

OFF THE SHELF
North Olympic Library System
2210 South Peabody Street
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RE: Doorways to Reading
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If you've ever been confounded by what to read next, and a librarian or friend suggested the ideal book, then you've been a beneficiary of readers' advisory! At the North Olympic Library System, staff can give personalized recommendations online at nols.org (under 'Services' select 'Bookmatch') or by phone. If you wonder how staff find those books or would rather search yourself, here are some things to try.

The first step is asking questions to learn what you've liked reading, and more importantly the 'why' behind your enjoyment. Nancy Pearl is an expert at this and it's made her one of the most famous librarians in the world. She even has an action figure! Here is the method she invented in her own words, "It seems to me that all works of fiction and narrative nonfiction are broadly made up of four experiential elements: story, character, setting, and language. I call these 'doorways,' because when we open a book, read the first few pages, and choose to go on, we enter the world of that book." To learn more and get lists of books by doorway, mood, occasion, or personality, check out her *Book Lust* series from NOLS or digitally from the Washington Anytime Library.

If you have a title or author in mind and you want to read more of the same, it's called a read-alike. One of the easiest things to do in this case is an online search. For instance "Pride and Prejudice read-alikes" will get you a lot of articles and lists. A favorite tool of library staff is Novelist, available on the Library's website at nols.org/online-resources. Try typing in a favorite

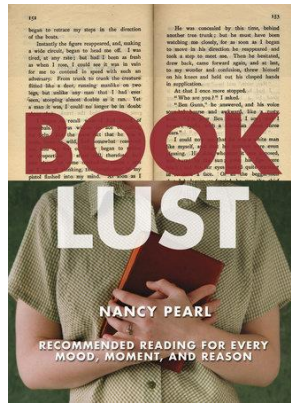
title or author to see a list of read-alikes on the right or scroll to the bottom of the page for “Appeal Terms.” Check the boxes on a few of the things you most liked and hit search to see others that match those characteristics. It can take a little digging, but gaining language for the things you love about books is especially useful.

Of course, we’re missing a key component here-- the human brain. Many library staff have favorite titles they frequently recommend and are always happy to share. In addition to the library, why not reach out to friends or family? Find a couple people with similar reading interests and you will have a constant stream of books to read. Don’t forget to step outside of your comfort zone now and again. A new favorite is waiting for you, and after all of this, you might find it just because you liked the cover.

For help finding great books to read, visit nols.org, call 360.683.1161, or email Sequim@nols.org. Happy reading!



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“Book Lust” by Nancy Pearl



nols.org/bookmatch

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