



**Satisfying Readers'  
Expectations**



# **Story Genres Workbook**



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# **The Trellis Method's**

## **Story Genres Workbook**

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# GENRES:

## Guiding Principles for Fiction

### *What Are Genres?*

Genres are like art: the audience knows what they like. And like a professional artist, writers who understand the specific characteristics of their favorite genre enjoy the knowledge of what to write for their target audience. That knowledge can free you from worrying about whether you're creating a story your readers will want to read. Best of all, knowing the characteristics of your favorite genre might be your ticket to writing a bestseller! A genre explains how the world works and helps writers, retailers, and readers categorize their stories.

*Note: The terms, definitions, and interpretations associated with genres vary. Top writers research masterworks in their chosen genres to understand and create what their target readers expect.*

### *Readers Know What They Like*

By the time readers reach adulthood, life has saturated their minds with the content of countless TV shows, films, and books. Most people know what they like and dislike, even if they can't name the genre. And even if they could, the terms and definitions

blur when writers mix genres. For example, what do you call a story that combines elements of the thriller, mystery, and romance genres? Top writers strive to include story structure and content designed to fulfill readers' pre-established expectations.

## *Brown M&M's Suggest Missing Details*

Details can make all the difference to readers. Keep in mind that they know what they like. So if a desired detail is missing, it can foreshadow how the audience will feel about your work. For example, the famous Van Halen rock band required event organizers to sign an extensive contract. It contained a lengthy rider demanding strict adherence to all provisions. Buried deep in the legal document was the M&M's clause.

### **Munchies**

Potato Chips with Assorted Dips

Nuts

Pretzels

**M&M's (WARNING: ABSOLUTELY NO BROWN ONES)**

Twelve (12) Reese's Peanut Butter Cups

Twelve (12) Assorted Dannon Yogurt (On Ice)

The M&M's warning sounds like an arrogant rock star's demand, right? However, it was quite the opposite. In David Lee Roth's

1997 *Crazy from the Heat* autobiography<sup>1</sup>, he explained this provision was all about safety details, not brown M&M's. The group's gear filled nine semi-truck trailers. Imagine what might happen without the proper support of speakers and equipment. Backstage, if Roth found brown M&M's in the bowl, he knew the event organizer had not read the contract rider, which according to the lead singer, "read like a version of the Chinese Yellow Pages because there was so much equipment, and so many human beings to make it function."

## *The Danger of Ignoring Details*

As an example of what can happen when people don't pay attention to details, the university in Pueblo, Colorado, did not adhere to all the provisions in the Van Halen legal document. According to the lead singer, the band's equipment "weighed like the business end of a 747," and sank into the arena's basketball flooring. Roth wrote, "It came out in the press that I discovered brown M&M's and did eighty-five thousand dollars' worth of damage to the backstage area. Well, who am I to get in the way of a good rumor?" A costly lesson in paying attention to the details!

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<sup>1</sup> Roth, David Lee. *Crazy from the Heat*. Hyperion. Reprint Edition.

## *The Secret to Writing Page-Turning Fiction*

Within the diverse universe we call genres, the secret to creating page-turning fiction is understanding and giving your target audience the details they expect. Genres help you do just that.

## *Genres Are the Portals to Your Story World*

John Truby stated in *The Anatomy of Genres*<sup>2</sup>, “Once we understand that all of human life is a form of story, the next step becomes clear: *genres are the portals to this world*.” Many experts write about genres. However, few agree on how to define all the moving parts.

- Historically, as the publishing industry and reading audiences grew, the emphasis on genres increased.
- Satisfying audience’s desire for familiar story worlds with unique twists is why writers learn about genres.
- Although there is no definitive agreement on what makes up a genre, there is a consensus that readers love them.
- Genres contain many details, and if missing from your story, readers notice and express disappointment in book reviews.

The *Story Genres Workbook* prompts you to include what you believe is the right content for your chosen genres.

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<sup>2</sup> Truby, John. *The Anatomy of Genres* (p. 8). Picador. Kindle Edition.



## *Conventions Define Expectations*

Within Robert McKee's *Story*<sup>3</sup>, he emphasized that the audience knows the **conventions** associated with their favorite genres, and thus, they expect to see them fulfilled. A writer's choice of genres plays a big part in what happens within the story. When a writer puts a book into a specific category, that implies a promise to deliver that genre's conventions. Also, each genre typically raises a **key question**. For example, a murder mystery creates a puzzle (i.e., who done it?), and readers expect the author to deliver that intellectual stimulation.

## *Key Scenes Satisfy Readers' Expectations*

According to McKee<sup>4</sup>, the audience also expects **key scenes** based on genres. For example, the buildup in a cozy murder mystery implies a promise: *the sleuth will strive to catch the killer, but face significant problems*. That implied promise obligates the writer to fulfill readers' expectations. In the cozy mystery subgenre, after dealing with problems, the audience expects a key scene that brings the criminal to justice. Successful authors consider the

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<sup>3</sup> McKee, Robert. *Story*. HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

audience's knowledge of genres and strive to deliver the conventions and key scenes that will fulfill their expectations.

## *Characters Deliver the Craved Emotions*

A story's plot events force characters into conflicts, and they react with emotions, causing shifts in traits and behaviors. But readers also expect certain characters based on their preferred genres. For instance, the chief protagonist in a thriller differs from the same role in a cozy mystery. Skillful writers select characters to fulfill the audience's expectations. Interesting and relatable characters engage audiences, turning casual readers into loyal fans.

## *Plot Events Force Characters to React*

Without plot events, characters have nothing to do. Genres establish general expectations. For example, readers expect events in a *thriller* that include the chief protagonist saving someone or something. In a *mystery*, the audience expects plot events that include the investigator interviewing suspects to reveal the actual criminal. Writers freshen and leverage a genre's expected plot events by forcing characters into unexpected situations, surprising and delighting readers.

## *Subplots Amplify the Overall Story*

The main plot structure is a series of events that force the story's characters into conflicts, and their reactions give readers the desired emotions. The subplot structure amplifies and supports the main plot. A subplot operates like a story within a story. Coming up with subplots operates much like the creation of the main plot. Subplots help create suspense and tension across many genres.

## *Themes Explain “Why” the Story Matters*

A symbiotic relationship exists between story elements.

- *Characters* are *who* experience the story.
- *Plot* is *what* happens within the story.
- *Theme* is *why* the story matters.
- *Structure* is *how* the story is told.

There is no single path to identifying your story's themes.

- The **external theme** gives meaning to the overarching narrative relating to what your book is about. For example, the mystery genre is about bringing the criminal to justice.
- The **internal theme** gives insight into the chief protagonist's life, amplifying conflicts, experiences, discoveries, and emotions, including the change required for the lead

character to solve the story problem. For example, the sleuth in a cozy mystery subgenre solves the murder when she puts the needs of the community ahead of her personal needs.

- The **philosophical theme** taps into the audience's collective knowledge of a universal truth, and typically provides the lead character with the motivation to learn the internal theme's life lesson. For example, the cozy mystery sleuth applies the internal theme only after a friend (foil character) reflects how compromised values hindered the protagonist from identifying the killer.

Think of themes as time-proven truths that resonate with readers. A theme conveys some universal truth, binding essential elements of your story and providing insights into how humans behave and the world works.

## *Deliver on Readers' Expectations*

The skillful writer:

- Combines a genre's conventions and key scenes to fulfill the audience's expectations of characters, plot, and themes.
- Gives readers the answer to the genre's key question.
- Places actual content at strategic Story Beats along the narrative's arc.

Conventions, key scenes, characters, plot, subplots, and themes are used to answer the key question, satisfying readers's expectations of a genre.

**Note:** Each writer defines their chosen genre's essential conventions, key scenes, characters, plot, subplots, and themes. This requires you to research and record what you believe will satisfy your target audience's expectations. This task benefits from reading masterworks that resonate with your target readers, not to copy bestselling authors verbatim, but to make sure and include what the audience expects. No shortcuts, just hard work that pays off when you add creative insights and twists to your chosen genre.

This workbook includes basic genre information. However, no one has created a master list covering every genre, subgenre, and sub-subgenre. Those who tried to create that master list admit they've fallen short of the goal. For one of the best books on genres, John Truby's *The Anatomy of Genres*<sup>5</sup> offers insights; however, you must separate the gold (advice) from the slag (opinions). Truby's terms may differ from this workbook.

## *A Subgenre Example for a Cozy Mystery*

Within the Crime genre is the Cozy Mystery subgenre.

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<sup>5</sup> Truby, John. *The Anatomy of Genres*. Picador. Kindle Edition.

The audience has pre-established expectations of this subgenre, and this example illustrates the information gathered to fulfill what readers expect within the pages of a cozy mystery novel. This example includes my personal notes recorded after studying books about the genre<sup>6</sup> and reading novels by bestselling authors.

**Note:** Authors differ on the views of genres, and if you decide to write a Cozy Mystery, your notes could include many of the elements that follow, but you're free to detour from this list because it is nothing more than a 'tour' map of a subgenre.

**Genre Conventions:** Define what this genre includes.

- A cozy mystery includes conventions that set it apart from thrillers, hard-core crime, and horror.
- In a series, readers prefer each book to solve the mystery, and they dislike cliffhangers designed to entice them to buy the next book.
- An inciting crime occurs near the novel's beginning, and if more offenses occur, each crime increases stakes and adds complexity. *Note: A typical cozy mystery balances family, friendship, and murder; thus, there's usually one murder or only a few homicides per story.*
- The murder takes place offstage.

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<sup>6</sup> Refer to the Bibliography in *The Trellis Method*.

- The murderer's reason for killing must be plausible.
- Readers expect to see every clue they'll need to solve the mystery, and they dislike having unknown evidence interjected at the end to wrap up the story.
- Readers enjoy the intellectual challenge of legitimate red herrings that distract and confuse, misdirecting them away from clues, facts, suspects, and timelines.
- Top cozy mysteries introduce fresh twists that surprise and delight readers.
- As the contest of wits with the sleuth progresses, the murderer makes it personal.
- Each story sets up a "ticking clock" that limits the time available to solve the crime.
- The investigator is often a likable amateur female sleuth who has (or develops) an interesting reason to get involved.
- Both the sleuth and the murderer have endearing qualities and flaws.
- While investigating, the sleuth encounters obstacles that increase conflict and tension, such as a personal issue that impedes her solving the crime.
- A cozy mystery avoids profanities, explicit sex, and graphic violence because that's what most target readers prefer.

- The setting is a small town or a subset of a larger city where the inciting crime happens.
- The murderer is from the same community as the victim.
- Victims are frequently disreputable, making the crime seem understandable or even justified.
- A cozy mystery series often has something that ties one book to the next, such as a trope, theme, hobby, or occupation.
- Stakes escalate because someone (or something) the sleuth cares about is in danger.

**Genre Key Scenes:** Story Beats guide placing the key scenes.

- An early scene in Act 1 shows the sleuth discovering (or hearing about) a murder.
- A scene takes place where one character paraphrases the external theme.
- A scene where someone close to the sleuth states the internal theme.
- A few scenes that serve as reminders of the external and internal themes.
- Scenes that bond readers to the sleuth when she does something nice for someone, especially if done for a person who doesn't deserve kindness.
- A scene where someone praises the criminal's abilities.



- A scene hinting at the criminal's object of desire—the MacGuffin.
- Another scene showing the discovery of the criminal's MacGuffin.
- Multiple scenes showing the sleuth chasing clues.
- A climactic scene where a sleuth exposes the criminal.
- A resolution scene showing the criminal brought to justice.

**General Readers' Expectations:** Fulfill these implied promises.

- **Puzzle:** The intellectual challenge and intrigue of solving the whodunit ahead of the story's big reveal.
- **Security:** Participation in the investigation without the real-world risks of chasing criminals.
- **Satisfaction:** The pleasure of seeing justice served.

**Chief Protagonist Expectations:** Make interesting and relatable.

- **Reluctant Amateur Sleuth (Chief Protagonist):** The investigator is often a likable amateur female sleuth who has (or develops) an interesting reason to get involved and solve the crime.
- **Sleuth's Character Arc:** In a series, the sleuth's character arc often continues to progress, such as starting out reluctant to investigate before committing to the effort.
- **Likable Person:** The sleuth's endearing qualities entice readers to want to know more.

- **Admirable and Realistic Traits:** As the sleuth interacts with others, she shows a mix of self-sufficiency and vulnerability.
- **Entertains and Informs:** Sleuth's daily activities plus her investigation offer interesting details to entertain and inform readers.
- **Triumphs Over Problems:** Her efforts to overcome internal issues and external obstacles inspire readers.

**Supporting Cast Expectations:** Make them interesting, too.

- **Worthy Opponent (Chief Antagonist):** The murderer's abilities and flaws match or even exceed the sleuth's talents, skills, and resources.
- **Quirky Characters:** Humorous, quirky characters with intriguing backstories spark conflict that inspire the sleuth.
- **Community Characters:** Other individuals interact with the sleuth, including family, police, and friends.

## *Give Readers What They Expect*

The selection and use of genres is not about emulating other authors. The genres you select and apply to your story give readers a sense of familiarity, allowing them to dive into the swirling emotions of your story. It's your creativity that makes

the story stand out from others. In a blog<sup>7</sup> post, Shane Parrish explained why it's important to write and avoid shortcuts.

“A world of common thinking available on demand will tempt people to outsource their thinking and disproportionately reward people who don't.”

Top writers strive to exceed readers' expectations, and many do this by understanding and combining genres. For example:

- Combine your primary genre (e.g., crime) with additional genres (e.g., romance and psychological thriller) to set your story apart from others.
- Give the audience the genre's familiar conventions and key scenes, but mix them up to surprise and delight readers.
- Allow the characters to showcase the emotions readers crave by dealing with significant problems.
- Use the plot to set up organic character conflicts, surfacing emotional reactions while increasing the stakes.
- Let the characters and events in the subplots amplify the main plot and the protagonist's problems.
- Scratch the audience's itch to understand why the story matters by balancing the mix of external, internal, and philosophical themes.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://fs.blog/why-write/>

Focus on the details (i.e., the M&M's principle) of your chosen genres. Give readers the familiar patterns they expect, yet surprise and delight the audience by combining genres in unexpected ways. Combining genres adds 'spice' to enhance the reader's experience, but too much can ruin the outcome:

1. Mixing genres adds complexity and may not satisfy the reader who expected one thing but got something else.
2. For a book that combines genres, the primary genre sets the expectation based on the *category*, *title*, *cover*, and *blurb*, and if what the author delivers in the novel differs from that implied promise, readers often express their disappointments in negative reviews, reducing sales.
3. How you "categorize" your novel at retailers matters because readers enter expectations into search boxes.

## *Additional Thoughts on Genres*

Robert McKee's *Story*<sup>8</sup>, John Truby's *The Anatomy of Genres*<sup>9</sup>, and Shawn Coyne's *The Story Grid*<sup>10</sup> inspired this workbook.

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<sup>8</sup> McKee, Robert. *Story*. Harper Collins e-books, 28 September 2010.

<sup>9</sup> Truby, John. *The Anatomy of Genres*. Picador. Kindle Edition.

<sup>10</sup> Coyne, Shawn. *The Story Grid: What Good Editors Know*. Black Irish Entertainment LLC, 28 April 2015.

- **McKee** warned that the sophistication of audiences presents the writer with the critical challenge of fulfilling audience expectations, or else the writer risks confusing and disappointing readers. He emphasized that writers must give the audience fresh, unexpected moments.
- **Truby** noted that the hierarchy of genres is based on three things: the primary character flaw the hero must overcome, the quality of the life philosophy the [story] form expresses, and the major art story form it explores.
- **Coyne** emphasized genres are labels that tell the audience what to expect from stories, *an essential consideration*.

The bare-bones synopses of popular genres will give you a starting point. The one-page genre descriptions serve as primers to help you research and complete your genre worksheet.

## APPENDIX:

### Scene Placement Notes

#### *The Genres and Story Beats Relationship*

A genre's conventions and key scenes enjoy a symbiotic relationship with the 18 Story Beats. At first glance, it's somewhat difficult to see how key scenes and conventions relate to Story Beats. For example, figuring out where to place key scenes can frustrate writers. The good news is there are no set rules, but there are principles you can use to minimize and even eliminate your concerns. I'll use a Cozy Mystery subgenre example to illustrate both the problem and the solution.

#### *The Cozy Mystery Explained*

A genre implies a promise to readers that key scenes will happen where readers expect them to take place. For example, most cozy mysteries are about **a murder that takes place early in the story**. The amateur **sleuth investigates**. Along the way, the **sleuth interviews suspects**, and the **conversations with quirky characters** spice up the story. In the end, the **sleuth reveals the killer**, and the **community celebrates**. Readers enjoy trying to solve the who-done-it puzzle prior to the big reveal.

## *Genre and Story Beats*

As will become obvious as you complete the *Story Beats Workbook*, you'll likely create somewhere between 50 scenes for a short book and over 100 scenes for an epic novel. Most of today's cozy mysteries fall within the short to medium length range. This illustration will show approximately 50 scenes at an average of 1,000 words per scene for a 50,000-word novel. Writers may feel a bit lost because of the difference between the number of key scenes found in popular cozy mysteries (e.g., approximately 11) and the number of single and sequence scenes defined in the Story Beats (e.g., ~50 scenes in this example).

## *Reconciling the Key Scenes and Story Beats*

Writers use research and creativity to reconcile the difference between the number of key scenes and those suggested by the Story Beats.

- **Research:** Find where to place key scenes based on the best of what others have already figured out. For example:
  - Find blog posts with examples from books and films that explain your genre's key scenes, conventions, and tropes.
  - List where key scenes fall within stories. For example, a murder typically takes place early in a cozy mystery, and

that scene is the single HOOK scene in the Story Beats. Choosing where to place a key scene is more art than science, and you control the location.

- Determine whether you'll combine other genres with your primary genre, and repeat the research for each one.
  - For example, a cozy mystery that has a romantic subplot would include key scenes from the Love genre.
  - Figure out where to place the combined number of key scenes in relation to the Story Beats.
- **Creativity:** After placing the key scenes within the Story Beats framework, you'll determine how the conventions influence the story by adding more scenes. For example:
  - A convention may add details to one of the story's scenes.
  - Sometimes conventions inspire more scenes.
  - Writers often find the genre's conventions serve as catalysts for creativity, spawning many additional scenes other than the key scenes tied to specific Story Beats.

Genres and Story Beats are servants, not your master. Place scenes and beats where you believe they will best tell your story.



## SELECTED GENRES:

### Notes and Synopses

#### *Inspiration*

Given the number of books read and websites visited, it's difficult to cite all the sources, but chief inspiration includes:

- Coyne, Shawn. *The Story Grid: What Good Editors Know*. Black Irish Entertainment LLC. Kindle Edition.
- Harrington, Nina. *How to Write a Cozy Mystery: The Ultimate Guide to Writing Modern Cozy Murder Mysteries* (Fast-Track Guides Book 10). Nina Harrington Digital. Kindle Edition.
- McKee, Robert. *Story*. HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.
- Rosett, Sara. *How to Outline A Cozy Mystery: Workbook* (Genre Fiction How To 1). Kindle Edition.
- Truby, John. *The Anatomy of Genres*. Picador. Kindle Edition.

Genres are like recipes with many common ingredients, but it's your creativity and characters that add the spices readers love! Use the synopses that follow to “seed” your worksheet and fulfill readers' expectations, combining genres to surprise and delight.

*Note: The synopses in the genre handout are bare-bones outlines.*

*Research your genres to define the critical details for your book.*

## BOOK GENRES: Popular Examples

### *Priming Your Research Pump*

Genre examples prime your research pump. Many of these examples span more than one genre or subgenre. Also, the content ranges from suitable for youth to adults only. Many are classics, and others are more recent. Research your primary and secondary genres to create your list of key scenes and conventions for pairing with the Story Beats.

#### *Action*

- *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum
- *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas
- *Jurassic Park* by Michael Crichton
- *To Build a Fire* by Jack London
- *The War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells
- *The Most Dangerous Game* by Richard Connell
- *The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern
- *The Hunger Games* series by Suzanne Collins
- *The Bourne Identity* by Robert Ludlum
- *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien

- *Ransom* by David Malouf
- *The Andromeda Strain* by Michael Crichton
- *On the Beach* by Neville Shute

### *Crime*

- *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* by Agatha Christie
- *The Cat Who Read Backwards* by Lilian Jackson Braun
- *The Daughter of Time* by Josephine They
- *Dead Until Dark* by Charlaine Harris
- *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* John le Carré
- *The Godfather* by Mario Puzo
- *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier
- *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold
- *The Big Sleep* by Raymond Chandler
- *Strangers on a Train* by Patricia Highsmith
- *Red Dragon* by Thomas Harris
- *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn
- *Killing Floor* by Lee Child
- *The Woman in White* by Wilkie Collins
- *And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie
- *Presumed Innocent* by Scott Turow
- *The Postman Always Rings Twice* by James M. Cain

## *Fantasy*

- *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
- *The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien
- *A Game of Thrones* by George R. R. Martin
- *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis

## *Horror*

- *Misery* by Stephen King
- *Dracula* by Bram Stoker
- *The Amityville Horror* by Jay Anson
- *The Shining* by Stephen King
- *Annihilation* by Jeff VanderMeer
- *Carrie* by Stephen King

## *Love*

- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
- *Outlander* by Diana Gabaldon
- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
- *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell
- *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen
- *The Notebook* by Nicholas Sparks

- *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman
- *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier
- *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe* by Fannie Flagg

### *Morality*

- *For Whom the Bell Tolls* by Ernest Hemingway
- *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens
- *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde
- *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

### *Performance*

- *The Natural* by Bernard Malamud
- *Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly

### *Science Fiction*

- *Watchmen* by Alan Moore
- *Necromancer* by William Gibson
- *Solaris* by Stanislaw Lem
- *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card
- *Old Man's War* by John Scalzi
- *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy

- *Dune* by Frank Herbert
- *The Martian* by Andy Weir
- *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury
- *1984* by George Orwell
- *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley
- *Foundation* by Isaac Asimov
- *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* by Philip K. Dick
- *Hunger Games* series by Suzanne Collins
- *The Time Machine* by H. G. Wells
- *I, Robot* by Isaac Asimov
- *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert A. Heinlein
- *A Wrinkle in time* by Madeleine L'Engle

### *Society*

- *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton
- *1984* by George Orwell
- *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
- *Ragtime* by E.L. Doctorow
- *Ordinary People* by Judith Guest

### *Status*

- *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy
- *An American Tragedy* by Theodore Dreiser

- *Brooklyn* by Colm Tóibín
- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë
- *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett

### *Thriller*

- *Red Dragon* by Thomas Harris
- *Coma* by Robin Cook
- *The Bourne Identity* by Robert Ludlum
- *The Client* by John Grisham
- *Seven Days in May* by Fletcher Knebel and Charles W. Bailey II
- *Marathon Man* by William Goldman
- *The Scarecrow* by Michael Connelly
- *Numbered Account* by Christopher Reich
- *The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins

### *War*

- *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane
- *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque
- *Gates of Fire* by Steven Pressfield

### *Western*

- *True Grit* by Charles Portis

## *Worldview*

- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
- *The Silence of the Lambs* by Thomas Harris
- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald

## *Cozy Mystery*

- *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* series by Alexander McCall Smith
- *The Hannah Swensen* series by Joanne Fluke
- *The Agatha Raisin* series by M.C. Beaton
- *The Cat Who...* series by Lilian Jackson Bruan
- *The Miss Marple* series by Agatha Christie

## *Young Adult:*

- *Fangirl* by Rainbow Rowell (Coming of Age, ...)
- *The Hunger Games* series by Suzanne Collins (Dystopian, ...)
- *Harry Potter* series by J. K. Rowling (Urban Fantasy, ...)
- *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman (Fantasy)
- *The Mortal Instruments* series by Cassandra Clare (Urban Fantasy, ...)
- *The Infernal Devices* by Cassandra Clare (Urban Fantasy, ...)
- *Passenger* by Alexandra Bracken (Urban Fantasy, ...)
- *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card (Science Fiction, ...)



- *Twilight* series by Stephenie Meyer (Paranormal, ...)
- *An Ember in the Ashes* by Sabaa Tahir (Fantasy, ...)
- *Throne of Glass* by Sarah J. Maas (Fantasy, ...)
- *Cruel Beauty* by Rosamund Hodge (Fairytale Retellings)
- *A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sarah J. Maas (Fairytale Retellings)
- *The Lunar Chronicles* by Marissa Meyer (Fairytale Retellings)
- *Heartless* by Marissa Meyer (Fairytale Retellings)
- *Dorothy Must Die* by Danielle Paige (Fairytale Retellings)
- *Stealing Snow* by Danielle Paige (Fairytale Retellings)
- *Divergent* series by Veronica Roth (Dystopian, ...)
- *Legend* by Marie Lu (Dystopian, ...)
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry (Science Fiction, ...)
- *The Maze Runner* series by James Dashner (Science Fiction, ...)
- *These Broken Stars* by Amie Kaufman and Meagan Spooner (Science Fiction, ...)
- *Across the Universe* by Beth Revis (Science Fiction, ...)
- *The Obernewtyn Chronicles* by Isobelle Carmody (Fantasy, ...)
- *The Queen of the Tearling* by Erika Johansen (Fantasy, ...)
- *The Sky So Heavy* by Claire Zorn (World's End, ...)
- *The 5th Wave* series by Rick Yancey (World's End, ...)

- *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio (Contemporary)
- *The Sky Is Everywhere* by Jandy Nelson (Contemporary)
- *Anna and the French Kiss* by Stephanie Perkins (Love, ...)
- *The Unexpected Everything* by Morgan Matson (Love, ...)
- *Stalking Jack the Ripper* by Kerri Maniscalco (Love, ...)
- *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne (Love, ...)
- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton (Coming of Age)
- *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky (Coming of Age)
- *The Strange and Beautiful Sorrows of Ava Lavender* by Leslye Walton (Magical Realism)
- *Bone Gap* by Laura Ruby (Magical Realism)
- *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak (Historical Fiction, ...)
- *Code Name Verity* by Elizabeth Wein (Historical Fiction, ...)
- *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart (Mystery, ...)
- *Pretty Little Liars* by Sara Shepard (Mystery, ...)
- *Leviathan* by Scott Westerfeld (Steampunk)
- *Etiquette & Espionage* by Gail Carriger (Steampunk)
- *Wolf by Wolf* by Ryan Gaudin (Speculative, ...)
- *And I Darken* by Kiersten White (Speculative, ...)
- *Illuminae* by Amie Kaufman and Jay Kristoff (Epistolary, ...)
- *Love Letters to the Dead* by Ava Dellaira (Epistolary, ...)