

READING ACTIVITY

Genre based/Themed Reading*

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Objective : Enabling a reader to read as many books as possible belonging to a particular genre/theme (sci-fi, romantic novels, historical fiction, adventure novels, detective fiction, so on (genre based) or nature, war, conflicts, love, so on (theme based) to gain an in-depth understanding of it.

Participation : Individual.

Material : Reading some of the well-known writers of a genre or theme.

Preparation : Reading novels of this genre/theme often and attempting to understand all the significant features of it.

Procedure :

·Identify one's passion through reading/discussing with friends or experts, to start with. Supposing the genre of detective fiction is one's interest they have to figure out a novelist of their choice and read some of his/her novels to comprehend the features of detective-story format: a) the crime, b) suspects, c) challenges in identifying the culprit, d) the detective and his strategies and e) unraveling the crime. Although there are variations, this format generally remained the same from the start of the genre.

Read a few novels of other detective writers to find out the similarities and dissimilarities, which would lead one to understand the genre deeply. Reading some of the established novelists and some of their popular novels is a must for a thorough grounding in the area. Without being familiar with the novelists of this genre and their popular works such as Edgar Allan Poe's **The Murders in the Rue Morgue**, Wilkie Collins' **The Moonstone**, Dorothy L. Sayers' **Gaudy Nights**, Arthur Conan Doyle's **A Study in Scarlet** and Agatha Christie's **Murder on the Orient Express** one cannot emerge as an authority.

Get a historical perspective of the genre such as the origin, the evolution, significant shifts, and major writers' contributions, popularity in different parts of the world and its current status. For instance, one should know about the legendry characters such as Sherlock Holmes, the subgenres such as whodunit, inverted detective story, serial killer mystery and legal thrillers and the role of pulp fiction magazines, without which one cannot be an enlightened reader of this genre.

Learning outcomes:

- 1) Learners realize that they have to identify their area of interest, which would act as a spring board to delve into the area.
- 2) Learners understand that reading different writers belonging to a particular genre/theme and familiarizing them with critical materials in the area and reflecting over them alone would make them gain expertise.

Further activity:

Reading detective novels of different writers and understanding their differing styles.

***Themed reading:** Reading based on a particular theme which interests a reader.

***Detective fiction** is a crime-related stories and it generally challenges readers to solve the crime by the clues provided even before the detective unravels it at the end of the novel. The suspense it builds throughout is one of the prime reasons for its success.