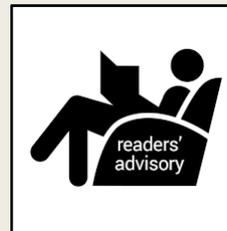


WHAT'S THE APPEAL?

Nancy Houseal
KDLA's Division of
Library Services

Readers' Advisory Services

- Finding the right book for the right person at the right time
- Helping readers find the best, most enjoyable reading that matches their needs, interests and reading level
- Connecting readers and authors/writers
- Working with books
- Talking to readers
- Developing your RA skills and knowledge of resources



WORKING WITH BOOKS

Key Term: Subject Heading

Subject headings refer to concrete aspects of a book—the who, what, where, and when.

Smokin' seventeen Close Item Detail

by [Janet Evanovich](#), [Lorelei King](#)

eAudiobook 2011

Held by: Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives

[Access online](#)

[Share](#)

[Cite](#)

[Save](#)

Description

Publication: Westminster, Md. : Books on Tape, 2011.

Edition: Unabridged.

Physical: 1 online resource (1 sound file) : digital.

Description:

Language: English

Staff View: [MARC Record](#)

ISBN: 9780307932266 0307932265

OCLC Number: 711874984

Series: [A Stephanie Plum novel](#)

Subjects: [Plum, Stephanie \(Fictitious character\) Fiction](#), [Women bounty hunters Fiction](#), [Plum, Stephanie \(Fictitious character\)](#), [Women bounty hunters](#), [Trenton \(N.J.\) Fiction](#)

Key Term: Genre

Genre is the word used to describe a category of literature, film or music.



Key Term: Appeal Factors

“Feel” of a particular book
Joyce Saricks



“Appeal addresses the elements of books that readers respond to and helps shape a particular reading experience.” Neal Wyatt

“When we . . . read the first few pages, and choose to go on, we enter the world of that book.” Nancy Pearl



Why important to know?

- Helps translate reader preferences into terms that can be applied to other title suggestions
- Provide formal structure that makes readers' advisory service effective
- Appeal terms apply to entire collection, regardless of format
- Shifts emphasis on reader likes and dislikes rather than the librarian's personal favorites
- Appeal factors helps introduce readers to new genres

Starter Questions

Can you tell me about a book you've read and enjoyed?

What TV shows and movies have you enjoyed?

Which of your favorite authors or series do you wish had a new book?

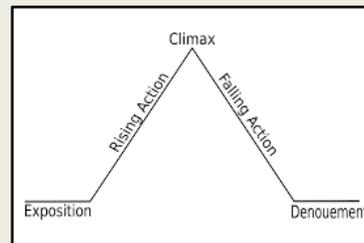
What are you in the mood for today?

APPEAL FACTOR: STORYLINE

Storyline

Quick way to determine a book's focus and structure

- Action-packed
- Character driven
- Intricately plotted
- Issue-oriented
- Nonlinear
- Open-ended
- Plot-driven (fiction only)
- Sweeping
- Unconventional
- World-building



Questions to Consider

- Does the story emphasize people or events?
- Is the focus more interior/psychological or exterior/situational?
- What is the author's intention in regard to story line?
- Does the story take place on more than one level?

**APPEAL FACTOR:
CHARACTERIZATION**

Characterization

For those readers who especially love books because of the characters (only applied to fiction books)



Ability diverse	Anthropomorphic	Authentic	Awkward	Believable
Brooding	Character duos	Complex	Courageous	Culturally diverse
Exaggerated	Flawed	Introspective	Large cast of characters	LGBTQIA diverse
Likeable	Mischievous	Quirky	Relatable	Religiously diverse
Sarcastic	Sassy	Snarky	Spirited	Spunky
Strong female	Sympathetic	Twisted	Unlikeable	Unreliable narrator
Well-developed				

Questions to Consider

- Are the characters developed over time?
- Is the focus on one character or several?
- From whose point of view is the story told?
- Do you identify with the character(s) or just observe them?
- Are there series characters?
- How important are the secondary characters?

Examples: Characterization

Example #1

Crinkling his brow and wrinkling his nose, Bill screwed up his mouth when he saw the check for dinner. Clearly displeased with the cost of his eggs, bacon, doughnuts, and coffee, he yanked open his wallet, tossed one dollar haphazardly on the table for tip, and went to the counter to pay for the meal.

Example #2

Her eyes pleaded with him to understand what she was explaining, her breath slow in frequency, but intense with each inhale. Her downturned lips revealed the shame she had for what she had done.

Example #3

He dropped his eyes toward the floor and his face burned crimson. His shoulders hunched over and he pursed his lips, clearly attempting to fight back tears.

APPEAL FACTOR: PACE

Pace

Rate at which a story unfolds for the reader

- Fast-paced
- Intensifying
- Leisurely paced



Questions to Consider

- Is there more dialogue or description?
- Do characters act or react to events?
- Are the characters and plot revealed quickly or slowly?
- Are there multiple plotlines and points of view? Are characters and plot quickly revealed or slowly unveiled?
- Are there short sentences, short paragraphs and short chapters or other indications of a telescoped time frame?

Examples: Which pacing is faster?

Example #1

The abandoned-looking building stood foreboding in the dusk and we snuck around the side, minding the cameras that swivelled out front. I froze when I heard a man's voice through a plastered-over window. 'We need to find new headquarters,' he hissed.

Example #2

The building looked abandoned. Foreboding. Cameras swiveled out front so we decided to sneak around the side. Suddenly a man's voice hissed through a covered window. 'We need to find new headquarters'.

APPEAL FACTOR: TONE

Tone

Feeling that a book evokes in the reader (“What are you in the mood for?”)

- Amusing
- Angst-filled
- Atmospheric
- Bittersweet
- Bleak
- Chaste
- Conservative
- Creepy
- Darkly humorous
- Disturbing

“All writing has a sense of tone.”

Dramatic	Emotionally Intense	Explicit	Feel-good	Funny
Gossipy	Gross	Gruesome	Haunting	Heartwarming
Heartwrenching	High-drama	Homespun	Hopeful	Impartial (NF only)
Impassioned (NF only)	Inspiring	Irreverent	Liberal (NF only)	Melancholy
Menacing	Mildly sensuous	Moody	Moving	Mystical
Noisy	Nostalgic	Offbeat	Patriotic	Quiet
Racy humor	Reflective	Romantic	Sad	Sardonic
Scary	Self-deprecating (NF only)	Serious	Silly	Sobering
Spiritual	Steamy	Strong sense of place	Suspenseful	Sweet
Thought-provoking	Upbeat	Violent	Whimsical	

Questions to Consider

- What type of book is the reader looking for?
- What is the reader in the mood for today?
- Does the reader want a book that makes them feel happy? Scared? Hopeful? etc.

Examples of Tone

Example #1 *The School* by Donald Barthelme

And the trees all died. They were orange trees. I don't know why they died, they just died. Something wrong with the soil possibly or maybe the stuff we got from the nursery wasn't the best. We complained about it. So we've got thirty kids there, each kid had his or her own little tree to plant and we've got these thirty dead trees. All these kids looking at these little brown sticks, it was depressing.

Example #2 *Charlotte's Web* by E. B. White

But I feel peaceful. Your success in the ring this morning was, to a small degree, my success. . . . These autumn days will shorten and grow cold. The leaves will shake loose from the trees and fall. Christmas will come, and the snows of winter. You will live to enjoy the beauty of the frozen world, for you mean a great deal to Zuckerman and he will not harm you, ever. Winter will pass, the days will lengthen, the ice will melt in the pasture pond. The song sparrow will return and sing, the frogs will awake, the warm wind will blow again. All these sights and sounds and smells will be yours to enjoy, Wilbur—this lovely world, these precious days...

APPEAL FACTOR:
WRITING STYLE

Writing Style

Tells us how a book is written, from the complexity of the language to the level of detail in the background



Accessible (NF only)	Attention-grabbing	Banter-filled	Browsable (NF only)	Candid
Compelling	Comprehensive (NF only)	Concise (NF only)	Conversation-able	Descriptive
Dialect-filled	Easy-to-understand (NF only)	Engaging	Gritty	Jargon-filled
Journalistic (NF only)	Lush	Lyrical	Minimal text	Participatory
Persuasive (NF only)	Richly detailed	Scholarly (NF only)	Slang-heavy	Spare
Stream of Consciousness	Stylistically complex	Thoughtful	Well-crafted dialogue	Witty
Wordplay-filled				

Questions to Consider

- Does the reader prefer elegantly written, award-winning books, or would they rather have a book written in a conversational style?
- Is the style of writing important to the reader, or are they more interested in a specific subject, genre, tone, setting, etc.

Examples: Writing Styles

Example #1 *The Sound and the Fury* by William Faulkner

The earth immediately about the door was bare. It had a patina, as though from the soles of bare feet in generations, like old silver or the walls of Mexican houses which have been plastered by hand. Beside the house, shading it in the summer, stood three mulberry trees, the fledged leaves that would later be broad and placid as the palms of hands streaming flatly undulant upon the driving air.

Example #2 *A Farewell to Arms* Ernest Hemingway

A doctor came in followed by a nurse. He held something in his two hands that looked like a freshly skinned rabbit and hurried across the corridor with it and in through another door. I went down to the door he had gone into and found them in the room doing things to a new-born child. The doctor held him up for me to see. He held him by the heels and slapped him.

APPEAL FACTOR: SETTING

Setting

Refers to not only where the story is set, but also the book's background. How much is that setting integral to the book?

- Descriptive
- Detailed
- Atmosphere
- World-building
- Culture
- Ambience
- Background
- Time period



Questions to Consider

- Is the background detailed or minimal?
- How important is the geographic location of the book?
- Is the setting a real place or has the author invented a new world?

Examples: Setting

Example *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens

There was a light in the ferry-house window opposite which streamed across the road, and threw into more sombre shadow a dark yew-tree with graves beneath it. There was a dull sound of falling water not far off; and the leaves of the old tree stirred gently in the night wind. It seemed like quiet music for the repose of the dead.

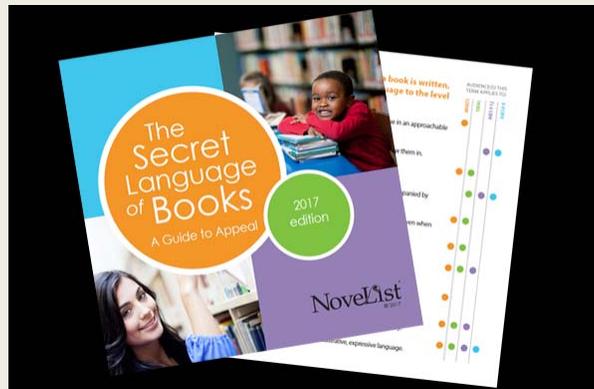
Example *1984* by George Orwell

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him.

RESOURCE: NOVELIST

The Secret Language of Books

<https://www-ebSCOhost-com.kdla.idm.oclc.org/novelist>
<https://www-ebSCOhost-com.kdla.idm.oclc.org/novelist/our-products/novelist-appeals/our-products/novelist-appeals>



NoveList in KYVL

The screenshot shows the KYVL Virtual Library homepage. The 'Databases' menu is open, and 'NoveList' is highlighted with a red box. Below the menu, the 'Databases' link in the 'Showing 6 Groups' section is also highlighted with a red box.

Books, Series, Authors

Step on a crack (Feb 2007)

Author: Patterson, James, 1947-

Adult Fiction

Series: Michael Bennett mysteries, 1

Description: During a state funeral for a former First Lady at a New York City airport, dozens of hostages, and NYPD officer Michael Bennett are taken captive.

Book Appeal Terms: Definition of Appeal Terms

Genre: Thrillers and suspense

Pace: Fast-paced

Tone: Melancholy, Suspenseful

Accelerated Reader: IL, US, BL, S, 7, PAR PLS, TU

Alex Cross novels

Series Author: Patterson, James, 1947-

Adult Fiction

Description: Serial murder, bank robbery, kidnapping -- all of these crimes are part of the life of detective/psychologist Alex Cross. Told from the point of view of the detective, the novels are full of plenty of twists and grisly details.

Book Appeal Terms: Definition of Appeal Terms

Genre: Thrillers and suspense

Storyline: Plot-driven

Pace: Fast-paced

Tone: Suspenseful

Author: Patterson, James, 1947-

Ages 0-8 Ages 9-12 Teen Adult Nonfiction Fiction

Description:

James Patterson began his career writing fast-paced single-title and series suspense novels, but he now publishes multiple series for adults in genres as diverse as crime thrillers/suspense, science fiction, historical fiction, and romance. Not to mention books for teens, younger readers, and a handful of adult nonfiction. Whether writing edge-of-one's-seat novels of hard-edged suspense or heartwarming tales of romance and relationships, he captivates male and female readers alike with sympathetic characters, short chapters, and compelling, labyrinthine plots. Start with: *Along Came a Spider* (Adults), *Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* (Teens)

Book Appeal Terms: Definition of Appeal Terms

Genre: Mysteries, Science fiction, Thrillers and suspense

Storyline: Plot-driven

Pace: Fast-paced

Tone: Suspenseful

The screenshot shows the NoveList Plus website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Home, Browse By, Especially For, Quick Links, How Do I?, Sign In, Help, Exit, Feedback, and Folder. Below this is a search bar with the placeholder text "Describe a book. Ex. Japan 1930 women" and a "Search" button. To the right of the search bar are links for "Search Other Databases" and "novelistqa". Below the search bar are links for "Basic Search", "Advanced Search", and "Search History".

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "Recommended Reads Lists" and has tabs for "Fiction" and "Nonfiction". Under "Fiction", there are sub-tabs for "Adult", "Teen", "Ages 9-12", and "Ages 0-8". Below these are several categories with right-pointing arrows: Audiobooks: Fiction, Best of 2014: Fiction, Canadian Fiction, Fantasy, Fiction A to Z, Graphic Novels, Historical Fiction, Horror, Mysteries, Romance, Science Fiction, Thrillers and Suspense, and Westerns.

The right column is titled "I'm in the mood for books that are..." and has tabs for "Adult", "Teen", "Ages 9-12", and "Ages 0-8". Below these are sub-tabs for "Moving and Lyrical", "Heartwarming and Funny", "Sweeping and Dramatic", and "Haunting and Spare". Below the sub-tabs is the text "For lovers of literary fiction with real emotional impact." and a carousel of book covers: "The Daughters of Men", "Alice Hoffman: The Marriage of Opposites", "The Hundred Year Flood", and "The Gods of Tang". Below the carousel is the text "Want to make your own combo? Try our appeal mixer".

Below the carousel is a section titled "Browse Genres" with a grid of book covers categorized by age group: "For Adults", "For Teens", "For Ages 9-12", and "For Ages 0-8".

The diagram shows a navigation bar with links: Home, Browse By, Especially For, Quick Links, and How Do I?. A grey arrow points down from the "Browse By" link to a dropdown menu. The dropdown menu has the following options: Genre, Appeal (highlighted with a red box), Award Winners, and Audiobooks.

To the right of the dropdown menu is a yellow box with the text: "The NoveList Toolbar gives you access to a variety of RA tools and resouces".

Advanced Search

AP heartwarming Select a Field (optional) Search Clear ?

AND AP chaste Select a Field (optional)

AND Select a Field (optional) + -

Basic Search Advanced Search Search History

Refine Results

Audience

Adult Teen

Ages 9-12 Ages 0-8

Additional Limiters

Publication Date

1908 2017

Update Results

Genre »

Character »

Storyline »

Pace »

Tone »

Writing Style »

Time Period »

Subject »

Location »

Books Series Authors

Results: 1-30 of 274 Sort by: Relevan

Results for: AP heartwarming AND AP chaste

1. **The wish** (Sep 2016)
By: Lewis, Beverly, 1949-
Years after her friend Gloria's family was expelled from the Old Order of endeavors to convince her to rejoin the Amish church, but Leona's fianc
Popularity: ★★★★★☆ Adult Fiction
[Title Read-alikes](#) [Author Read-alikes](#)
Read reviews on [goodreads](#)
★★★★☆
57 reviews

2. **The photograph** (Sep 2015)
By: Lewis, Beverly, 1949-
"In a 1980s Amish community, three sisters face a time of transition in th
her own future"--
Popularity: ★★★★★☆ Adult Fiction
[Title Read-alikes](#) [Author Read-alikes](#)
Read reviews on [goodreads](#)
★★★★☆
168 reviews

CONCLUSION

Key Idea Today's Training

“The appeal of a book to a reader is not only a matter of which genre or subgenre the book falls into, but also depends on other characteristics of the book itself.”

The Librarian's Clues to Murder and Mayhem by John Charles, Joanna Morrison, and Candace Clark

KDLA Can Help!

- Monday – Friday 8:00 to 4:30 (ET)
 - 502-564-8306
 - Toll-free 800-928-7000, option #3

- Ask a Librarian (24/7)
 - *Information Request:*
 - <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/askalibrarian/Pages/InformationRequest.aspx>



Remember

- Continuing Education Events Calendar

<http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/staffdevelopment/Pages/ContinuingEducationCalendar.aspx>

- Follow-up email with
 - *Training certificate*
 - *Evaluation survey link*



Download Presentation

In the File Share box:

- Click “What’s the Appeal?”
- “Save to my computer”
- In the pop-up window:
 - “Click to Download”
 - “Save”
- Choose where to save it
- “Save”

