

How to Judge a Book

Before judging the books you need to decide how you will choose which one is the best. The Information Book Award adult judges decide on a list of qualities, called criteria, that they use to compare the books against each other. Phrasing the criteria as questions can help you to decide how well the book fits the criteria.

Here are some ideas for criteria. Do you agree with them? Are any more important to you than others?



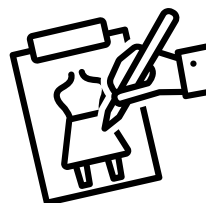
Subject

- Is the subject or topic interesting?
- Does the book take a completely different approach to a familiar subject or explore a new or rarely covered subject?
- Does the blurb or the introduction make you want to keep reading?
- Has the book sparked your curiosity to find out more about the subject?



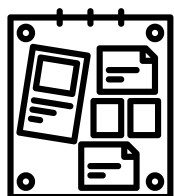
Writing Style

- Is the language used familiar and easy to read?
- Are new or technical words explained?
- Is there a sense of the author's voice in the style of writing? eg. chatty, humorous, informative, questioning, challenging



Design

- Does the cover design make you want to open the book?
- Is the text easy to read?
- What do you like about the layout and/or illustrations?
- Do the illustrations help you to understand what the writer is saying?



Organisation

- How does the book help you to locate information quickly? Does it have a contents page, index or glossary?
- How is the information presented on each page?
- Does the book make use of headings?
- Is the text divided into easier-to-read chunks?


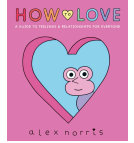




Reliability and Accuracy

- Is the information up-to date? (try looking at the date of publication)
- Is the author a reliable source? (Are any credentials given, are any expert consultants or fact checkers mentioned?)
- The adult judges sometimes invite experts to check certain books for accuracy. Perhaps you could ask a teacher or librarian for their opinion.

My Criteria

Write down your criteria then give each book a score out of ten. Add up the scores to find out which book is the winner.

Criteria				

Total

○ ○ ○ ○