



### Characteristics of Literary Fiction

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1. **PACING** – Pacing is slower, as these are usually densely written books. Complex characters and/or story lines, as well as imaginative language and style, force readers to read more slowly in order to understand the layers of embedded meaning. There is generally more description than dialogue.
2. **STORY LINE** – Story lines are thought-provoking. Literary Fiction operates in the realm of ideas as well as practicalities, and these novels often consider universal dilemmas. Endings are often open or ambiguous.
3. **CHARACTERIZATION** – Characters emerge as more important than story lines, and the philosophical questions central to these books are often explored more through character than through story. Characters, even secondary characters, are multi-dimensional and often act in ways that are unpredictable.
4. **FRAME/SETTING** – Although frame is less important than in some genres, these layered stories often lend themselves to elaborately portrayed background details.
5. **TONE/MOOD** – The tone of Literary Fiction may be dark because of the seriousness of the issues considered, but Literary Fiction may also be humorous – either light or satirical in mood. Atmosphere may carry meaning or function as a component of the writing style.
6. **STYLE/LANGUAGE** – Literary style is important. Authors and readers pay attention to words and how they are woven together with elegant, often poetic language. The structure of the novel itself may be more complex, even experimental, and these novels may play with the conventions of other genres.

## Intellect Genres

### Literary Fiction Writers to Try, If You Enjoy...

ADRENALINE:	Don DeLillo
BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIR:	Isabel Allende T. Coraghessan Boyle Nancy Horan
FANTASY:	Isabel Allende Alice Hoffman Gabriel García Márquez
GAY/LESBIAN:	James Baldwin David Leavitt Sarah Waters
GENTLE:	Eudora Welty
HISTORICAL FICTION:	Geraldine Brooks
HISTORY:	E. L. Doctorow Gore Vidal
HORROR:	Jonathan Carroll
HUMOR:	Jonathan Safran Foer Michael Malone Richard Russo
INSPIRATIONAL:	Charles Williams
MULTICULTURAL:	Junot Díaz Louise Erdrich Jhumpa Lahiri Gloria Naylor Zadie Smith
MYSTERY:	Kate Atkinson Michael Chabon ( <i>The Yiddish Policemen's Union</i> )
NATURAL HISTORY:	Wendell Berry
PSYCHOLOGICAL SUSPENSE:	Henry James Arthur Phillips



ROMANCE:	Amy Bloom ( <i>Away</i> )
SAGA:	Sandra Cisneros ( <i>Caramelo</i> )
	Louise Erdrich
	Joyce Carol Oats (We are the Mulvaney's and The Falls)
SCIENCE FICTION:	Margaret Atwood
	Kazuo Ishiguro ( <i>Never Let Me Go</i> )
	Doris Lessing
	Philip Roth ( <i>The Plot Against America</i> )
TRAVEL:	Paul Theroux
TRUE ADVENTURE:	Herman Melville
	Arturo Pérez-Reverte
TRUE CRIME:	Kathryn Harrison
	Matthew Pearl
WESTERN:	Jim Harrison
	Craig Johnson
	Cormac McCarthy
	Larry McMurtry
WOMEN'S LIVES:	Diana Abu-Jaber
	Margaret Drabble
	Toni Morrison

## Intellect Genres

### Authors BEYOND the Literary Fiction Genre

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BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIR:	Alison Bechdel
ADRENALINE:	Arturo Pérez-Reverte
	Daniel Silva
	Mattin Cruz Smith
BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIR:	Robert A. Caro
	Azar Nafisi
	May Sarton
FANTASY:	Jasper Fforde Neil Gaiman
GENTLE:	Phillip Gulley
	Alexander McCall Smith
HISTORICAL:	Margaret George
	Sharon Kay Penman
	Steven Pressfield
HISTORY:	Doris Kearns Goodwin
	David McCullough
	Art Spiegelman
HORROR:	Toby Barlow
	Michael Cadnum
	M. R. James
LANGUAGE:	Bill Bryson
	Lynn Truss
MYSTERY:	James Lee Burke
	R D. James
	Fred Vargas



NATURAL HISTORY:	Annie Dillard
	Stephen J. Gould
	Oliver Sachs
PSYCHOLOGICAL SUSPENSE:	Minette Walters
	Ruth Rendell/Barbara Vine
SAGA:	James Michener
SCIENCE FICTION	Michael Flynn
	Neal Stephenson
TRAVEL:	Bill Bryson
	Michael Palin
	Paul Theroux
TRUE ADVENTURE:	John Krakauer
TRUE CRIME:	Truman Capote
	Erik Larson
	Norman Mailer
WESTERN:	Ivan Doig
	Larry McMurtry
WOMEN'S LIVES:	Kaye Gibbons
	Barbara Kingsolver