

Book Club Kit Titles

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Adult Fiction

Title/Author	Edition date
<i>The Age of Hope</i> / David Bergen	2012
Born in 1930 in a small town outside Winnipeg, beautiful Hope Koop appears destined to have a conventional life. But as the decades unfold, what seems to be a safe, predictable existence overwhelms her. Where is there room for her? And just who is she anyway?	
<i>The Alchemist</i> / Paulo Coelho	1998
Santiago is an Andalusian shepherd boy who one night dreams of a treasure in an Egyptian pyramid. As he journeys in search of it, he meets many spiritual teachers in unassuming forms. This simple, charming fable can be interpreted in many ways.	
<i>All the Light We Cannot See</i> / Anthony Doerr	2014
From the highly acclaimed, multiple award-winning Anthony Doerr, a stunningly ambitious and beautiful novel about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.	
<i>All My Puny Sorrows</i> / Miriam Toews	2014
Elfrieda wants to die. Yolandi desperately wants to keep her older sister alive. As the situation becomes ever more complicated following Elf's most recent suicide attempt, Yoli faces the most terrifying decision of her life.	
<i>American Gods</i> / Neil Gaiman	2011
With his life in pieces, Shadow accepts a job from an enigmatic stranger who seems to know more about him than he does himself. Ultimately, Shadow will discover that beneath the placid surface of everyday life a storm is brewing—an epic war for the very soul of America—and that he is standing squarely in its path.	
<i>American War</i> / Omar El Akkad	2017
Sarat is only six when the Second American Civil War breaks out in 2074. Her father is killed, her family forced into a camp for displaced persons, and as she grows up, the decisions she makes will have tremendous consequences not just for Sarat but for her family and her country.	
<i>Americanah</i> / Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	2013
Ifemelu and Obinze are young and in love when they depart military-ruled Nigeria for the West. Beautiful, self-assured Ifemelu heads for the U.S. where she is forced to grapple what it means to be black for the first time. Quiet, thoughtful Obinze hoped to join her, but post 9/11 America is closed to him. Instead, he plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London.	

- And the Birds Rained Down* / Jocelyne Saucier 2012
Tom and Charlie are living on their own in the woods, away from civilization. But when two women arrive one summer, all four are faced with challenging questions about growing up, growing old and finding purpose in life.
- Annabel* / Kathleen Winter 2010
In 1968 remote Labrador, a baby is born who is neither fully boy nor girl, but both. His parents raise him as a boy named Wayne, but his shadow-self—a girl he thinks of as Annabel—never entirely disappears. A compelling debut novel about one person's struggle to discover their true identity in a culture that shuns ambiguity.
- The Art of Racing in the Rain* / Garth Stein 2008
Enzo knows he is different from other dogs: a philosopher with a nearly human soul (and an obsession with opposable thumbs), he has educated himself by watching television extensively. On the eve of his death, Enzo takes stock of his life in this captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life as only a dog could tell it.
- Bel Canto* / Ann Patchett 2005
When terrorists seize hostages at an embassy party, an unlikely assortment of people is thrown together, including an American opera star and the Japanese CEO who is her biggest fan. As terrorists and hostages forge unexpected bonds, they forget the real danger that has been set in motion—and cannot be stopped.
- Beloved* / Toni Morrison 2004
Proud and beautiful, Sethe escaped from slavery but is haunted by its heritage—and by the ghost of her two-year-old daughter. Set in rural Ohio several years after the Civil War, this profoundly affecting chronicle of slavery and its aftermath is considered Toni Morrison's greatest work.
- Birdie* / Tracey Lindberg 2015
A big, beautiful Cree woman with a dark secret in her past, Bernice (Birdie) has left her home in northern Alberta to travel to Gibsons, B.C., looking for family, for home, for understanding. Part dream quest and part travelogue, *Birdie* is a darkly comic and moving novel about the universal experience of recovering from tragedy, informed by Cree traditions.
- The Birth House* / Ami McKay 2007
The first daughter in five generations of her Nova Scotia family, Dora Rare becomes an apprentice to a gifted midwife and storyteller before their home is threatened by the arrival of a brash medical doctor who promises sterile and painless births.
- The Book of Negroes* / Lawrence Hill 2007
Stunning, wrenching and inspiring, the novel spans the life of Aminata Diallo, born in West Africa in 1745. During her long life of struggle, she does what she can to free herself and others from slavery, including learning to read and teaching others to, and befriending anyone who can help her, black or white.
- The Book of Unknown Americans* / Cristina Henríquez 2014
Arturo and Alma Rivera have lived their whole lives in Mexico. One day, their beautiful fifteen-year-old daughter, Maribel, sustains a terrible injury, one that casts doubt on whether she'll ever be the same. And so, leaving all they have behind, the Riveras come to America with a single dream: that in this country of great opportunity and resources, Maribel can get better.
- The Break* / Katherena Vermette 2016
When Stella, a young Métis mother, looks out her window one evening and spots someone in trouble, she calls the police to alert them to a possible crime. In a series of shifting narratives, people connected with the victim—police, family, friends—tell their stories leading up to that fateful night and build a larger story about Winnipeg's North End.
- A Brief History of Seven Killings* / Marlon James 2014
In December 1976, just before the Jamaican general election, gunmen stormed Bob Marley's house, machine guns blazing. The attack nearly killed the reggae superstar and injured several others. *A Brief History* is a fictional exploration of that dangerous time and its bloody aftermath, from the slums of Kingston in the 70s to the radically altered Jamaica of the 90s.

- The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* / Junot Díaz 2007
Leaping back and forth between the Dominican Republic and New Jersey, pouring across pages in a combustible mix of slang and lyricism, *Oscar Wao* bridges several generations and distinct cultures with exhilarating doses of Caribbean history and old-fashioned pulse-pounding drama.
- Christie Pits* / Jamie Michaels [GRAPHIC NOVEL] 2019
On a summer night in 1933, a homemade swastika flag flown at a public baseball game was the spark that set off the worst race riot in Canadian history. A story of resistance against hatred informed by archival research and first-hand interviews.
- Clara Callan* / Richard B. Wright 2001
A novel which follows the adventures of two Canadian sisters who struggle against social convention during World War II—one in a small town in Ontario, the other in New York City.
- Cloud Atlas* / David Mitchell 2004
In this audacious and dazzling novel, Mitchell weaves history, science, humour, and suspense through six separate but related narratives, each set in a different time and place and written in a different prose style.
- Come, Thou Tortoise* / Jessica Grant 2009
A delightfully offbeat story featuring an opinionated tortoise and an IQ-challenged narrator who find themselves in the middle of a life-changing mystery.
- A Complicated Kindness* / Miriam Toews 2004
Doomed to work at the Happy Family Farm, a chicken slaughterhouse in a Mennonite community, sixteen-year-old Nomi Nickel nevertheless manages to bear witness to the dissolution of her family with a dark, sly wit.
- Cool Water* / Diane Warren 2011
A day in the life of Juliet, Saskatchewan: a hot, dusty little town on the edge of the Little Snake sand hills, where it's easy to imagine that nothing ever happens. But the heart of the town beats in the rich and overlapping stories of its people.
- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* / Mark Haddon 2004
Despite his overwhelming fear of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically-gifted, autistic fifteen-year-old boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secret information about his mother.
- Cutting for Stone* / Abraham Verghese 2009
Twin brothers are born of a secret union between an Indian nun and a British surgeon at a mission hospital in Addis Ababa. Orphaned by their mother's death in childbirth and their father's disappearance, bound together by a preternatural connection and a shared fascination with medicine, the twins come of age as Ethiopia hovers on the brink of revolution.
- Dare Me* / Megan Abbott 2012
Addy has always been Beth's best friend, until the arrival of a new cheerleading coach who draws Addy and the other cheerleaders into her golden circle. Only Beth remains outside. When a tragic death leads to a police investigation, Addy tries to uncover the truth and learns that the boundary between loyalty and love can be dangerous terrain.
- The Dry* / Jane Harper 2018
Twenty years ago, Aaron was accused of murder and fled his hometown, saved from prosecution only because of his best friend Luke's steadfast alibi. But now more than one person knows that wasn't the truth, and Luke is dead. Amid the worst drought in a century, long-buried mysteries resurface, and Aaron will find that small towns have always hidden big secrets.
- The Elegance of the Hedgehog* / Muriel Barbery 2008
In an elegant Parisian apartment building, concierge Renée scrutinizes the lives of its inhabitants, who are barely aware of her existence. Then there's Paloma, a genius who plans to end her life on her thirteenth birthday. Only when a new tenant arrives do they discover their kindred souls.

- Everything I Never Told You* / Celeste Ng 2014
Lydia is the favourite child of Marilyn and James Lee, and her parents are determined that she will fulfill the dreams they were unable to pursue. But when Lydia's body is found in the local lake, the delicate balancing act that has been keeping the Lee family together is destroyed, tumbling them into chaos.
- The Evolution of Alice* / David Alexander Robertson 2014
Alice is a single mother raising her three young daughters on the rez where she grew up. When an unthinkable loss occurs, Alice is forced to confront truths that will challenge her belief in herself and the world she thought she knew.
- Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* / Jonathan Safran 2006
Oskar Schell, the nine-year-old son of a man killed in the World Trade Center attacks, searches the five boroughs of New York City for a lock that fits a black key his father left behind.
- Family Matters* / Rohinton Mistry 2002
In mid-1990s Bombay, Nariman Vakeel lives in a crumbling apartment with his two middle-aged stepchildren—mild-mannered Jal and his domineering sister, Coomy, who plots to turn over the care of her stepfather to her younger sister, Roxana.
- Fifteen Dogs* / André Alexis 2015
On a bet, Hermes and Apollo grant the gifts of human reasoning and language to a group of dogs in a vet clinic in Toronto. With their newfound abilities, the dogs escape and create their own society. But the impact of complex thought and individuality splits the social order of the pack in this compelling look at the beauty and perils of consciousness.
- The Finkler Question* / Howard Jacobson 2010
When Julian Treslove is mugged, he's convinced the crime was a misdirected act of anti-Semitism, and in its aftermath his whole sense of self changes. A funny, unflinching novel with "poignant insights into the indignities of aging, the competitiveness of male friendship, and the yearning to belong" (*Booklist*).
- The Five People You Meet in Heaven* / Mitch Albom 2003
This contemporary fable is a reminder of the interconnectedness of us all and a meditation on what it means to live a meaningful life. Eddie is a bitter old man who has lived, in his mind, an uninspired life. After death, he learns differently.
- The Forgotten Garden* / Kate Morton 2010
In 1913, a tiny girl abandoned on a ship headed for Australia is taken in by the dockmaster and his wife and raised as their own. After she learns the truth, "Nell" sets out to trace her real identity. But it is not until her granddaughter takes up the search after Nell's death that all the pieces of the puzzle are assembled.
- Frying Plantain* / Zolika Reid-Benta 2019
Kara Davis is a girl caught in the middle of her Canadian nationality and her desire to be a "true" Jamaican. A rich and unforgettable portrait of the tensions between mothers and daughters, second-generation Canadians and first-generation cultural expectations, and Black identity and predominately white society.
- Galore* / Michael Crummey 2010
A novel about the power of stories to shape and sustain us, spanning two centuries of life in the outport of Paradise Deep where the line between the everyday and the otherworldly is impossible to discern. Sprawling and intimate, stark and fantastical, this book gives us Newfoundland in all its idiosyncrasies.
- The Garneau Block* / Todd Babiak 2006
Meet the warm, endearing, and delightfully flawed residents of a fictional cul-de-sac in Edmonton's Garneau neighbourhood just after the scandalous death of a neighbour and the sudden news that their land is about to be repossessed by the university.
- Go Set a Watchman* / Harper Lee 2015
Set two decades after *To Kill a Mockingbird*, 26-year-old Scout returns home from New York to visit her aging father. As civil rights tensions and political turmoil transform the South, her homecoming turns bittersweet when she learns disturbing truths about those closest to her and begins to question her own values and assumptions.

- The Goldfinch* / Donna Tartt 2013
 Theo, a 13-year-old New Yorker, miraculously survives an accident that kills his mother. Abandoned by his father, Theo is taken in by the family of a wealthy friend. Bewildered by his strange new home, tormented by grief, he clings to the one thing that reminds him of her: a small, mysteriously captivating painting that ultimately draws Theo into the underworld of art.
- The Golden Mean* / Annabel Lyon 2009
 A bold reimagining of one of history's most intriguing relationships, the novel brings ancient Greece to vivid life via the story of the remarkable friendship between the philosopher Aristotle and his pupil, the young Alexander the Great.
- The Green Road* / Anne Enright 2016
 When Rosaleen announces she's decided to sell the family house and divide the proceeds, her adult children return to Ireland for a last Christmas, feeling that their childhoods are being erased and their personal history bought and sold. A profoundly moving work about a family's desperate attempt to recover the relationships they've lost and forge the ones they never had.
- The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* 2009
 Mary Ann Shaffer & Annie Barrows
 January 1946: writer Juliet Ashton receives a letter from a stranger, a founding member of the Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society. And so begins a remarkable tale of the island of Guernsey during the German occupation, and of a society as extraordinary as its name.
- Half-Blood Blues* / Esi Edugyan 2011
 Berlin, 1939: A young, brilliant trumpet-player is arrested in a Paris cafe. The star musician was never heard from again. He was twenty years old. He was a German citizen. And he was black. Fifty years later, Sidney Griffiths, the only witness that day, still refuses to speak of what he saw.
- Half of a Yellow Sun* / Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie 2007
 Adichie re-creates the 1960s struggle of Biafra to establish an independent republic in Nigeria, following the intertwined lives of the characters through a military coup, the Biafran secession, and the resulting civil war.
- The Handmaid's Tale* / Margaret Atwood 2011
 A stunning Orwellian vision of the near future, at once a mordant satire and a dire warning. This is the story of Offred, one of the unfortunate "Handmaids" under the new social order who have only one purpose: to breed.
- Harvest* / Jim Crace 2013
 One morning, the inhabitants of a remote English village awaken to find the sky marred by two columns of smoke. One is the result of an overnight fire that damages the master's outbuildings; the second is sent up by newcomers to announce their presence. In the minds of the villagers, a coincidence is unlikely, and a violent confrontation looms.
- The Help* / Kathryn Stockett 2011
 Mississippi, 1962: Aibileen is a black maid who's always taken orders quietly, but lately can't restrain her bitterness. Her friend Minny has never held her tongue. White college graduate Skeeter is full of ambition, but without a husband is still considered a failure. These very different women join together to write a book that could forever alter their small town and their own lives.
- Home* / Marilynne Robinson 2008
 Reverend Boughton's hell-raising son, Jack, has come home after twenty years away. Now an alcoholic carrying two decades worth of secrets, he remains the most beloved child. As Jack tries to make peace with his father, he begins to forge a new bond with his sister Glory, who has also returned home with a broken heart.
- The Illegal* / Lawrence Hill 2016
 All Keita has ever wanted to do is to run. But his very existence in Freedom State is illegal. As he trains in secret, eluding capture, the stakes keep getting higher. Soon, he is running not only for his life, but for his sister's life, too.

- The Immortalists* / Chloe Benjamin 2018
1969 in New York City's Lower East Side: a traveling psychic claims to be able to tell anyone the day they will die. The Gold children, four adolescents on the cusp of self-awareness, sneak out to hear their fortunes. What they learn informs the next five decades as each one attempts to fulfill or avert their destiny.
- The Imperfectionists* / Tom Rachman 2011
Follow the messy private lives of the reporters, editors, and executives of an international newspaper based in Rome, from the obituary reporter who will do anything to avoid work to the publisher, who seems more interested in his basset hound. As the era of print news gives way to the Internet, this imperfect crew stumbles toward an uncertain future.
- In Search of April Raintree* / Beatrice Culleton Mosionier 1999
A Canadian classic, this powerful and moving novel tells the story of two Métis sisters who suffer the breakdown of their family and the injustices of the social services system.
- In The Lake of the Woods* / Tim O'Brien 1995
John and Kathy Wade, whose marriage has been built on mutual deception, visit a Minnesota lake to try to sort things out, a difficult process made more so by Kathy's sudden disappearance.
- In the Midst of Winter* / Isabel Allende 2018
A minor traffic accident becomes the catalyst for an unexpected and moving love story between two people who thought they were deep into the winter of their lives, in this sweeping novel that journeys from present-day Brooklyn to Guatemala in the recent past to 1970s Chile and Brazil.
- In the Skin of a Lion* / Michael Ondaatje 1996
In 1923, Patrick Lewis arrives in Toronto and becomes one of the many individuals searching for Ambrose Small, a millionaire who has disappeared.
- Indian Horse* / Richard Wagamese 2012
Saul Indian Horse is dying. Tucked away in a hospice high above the clash and clang of a big city, he embarks on a marvellous journey of imagination back through the life he led, with all its sorrows and joys.
- Invisible Man* / Ralph Ellison 1982
The nameless narrator of the novel describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood", and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be.
- The Jade Peony* / Wayson Choy 1995
Members of a tight-knit Canadian Chinese family recall their childhood days in Vancouver during the 1930s and 40s. A candid, yet affectionate portrait of family life in the Chinese community through racism and loyalty, humour and heartbreak.
- The Jane Austen Book Club* / Karen Joy Fowler 2004
As six Californians get together to form a book club to discuss the novels of Jane Austen, their lives are turned upside down by troubled marriages, illicit affairs, changing relationships, and love.
- Kindred* / Octavia Butler 2003
Dana, a modern black woman, is celebrating her twenty-sixth birthday when she is snatched abruptly from her home and transported to the antebellum South. As she is repeatedly drawn back through time, each time the stay grows longer and more dangerous until it's uncertain whether or not Dana's life will end, long before it has a chance to begin.
- The Kite Runner* / Khaled Hosseini 2004
Hosseini traces the unlikely friendship of a wealthy Afghan youth and a servant's son, in a tale that spans the final days of Afghanistan's monarchy through the atrocities of the present day.

- Larry's Party* / Carol Shields 1997
 Larry Weller, born in 1950, is an ordinary guy made extraordinary by Shields' perception, irony and tenderness. Larry adapts to society's changing expectations of men as he moves through the spontaneity of the 70s, the blind enchantment of the 80s and the lean, mean 90s, completing at last his quiet, stubborn search for self.
- The Last Neanderthal* / Claire Cameron 2018
 Two women separated by millennia are linked across the ages by the shared experience of early motherhood. In the modern day, archaeologist Rosamund Gale races to excavate newly found Neanderthal artifacts before her baby comes; 40,000 years in the past, Girl is left alone to care for Runt, a foundling of unknown origin.
- Late Nights on Air* / Elizabeth Hay 2007
 Set in 1970s Yellowknife, the novel follows the loves, rivalries, and entanglements of a quirky group who work at the local radio station. One summer they embark on a canoe trip that takes them into the arctic wilderness. A fresh, erotic, darkly witty and moving tale about the power of a voice and a place to generate love and haunt the memory.
- Life After Life* / Kate Atkinson 2013
 On a cold and snowy night in 1910, Ursula Todd is born to an English banker and his wife. She dies before she can draw her first breath. On that same day, Ursula Todd is born, lets out a lusty wail, and embarks upon a life that will be unusual, to say the least. For as she grows, she also dies, repeatedly, in a variety of ways, while the young century marches on...
- Life of Pi* / Yann Martel 2001
 Possessing encyclopedic intelligence, unusual zookeeper's son Pi Patel sets sail for America. When the ship sinks, he escapes on a life boat and is lost at sea with a dwindling number of animals until only he and a hungry Bengal tiger remain.
- Little Fish* / Casey Plett 2018
 It's the dead of winter in Winnipeg and Wendy, a thirty-year-old trans woman, feels like her life is frozen in place. Alternately warm-hearted and dark-spirited, desperate and mirthful, *Little Fish* explores the winter of discontent in the life of one transgender woman as her past and future become irrevocably entwined.
- Little Pretty Things* / Lori Rader-Day 2015
 Juliet is used to losing. Ten years after high school, she's still stuck in a dead-end job, cleaning rooms at a one-star motel. But when her school rival checks in and is found dead the next morning, Juliet becomes the chief suspect in her murder.
- Luncheon of the Boating Party* / Susan Vreeland 2008
 Vreeland focuses on a single painting—Auguste Renoir's masterpiece, which depicts a gathering of his real friends enjoying a summer Sunday on a café terrace along the Seine. Narrated by the artist and seven of the models, the novel illuminates the gusto, hedonism, and art of the era with a gorgeous palette of vibrant, captivating characters.
- A Man Called Ove* / Fredrik Backman 2014
 A curmudgeon hides a terrible personal loss beneath a cranky and short-tempered exterior while clashing with new neighbors, a boisterous family whose chattiness and habits lead to unexpected friendship.
- The Marrow Thieves* / Cherie Dimaline 2017
 Humanity has nearly destroyed its world through global warming, but now an even greater evil lurks. The indigenous people of North America are being hunted for the key to recovering something the rest of the population has lost: the ability to dream.
- The Memory Keeper's Daughter* / Kim Edwards 2006
 In 1964, when Dr. David Henry delivers his own twins, he realizes that one of them has Down Syndrome and makes a split-second decision that will haunt all their lives forever. He asks his nurse to take the baby away to an institution and to keep her birth a secret. Instead, she disappears into another city to raise the child as her own.
- Midnight's Children* / Salman Rushdie 1981
 An allegory of modern India and a family saga set against the volatile events of the thirty years following the country's independence—the partitioning of India and Pakistan, the rule of Indira Gandhi, and the imposition of martial law.

- Midnight at the Bright Ideas Bookstore* / Matthew Sullivan 2018
Bookstore clerk Lydia Smith lives her life hiding in plain sight. But when a customer kills himself in the bookstore, her life comes unglued. Lydia has been bequeathed his meager worldly possessions, which seem to contain a hidden message for her. What did he know? And what does it have to do with Lydia?
- The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* / Arundhati Roy 2018
An intimate journey across the Indian subcontinent begins with Anjum—who used to be Aftab—unrolling a threadbare Persian carpet in the graveyard she calls home. Braiding together the lives of a diverse cast of characters who've been broken by the world they live in, patched together by acts of love and by hope, this ravishing book reinvents what a novel can do and can be.
- Mister Pip* / Lloyd Jones 2007
After the trouble starts and the soldiers arrive on Matilda's island, only one white person stays behind. Mr. Watts, whom the kids call Pop Eye, wears a red nose and pulls his wife around on a trolley, and he steps in to teach the children when there is no one else. His only lessons consist of reading from his battered copy of *Great Expectations* by his friend Mr. Dickens.
- Mistress of Nothing* / Kate Pullinger 2009
Accompanying her mistress, Lady Duff Gordon, to Egypt, Sally finds a heady freedom never known before. But freedom is a luxury that a maid can ill-afford, and when Sally grasps more than her status entitles her to, she is brutally reminded that she is mistress of nothing.
- Moon of the Crusted Snow* / Waubgeshig Rice 2018
With winter looming, a small northern Anishinaabe community goes dark. Panic builds as the food supply dwindles. Frustrated by the building chaos, a group of young friends and their families turn to the land and traditional ways in hopes of helping their community thrive again. Out of catastrophe comes resilience. And as one society collapses, another is reborn.
- Mrs. Dalloway* / Virginia Woolf 2000
On a June morning in 1923, Clarissa Dalloway is preparing for a party and remembering her past. Elsewhere in London, Septimus Smith is suffering from shell-shock and on the brink of madness. Their days interweave and their lives converge as the party reaches its glittering climax.
- My Name is Lucy Barton* / Elizabeth Strout 2016
Lucy Barton is recovering slowly from what should have been a simple operation. Her mother, to whom she hasn't spoken for many years, comes to see her. Gentle gossip about people from Lucy's childhood seems to reconnect them, but just below the surface lies the tension that has informed every aspect of Lucy's life.
- My Sister's Keeper* / Jodi Picoult 2004
Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for her sister Kate—a role that she challenges when she decides to sue her parents. An examination of what it means to be a good parent, a good sister, a good person. Is it morally correct to do whatever it takes to save a child's life?
- The Nesting Dolls* / Gail Bowen 2011
A young woman hands her baby to a perfect stranger and disappears just hours before being murdered, instigating both a search for her killer and a custody battle over the six-month-old child. A riveting, heart-rending story of the ageless struggle between selfishness and selflessness.
- The Night Circus* / Erin Morgenstern 2011
The Cirque des Rêves arrives without warning, and it is only open at night. Behind the scenes, a fierce competition is underway: a duel between two young magicians who have been trained since childhood expressly for this purpose. But unbeknownst to them both, this is a game in which only one can be left standing.
- The Nightingale* / Kristin Hannah 2015
The story of two sisters, separated by years and experience, by ideals, passion and circumstance, each embarking on her own dangerous path toward survival, love, and freedom in German-occupied, war-torn France.

- North End Love Songs* / Katherena Vermette 2012
The North End is a neighbourhood of colourful birds, stately elms, and always wily rivers, where a brother's disappearance is trivialized by local media and police because he is young and aboriginal. It is also where young girls share secrets, movies, cigarettes, Big Gulps and stories of love, and a young mother watches her small daughters as they play in the park.
- The Opening Sky* / Joan Thomas 2014
Liz, Aiden and Sylvie are an urban, urbane, progressive family. But when the past and present collide in a crisis it shatters the complacency of all three as they are forced to confront a tragedy from years before when four children went missing. A novel about the desire to do the right thing, to be loved, and to be seen for who we truly are.
- The Origin of Species* / Nino Ricci 2008
Thirty-something Alex Fratarcangeli is plagued by the sense of being a fraud in all aspects of his life, from his professional ambitions to his romantic involvements, and still haunted by an extraordinary experience in the Galapagos Islands, the consequences of which threaten to upend his ordinary life.
- The Outlander* / Gil Adamson 2007
Set in 1903, this is the tale of 19-year-old Mary Boulton, widowed by her own hand, and her frantic odyssey across western Canada. The details of her past—an unhappy marriage, a dead child, crippling depression—slowly emerge as she reluctantly ventures into the mountains, fleeing from her two brothers-in-law.
- Palace Walk* / Naguib Mahfouz 1991
An epic family saga of colonial Egypt traces three generations in the family of al-Sayyid Ahmad Abd al-Jawad, who rules his household with a strict hand while living a secret life of self-indulgence. The family's trials mirror those of their turbulent country during the years spanning the two world wars, as change comes to a society that has resisted it for centuries.
- The Paying Guests* / Sarah Waters 2014
Frances is an intelligent, reliable, resourceful young woman, a companion to her widowed mother, keeper of the large house in which the two of them rattle about, now that the men of the family have died. But then Frances falls in love, and the carefully wrought edifice of her life collapses in a heap of passion and catastrophe.
- A Prayer for Owen Meany* / John Irving 1989
In the summer of 1953, two eleven-year-old boys—best friends—are playing in a Little League baseball game. One of the boys hits a foul ball that kills the other boy's mother. The boy who hits the ball doesn't believe in accidents; Owen Meany believes he is God's instrument. What happens to Owen, after that 1953 foul ball, is extraordinary and terrifying.
- The Progress of Love* / Alice Munro 2006
In this collection of eleven stories, Alice Munro proves once again a sensitive and compassionate chronicler of our times. Drawing us into the most intimate corners of ordinary lives, she reveals much about ourselves, our choices, and our experiences of love.
- The Purchase* / Linda Spalding 2012
1798: in a tiny community in southern Virginia, Daniel holds fast to his Quaker beliefs in a changing world. A firm abolitionist, Daniel attends an auction and becomes the unexpected owner of a young slave boy named Onesimus. And so begins a series of events that will lead to tragedy and murder.
- Reading by Lightning* / Joan Thomas 2008
Set in England and in a God-fearing Canadian prairie town during the years leading up to World War II, Joan Thomas's first novel observes the emergence of a personality in the face of intruding ideologies.
- Recipe for a Perfect Wife* / Karma Brown 2020
In this captivating dual narrative, modern-day Alice Hale finds inspiration in hidden notes left by her home's previous owner, a quintessential 1950s housewife. The parallels between this woman's life and her own cause Alice to question the foundation of her own marriage—and what it means to be a woman fighting for her place in a patriarchal society.

- Room* / Emma Donoghue 2010
To five-year-old Jack, Room is the entire world—it is where he was born and grew up. At night, his Ma shuts him safely in the wardrobe, where he is meant to be asleep when Old Nick visits. When Ma devises a bold plan to escape from the place where she too has been kept captive, she does not realize how unprepared she is for the plan to work.
- The Rosie Project* / Graeme Simsion 2013
Don Tillman, a socially challenged genetics professor who has never been on a second date, embarks on the quest for the perfect wife. Enter Rosie, a girl who embodies everything he thinks he doesn't want, on the search for her biological father.
- The Round House* / Louise Erdrich 2012
In the spring of 1988, Geraldine Coutts is attacked on a reservation in North Dakota. She refuses to leave her bed and slips into an abyss of solitude. Her 13-year-old son Joe becomes frustrated with the investigation and sets out to get answers of his own. His quest takes him to the Round House, but that is only the beginning.
- Ru* / Kim Thuy 2009
In Vietnamese it means lullaby; in French it is a small stream, but also signifies a flow—of tears, blood, money. In vignettes of exquisite clarity, sharp observation and sly wit, we are carried along on an unforgettable journey from a palatial residence in Saigon to a crowded and muddy Malaysian refugee camp, and onward to a new life in Quebec.
- Run* / Ann Patchett 2007
Since their mother's death, Tip and Teddy Doyle have been raised by their possessive father. When an argument inadvertently causes an accident that involves a stranger and her child, all Bernard Doyle cares about is his ability to keep his children safe.
- Sanctuary Line* / Jane Urquhart 2011
Set on a lakeshore farm, the novel weaves together the past and present of one family: ancestral lighthouse-keepers; seasonal Mexican workers; the migratory patterns of the Monarch butterfly; the tragedy of a young woman's death during a tour of duty in Afghanistan; and three different but equally powerful love stories.
- The Secret Place* / Tana French 2014
The photo on the card shows a boy who was found murdered a year ago on the grounds of a girls' boarding school in the leafy suburbs of Dublin. The caption says, I KNOW WHO KILLED HIM. As two detectives begin to untangle the underworld of teenage girls they realize it's far more mysterious and dangerous than they could have imagined.
- Sing, Unburied, Sing* / Jesmyn Ward 2017
Jojo and his toddler sister live with their grandparents and the occasional presence of their drug-addicted mother Leonie on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi. When their father is released from prison, Leonie packs them into her car and sets out for the state penitentiary on a journey rife with danger and promise. An intimate portrait of a family and an epic tale of hope and struggle.
- Southernmost* / Silas House 2018
Tennessee evangelical preacher Asher Sharp offers shelter to two gay men and in doing so, risks losing everything: his wife, his congregation, and his young son, Justin. Asher flees to Key West in search of his brother, Luke, whom he'd rejected years ago after Luke came out, to discover a new way of thinking about the world, and a new way of understanding love.
- State of Wonder* / Ann Patchett 2011
Dr. Marina Singh, a research scientist with a Minnesota pharmaceutical company, is sent to Brazil to track down her former mentor, who seems to have disappeared in the Amazon while working on what is destined to be an extremely valuable new drug, the development of which has already cost the company a fortune.
- Station Eleven* / Emily St. John Mandel 2014
An audacious, darkly glittering novel set in the eerie days of civilization's collapse, *Station Eleven* tells the spellbinding story of a Hollywood star, his would-be savior, and a nomadic group of actors roaming the scattered outposts of the Great Lakes region, risking everything for art and humanity.

- Still Alice* / Lisa Genova 2009
Happily married with three grown children, Alice Howland is a professor at the height of her career when she notices forgetfulness creeping in. As confusion starts to cloud her thinking and her memory begins to fail her, she struggles to maintain her independence even as her sense of self is being stripped away by early onset Alzheimer's disease.
- Still Life* / Louise Penny 2005
None of the locals can understand why anyone would want to kill well-loved artist Jane Neal. Surely it was an accident—a hunter's arrow gone astray. But Chief Inspector Gamache knows something dark is lurking behind the white picket fences of Three Pines, and if he watches closely enough, the town will begin to give up its secrets...
- The Stone Angel* / Margaret Laurence 1998
Hagar Shipley, age ninety, tells the story of her life, and in doing so tries to come to terms with how the very qualities which sustained her have deprived her of joy. Mingling past and present, she maintains her pride in the face of senility, while recalling the life she led as a rebellious young bride, and later as a grieving mother.
- The Stone Carvers* / Jane Urquhart 2001
This intricate, passionately crafted novel chronicles the involvement of Klara Becker, a stonecarver from Canada, as she participates in creating a Parisian monument to the eleven thousand Canadians who died in World War I.
- Stranger* / David Bergen 2016
Determined to reclaim her stolen daughter, Iso makes her way north from Guatemala. Travelling without documentation and with little money, Iso descends into a world full of danger. In a place of shifting boundaries, she must determine who she can trust and how much, aware that she might lose her daughter forever.
- Territory of Light* / Yuko Tsushima 2019
A young woman, left by her husband, starts a new life in a Tokyo apartment and struggles to bring up her two-year-old daughter alone. As the months come and go and the seasons turn, she must confront what she has lost and what she will become. A haunting, dazzling novel of loss and rebirth.
- There There* / Tommy Orange 2018
This multi-faceted novel follows several people, each of whom has private reasons for travelling to the Big Oakland Powwow. A generational story about violence and recovery, memory and identity, and the beauty and despair woven into the history of Indigenous people.
- Things Fall Apart* / Chinua Achebe 2009
This classic novel centres on Okonkwo, the “strong man” of an Ibo village in Nigeria, tracing his fall from grace within his tribe and the transformation of his world with the arrival of aggressive European missionaries.
- A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* / Betty Smith 2005
An American classic about a young girl's coming of age at the turn of the 20th century. Bright, imaginative, and resilient Francie Nolan survives—and thrives—despite her bittersweet formative years in the slums of Brooklyn.
- The Underground Railroad* / Colson Whitehead 2018
A tour de force chronicling a young slave's adventures as she makes a desperate bid for freedom in the antebellum South. From the brutal importation of Africans to the unfulfilled promises of the present day, this is a story of one woman's ferocious will to escape the horrors of bondage and a shattering, powerful meditation on the history we all share.
- Unless* / Carol Shields 2002
A mother's grief over a daughter's break with the family revises her feminist outlook and pushes her craft as a writer in a new direction. A candid and deeply moving novel from one of the twentieth century's most accomplished and beloved authors.

- The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* / Rachel Joyce 2012
Recently retired Harold Fry is jolted by a letter from Queenie Hennessy, an old friend, who he hasn't heard from in twenty years. She is in hospice and writing to say goodbye. Harold intends a quick walk to the corner to mail his reply but instead, inspired by a chance encounter, becomes convinced he must deliver his message in person to Queenie—who is 600 miles away.
- The Unquiet Dead* / Ausma Zehanat Khan 2015
Christopher Drayton's apparently accidental death doesn't seem to warrant a police investigation, particularly not from the team responsible for handling "minority-sensitive" cases in Toronto. But Drayton may have been a war criminal with ties to the Srebrenica massacre of 1995, and the investigation has far-reaching ripples throughout the community.
- Warlight* / Michael Ondaatje 2018
In post-World War II London, teenaged Nathaniel and his older sister, Rachel are seemingly abandoned by their parents and left to the care of an enigmatic figure they call The Moth. Years later, Nathaniel begins to uncover all he didn't know or understand during that time; his journey through reality, recollection, and imagination is told in this magnificent novel.
- Washington Black* / Esi Edugyan 2018
From the blistering cane fields of Barbados to the icy plains of the Canadian Arctic, from the mud-drowned streets of London to the eerie deserts of Morocco, a boy rises from slavery in the 1830s to become a free man of the world. This inventive, electrifying novel asks, what is freedom? And can a life salvaged from the ashes ever be made whole?
- Water for Elephants* / Sara Gruen 2006
Recently orphaned and suddenly adrift, Jacob joins a second-rate circus struggling to survive during the Great Depression. There he meets Marlena, the beautiful equestrian star married to a twisted animal trainer—and Rosie, an untrainable elephant. The bond of love and trust that grows among this unlikely trio is their only hope for survival.
- When Alice Lay Down With Peter* / Margaret Sweatman 2001
A sweeping, magical novel that follows four generations of the McCormack family through more than a century of Canadian history as it unfolds on the flood plains of southern Manitoba.
- Where'd You Go, Bernadette?* / Maria Semple 2012
Bernadette is on the brink of a meltdown. As disaster follows disaster, she disappears, leaving her family to pick up the pieces. Her 15-year-old daughter Bee attempts to reveal the past by weaving together emails, invoices and school memos that Bernadette has been secretly hiding for decades.
- Wolf Hall* / Hilary Mantel 2009
Henry VIII wants to annul his marriage of twenty years and marry Anne Boleyn; the pope and most of Europe opposes him. Into this impasse steps Thomas Cromwell. England in the 1520s is a heartbeat from disaster: an era when the personal and political are separated by a hairbreadth, where success brings unlimited power but a single failure means death.

Non-Fiction Book Club Kits

- Braiding Sweetgrass* / Robin Wall Kimmerer 2013
As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer is trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science; as a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. Her book brings these two lenses of knowledge together to argue that we must acknowledge our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world.
- Broken Circle* / Theodore Fontaine 2010
Theodore Fontaine lost his family and freedom just after his seventh birthday when he was forced to enter an Indian residential school; twelve years later, he left on a path of self-destruction. His powerful and poignant memoir conveys a unique understanding of why succeeding generations of Indigenous children still suffer from this dark chapter in history.
- Brother, I'm Dying* / Edwidge Danticat 2008
In a single day in 2004, Danticat learns that she's pregnant and that her father, André, is dying—a constellation of events that frames this Haitian immigrant family's story, rife with premature departures and painful silences.
- Curtains: Adventures of an Undertaker-in-Training* / Tom Jokinen 2011
At forty-four Tom Jokinen began to seriously question the secular funeral rites that are taking over the industry: is this really the way we want to say our final goodbyes? This book is about what he found, from the mundane to the macabre, after he quit his job in order to become an apprentice undertaker.
- Dead Wake: the Last Crossing of the Lusitania* / Erik Larson 2016
In May 1915, as WWI entered its tenth month, a luxury ocean liner sailed from New York bound for Liverpool. Its passengers were at ease, even though the seas around Britain were a war zone, because of the gentlemanly strictures of warfare that for a century had kept civilian ships safe from attack. Germany, however, was determined to change the rules of the game.
- Drunk Mom* / Jowita Byblowska 2013
Her trips to the liquor store are in and out missions. Perhaps she's being paranoid, but she thinks people tend to notice the stroller. She knows she's become a villain: a mother who drinks; a mother who endangers her baby. She drinks to forget this. And then the trouble really starts.
- Educated* / Tara Westover 2018
Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents; only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home.
- Eat Pray Love* / Elizabeth Gilbert 2010
Plagued with despair after a nasty divorce, the author divides a year equally among three dissimilar countries, exploring her competing urges for earthly delights and divine transcendence. A sprawling travelogue of soul-searching and self-discovery.
- The Glass Castle: A Memoir* / Jeannette Walls 2005
Child of an alcoholic father and an eccentric artist mother, Walls tells the story of her nomadic upbringing, during which she and her siblings fended for themselves while their parents outmanoeuvred bill collectors and the authorities.
- Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* / Alison Bechdel [GRAPHIC NOVEL] 2006
A fresh and brilliantly told memoir from a cult favorite comic artist, marked by gothic twists, a family funeral home, sexual angst, and great books.
- The Golden Spruce* / John Vaillant 2005
The story of a glorious natural wonder, a tree with luminous glowing needles; the man who destroyed it; and the fascinating, troubling context in which his act took place—a tale of obsession so fierce that it kills the thing it loves most.

- H is for Hawk* / Helen Macdonald 2015
When Helen Macdonald's father died suddenly, she was devastated. An experienced falconer, Helen had been captivated by hawks since childhood, and she saw that the goshawk's fierce and feral temperament mirrored her own. Heart wrenching and humorous, this is an unflinching account of bereavement and a unique look at the magnetism of an extraordinary creature.
- A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* / Dave Eggers 2001
Dave Eggers was twenty-one when his parents died of cancer within weeks of each other and he became the acting parent of his eight-year-old brother. A wildly inventive as well as deeply heartfelt story of the love that holds a family together.
- A House in the Sky* / Amanda Lindhout & Sara Corbett 2014
As a young woman, aspiring to understand the world, Amanda Lindhout carved out a fledgling career as a reporter. In August 2008, she traveled to Somalia and on her fourth day there was abducted. Held hostage for 460 days, Amanda survived on memory—every lush detail of the world she experienced before captivity—and on strategy, fortitude, and hope.
- The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* / Rebecca Skloot 2009
When Henrietta Lacks died in 1951, doctors treating her took tissue samples for research without her family's knowledge. Her cells have aided in medical discoveries from the polio vaccine to AIDS treatments, but the ethical questions surrounding the treatment of this poor, black woman persist.
- The Inconvenient Indian* / Thomas King 2012
This book is at once a history and the complete subversion of a history—a critical and personal meditation about what it means to be “Indian” in North America. King refashions old stories about historical events, takes a sideways look at pop culture, and articulates a deep understanding of the cumulative effects of ever-shifting laws and treaties on Native peoples and lands.
- I've Been Meaning to Tell You* / David Chariandy 2018
The son of Black and South Asian migrants from Trinidad, Chariandy draws upon his personal and ancestral past, including the legacies of slavery, indenture, and immigration, as well as the experiences of growing up as a visible minority in the land of one's birth. An intimate and profoundly beautiful meditation on the politics of race today.
- Lab Girl* / Hope Jahren 2016
An illuminating memoir of a woman in science; a moving portrait of a long-time collaboration; and a stunningly fresh look at plants that will forever change how you see and think about the natural world. *Lab Girl* is a book about work, about love, and about the mountains that can be moved when those two things come together.
- Louis Riel* / Chester Brown [GRAPHIC NOVEL] 2003
A compelling, meticulous, and dispassionate depiction of the charismatic, and perhaps insane, nineteenth-century Métis leader. “A strong contender for the best graphic novel ever” (*Publisher's Weekly*).
- The Lucky Ones* / Anne Mahon 2013
A wide assortment of men and women ranging in age from four to 73, representing a variety of African countries and backgrounds, tell the compelling stories of their journeys to their new home in Manitoba. A collection of personal accounts of heartbreaking loss, extraordinary bravery, and the resilience needed to begin again in a new country.
- Manitowapow: Aboriginal Writings from the Land of Water* 2011
Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair & Warren Cariou
Manitowapow is the traditional name that became Manitoba, a word that describes the sounds of beauty and power that created the province. This anthology of Aboriginal writings from Manitoba takes readers back through the millennia and forward to the present day, painting a dynamic picture of a territory interconnected through words, ideas, and experiences.
- Maus: A Survivor's Tale* / Art Spiegelman [GRAPHIC NOVEL] 1986
The story of a Jewish survivor of Hitler's Europe and his son, a cartoonist who tries to come to terms with his father's story and history itself.

- No Visible Bruises* / Rachel Snyder 2020
An urgent and immersive account of the scale of domestic violence that explodes the common myths: that if things were bad enough, victims would just leave; that a violent person cannot become nonviolent; and, most insidiously, that violence inside the home is a private matter, sealed from the public sphere and disconnected from other forms of violence.
- Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* / Marjane Satrapi [GRAPHIC NOVEL] 2003
Satrapi's wise, funny, and heartbreaking memoir of growing up during the Islamic Revolution tells the story of her life in Tehran from ages six to fourteen. Intensely personal, profoundly political, and wholly original.
- Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books* / Azar Nafisi 2004
After resigning from her position at a Tehran university due to its repressive policies, Nafisi invited seven of her best female students to discuss literature in her home. This blend of memoir and literary criticism is a moving testament to the power of art.
- Seven Fallen Feathers* / Tanya Talaga 2017
From 2000 to 2011, seven Indigenous high school students—forced to leave home and live far away from their families to get an education—died in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The sweeping narrative of their lives delves into the history of this small northern city and the ways it manifests Canada's long struggle with human rights violations against Indigenous communities.
- A Thousand Farewells* / Nahlah Ayed 2013
In 1976, Nahlah Ayed's family gave up their comfortable life in Winnipeg for a Palestinian refugee camp. The transition was jarring, but it was from this uncomfortable situation that Ayed first observed the people whose heritage she shared. The heartfelt, personal chronicle of a journalist who has devoted her career to covering one of the world's most vexing regions.
- Tolstoy and the Purple Chair* / Nina Sankovitch 2011
Caught up in grief after the death of her sister, Nina decides to stop running and start reading. For one year, she will devote herself to reading a book a day. She finds a lesson in each book, ultimately realizing the ability of a good story to console, inspire and open our lives to new places and experiences.
- We Watch the Waves* / Susan Riley 2007
Susan Riley's father died when she was 9 months old; she was 25 when she learned that he had committed suicide. After her mother died, Susan realized she never knew much about her either. In this poignant memoir, she discovers her parents' youth.
- Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?* / Jeannette Winterson 2011
Funny, acute, fierce and celebratory, this is a tough-minded search for belonging, for love, an identity, a home, and a mother.