

CWPT Library and Knowledge Services

Mood Boosting

**Feeling stressed, depressed, or just want a bit of a pick-me-up?
Boost your mood with a recommended read. A selection of books
from the Trust's Library Service, recommended by Reading Well as
part of their Mood Boosting scheme**

**For more information and the full list of recommended reading go to
<https://reading-well.org.uk/books/mood-boosting-books>**

The Keeper of Lost Things



Ruth Hogan

Once a celebrated author of short stories now in his twilight years, Anthony Pearde has spent half his life collecting lost objects, to atone for a promise broken years before. Realising he is running out of time, he leaves his house and all its lost treasures to his assistant Laura, the one person he can trust to fulfil his legacy and reunite the thousands of objects with their owners. But his final wishes have unforeseen repercussions which trigger a serendipitous series of encounters...

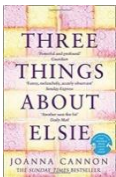
Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine



Gail Honeyman

Eleanor Oliphant leads a simple life. She wears the same clothes to work, eats the same meal deal for lunch every day and buys the same two bottles of vodka to drink every weekend. She is happy. Nothing is missing from her timetabled life. Except, sometimes, everything. One simple act of kindness is about to shatter the walls Eleanor has built. Now she must learn to navigate the world that everyone else seems to take for granted – while searching for the courage to face the dark corners she's avoided all her life. Change can be good. Change can be bad. But surely any change is better than... fine?

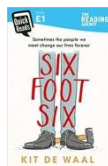
Three Things About Elsie



Joanna Cannon

84-year-old Florence has fallen in her flat at Cherry Tree Home for the Elderly. As she waits to be rescued, she considers the charming new resident who looks exactly like a man she once knew – a man who died sixty years ago. His arrival has stirred distant memories she and Elsie thought they'd laid to rest. Lying in the front room, Florence wonders if a bad secret from her past is about to come to light ...

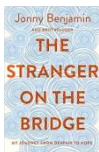
Six Foot Six



Kit de Waal

It's an exciting day for Timothy Flowers. It's the third of November, and it's his twenty-first birthday. When Timothy walks to his usual street corner to see his favourite special bus, he meets Charlie. Charlie is a builder who needs Timothy's help because Timothy is very tall, six feet six inches. Timothy has never had a job before. But when Timothy and Charlie have to collect money from a local thug, things don't exactly go according to plan. Over the course of one day, Timothy's life will change for ever.

The Stranger on the Bridge



Jonny Benjamin

In 2008, Jonny Benjamin was about to jump from Waterloo Bridge. A stranger saw his distress and talked with him – a decision that saved Jonny's life. In 2014 Jonny, with Rethink Mental Illness launched a campaign so Jonny could thank the stranger who started his recovery. Over 319 million people followed the search and the stranger, Neil Laybourn, was found. The pair have been friends ever since. This is about Jonny's journey to find the man who saved his life, and to explore how he came to be on the bridge and how he manages schizoaffective disorder.

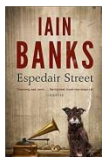
Dear Mrs Bird



AJ Pearce

London, 1941. Emmeline Lake is trying to stay cheerful despite the Luftwaffe making life annoying. She dreams of becoming a Lady War Correspondent and when she spots a job advert in the newspaper she seizes her chance – but after a misunderstanding, she finds herself typing letters for the formidable Henrietta Bird, the renowned agony aunt of Woman's Friend magazine. Mrs Bird is very clear: letters containing any form of Unpleasantness must go in the bin. But as Emmy reads the pleas from women who have Gone Too Far with the wrong man, or can't bear to let their children be evacuated, she decides to secretly write back. This is a love letter to the power of friendship, the kindness of strangers and the courage of ordinary people in extraordinary times.

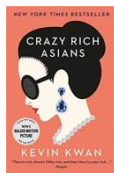
Espedair Street



Iain Banks

Daniel Weir used to be a famous - or infamous - rock star. Maybe still is. At thirty-one he's made mistakes that have paid off and smart moves he regrets. He has gone from rags to riches and back, but has not much else. His friends are all dead, fed up with him or just disgusted. And now Daniel is all alone. As he contemplates his life, he sees only two problems: the past and the future. He knows how bad the past has been. But the future is something else.

Crazy Rich Asians



Kevin Kwan

When Rachel Chu agrees to spend the summer in Singapore with her boyfriend, Nicholas Young, she envisions a humble family home and time with the man she might one day marry. What she doesn't know is that Nick's family home looks like a palace, that she'll ride in more private planes than cars and that she is about to encounter the strangest, craziest group of people in existence. Uproarious and filled with jaw-dropping opulence, this is an insider's look at the Asian jet set.

Sour Heart



Jenny Zhang

Centred on a community of immigrants on the edge of poverty in 1990s New York, these stories examine the ways that family and history can weigh us down, but also lift us up. From the woman coming to terms with her grandmother's role in the Cultural Revolution, to the daughter struggling to understand where her family ends and she begins.

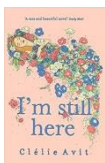
Hyperbole and a Half



Allie Brosh

A blog written by a 20-something American girl, with funny, wise stories about the mishaps of her life. Brosh's website receives millions of visitors a month. Now her book tells the "learning experiences" she has endured as a result of her character flaws. Including stories about her childhood; her mentally challenged dog; and a moving account of her struggle with depression.

I'm Still Here

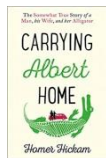


Clélie Avit

Elsa has been in a coma for five months. With all hope of reviving her gone, her family must face the fact that it might be time to turn off her life support. What they don't know is that in the past few weeks Elsa has regained partial consciousness - she just has no way of telling them. Thibault is in the same hospital visiting his brother and, seeking a retreat, goes into Elsa's room. When he begins to talk to her, he doesn't realise she can hear every word - and that he is giving her a reason to wake up. And so begins a love story that might just save both their lives...

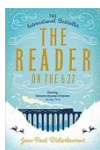
Carrying Albert Home: The Somewhat True Story of a Man, His Wife and Her Alligator

Homer Hickam



A journey of a thousand miles. With an alligator on the back seat. And John Steinbeck as a passenger. In 1930s America, the Depression made horizons smaller, and Elsie found herself back where she began, in the coalfields of West Virginia. She had one memento of her halcyon days – an alligator named Albert. One day, her husband's patience snapped and Elsie had to choose between Homer and Albert. She decided to carry Albert home to Florida. And so began their journey like no other, where they met everything from movie stars and revolutionaries to Hemingway and hurricanes in the struggle to find love, redemption, and a home.

The Reader on the 6.27



Jean-Paul Didierlaurent

Guylain Vignolles lives on the edge of existence. Working at a book pulping factory in a job he hates, he has but one pleasure in life. Sitting on the 6.27 train each day, Guylain recites aloud from pages he has saved from the jaws of his monstrous pulping machine. But it is when he discovers the diary of a lonely young woman, Julie - a woman who feels as lost in the world as he does - that his journey will truly begin.

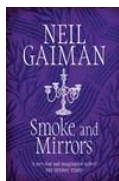
Me Talk Pretty One Day



David Sedaris

The author's recent move to Paris from New York inspired these hilarious pieces, including his attempts to learn French from a sadistic teacher who declares that 'every day spent with you is like having a caesarean section'. His family is another inspiration, such as his brother, who talks incessant hip-hop slang to his bewildered father. Also included are responses to such modern annoyances as restaurant meals presented in ludicrous towers of food and cashiers with six-inch fingernails.

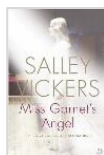
Smoke and Mirrors



Neil Gaiman

This definitive collection of the author's short fiction will haunt your imagination and move you to the very depths of your soul. An elderly widow finds the Holy Grail beneath an old fur coat. A stray cat fights a terrible nightly battle to protect his adoptive family from unimaginable evil. A young couple receives a wedding gift that reveals a chilling alternative history of their marriage.

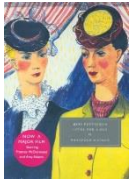
Miss Garnet's Angel



Salley Vickers

Just retired, Julia is left a legacy which she uses to leave her orderly life and go to live in Venice. Its beauty, secret corners and treasures, and its people overwhelm a lifetime of reserve and caution. Above all, she is touched by the all-prevalent spirit of the Angel, Raphael. The ancient tale of Tobias, who travels to Medina unaware he is accompanied by the Angel, unfolds alongside Julia's journey.

Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day



Winifred Watson

A genteel rags-to-possible-riches story first published in 1938.

Middle-aged spinster governess on her uppers goes for a job interview. She becomes entangled in the complex love life of her new employer. Within hours she's had a complete makeover and her first cocktail. A funny and light-hearted novel

Wonder



R.J. Palacio

Auggie wants to be an ordinary ten-year-old. He *feels* ordinary - inside. But ordinary kids don't make other ordinary kids run away screaming in playgrounds. Ordinary kids aren't stared at wherever they go. Born with a terrible facial abnormality, Auggie has been home-schooled by his parents his whole life. Now, he's being sent to a real school - and he's dreading it. All he wants is to be accepted - but can he convince his new classmates that he's just like them, underneath it all?

Hector and the Search for Happiness



Francois Lelord

Can we learn to be happy? Hector is a successful young psychiatrist. He's very good at treating patients in real need of his help. But many people he sees have no health problems: they're just deeply dissatisfied with their lives. Hector can't do much for them and it's beginning to depress him. So when a patient tells him he looks in need of a holiday, Hector decides to set off round the world to find out what makes people everywhere happy (and sad), and whether there is such a thing as the secret of true happiness.

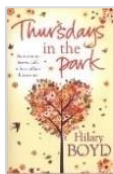
The Help



Kathryn Stockett

Jackson, Mississippi, 1962. Where black maids raise white children, but aren't trusted. Aibileen is raising her seventeenth white child and nursing the hurt of her own son's death; Minny's cooking is as sassy as her tongue; and white Miss Skeeter, home from College, wants to know why her beloved maid has disappeared. No one would believe they'd be friends; fewer still would tolerate it. But, as each woman finds the courage to cross boundaries, they come to depend and rely upon one another.

Thursdays in the Park



Hilary Boyd

Married for half her life and out of nowhere he leaves, Jeanie is furious and hurt, and confronts her husband, George. The best day is Thursday; when she takes her granddaughter to the park. There she meets Ray. He is kind, easy to talk to, and gorgeous. She starts to live for Thursdays. But has she the courage to turn her life upside down for another shot at love?

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand



Helen Simonson

Major Pettigrew is content to lead a quiet life, away from the meddling of locals and his overbearing son. But when his brother dies, he seeks companionship with the village shopkeeper. Drawn by a love of books and the loss of partners, they contend with irate relatives and gossiping villagers. The perfect gentleman, but an unlikely hero, the Major must ask what matters most: family obligation, tradition or love?

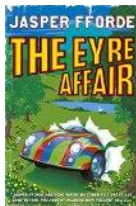
Turned Out Nice Again



Richard Mabey

The author weaves together science, art and memoirs to show the weather's impact on our culture and national psyche. He rambles through the myths of Golden Summers, our denial about the Winter, herrings falling in Norfolk, Saharan dust reddening south coast cars and the fact that English has more words for rain than Inuit has for snow.

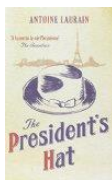
The Eyre Affair



Jasper Fforde

There is another 1885, somewhere, where the Crimean War still rages, dodos are cloned in kits and everyone is deeply disappointed by the ending of 'Jane Eyre'. There are no jetliners or computers, but there are policemen who time travel, a Welsh republic, a great interest in literature – and a woman called Thursday Next.

The President's Hat

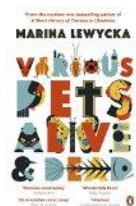


Antoine Laurain

Dining alone in a Parisian brasserie, Daniel Mercier can't believe his eyes when President Mitterrand sits down at the next table.

Daniel's thrill at being so close persists after the presidential party has gone, when he discovers that Mitterrand's black felt hat has been left behind. Daniel decides to keep the hat as a souvenir of an extraordinary evening. It's a perfect fit, and as he leaves the restaurant Daniel begins to feel somehow different.

Various Pets Alive and Dead



Marina Lewycka

For twenty years Doro and Marcus lived in a commune, convinced lentils and free love would change the world. They didn't. What they did do was give their children a terror of radicalism, dirt, cooking rotas and poverty. Their daughter Clara wants nothing less than her own, clean bathroom. Their son, Serge hides the fact that he's a banker earning lots of money. So when Doro and Marcus spring a surprise on their kids – the family is forced to confront some thorny truths about themselves.

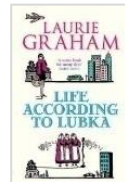
Tennyson's Gift



Lynne Truss

In July 1864, the Isle of Wight is buzzing with creativity. Tennyson is reciting 'Maud' to empty sofas; the photographer Julia Cameron is white-washing the roses for visual effect and the mismatched couple actress Ellen Terry and painter G. F. Watts, are thrown into the company of Lorenzo Fowler, the American phrenologist and his daughter, Jessie. Enter Charles Dodgson (aka Lewis Carroll), and the imaginative cocktail of Victorian seriousness and riotous farce takes flight.

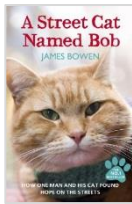
Life According to Lubka



Laurie Graham

Buzz is at the top of the music PR business. But her life is about to change. Some 20 year old has been given the new girl band, and instead Buzz gets to tour with the Gorni Grannies, Bulgarian singers of a certain age. These ladies may not be tantrum-throwing celebs, but they present other challenges. Fuelled by shots of home-brewed plum rakia, Buzz and Lubka address life's ups and downs, until the world tilts and a different future beckons.

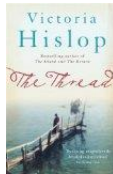
A Street Cat Named Bob



James Bowen

When James Bowen found an injured, street cat in the hallway of his sheltered accommodation, he had no idea how much his life would change. He was living on the streets of London and the last thing he needed was a pet. Yet he couldn't resist helping the intelligent tom cat, whom he christened Bob. Soon the two were inseparable and their diverse, comic and occasionally dangerous adventures would transform both their lives, slowly healing the scars of each other's troubled pasts.

The Thread



Victoria Hislop

Thessaloniki, 1917. As Dimitri is born, fire sweeps through the thriving Greek city where Christians, Jews and Muslims live side by side. Five years later, Katerina's home in Asia is destroyed by the Turkish army. Losing her mother, she flees to Greece. Her life becomes entwined with Dimitri's, and the city as war, fear and persecution begin to divide its people. Thessaloniki, 2007. An Anglo-Greek hears his grandparents' life story and must make a decision. For decades, they have looked after the memories of the people forced to leave. Should he be their next custodian and make this city his home?

The Readers of Broken Wheel Recommend

Katarina Bivald



Sara has never left Sweden, except in the books she reads. When her penfriend Amy invites her to come and visit Broken Wheel, Iowa, she decides it's time. She arrives to find

Amy has died. In this town almost beyond repair are the people she knows through Amy's letters. Sara realises that Broken Wheel is in desperate need of adventure, self-help and a little romance. In short, this town needs a bookshop.

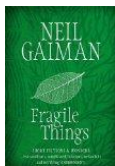
The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society



Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows

It's 1946 and author Juliet Ashton can't think what to write. She receives a letter from Dawsey Adams of Guernsey, he has a book that once belonged to her - and, the begin to write. When Dawsey reveals that he is a member of the Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society, her curiosity is piqued and soon she begins to hear from other members. As letters come with stories of Guernsey under German Occupation, Juliet realizes that the society is as extraordinary as its name.

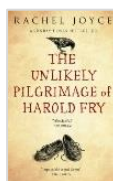
Fragile Things



Neil Gaiman

Short stories of ghosts and heartbreak. After hours drinking and unanswered phones, good deeds and bad days.. Stories within stories, whispered in the quiet of the night, shouted above the roar of the day, between lovers and enemies, strangers and friends. All are fragile made up of 26 letters to form tales which dazzle and haunt the imagination.

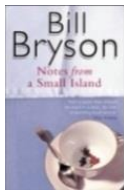
The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry



Rachel Joyce

When Harold Fry nips out one morning to post a letter, leaving his wife hoovering upstairs, he has no idea that he is about to walk from one end of the country to the other. He has no hiking boots or map, let alone a compass, waterproof or mobile phone. All he knows is that he must keep walking. To save someone else's life.

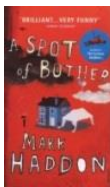
Notes from a Small Island



Bill Bryson

In 1995, before leaving the UK to move back to the States, Bill Bryson insisted on taking one last trip around Britain. His aim was to take stock of the nation's public face and private parts, and analyse what it was he loved so much about a country that produced Marmite; a hero whose dying wish was to be kissed by a man named Hardy; place names like Farleigh Wallop and Shellow Bowells; and Gardener's Question Time.

A Spot of Bother



Mark Haddon

At 57, George is settling down to retirement. Then Katie, his tempestuous daughter, announces that she is getting remarried, to Ray. Her family is not pleased. Katie can't decide if she loves Ray, or the way he cares for her son, and her mother Jean is put out by the wedding planning getting in the way of her affair with one of her husband's former colleagues. Unnoticed in the uproar, George discovers a sinister lesion on his hip, a quietly begins to lose his mind.

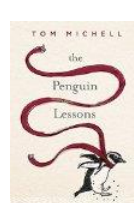
Big Stone Gap



Adriana Trigiani

In the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, the tiny town of Big Stone Gap is home to the most charming eccentrics in the state. Ave Maria Mulligan is the town's self-proclaimed spinster. She lives an amiable life with good friends and hobbies until the fateful day in 1978 when she suddenly discovers she's not who she thought she was. Soon she's juggling two unexpected marriage proposals and conducting a no-holds-barred family feud. The thought of spending the rest of her life in Big Stone Gap is suddenly overwhelming.

The Penguin Lessons



Tom Michell

Tom is single and seeking adventure. He has a ticket to South America, and a teaching job in an Argentine boarding school. What he doesn't need is a pet penguin. Set in the years after the Perónist regime, this is the story of Juan Salvador the penguin, rescued by Tom from an oil slick. When the bird refuses to leave Tom's side, he has no choice but to smuggle it across the border and back to school. Whether it's as the rugby team's mascot, the housekeeper's confidant, or the most flamboyant swimming coach in world history, Juan Salvador transforms the lives of all he meets. And Tom, he discovers a compadre like no other.

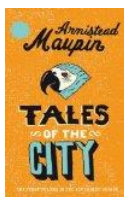
To the Moon and Back



Jill Mansell

When Ellie Kendall tragically loses her husband she feels her life is over. But eventually she's ready for a new start – at work, that is. She doesn't need a new man when she has a certain secret visitor to keep her company. Moving to North London, Ellie meets neighbour Roo who has a secret of her own. Can the girls sort out their lives? Guilt is a powerful emotion, but a lot can happen in a year in Primrose Hill.

Tales of the City



Armistead Maupin

San Francisco, 1976. A naïve young secretary, fresh out of Cleveland, tumbles headlong into a brave new world of laundromat Lotharios, pot-growing landladies, cut throat debutantes and Jockey Shorts dance contests. The saga that ensues is manic, romantic, tawdry, touching and outrageous.

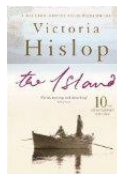
Life with the Lid Off



Nicola Hodgkinson

When single mother Nicola decided to follow her rural dream, it involved transporting her young family, horse, donkey and two bantams to a ramshackle cottage in an idyllic seaside village. But amid the chaos, the magic of family life shines through, peppered with humour, love, moments of high drama, and nostalgia.

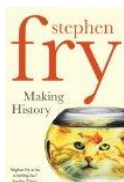
The Island



Victoria Hislop

Alexis longs to find out about her mother's past. But all Sofia admits to is growing up in a Cretan village. When Alexis decides to visit Crete, Sofia gives her a letter and says that she will learn more. Then she finds Fotini, and hears about her great-grandmother Eleni, her daughters and a family rent by tragedy, war and passion.

Making History



Stephen Fry

Michael Young is a brilliant history student whose life is changed when he meets Leo Zuckerman, an ageing physicist with a theory that can change worlds. Together they realise that they have the power to alter history and eradicate a great evil. But tinkering with timelines is more dangerous than they can imagine and nothing - past, present or future - will ever be the same again.

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Brian Oliver Library

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