, Read This Next is FANTASTIC!

Read This Next is organized into the following major sections: Love, Memoir, Family, History, Politics, Humor, Work and Money, War, Religion, and Death. Each section has 12 recommendations as well as several "Read These Too" suggestions, and "Bonus Books." All of these things make Read This Next a wonderful treasure trove of bookish goodness, but the absolute best part of this book are the book group discussion questions. Some of the questions are so hilarious that I have to give you some examples...

From the discussion guide to *Camille* by Alexandre Dumas, fils:

In most twentieth-century romance novels, the lovers end up together at last, happy and safe. Which is more romantic - a happy ending or one where someone tragically croaks? (As we know, by the end of most twenty-first century romance novels, both lovers are vampires, making this a moot point.)

From the discussion guide to *All Creatures Great and Small* by James Herriot:

All Creatures Great and Small popularized all things veterinary, and inspired many children to go to vet school - although frankly the image of vetting here is not very appealing. It seems to involve a lot of being stepped on by hooved beasts, standing in freezing stables, and intimate relations with excrement of all sorts. What is it that's so appealing about Herriot's life?

And my personal favorite, from the discussion guide to *Read This Next* by Sandra Newman and Howard Mittelmark:

In this book, Barrington Hewcott has said he sought to create an allegorical system in which "books" represent the Reagan administration, "authors" are the Soviet Union, and the color red is former attorney general Edwin Meese. Do you think readers even notice complicated allegories like these? If they don't, do the allegories still work away in their unconscious, influencing their beliefs and feelings? Also, by reading this book, can you tell whether Hewcott is a Communist? Do you think he may subliminally have turned you into a Communist? Go to the mirror. Can you see the first signs of Communism forming on your skin? Any beadiness in the eyes, or weakness in the chin? If you see these telltale signs, turn yourself in to the authorities immediately.

If that's not enough to make you pick up this book nothing will Mr./Mrs. Stoneface, and I request that you humorless turkeys stop reading this review at once!

Slay Belle says

I have to wonder about the accuracy of the book suggestions/reviews when "Lolita" is described as a 'forbidden romance' and the message of 'The Feminine Mystique' is summarized as 'get a job' or 'Ender's Game' is described about 'being a great general'. I get that the reviews were supposed to be irreverent ("you need to be jewish or gay to be in the literary community. They make you pick when you join.") but there's a

difference between being irreverent and just wrong.

Carla Ruffer says

loved it! The authors had funny little quips throughout the book. Make sure you have this site open to add tons to your TRB list. Also, don't read the discussion parts unless you've read that suggested book. My mom tried to do that and not surprisingly couldn't get through *Read This Next*. She said it was boring and made no sense - of course it didn't since she was reading discussion questions about books she hadn't read yet. Just read this to get excellent suggestions for your TRB. Mine is now over 100.

Jeanette "Astute Crabbist" says

If you've seen a few of my sillier book reviews, you'll understand why I loved this book. I'm giving it a slightly higher rating than I've given other books of this type. These people are juvenile, playful, heinously un-PC, and utterly hilarious. This book provided me with numerous late-night cackle sessions and a long list of wonderful book suggestions. In their more serious moments, they also gave me a lot of food for thought. The authors' humor is sort of like Dave Barry, minus the booger jokes. If you think of yourself as sophisticated (that's "boring" to the rest of us), you might not find it funny. You poor dear.

Libby says

I love to see what others are reading(would I be on a site like Goodreads if I didn't?)and I also love books about books. *Read This Next* scored very high on both counts. This book is full of great recommendations written in a witty and playful style that raises it miles above the usual lists of "Great Literature." I often shy away from popular and highly recommended books, but I actually have read about a quarter of the books suggested here and most of those rate five stars from me. I may actually get out of my recliner and go look for the remaining three quarters of Sandra Newman's choices. The sense of humor displayed here was a winner all by itself.

Cheryl says

If you like this, you'll want to own it, because of all the discussion questions and bonus trivia for so many rec's. I was put off by the witticisms... not sure if they 'tried too hard' or were just too relentlessly cocky, but either way imo annoying.

Some of the rec's I've already read. A few are on my to-read lists. Many I have already decided I have no interest in. Among the ones that are new to my consideration I will investigate further:

Biting the Sun

Tales from a Traveling Couch: Psychotherapist Revisits His Most Memorable Patients

And among those I am glad to reminded of are:

The Man Who Was Thursday: A Nightmare and the Father Brown mysteries. I will look for quotations here on GR by Chesterton to 'like,' too.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

A Doll's House

So, iow, not very many of the 500 were relevant to me. But if I were starting up a book club, maybe this would be a good source of discussable (as opposed to just enjoyable) books. And I did like that SF and Science NF were included.

Meaghan says

Of the 500 books recommended in this book, I've read 29 of them, have some on my to-read list, and glanced through a few more, which I don't think is too bad. Many of the books listed that I haven't read, I've never even heard of. This is a good place to look off the beaten track for literary finds, and such a wide range of genres and writers and writing styles are represented that there will be several books included to please even the most finicky person. I wish I had read this before I started my around-the-world reading challenge, cause there are a lot of international recommendations that look very appealing.

Sarah Goodwin says

Words cannot express how much I loved 'How NOT to Write A Novel', it got me through my undergraduate years when every tutor wanted me to quote from 'non-fiction sources' like Stephen King's 'On Writing' which I still haven't read. So, in the midst of trying to educate myself by reading everything and anything that comes well recommended, I snapped this book up to guide me.

It's worth noting that my copy is now dogeared and written all over, because I got quite a few good recommendations out of it. So I guess it's fit for purpose, and yes, it did make me laugh.

But, I read it very quickly by...not reading it. Because at the start of each genre section there's a two page run down of all the books you're about to read about...why? I just skipped that bit and went on to read the actual bits about each book. Similarly the 'reading group notes' for each book were full of spoilers, and quite useless unless you'd already read the book in question, in which case they were just pointless. So after a while I started skipping those too.

Also, after a point, the actual 'blurbs' of the books stopped being informative enough for me to know what they were about. Culminating in one annoying section, where each book was described as just 'good'. Great, that's really informative, I'll certainly be looking those up. Only, obviously I could have googled those fifteen books for free.

I was hoping that this book would guide me through the classics with a humorous twist, but it didn't. It also glossed over genres very quickly, and while 'love' was covered, there was no mention of chick-lit, a genre

I'm very interested in.

So, not a complete waste of time and money, but, not what I was expecting, and not entirely helpful.

Destiny says

This is not the kind of book that you sit and read from beginning to end; but, I basically perused the entire thing. The authors have a great sense of humor, which makes the books summaries a joy to read. There are also a lot of books I have never heard, as well as some classics. I look forward to starting some of the books they suggest. (And their book group discussion questions are a riot!)

Brittany (UnderTheRadarBooks) says

Great resource for librarians, book clubs and bibliophiles!

MissAnnThrope says

"Ever been betrayed by a pretty cover and a pair of alluring blurbs?"

YES! *shakes fists at Shiver*

"In a world where so many books disappoint - robbing you of your time and money, promising more than they can deliver - *Read This Next* is the wickedly smart, faithful, and attractive partner you've always dreamed would bring you true and lasting reading happiness."

WINNAH! WINNAH! CHICKEN DINNAH!

Seriously, this book absolutely fulfills that promise. There is no other book about books like it. It's hilarious and some of the commentary is just so spectacularly *wrong*. Awesome!

The recommendations in *Read This Next* are not of the typical variety found on most recommended lists. There are classics included, but it also spans a wide range over many different genres. There is even an explanation on the differences between steampunk and slipstream. Mittlemark and Newman write such witty reviews that you will want to read almost every single book they recommend.

Read This Next is organized in a way that you can easily skip to the genres you prefer, or read it straight

through to discover new gems and not miss out on their snarky humor (recommend this option). The categories are:

1. Love
2. Memoir
3. Family
4. History
5. Politics
6. Humor
7. Work and Money
8. War
9. Religion
10. Death

This would be a perfect book to use in a book group. They recommend how to start a book group and include excellent discussion questions for each book.

Read This Next is a hilarious read! I would read this again and again. I really, really hope that the authors put out a Volume 2. Read the entire book for shits and giggles and don't forget to read the About the Author page. Funny stuff! This book is going on the top of my wish list!

Daniel (Attack of the Books!) Burton says

There's a lotta interesting information on a lotta interesting books in here...specifically, 500 books. I enjoyed learning a bit about these, the books that Howard Mittelmark thinks are the best you'll ever read. His commentary is witty, snarky...and occasionally even useful.

The problem is, I've not read enough of the books on his list, yet. I'm putting it next to my desk so that the next time I need a book, or need some commentary on the book, Mittelmark's book will be there, fully of short, quick and insightful commentary, without too much depth or weight.

Julie Ehlers says

As a lifelong bibliophile and veteran of several book groups, I've read a lot of these "what to read" books, and this is by far the best, for a few reasons. First of all, most of these types of books recommend the same titles over and over again. In contrast, the vast majority of titles featured in this book I've never seen recommended elsewhere, and in many cases, I hadn't even heard of them--very rare for a lifelong bibliophile and veteran of several book groups like myself! This book is also completely hilarious. Once you start to skim it, you'll probably find you want to read the whole thing cover-to-cover--again, unusual for a book of this type. Finally, the discussion questions are fantastic and make you realize how staid and stuffy most reading-group-guide questions are. They're generally extremely irreverent, but in a thought-provoking and humorous way; just what you want if you're trying to have a good discussion. Highly recommended for book groups and book lovers who have a sense of humor.

Betsy says

If you're not already overwhelmed by great books on your "to-read" list, this kicky guide is an easy way to pique your interest in something new at the library. Divided by genre (history, politics, romance, religion, etc.), this compilation of short book reviews also includes book club-style discussion questions, occasional historical notes and additional lists of "read this too" book in more specific sub-genres. Recommended books range from those published in the last few years to classics from the 19th century. The writing is a bit cheeky and irreverent, which makes flipping through the collection fun. Skim through this with a pen and highlighter to check off the books you've already finished and mark the ones you want to try next.

Allison (The Allure of Books) says

I love lists. Actually, I should probably specify that I love reading lists written by other people – writing my own lists and following them? ha. haha. No. So, when I had a chance to grab a copy of *Read This Next: 500 of the Best Books You'll Ever Read* by Howard Mittelmark and Sandra Newman? I thought: YES PLEASE!

So, the danger for readers like most of us is that these lists will be snobby and pretentious – "here are 500 classic and literary fiction books you should read, everything else is worthless" or some such. Well, I am happy to say that *Read This Next* didn't strike me as that type of book at all. While there is a section dedicated solely to trying to convince everyone to read Proust (FYI, it didn't work on me), it also recommends books like *Ender's Game* and *Soulless*.

Another thing that struck me is how radically I was able to misjudge some of the different sections. I really cracked myself up with trying to guess how many books I'd probably read within any given subject. When I got to the War chapter I was like "Welp, it's a sure bet I haven't read any of these!" This is when they were able to surprise me with an *Ender's Game* mention. Then, I get to a list of post-apocalyptic books and I'm thinking something like "ooo, bet I've read at least a few of these..." Um, no. Try NONE. Yes indeed, *Read This Next* was full of surprises.

Another surprise was how FUNNY it all was. Every chapter intro made me laugh, and I also enjoyed how willing the authors were to share their opinions. I was even able to (mostly) get over a snide remark about the Harry Potter series, which I think was very big of me. I decided it was worth it when they totally dissed The Da Vinci Code a few chapters later.

This book definitely grew my TBR you guys, there was a really great mixture of genres and time periods. It also reaffirmed and strengthened my determination to try and tackle *Infinite Jest* by David Foster Wallace. If you're a pretty varied reader, I definitely think *Read This Next* will tickle your fancy. From science fiction to historical non-fiction, there are recommendations at the ready!

To Sum it Up:

-This is so not a literati hoity-toity "genre reading is above us" kind of book, y'all.

-The chapter intros are legit hilarious, I really appreciated this book's sense of humor.

-I AM GOING TO READ INFINITE JEST. That is all.

