"A great book should leave you with many experiences, and slightly exhausted at the end. You live several lives while reading."  [**William Styron**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/william-styron)  
  
• "In the highest civilization, the book is still the highest delight. He who has once known its satisfactions is provided with a resource against calamity." [**Ralph Waldo Emerson**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/data/author/ralph-waldo-emerson)  
  
• "There are worse crimes than burning books. One of them is not reading them."   
[**Joseph Brodsky**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/data/author/joseph-brodsky)  
  
• "To acquire the habit of reading is to construct for yourself a refuge from almost all the miseries of life." [**W Somerset Maugham**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/data/author/w-somerset-maugham)  
  
• "Every man who knows how to read has it in his power to magnify himself, to multiply the ways in which he exists, to make his life full, significant, and interesting." [**Aldous Huxley**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/data/author/aldous-huxley)  
  
• "The dearest ones of time, the strongest friends of the soul – BOOKS." [**Emily Dickinson**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/data/author/emily-dickinson)  
  
• "We don't need a list of rights and wrongs, tables of dos and don'ts: we need books, time, and silence. Thou shalt not is soon forgotten, but Once upon a time lasts forever." [**Philip Pullman**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/philippullman)  
  
• "Reading is the sole means by which we slip, involuntarily, often helplessly, into another's skin, another's voice, another's soul." [**Joyce Carol Oates**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/data/author/joyce-carol-oates)  
  
• "I think we ought to read only the kind of books that wound or stab us. If the book we're reading doesn't wake us up with a blow to the head, what are we reading for? So that it will make us happy, as you write? Good Lord, we would be happy precisely if we had no books, and the kind of books that make us happy are the kind we could write ourselves if we had to. But we need books that affect us like a disaster, that grieve us deeply, like the death of someone we loved more than ourselves, like being banished into forests far from everyone, like a suicide. A book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us. That is my belief."  
[**Franz Kafka**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/data/author/franz-kafka)