

BLOG BYTES



by Kristopher Zgorski

Sometimes as readers, the toughest task is choosing what to read next—not because there is a lack of quality material, but because there is so much good stuff that it can be overwhelming. Let's look at a few online resources that might be able to help.

whichbook (whichbook.net) is an invaluable website that allows readers to enter parameters related to their desired reading material before returning a selection of options that might be the right choice. Options under Mood and Emotion are presented as a range, so that the user can use a slide bar to find the exact location between “happy” and “sad” and/or “gentle” and “violent” and/or “Expected” and “Unpredictable” that they desire. The more of these options the user employs, the more accurate the resulting book options will be. Users can also use the Globe feature to select a desired locale to discover books set in that country or region. Another valuable resource is the Choose by Character function, which allows the user to enter parameters based on age, race, and sexuality. Lastly there is a function that lets the user choose from a selection of best-selling books, which will return a list of other books with similar themes or vibes. This is a new website, so as more books are added to their database, it will only continue to become more valuable.

Bookfinity (bookfinity.com) is another site hoping to help readers connect with the right book choices. They use Reader Types to help curate a list of options. There is a quiz readers can take that will help to determine what type of reader they are, which then makes the preset selections more targeted. Users can also browse options by the more traditional genre approach, with the resulting list being ranked by the title’s popularity with website/app users. Bookfinity also features a growing number of essays that cover topics such as book adaptations, book-club choices, and diverse reading lists. Something that will please many dedicated readers is that the information and synopsis given about each book included in any of their generated lists is concise and useful without straying into spoiler territory.

A third option is *Meet New Books* (meetnewbooks.com), another resource that uses genre, trope, and theme algorithms to help narrow down the plethora of book choices in the world. One of the nice things about this website is that many of the resulting options contain a short excerpt from the book, so readers can see if the writing style is to their liking without having to flip to another resource. This site is most useful in finding books that are similar to a title a reader loved—sometimes with the choices being less obvious but no less accurate. Users who engage with the site by rating books and marking things of interest will slowly see the relevancy and accuracy of the algorithm’s suggestions increase with more data points to analyze.

Bookmark these sites now and visit the next time you are struggling to choose a book from that towering To Be Read pile (or, if you are anything like me, the several TBR piles) you have. ●