

dlr Libraries recently invested in a new collection of book club sets. There are ten copies of each title. Please see website and browse under 'Find and Renew', 'Recommendations', then 'Book Sets'. Titles have been chosen with the book club reader in mind, selected to maximize topics for discussion. If your book club is interested in reserving any of these titles, please email: [libraryculture@dlrcoco.ie](mailto:libraryculture@dlrcoco.ie)

***A Change of Climate*** by Hilary Mantel

***Amy & Isabelle*** by Elizabeth Strout

***Burial Rites*** by Hannah Kent

***Crow Lake*** by Mary Lawson

***Eight Months on Ghazzah Street*** by Hilary Mantel

***Four Letters of Love*** by Niall Williams

***The Gustav Sonata*** by Rose Tremain

***Italian Shoes*** by Henning Mankell

***My Name is Asher Lev*** by Chaim Potok

***Notes from an Exhibition*** by Patrick Gale

***Prayers for the Stolen*** by Jennifer Clement

***Still Alice*** by Lisa Genova

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

***The Children Act*** by Ian McEwan

***The Door*** by Magda Szabó

***The Glass Room*** by Simon Mawer

***The Hired Man*** by Aminatta Forna

***The Homesman*** by Glendon Swarthout

***The Lowland*** by Jhumpa Lahiri

***The Other Side of You*** by Salley Vickers

***The Tie That Binds*** by Kent Haruf

***The Undertaking*** by Audrey Magee

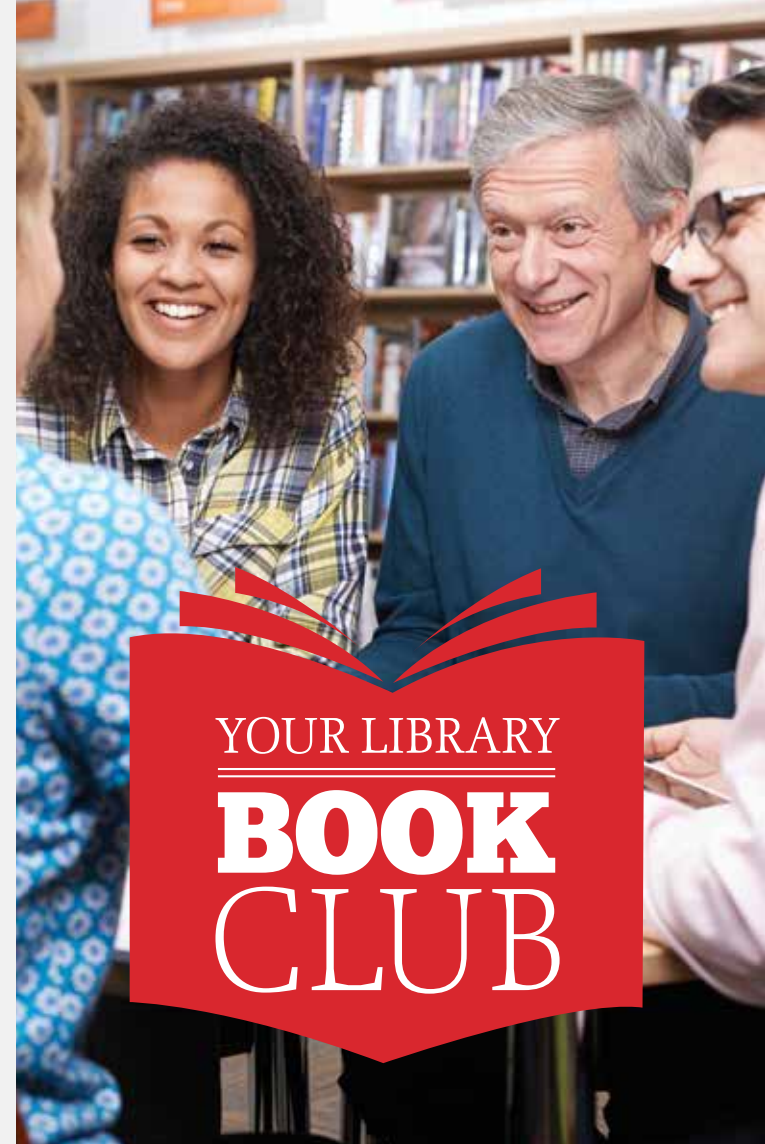
***The Vegetarian*** by Han Kang

### Some further tips:

- Be spontaneous in your discussions.
- Make sure everyone gets an opportunity to be heard.
- Speak up.
- Listen to others – book clubs are a great space to develop your own listening skills!
- “So, did you like the book?” can be a closed question, often leading to a yes or no answer. Instead ask a more open ended question such as: “What was your reading experience?”
- Try turning statements into provocative questions that probe and stimulate discussion.
- Differentiate between intellectual, physical and emotional responses i.e. Is the author evoking a cerebral response, making you think, or is she/he evoking a visceral response in which your heart pounds, adrenalin soars or are feelings such as anger, joy, sadness elicited.
- Discuss language, narrative voice, character development, plot development, author’s vision/ intent, mood and setting.
- Read passages out loud to hear the voices and the language; this can be illuminating.
- Have fun engaging in the process of shared exploration.
- Do remember and respect the fact that there is no right or wrong in the art of literary interpretation!



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With thanks to Mary Burnham of Dubray Books who helped compile this leaflet. Follow 'Mary loves books' on Facebook for regular book recommendations!

## Your Library Book Club

Reading is such a solitary experience and yet there is much more pleasure to be had by discussing the book with others. We often discover different aspects of a story through another person's point of view, meanings that may have passed us by in our rush to get to the end. This is the forum to tease out why you identified with various characters or found them to be cold and unapproachable, why a story can build from inauspicious beginnings to a truly riveting crescendo at the end.

Consider making a list of books you would like to read during the year right at the start. Most clubs meet about eight times a year as so many people go away during the summer months of June, July and August and everyone seems to be up to their eyes with preparations for Christmas so a meeting in December is also one to avoid.



## Reading Around the World!

This is a great project for book clubs and one that can introduce readers to writers from all over the world. Think of a country and appoint one member to hunt down an author from Egypt, Belgium, Norway or Greece for example, who has a book published in English. You will be surprised at the vast selection of foreign authors whose work is a great introduction to a completely different way of life.

## Reading Outside your Comfort Zone

Challenge yourself as a reader to consider books you normally wouldn't pick off the shelf. Make sure you have a healthy mix of male and female authors; different genres such as biography, history, current affairs, or even travel writing that will bring you to places you may never get the opportunity to visit. There are exciting literary prizes to follow such as the Man Booker Prize, The Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and The International Dublin Literary Award.

## The Discussion

Everyone is entitled to a particular point of view even if it is at odds with everyone else. If you don't like a book, say it! But be prepared to tell the group why, and where the book fell down, in your opinion. Everyone should have the floor, without interruption, to say a few words about their reading experience after which the discussion can be opened up to the group.



## Talking about the Book

Think about the beginning, the middle and the end. Did the novel capture your interest right from the start or was it slow going at first? When you reached the central theme was it satisfying, did it fulfill its promise from the outset? Did your book come to a satisfactory conclusion, or were too many loose ends tidied up at the end? The reader is richly rewarded when a novel ends well.

If the book was translated think about whether it was done well or if the language was stilted and awkward. A good translator is worth their weight in gold as you will hardly notice the transition from one language to the other!

Were the characters engaging? Did they behave in a way you could understand? When the author fleshes his/her novel out with well-drawn characters they come across as living breathing beings that are totally believable. Everyone identifies with *David Copperfield* and sees the world from his viewpoint, and who could forget young Scout from *To Kill a Mocking Bird*.

Writers are storytellers, taking you on a particular journey. Did you enjoy the ride or did you get lost along the way?

Book clubs are a great way to get back into reading if you are a lapsed reader. They can introduce you to new authors that you may not come across by yourself. Book clubs allow you to meet and enjoy the company of like-minded people, and indeed people with opinions that can give you a whole new perspective on books, authors and life itself!

Ask in your local library about joining one of dlr Libraries' many book clubs.

