

## Canton Public Library Book Club Resources in Review

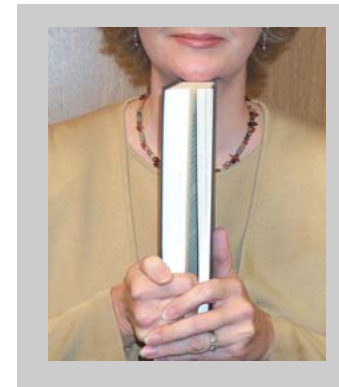
1. Canton Public Library's popular Book-Club-in-a-Bag kits are available for check out and contain eight books of the same title and include discussion questions, reviews, and author biographies. Everything you need for your book club!
2. Looking for some guidance on how to conduct or lead a book discussion? One of our librarians would be happy to show you how to lead a book discussion by participating in one of your book club meetings.
3. Canton Public Library also offers several book discussion opportunities including *Lunch and a Book*, a Contemporary Book Discussion Group, and an *Email Book Club*.
4. If you would like to join an established book group, Canton Public Library may be able to help you find a local book group (not library affiliated) that is looking for new members.
5. Other resources found at the Canton Public Library include reading group guide books, book review sources, bookmarks and the Books and Reading subject page on our Internet Branch, [www.cantonpl.org](http://www.cantonpl.org).

*For more information,  
please call the Adult Reference desk at (734) 397-0999.*



1200 S. Canton Center Road, Canton, Michigan 48188  
(734) 397-0999 | [www.cantonpl.org](http://www.cantonpl.org)

# How to Start a Book Club



**-in 7 Easy Steps-**

By Canton Public Library  
Adult Services Librarians

## Why do people start book clubs? Here are a few reasons that some Canton residents have started their book clubs...

*"I like to get out. It is a nice way to get together with other [people]. It is also good to get other people's points of view on the books."*  
-Michelle, Canton, MI

*"I really get to understand and appreciate books – even those I do not necessarily like."*  
-Sharon, Canton, MI

*"I like the social part of the book club. We get together to eat, drink and talk about the book—a little. It is not a big deal if someone hasn't read the book."*  
-Becky, Canton, MI

Whatever the reason, book clubs are a great way to enjoy books, people, and to simply have fun. The Canton Public Library has put together this brochure to provide you with some helpful guidelines to start your own book club and to make you aware of the resources available to readers and book groups at the Canton Public Library.

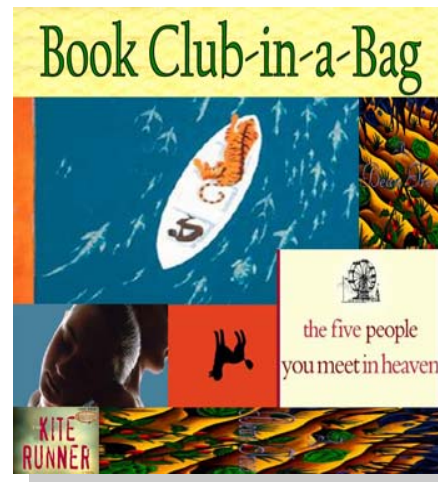
## Start a Book Club in 7 Easy Steps

### Step 1: Self-analysis

Why do you want to be in a book club? Is it because you want a social outlet? Do you want to read more classics/contemporary/literary books? Picture what your book club experience would look like — what kinds of books would you be reading, what (if any) food would be served and what is the environment like?

### Step 7: Have fun!

Most importantly, have fun! However you decide to organize your book club, remember to have a good time doing it. A book club is about spending time with stimulating people discussing fascinating books and expanding your interests, not worrying about details.



## Other Book Club Resources at Canton Public Library

### Books:

*Book Discussions for Adults: A Leader's Guide* by Ted Balcom

*The Reading Group Handbook: Everything You Need to Know, from Choosing Members to Leading Discussions* by Rachel W. Jacobsohn

### Websites:

[http://www.cantonpl.org/subjects/books\\_reading/](http://www.cantonpl.org/subjects/books_reading/)

<http://readinggroupsguides.com>

<http://bookclubcookbook.com/links.htm>

### Book Reviews

*New York Times Book Review*

*Booklist*

*Publishers Weekly*

### Book Ideas:

Bookmarks (from the Canton Public Library)

### Step 5: Pick a good book

How are you going to pick your books? This is another crucial step. Decide what type of material the group will read and what the criteria is for selection. Primarily fiction with some non-fiction titles? Only Pulitzer Prize winning novels or, perhaps a genre such as Romance? The method in which a book is chosen also varies from group to group. Some groups take turns picking a book; others vote on titles presented by members. It is also helpful to keep a current list of potential titles for those rare occasions when no one has a suggestion.

▶ **Canton Public Library can help!** Visit our website at [www.cantonpl.org/subjects/books\\_reading](http://www.cantonpl.org/subjects/books_reading) for links to helpful websites and resources for book groups. You will also find reading suggestions on our printable bookmarks by visiting [www.cantonpl.org/services/bookmark](http://www.cantonpl.org/services/bookmark) or simply come to the library for bookmarks already printed!

### Step 6: What to talk about

Depending on the book you have selected you may want to discuss: characters and storyline; action; social implications; symbolism; author's purpose; credibility; resolution; style and setting. Of course, once you get to know each other you may also want to talk about personal issues — how are the kids, spouse, job, etc. That is great, especially if getting to know people is your main objective in starting a book group. Just be sure to set some guidelines for socializing (i.e. save the last 15 minutes to chat).

### Step 2: Search for members

This is arguably one of the most important steps. Keep in mind that most good book clubs consist of a diverse group of people. Some ideas for obtaining members include: friends; coworkers; parents at your child's daycare, sporting practices, or after school activity; and people that belong to organizations you belong to (i.e. church, bowling league, etc.).



You may want to consider putting an ad in the paper or posting notices at your favorite grocery store or coffee shop or - like one innovative Canton resident - send a letter of invitation to your neighbors.

▶ **Canton Public Library can help!** You may decide to join an established book group. Canton Public Library (CPL) offers several book discussion opportunities including *Lunch and a Book*, a Contemporary Book Discussion Group, and an *Email Book Club*. For more information, visit us at [www.cantonpl.org/services/bookprog](http://www.cantonpl.org/services/bookprog) or call the Adult Reference desk at (734) 397-0999. CPL may also be able to help you find a local book group (not library affiliated) that is looking for new members. For more information, please call Adult Services Librarian Kim Brandow at (734) 397-0999, ext. 143.



### Step 3: Choose the place and time

At your first meeting, establish where, when and how often your book club will meet. Many book clubs take turns meeting at each other's homes. There are, however,

many other suitable venues including restaurants, libraries, and coffee houses. Some groups select different venues based on the book (i.e. selecting a Japanese restaurant to discuss *Memoirs of a Geisha*). Meeting frequency, duration and time should also be discussed and established at your first meeting. Most groups meet once a month.

### Step 4: Cost and organization

Costs may include: babysitters, food, cost of books, cost of travel, etc. Are these costs to be shared collectively or left to individual members? If you are looking to keep costs low or eliminate them altogether, keep in mind that you do not need to serve food and may be able to obtain many of your book group selections from the Canton Public Library.

▶ **Canton Public Library can help!** You can check out Canton Public Library's popular Book-Club-in-a-Bag kits which contain eight books of the same title and include discussion questions, reviews, and author biographies. For more information, please visit us at [www.cantonpl.org/services/bookprog/bksbag1.html](http://www.cantonpl.org/services/bookprog/bksbag1.html) or call the Adult Reference desk at (734) 397-0999.

*"We use the CPL Book-Club-in-a-Bag kits consistently. They work extremely well for us. It has been great!"*  
-Kelly, Canton, MI

Other things to consider...Who will lead the discussion and what is the role of the leader (many book clubs take turns "leading a discussion")? Who will develop/obtain the discussion questions? What are the ground rules? What if someone quits? Who will keep records of book lists, member information, etc?

Rachel Jacobsohn, author of *The Reading Group Handbook*, offers these discussion tips for both leaders and members:

- Look at the person talking.
- Do not interrupt.
- Stay relevant.
- Give non-verbal cues to speaker (nod, smile).
- Ask questions.
- Stay focused.

### ▶ Canton Public Library can help!

Our librarians are happy to show you how to lead a book discussion by participating in one of your book club meetings. For availability, please call Adult Services Librarian, Kim Brandow at (734) 397-0999, ext. 143.

## CPL's Top 10 Circulating Book-Club-in-a-Bag Kits

1. *My Sister's Keeper*  
by Jodi Picoult
2. *Kite Runner*  
by Khaled Hosseini
3. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*  
by Mark Haddon
4. *Secret Life of Bees*  
by Sue Monk Kidd
5. *Life of Pi*  
by Yann Martel
6. *Eat Cake*  
by Jeanne Ray
7. *Nickel and Dimed*  
by Barbara Ehrenreich
8. *Five People You Meet in Heaven*  
by Mitch Albom
9. *The Bean Trees*  
by Barbara Kingsolver
10. *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*  
by Sijie Dai