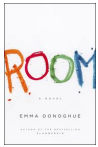


# Past One Book Selections



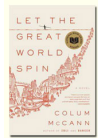
Discussion of a single book and the issues therein to encourage literary reading and to build community by encouraging conversation and the sharing of ideas by members of the community. What if Bloomington and Surrounding Communities All Read One Book? Since 2002, our community has joined together to select and read the same book. The official reading period extends from January through June, although many book groups continue reading and discussion throughout the year. Here is a list of our selections from previous years.



**2012**  
**Room**  
by Emma Donoghue

Jack is a typical five-year-old who enjoys watching TV, reading, and playing games with his Ma. But he has lived all of his life in a single room. The room is his world, shared with his Ma, and occasionally with Old Nick, a mysterious and unnerving nighttime visitor. Told from the perspective of Jack, the novel explores not only survival in captivity but also what happens when captivity ends and the world expands beyond the four walls of Room.

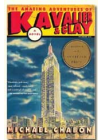
Read the book. [Reserve a copy at the Library](#). Visit your local bookstore.



**2011**  
**Let the Great World Spin**  
by Colum McCann

In August 1974, a tightrope walker, suspended a quarter mile above the streets of Manhattan, dances his way between the Twin Towers. Below, the lives of ordinary people become entwined in extraordinary ways in this sweepingly radical social novel that captures the spirit of America in a time of transition, promise, and soon-to-be-ended innocence.

Read the book. [Reserve a copy at the Library](#). Visit your local bookstore.



**2010**  
**The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay**  
by Michael Chabon

Like the comic books that animate and inspire it, The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay is both larger than life and of it too. Complete with golems and magic and miraculous escapes and evil nemeses and even hand-to-hand Antarctic battle, it pursues the most important questions of love and war, dreams and art, across pages brimming with longing and hope.

Read the book. [Reserve a copy at the Library](#). Visit your local bookstore.



**2009**  
**The Book Thief**  
by Markus Zusak

Narrated by Death, this coming-of-age story set in World War II chronicles the life of a young girl in Germany who learns from the books she steals and the friends she collects along the way.  
Read the book: [Reserve a copy at the Library](#) or Visit your local bookstore.



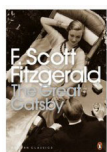
**2008**  
**The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf**  
by Mohja Kahf

"Syrian immigrant Khadra Shamy is growing up in a devout, tightly knit Muslim family in 1970s Indiana, at the crossroads of bad polyester and Islamic dress codes. Along with her brother Eyad and her African-American friends, Hakim and Hanifa, she bikes the Indianapolis streets exploring the fault-lines between "Muslim" and "American." The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf charts the spiritual and social landscape of Muslims in middle America, from five daily prayers to the Indy 500 car race. It is a riveting debut from an important new voice." -*PublicAffairs*  
Read the book: [Reserve a copy at the Library](#) or Visit your local bookstore.



**2007**  
**Fahrenheit 451**  
by Ray Bradbury

"In Fahrenheit 451, Ray Bradbury's classic, frightening vision of the future, firemen don't put out fires--they start them in order to burn books. Bradbury's vividly painted society holds up the appearance of happiness as the highest goal--a place where trivial information is good, and knowledge and ideas are bad. Fire Captain Beatty explains it this way, 'Give the people contests they win by remembering the words to more popular songs.... Don't give them slippery stuff like philosophy or sociology to tie things up with. That way lies melancholy'." -*amazon.com review*  
Read the book: [Reserve a copy at the Library](#) or Visit your local bookstore.



**2006**  
**The Great Gatsby**  
by F. Scott Fitzgerald

"A portrait of the Jazz Age in all of its decadence and excess, Gatsby captured the spirit of the author's generation and earned itself a permanent place in American mythology. Self-made, self-invented millionaire Jay Gatsby embodies some of Fitzgerald's--and his country's--most abiding obsessions: money, ambition, greed, and the promise of new beginnings. 'Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter--tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther.... And one fine morning--' Gatsby's rise to glory and eventual fall from grace becomes a kind of cautionary tale about the American Dream." -*amazon.com review*  
Read the book: [Reserve a copy at the Library](#) or Visit your local bookstore.



**2005**  
**The Kite Runner**  
by Khaled Hosseini

"This powerful first novel, by an Afghan physician now living in California, tells a story of fierce cruelty and fierce yet redeeming love. Both transform the life of Amir, Khaled Hosseini's privileged young narrator, who comes of age during the last peaceful days of the monarchy, just before his country's revolution and its invasion by Russian forces. But political events, even as dramatic as the ones that are presented in "The Kite Runner," are only a part of this story. A more personal plot, arising from Amir's close friendship with Hassan, the son of his father's servant, turns out to be the thread that ties the book together. The fragility of this relationship, symbolized by the kites the boys fly together, is tested as they watch their old way of life disappear." -Edward Hower, *New York Times* August 3, 2003

Read the book: [Reserve a copy at the Library](#) or Visit your local bookstore.



**2004**  
**Reading Lolita in Tehran**  
by Azar Nafisi

"Rich with the author's memories of teaching English during the Islamic revolution that so radically altered her country: the increasing ideological dogmatism of cultural revolutionaries; the imposition of strict clothing rules; the reign of new morality police; the rise of terror, mass arrests, and executions; and the devastation caused by eight years of war with Saddam Hussein's Iraq...

Reading Lolita in Tehran provides a stirring testament to the power of literature to cultivate democratic change and open-mindedness. Azar Nafisi's memoir will resonate with anyone who loves books, or who wants (or needs) to be reminded why books matter. This passionate defense of literature lucidly demonstrates how its power resides in the personal space between each reader and the writing on the page. No one - not governments, or their militaries, or religious leaders - can put an end to this conversation" -Heather Hewett, *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 27, 2003

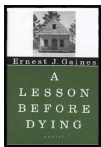
Read the book: [Reserve a copy at the Library](#) or Visit your local bookstore.



**2003**  
**1984** <sup>TM</sup>  
 by George  
 Orwell

"Instead of a glorious future of freedom and dignity, the inhabitants of this future society live under the watchful eye of Big Brother, leader of a government whose power is enforced by Thought Police and diabolical informants. The novel's protagonist, Winston Smith, a member of the outer ring of the Party, finds himself slowly evolving into an independent thinker who writes anti-Big Brother slogans in his diary. A key ingredient in this chilling documentation of eroding human freedom is its depiction of a corrupted language, "Newspeak," Orwell's brilliant rendering of that degraded language of politicians and sophists which hides rather than reveals truth. As a true anti-utopian novel, one in which the horrors of totalitarianism are amply illustrated, Orwell's 1984 serves as a poignant reminder of the preciousness of free thought and an open society." -*Magill Book Reviews*, 1995

Read the book: [Reserve a copy at the Library](#) <sup>TM</sup> or Visit your local bookstore.



**2002**  
**A Lesson**  
**Before Dying** <sup>TM</sup>  
 by Ernest  
 Gaines

"Ernest J. Gaines, one of the foremost African American novelists of his generation, offers a compassionate and moving account of the struggle to bring a young black man awaiting execution to an awareness of his dignity and humanity. Gaines creates a cast of sharply drawn minor characters, all of whom, including those of whose conduct he must disapprove, he treats with sympathy and insight. He is at his best in his nuanced observation of the ironies and intricacies of negotiation between races and between generations." -W.P. Kenney, *Magill Book Reviews*, 1993

Read the book: [Reserve a copy at the Library](#) <sup>TM</sup> or Visit your local bookstore.

*One Book One Bloomington and Beyond is a project of the [Bloomington Arts and Entertainment District](#) <sup>TM</sup>, [Boxcar Books](#) <sup>TM</sup>, [Free University of Monroe County](#) <sup>TM</sup>, [Indiana University Libraries Bloomington](#), <sup>TM</sup> [Monroe County Community School Corporation](#), <sup>TM</sup> [Monroe County Public Library](#), <sup>TM</sup> and [WFHB](#) <sup>TM</sup>.*

Updated November 2, 2016

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 [3] <https://mcpl.monroe.la.us/view.aspx?row=4327%20481484>  
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