



TIPS AND HINTS

Don't Judge a Book By Its Cover!



Diversity



recognize value include respect

Diversity Team Living Library

Helpful Tips for Books



LIVING-library.org
Understanding Diversity



HELPFUL TIPS FOR BECOMING A BOOK

- Prepare yourself for your role of being a Book. This is not a game: you have to be convincing about the Book you are representing.
- It can help to prepare some factual arguments and information, such as statistics or research data, in order to evaluate the relevance of the information some Readers might confront you with.
- Be yourself; be honest and open to talk and listen carefully.
- Loving to talk, being egotistical, and/or an exhibitionist does not make a good Book. These characteristics can endanger the whole concept of the Living Library.
- Do not act another role or invent characteristics for yourself; the Reader will realize, and you will lose credibility.
- Be ready to share your reflected personal experience. If questions become too intimate, feel free to say that you do not want to answer.
- Accept that your Reader borrowed your book title and is interested in this dimension of your personality; additional information is mainly meant for illustration. This might give you the feeling that you are somewhat limited, but this is normal in the context of the Living Library.
- Be prepared to repeat yourself again and again, as different Readers might pose the same question. Try to treat your Reader as if they are the first person you are giving this information to. Try not to show that you are answering the same question for the 3rd, 4th, or 5th time.
- Remember that you meet your Reader for approximately 30 minutes and you might never meet again in your lives.
- Every Reader borrowing a book will be a different experience, and the reason for choosing your book can vary greatly. A good question to start the discussion is 'Why did you choose my book?' This will give you a first impression of the Reader's interest and will give you direction for the conversation.
- Readers of the Living Library are, in general, ready to talk, to listen and to learn. Their questions are not always very clear, so it's important to help Readers formulate their interest in your book. Try to get some basic information about the Reader – Have they met someone like you before? Did they have good or bad experiences with a person like you? This will help you to decide on the kind of information they might find interesting.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR BECOMING A BOOK (CONT.)

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- It may turn out that a Reader is inappropriate or for some reason becomes verbally aggressive and/or attempts to hold you responsible for a variety of social problems. Try to remain calm and show understanding, while expressing your disagreement where necessary. Try to move the discussion on to an area in which you feel safe.

- If you feel uneasy or humiliated by a Reader, recall the rules of the Living Library: you have the right to end the discussion if you feel insulted or accused.
- Although the Librarians are invited to encourage the Reader to choose a Book that represents a topic that may challenge a stereotype and prejudice, the Reader may have, the motivation to borrow a very different book.
- Readers may be curious about a book or looking for personal advice. **Remember:** Readers have to make their life decisions themselves; you can share your own experiences of solving problems or tackling difficult situations, but be careful not to give advice.
- The content of the discussion with your Readers is, in principle, confidential. If you quote from other Readers, do not mention their names.
- It may happen that you are borrowed by two or more people. This can be interesting, as the discussion is more varied. However, be aware not to let yourself be used for sorting out problems between different members of a group.
- If you work with a Dictionary (i.e. an interpreter), pause after every two or three sentences to ensure that everything you say has been translated. If you are not sure you understood the questions or comments of the Readers in translation, clarify it.
- If your book is a bestseller, arrange with the Librarians for short breaks between the Readers and inform them of how many Readers you are prepared to meet.
- If your Book is not as popular on that day, try to make the best use of the time in the Library by spending time with other Books.
- Enjoy being a Book! If approached with the right motivation it can be a very interesting and enriching experience for you and your Readers!





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