



Talking Book Center
1 Churchville Avenue
Staunton, VA 24401
540-885-6215

Global Reading: France

DB36928 A Man's Place by Annie Ernaux (family fiction)

Ernaux is once again prompted by a parent's death to create a portrait with words. For most of his life, Ernaux's father owned a small grocery shop in a Normandy town. Like others, he took pains not to act like a farmer or a laborer. He was proud of his daughter's ability in school, sure that she would lead a better life. She, in turn, outgrew him, favoring instead a more cultured lifestyle. 1983. 2022 Nobel Prize winner.

DB96732 Les Misérables by Victor Hugo (classic)

Jean Valjean, a poor French peasant, is imprisoned for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his sister's hungry children. He escapes, hiding his identity and devoting his life to noble causes, until he once again becomes the victim of cruel circumstance in early nineteenth-century France. Originally published in 1862.

DB40902 The Stranger by Albert Camus (fiction)

An existential novel, set in Algiers, about a man who resists any commitment, rendering his life meaningless. He does not react to his mother's death nor to a killing he commits, and he becomes a placid prisoner convicted of murder. His own impending death, however, leads him to some realizations. 1942.

DB108765 The N'Gustro Affair by Jean-Patrick Manchette (crime thriller fiction)

Mean, arrogant, naive, sadistic on occasion, the young Henri Butron records his life story on tape just before death catches up with him: a death passed off as a suicide by his killers, French secret service agents who need to hush up their role. It's a thinly veiled retelling of the 1965 abduction and killing of Mehdi Ben Barka, a radical opponent of King Hassan II of Morocco. Violence, strong language, and some descriptions of sex. 1971.

DB84671 Paris Nocturne by Patrick Modiano (psychological fiction)

The victim of a car accident, a young man reflects on the night and tries to remember if

he actually remembers the driver or if his memory is playing games with him. He searches for her later. 2003.

DB53171 Around The World In Eighty Days by Jules Verne (adventure)
London, 1872. Well-to-do, eccentric Phileas Fogg is certain that he can travel around the world in eighty days. He's so sure that he's wagered half of his fortune and set off on the grand adventure with his servant, Passepartout. 1873.

DB51746 All Men Are Mortal by Simone de Beauvoir (relationships)
Ambitious and self-absorbed Parisian actress Regina is intrigued by a mysterious man reposing in a hotel garden. She succeeds in capturing his interest and persuades him to reveal his secret--that he is immortal. As their relationship develops, the pair explore a range of philosophical and social issues. 1946.

DB86411 Modern France: A Very Short Introduction (nonfiction)
An overview of a country whose ideas, values, and culture create a strong national identity combined with universal values. Explores the French Revolution (1789) and its political aftermath, the fixation on language and literature, imperial expansion and decolonization, and the development of Paris, world capital of perpetual appeal. 2011.

DB44071 The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (classic)
The narrator's plane is forced down in the African desert, where he meets the little prince from Asteroid B-612, who freely shares his experiences with the fascinated pilot. For grades 3-6. 1943.

DB90858 A Literary Tour de France: The World Of Books On The Eve Of The French Revolution by Robert Darnton (nonfiction, history)
Using the archives from a Swiss university, author recounts the adventures of Jean-François Favarger, a traveling salesman for a Swiss publishing house, during five months in 1778. Discusses business practices, government censorship, book smuggling. Using the archives from a Swiss university, former Harvard University librarian recounts the adventures of Jean-François Favarger, a traveling salesman for a Swiss publishing house, during five months in 1778. Discusses day-to-day business practices, government censorship, book smuggling, the differences in markets, and more. 2018.