

# Reading Record

Name:

.....

Date Started:

M	M	/	Y	Y
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Date Finished:

M	M	/	Y	Y
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Dear Veteran,

**We are delighted to welcome you to this individual Reading History, which we hope will help you keep track of what you have read, what you thought of it - and what you might read next.**

It's given to you with good wishes from the military charity Reading Force. We were founded in 2011 and since then have been encouraging Forces and their families to keep in touch through sharing books. Reading is such a simple pleasure, and talking about what you have read can provide common ground for conversation and friendship.

Reading Force grew from personal experience – my own as a military wife, and that of our wider family. Reading works in a military context because we are often separated by distance, experience or postings. Keeping in touch through a book can keep a connection going. And it works equally well for veterans, who have the chance to connect through our book clubs.

This booklet is for you to keep, so you are welcome to record your thoughts and feelings – safe in the knowledge that only you will have access. You can fill it in as you progress. In a few years' time, it could be so interesting to look back and remember what you read, and how you felt about it.

Happy reading!

*Alison Baverstock*

Professor Alison Baverstock,  
Founder and Director of Reading Force and now veteran's wife.

## Reading record

Book title

Year of publication:

Y	Y	Y	Y
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Author

Author nationality

Date you began:

M	M	/	Y	Y
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Date you finished:

M	M	/	Y	Y
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How did you hear of this book?

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How would you describe it to someone who had not read it?

--

Are there any characters you found particularly interesting and if so why?

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Where was it set and was this important?

--

Any thoughts from others you discussed this book with?

--

Your overall verdict on this book?

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Please score out of ten:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Put a ring around your score.

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# Why belong to a book club?

At Reading Force we believe in the power of books and shared-reading to help bring people together.

👉👉 *What are the benefits? There are so many! Getting to know a greater range of people. Learning from others, having your views and attitudes stretched and challenged. Reading books you wouldn't normally choose and being taken out of your comfort zone. 📖📖*

A book club can help people feel part of their community and reduce feelings of isolation, whether held locally or online. Reading the same book can also connect people for longer than a telephone call or chat online.

While you are all reading the same book you can be thinking about how others will react to the book. And when it comes to discussion, you might hear a perspective you had not thought of before.

👉👉 *I felt included and it's good to be given a voice and an opportunity to express your thoughts as well as to listen to those of others. I can think of nothing better. 📖📖*

Now is a great time to think about a new challenge and connect with your community through sharing books!

👉👉 *The fact that I read prevents any arguments about me watching TV programs. Not everybody in the family reads anything, other than newspapers and magazines, whereas I will read the label on a sauce bottle. 📖📖*

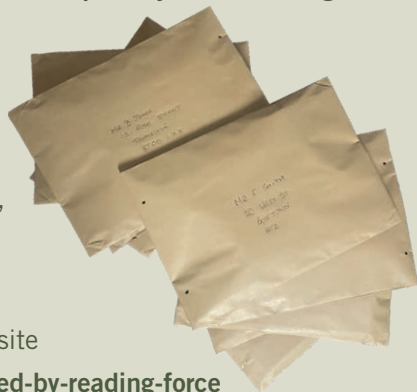
👉👉 *To me reading is a sort of mindfulness, hours can go by and the only thoughts are the book. 📖📖*

# Reading Force Book Clubs

Our Reading Force Book Groups help those with a Forces connection keep in touch through the simple pleasure of sharing a book. Most of those choosing to belong have not belonged to a book group before, but all value this simple way of connecting with the military.

Members gain:

- Free books for the whole group for three months
- Suggestions for what you might read next
- Guidelines on how to set up and run a book club, whether in person or online
- Discussion materials to help get things started



To find out how to take part, please look at our website

[www.readingforce.org.uk/online-book-clubs-supported-by-reading-force](http://www.readingforce.org.uk/online-book-clubs-supported-by-reading-force)

## Where to host a book club?

Where to hold a reading group may be an early issue, and you could consider any of the following:

- Royal British Legion branches or clubs
- Royal Navy, Royal Air Force or Army Regimental Associations
- Other activity-based peer support groups e.g. Combat Stress, H4H, Defence Garden Scheme
- Armed Forces Breakfast Clubs
- Or you might contact a local hotel and ask if they would like to host such an event. For more information about groups in NI please have a look at: [www.nivso.org.uk/localsupport](http://www.nivso.org.uk/localsupport) or contact the NIVSO (Northern Ireland Veteran Support Office) <https://nivso.org.uk>

📖📖 *I have always enjoyed reading and it has been fun discussing the books at the meetings too.* 📖📖

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# How to keep a book club going

## How do you keep the enthusiasm for shared-reading going, particularly once you have had three free books from a Reading Force Book Club?

A model that many use is book club members taking it in turns to choose. Sometimes people worry about whether their book will be popular, but the best discussions often result from people not agreeing about a chosen book. It can be quite boring if everyone loves it!

To take the pressure off individual choosers, the following ideas may help:

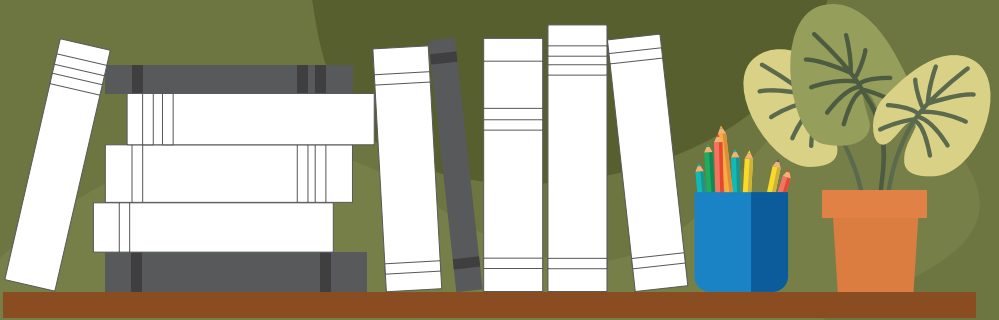
- **Choose a book for the reading group that you have not read before.** That way everyone is on the same journey. Recommending your favourite book to a group can feel a little too exposing, and can also deter others from saying what they really think of it – particularly if they are not as keen as you!
- **Choose a book that is topical.** Bookshops (shops and online) put the titles they think most likely to appeal at the front, or in the window. Some bookshops have ‘staff recommend’ slots with handwritten feedback. You will find bookshop staff love to be asked to recommend a book for a shared-read.
- **Join your local library** (free, all you need is some proof of address – a copy of a utility bill will do). Then look to see what staff recommend. Library staff too are delighted to recommend.
- **Set some boundaries for what your group will read** – perhaps not more than 300 pages or written in the last twenty years.
- **Look at our Reading Force selections.** Each month we will be adding to a rolling programme of recommended reading, based on what we ourselves have enjoyed (or not). This will run six months ahead, so you have the chance to plan your reading. See [www.readingforce.org.uk](http://www.readingforce.org.uk)

Reading is ‘good mindfulness’ and keeps me in the here and now.

It’s always good to try a new hobby.

This page offers you the chance to see at a glance what you have read.

We suggest you allocate a different colour to each type of book you have read and then shade the titles to match. You choose your own colour scheme!



Type of book read:

- |                                                      |                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Action and adventure        | <input type="checkbox"/> How to, self-improvement and educational    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Science Fiction or Fantasy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Memoir and biography                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships and romance   | <input type="checkbox"/> History, politics and international affairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Health and wellbeing, cookery and lifestyle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crime, mystery and thriller | <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/>                  |

## Reading wish list

In the year ahead, why not challenge yourself to read books you have been meaning to read for a while or titles that are outside your usual comfort zone. You can use the list above to prompt ideas.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Force loves to hear what you have been reading and how you have enjoyed our book clubs. Do get in touch. You can offer feedback to our book club coordinator [judith@readingforce.org.uk](mailto:judith@readingforce.org.uk) or via our website [www.readingforce.org.uk](http://www.readingforce.org.uk)

Reading Force is generously supported by various sponsors, charities and trust funds including:

