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## How to Read a Book in Five Minutes

You cannot read all of the new titles added to the collection every year, much less the thousands already owned. But the users need your help, so here are some hints on evaluating the usefulness of books so you can recommend them.

Take a pile of new or interesting-looking older titles. Give each one five minutes by the clock and then write on a 3 x 5, Author, Title, Genre, Call #, and a brief note of contents and use. Use the list below as a beginning guide to what to look for and how to do it fast:

### I. Fiction Checklist

- A. Cover. Indicates contents (Metallic lettering means glitzy; beige and brown colors means serenity etc.)
- B. Blurb. Does it lure in reader without revealing whole plot?
- C. Heft. Can you balance it in bed?
- D. Type.
- E. Read first chapter, skip through, read a bit in the middle. Read the end. Does it flow?
- F. Evaluate:
  - Style
  - Pace
  - Clarity
- G. What is format?
  - Narrative?
  - Flashbacks?
  - Alternating Narrator?
  - Letters?
  - First Person?
  - Omniscient Author?
- H. Connect with other books. Which ones, and why?
- I. Who for?/what for?

### 2. Nonfiction Check List

- A. Cover
  - Attractive?
  - Reflect content and approach?
  - Color and type appropriate?
- B. Blurb – Is it helpful?
- C. Heft – Can you balance it?
- D. Type (Big? Small? Crammed?)
- E. Table of contents: Are chapter headings meaningful or fey?

- F. Read a bit of preface/foreword.
- G. Read part of a chapter about something you know, check for style, reading level, arrangement of information.
- H. Illustrations
- I. Index and bibliographies
- J. Ask yourself who for? what for?

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