

Read your Way into The World



The Global Leadership League is excited to share our compiled reading list from this year's New Year Hoopla. Our theme for the Hoopla event was "Read your Way into The World," where we collected our community's favorite books that helped transport them to a different place. Contributors often told us why they liked the books, too! We hope this reading list helps to transport you to different places as well.

- **A Thousand Rooms of Dream and Fear** by Atiq Rahimi
- **A Little Life** by Hanya Yanagihara
 - This is a heavy book - emotionally, but it is beautifully written.
- **A Long Petal of the Sea** by Isabel Llendé
- **A Psalm for the Wild-Built** by Becky Chambers
 - The power of friendship and the agency in being who (or what you are) and to find happiness despite societal expectations. A tea monk and a robot form a bond in an alternate world to our own. The imagery and vibes are like a warm hug and so inspiring. Truly one of my favorite books of the past 10 years. The follow-up book is just as great.
- **A Tale of Two Cities** by Charles Dickens
- **A Year in Tokyo** by Christy Ann Jones
 - A lovely, deeply authentic memoir of the author's experience in Tokyo. Beautifully illustrated!
- **All About Love** by Bell Hooks
 - This book transported me closer to living a life that is love- and heart-centered, changing the way I engage with those around me and improving my relationships.
- **Architect's Apprentice** by Elif Shafak
- **Atomic Habits** by James Clear
 - Helped with personal and professional habits and goal setting!

Read your Way into The World

- **Betty** by Tiffany McDaniel
 - This book was not an easy story, but it was beautifully written. I loved the undertone of magic and the child's perspective on hard topics. It brought me into rural Appalachia, a place I know little about.
- **Between Shades of Gray** by Ruta Sepetys
- **Burnt Shadows** by Kamila Shamsie
- **Clap When You Land** by Elizabeth Acevedo
 - Elizabeth Acevedo is a master of prose and never fails to craft an impactful story about family. This book largely deals with grief, while also focusing on heritage and family as a Dominican-American girl travels to the Dominican Republic to visit an unknown sibling and extended family. It's a wonderful glimpse at cultural identity and the realities of life, but there's a lot of love and beauty there as the main character connects with her father's homeland.
- **Cutting for Stone** by Cutting for Stone
- **Daughters of the New Year** by E.M. Tran
 - E.M. Tran
- **Designing Your Life** by Dave Evans and Bill Burnett
 - Creating a well-designed life and practically embedding practices, tools, and mindsets on my ongoing life journey.
- **Doomsday Book** by Connie Willis
- **Elena Knows** by Claudia Piñero (trans. Frances Riddle)
 - There is so much happening in this small, compact, powerful book. Set in the outskirts of Buenos Aires, it covers a lot of hard-hitting topics (disability, suicide, abortion, etc.). It's an uncomfortable read, but I was absolutely haunted by this book and have been recommending it to others since I read it.
- **Elsewhere: One Woman, One Rucksack, One Lifetime** of Travel by Rosita Boland
 - Stories of a female traveler going to far-off places, being confident about her abilities to travel, but also dealing with the opinions of others about her solo travels. She experiences love, loss, and other life happenings along the way. It was a great read for those of us who love to travel and explore.
- **Fourth Wing** by Rebecca Yarros

Read your Way into The World

- **Firekeeper's Daughter** by Angeline Bouley
 - It beautifully depicts the challenges that Native American communities and women, in particular, face trying to obtain justice. It also teaches about Anishinaabe practices through the story.
- **Green Lights** by Matthew McConaughey
 - Loved this book! Terrific stories, including about McConaughey's own study abroad experience in Australia! With excellent life lessons: Pivot. Persist. And deal. Get relative. Just keep livin'.
- **In the Name of Salomé** by Julia Alvarez
 - Captivating story focused primarily on two women that transported me to another time and to two other countries!
- **Intimacies** by Katie Kitamura
 - The main character is living between worlds and grasping for connection. As someone who has moved around quite a bit, I really resonated with so much of this book! Plus it was an interesting peek into life as a court interpreter in The Hague.
- **Iron Flame** by Rebecca Yarros
- **Lady Tan's Circle of Women** by Lisa See
 - It's a historical novel about medical practice, and particularly women healthcare givers, in 15th Century China. Lisa See creates impressions of place and time in her books that easily place me in inner courtyards, gardens, bustling street markets, or on a riverboat observing villagers on the shoreline.
- **Le Otto Montagne ("The Eight Mountains")** by Paolo Cognetti
- **Meet Me In Another Life** by Catriona Silvey
 - A little bit weird, but overall quite wonderful and out of this world.
- **Mother Country** by Jacinda Townsend
 - This book follows two characters and their connections to Morocco. It is a sad tale, but I really enjoyed how immersive the book felt in the Moroccan culture.
- **My Life on the Road** by Gloria Steinem
 - I loved how Steinem infuses her wit and sense of humor in her autobiography. I learned a lot about her life and activism, and the book reminded me to remain observant, curious, and reflective, whether I'm at home or traveling.

Read your Way into The World

- **Netherland** by James O'Neill
- **Next Year in Havana** by Chanel Cleeton
 - The multi-generational history of the Cuban migration to south Florida (from a historical fiction lens), with the theme that eventually life will change and the characters will spend time again "next year in Havana."
- **On Persephone's Island: A Sicilian Journal** by Mary Taylor Simeti
 - The thick and thoughtful descriptions of complex and astounding Sicily gave me the most culturally immersive experience I've had as a reader. I keep it in my bookcase because I know I will read it again and again.
- **One Hundred Years of Solitude** by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
- **Outlander** by Diana Gabaldon
 - I learned so much about Scottish history. Each time I questioned something, in fact, I looked it up, and 9/10 it was real!
- **Pachinko** by Min Jin Lee
- **Pedagogy of the Oppressed** by Paulo Freire
 - This book changed my entire perspective on education and the role of international/global education. Transported me towards liberation for all!
- **Playing Big** by Tara Mohr
 - Playing bigger, getting out from under that outdated playing small narrative, working to better myself as a power communicator - ongoing work!
- **Prisoners of Geography** by Tim Marshall
- **Rewilding** by Isabella Tree
 - That we can restore the earth's ecosystems if we try.
- **Small Things Like These** by Claire Keegan
 - The book is set in Ireland in the 1980s, and it describes one man's discovery of the abuses behind the church-sponsored laundries that employed unwed mothers. It is beautifully written, and I absolutely loved it. It sheds light on a painful part of Ireland's past while also quietly spotlighting the beauty of family (birth families and the families we create).
- **Sophie's World** by Jostein Gaarder
 - A taste of philosophy.

Read your Way into The World

- **Shadow of the Wind** by Carlos Ruiz Zafon
- **The Cat's Meow: How Cats Evolved from the Savanna to Your Sofa** by B Osos
- **The Collapsing Empire** by John Scalzi
 - As the start of a trilogy, this science fiction book explores so many aspects of government, business, humanity, and culture. The rest of the series is great, too!
- **The Covenant of Water** by Abraham Verghese
 - It really paints a picture in your mind of Kerala, India. The author narrates the audiobook version.
 - It introduced me to a place and time and with a group of people (Orthodox St. John Christians) in India that I would not have known about otherwise. Verghese creates vivid characters and settings - the reader becomes part of an intimate, sweeping story.
 - Indian family stories, caste system, Indian history, medical evolution in India.
- **The Cradle of the World** by Katherine Scholes
- **The Girl with Seven Names: A North Korean Defector's Story** by Lee Hyeon-Seo
 - An amazing story; I learned so much about North Korea and this woman's amazing life.
- **The Girl with the Louding Voice** by Abi Dare
 - Another hard story set in Nigeria. Lovely narrator and beautiful storytelling.
- **The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society** by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows
- **The Impossible First** by Colin O'Brady
 - A riveting account of an unassisted trek across Antarctica.
- **The Island of Missing Trees** by Elif Shafak
 - Beautiful expression; got a vicarious experience of life in a different part of the world.
- **The Kitchen Front** by Jennifer Ryan
 - Gave some great historical background of wartime England.
- **The Lemon Tree** by Sandy Tolan
- **The Lonely Planet Travel Anthology** by Lonely Planet
 - Short stories from travels in far flung places around the world!

Read your Way into The World

- **The Lost Bookshop** by Evie Woods
 - The jumping between time periods for different historical contexts as well as the movement between the UK, Ireland, and France of the characters' stories. I loved the comparison of the cities but also what was taking place culturally in each time-space.
- **The Midnight Library** by Matt Aig
- **The Ministry of the Future** by Kim Stanley Robinson
 - What the future holds if we do not change the way we live and work to reduce emissions and avoid the catastrophic impact of climate change and biodiversity loss.
- **The Money Belief Formula: Mindset + Behavior = Financial Success: Transform Your Habits and Win with Wealth** by Susan M Diamond
 - The simple yet profoundly changing money belief formula is guaranteed to get you closer to your goals than any spreadsheet, course, or hired help. Building any strong empire starts with a solid foundation. It helps you recognize the mindset needed to be a financial success, and this mindset can apply to all areas of your life as well. Understanding where you came from, where you are, and how to get to where you want to go. This book is the springboard needed for adults to understand limiting beliefs so that they can truly be limitless.
- **The Overstory** by Richard Powers
- **The Seven Sisters Series** by Lucinda Riley
 - After the death of their father, seven adopted sisters learn about their biological history and travel back to their birthplaces to learn more about themselves. I read these books during the pandemic, when travel wasn't an option, and it was a fun way to "see the world" during that time. The final book came out in 2023. They're definitely more of a fun/fluff read with a little bit of history and a little bit of a love story, but all about celebrating women!
- **The Stationery Shop** by Marjan Kamali
 - Feeling right there in the setting, connecting with the characters.
- **The Story of a New Name** by Elena Ferrante
- **The Thursday Murder Club** Series by Richard Osman
 - Charming series about a group in a retirement community who solve murders. It challenges narratives about age and capability.
- **Un Indovino Mi Disse ("A Fortune-Teller Told Me")** by Tiziano Terzani



Read your Way into The World

- **The Year of Living Danishly** by Helen Russell
 - I loved learning more about Danish culture from a British point of view and seeing how the author accepts and rejects various aspects of Danish culture ... I expect as I read more she will encounter culture shock. It's interesting to watch her journey and try to learn from her experience.
- **Windswept: Walking the Paths of Trailblazing Women** by Annabel Abbs
 - I liked the author's descriptive style of writing, and the themes of traveling and walking/hiking really resonated with me. I also enjoyed learning about the lives and journeys of the powerful women featured in the book, such as Gwen John and Daphne du Maurier, who defied the societal expectations for women in their respective eras.
- **You Could Make This Place Beautiful** by Maggie Smith
- **Kindred** by Octavia Butler
- **The Great Alone** by Kristin Hannah
 - About life in rural Alaska and resiliency.
- **Bel Canto** by Ann Patchett