The Secret Language of Books: A Guide to Appeal

Now Included! Appeal for Audiobooks
The book that you hold in your hands (the result of several lifetimes spent reading!) is for anyone who loves to match readers with books. NoveList has been doing that – matching readers with books – for over 20 years, and we believe that a key to successful matchmaking is appeal – the “chemistry” of readers’ advisory.

Appeal is a way of determining why people enjoy the books they read. Some readers already have a good vocabulary for talking about the books they love, while some do better in talking about books they never want to read again – but framing these conversations in appeal is the foundation for helping people find what to read next.

Some of the pioneering (and groundbreaking! and revolutionary!) librarians who introduced appeal include Joyce Saricks, Nancy Pearl, and Neal Wyatt, to name just a few. Starting with their trailblazing work, NoveList brought together an intrepid band of catalogers to untangle the finer points of term selection and definition, wrestling (in our left-brained way) with the inherently subjective nature of appeal – what is “heartwarming” to one reader may be saccharine to another; what is “mildly sensuous” to me may be quite shocking to others.

The result of our efforts is an evolving vocabulary that changes in response to reader feedback, and a cataloging team committed to making appeal searchable in a systematic way for librarians and readers. The appeal vocabulary outlined in this book is organized in several different categories, including: Storyline, Pace, Tone, Writing Style, Illustration, and – most recently! – Audio Characteristics.

Happy reading!

Victoria Caplinger, MLS
Adult Cataloging Supervisor, NoveList
Storyline is a quick way to determine a book’s focus -- is the plot what drives the story, or is character development where the real interest lies? Is the plot intricate, or sweeping and nonlinear? This helps readers find books with an overall structure they enjoy.

**Action-packed:** Pulse-pounding, high-octane excitement is the rule in these books!

**Character-driven:** Interior growth and development of characters is an important element in these books.

**Intricately plotted:** With intricate, complicated or elaborate storylines, these books often involve multiple plots, large casts of characters, and numerous twists and turns in the narrative.

**Issue-oriented:** Issue-oriented books explore controversial themes, which may cover a variety of emotional, ethical, or social problems.

**Nonlinear:** Instead of being portrayed chronologically, the events in these books shift between different time periods.

**Open-ended:** Instead of providing all the answers, these books invite readers to ponder events long after the last page.

**Plot-driven:** In these books, a pivotal event or series of events propels the story forward; characters often react to the events, rather than causing them.

**Sweeping:** These sprawling stories span decades or generations and frequently include multiple locations and historical events.

**World-building:** Almost exclusively found in works of fantasy and science fiction, these books immerse the reader in a vivid imaginary world with intricacies such as invented histories, languages, geography, or cultures.
Pace is the rate at which a story unfolds for the reader. We identify books falling at either end of the pacing spectrum -- titles that are clearly fast-paced and those which are steady -- as well as those that start slowly then accelerate as the story progresses.

**Fast-paced:** Events in these exciting books unfold rapidly, moving the reader quickly through the story.

**Intensifying:** These books gradually build in momentum throughout the story, resulting in a gripping conclusion.

**Leisurely paced:** Due to descriptive language, focus on detail, or careful development of character or setting, these books unfold slowly, allowing the reader to savor the narrative.

**EXAMPLE:**

Gone Girl / Gillian Flynn  
**Storyline:** Intricately plotted  
**Pace:** Fast-paced  
**Tone:** Disturbing, Bleak, Suspenseful  
**Writing Style:** Compelling

**EXAMPLE:**

The House of Hades / Rick Riordan  
**Storyline:** Action-packed  
**Pace:** Fast-paced  
**Tone:** Suspenseful, Funny  
**Writing Style:** Attention-grabbing

Why so few pace terms? Some readers like things fast-paced, while others prefer something more leisurely, and expert Neal Wyatt assures us that no one really looks for “medium-paced” books!
Tone

Tone is the feeling that a book evokes in the reader. Is the mood of the story light and upbeat, or dark and menacing? Is it inspirational or bleak? Does the setting significantly add to the emotional content of the story?

**Amusing:** They may not make you laugh out loud, but these entertaining stories have a light humor that sometimes accentuates more serious themes.

**Angst-filled:** Characters in these books experience problems associated with adolescence, such as changing relationships, parental pressure, and questions about sexuality, popularity, or social standing.

**Atmospheric:** These books evoke the story’s setting, whether it’s a gothic mansion or a small Midwestern town. Although noteworthy, these settings are more generic than those in which “Strong sense of place” is used.

**Bawdy:** These books include coarse or risque material and may refer to sex in a humorous way.

**Bittersweet:** These books have a mixed emotional edge -- both pleasant and painful -- that is sustained throughout the story.

**Bleak:** The outlook of these books is dark, frequently devoid of faith in human nature and tending away from hope or optimism.

**Chaste:** These books about romantic relationships focus on the emotions and proper social behavior of the characters, and contain no sex or descriptions of sexual activity.

**Conservative:** These books represent a conservative (often Republican) perspective when discussing American politics, politicians, and political takes on social issues such as the environment, poverty, and the economy. Nonfiction use only.

Are your readers particular about the level of sensuality in the books they read? If they’d prefer the action to stop with hand-holding, steer them toward “chaste” books; if they want to dial it up a notch (or 50!) direct them toward “steamy” or even “explicit” titles.
Creepy: Unsettling in a visceral, skin-crawling way, these books make the reader distinctly uneasy, and often feature supernatural elements and eerie settings.

Darkly humorous: Biting humor abounds in these books, where the tone and subject matter is often morbid.

Disturbing: These books approach the darker side of human nature, and are unsettling in a sophisticated, psychological manner. Often featuring socially marginal or dysfunctional individuals and families, they showcase the less pleasant sides of human interaction.

Dramatic: These cinematic books feature exciting and larger-than-life stories, depicting anything from historical events to space warfare.

Emotionally intense: Conveying great depth or complexity of emotion, these books explore the inner lives of characters in detail.

Explicit: These books contain lots of vividly described sex, ranging from the plainest (but plentiful) vanilla to the kinkiest of kink and breaking of social mores.

Feel-good: These books have a gentle, comfortable, and hopeful feeling (not just a happy ending).

Funny: Laugh-out-loud humor and a light, playful tone characterize these books.

Gossipy: The actions and people in these books tend to be over-the-top, dramatic, and salacious. When used in nonfiction, the books will focus on scandals and rumor, and the sources may be undocumented.

Looking for “funny” books? Use appeal terms to figure out what kind of funny is just right: for gallows humor, try “darkly humorous;” for the third-graders in your library look for “gross” or “silly;” guide sophisticated readers toward the more restrained “witty” or “amusing” titles in your collection.
**Tone**

**Gross:** Yuck! Including lots of nasty, oozy, or otherwise disgusting facts or details, these books may be educational or purely for entertainment.

**Gruesome:** Not for the squeamish, these books include a significant amount of explicit gore or other grisly elements.

**Haunting:** Often because of hard-hitting storylines, these books have a memorable, unforgettable quality that stays with the reader.

**Heartwarming:** These gentle, comfortable books are sometimes sentimental, always life-affirming, and don’t usually have edgy or potentially objectionable content.

**Heartwrenching:** These books convey emotions that are keenly distressing, hitting a nerve with readers and deeply affecting them.

**High-drama:** Ranging from juicy and sensational stories to full-fledged melodramas, the characters in these books may deal with anything from perilous, back-stabbing social scenes to angst-filled personal traumas.

**Homespun:** Simplicity is key in these books, which often have a rural or small-town setting and feature characters that are unpretentious and cherish old-fashioned values.

**Hopeful:** While addressing serious issues, these nonfiction books incorporate some optimistic elements, expressing belief in humanity’s ability to strive for improvement and make things better. Nonfiction use only.

**Impassioned:** These books convey strong emotions to readers because the authors are forcefully advocating a particular point of view, making an argument, or telling an emotional story. Nonfiction use only.

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Readers may discover new genres or subjects based on appeal factors. For example, readers who like offbeat mysteries may learn that they also enjoy science fiction or fantasy if the books have a similar zany style of humor.
Inspirational: These books have an inspiring, enlightening, or uplifting quality, which may or may not be religious in nature.

Liberal: These books represent a liberal (often Democratic) perspective when discussing American politics, politicians, and political takes on social issues such as the environment, poverty, and the economy. Nonfiction use only.

Melancholy: While not grim or hopeless, these books have a sad, somber, or gloomy edge.

Menacing: A sense of threat or menace pervades these stories, evoking feelings of dread in the reader.

Mildly sensuous: Sex is present in these books, but it’s not given pride of place. Relationships are of the most importance, but sometimes the characters act on their attractions.

Moody: These intense books have a dark and brooding tone that sometimes borders on melodrama.

Moving: These touching books make readers feel emotionally invested in both the characters and the story.

Mystical: Although not necessarily religious in nature, these books approach spiritual themes. They may explore archetypes and myths, incorporate magical or metaphysical events, and address aspects of the human experience from a spiritual perspective.

**Example:**

*Men We Reaped / Jesmyn Ward*
*Tone:* Heartwrenching, Moving, Melancholy
*Writing Style:* Stylistically complex

**Example:**

*The Ocean at the End of the Lane / Neil Gaiman*
*Tone:* Haunting, Bittersweet, Mystical
*Writing Style:* Lyrical
**Tone**

**Noisy:** Because of rousing, energetic pictures or text, these stories lend themselves to loud readings.

**Non-spiritual:** These nonfiction books represent a decidedly non-spiritual outlook when discussing issues related to religion and spirituality. Nonfiction use only.

**Nostalgic:** Great attention is paid to setting and period detail in these books, either because characters reminisce or recollect events in the past, or because the book as a whole looks back toward a particular place or time with longing and wistfulness.

**Offbeat:** Frequently containing extreme plot twists, bizarre humor, and unique personalities, these quirky books recount unconventional, idiosyncratic, or unusual stories, often quite creatively.

**Quiet:** These soothing, low-key stories have a calming effect on young readers.

**Reflective:** These contemplative books feature characters who think seriously about their lives and place in the world, which can inspire a similar mood in the reader.

**Romantic:** These books are not genre romances, but do feature strong romantic elements -- either between characters or in the nature of the story or setting itself. Happy endings not guaranteed!

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**EXAMPLE:**

**And the Mountains Echoed / Khaled Hosseini**

**Storyline:** Character-driven, Intricately plotted

**Tone:** Heartwrenching, Dramatic,

Strong sense of place

**Writing Style:** Lyrical

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**EXAMPLE:**

**The Fault in Our Stars / John Green**

**Storyline:** Character-driven

**Tone:** Emotionally intense, Moving, Bittersweet

**Writing Style:** Witty, Dialogue-rich
Sad: The issues dealt with in these books may be very serious (such as death), or less serious but still challenging (such as a friend moving away), and in all cases are likely to elicit a sense of sadness in young readers.

Sarcastic: Sarcasm is frequently employed in these books, or can be attributed to one or more main characters. Despite sarcasm’s association with humor, these books aren’t always meant to be funny and can be quite serious.

Sassy: These books feature characters (usually female) with outsized personalities and a bottomless well of one-liners and comebacks.

Scary: These spooky books have a frightening or menacing feeling that will make young readers uneasy.

Serious: Marked by seriousness, gravity, or solemnity, these books often confront social issues such as war, poverty, environmental, gender, or racial concerns.

Silly: The class clowns of literature, these books are quite goofy but lots of fun. They employ sophomoric or ridiculous humor that goes beyond merely “funny” books in terms of either believability or good taste.

Sobering: Addressing weighty social issues, these profoundly serious and hard-hitting books present a perspective that may be revelatory to the reader.

**EXAMPLE:**
Divergent / Veronica Roth
Storyline: World-building
Tone: Bleak, Suspenseful
Writing Style: Compelling

**Example:**
Eleanor & Park / Rainbow Rowell
Storyline: Character-driven
Tone: Angst-filled, Romantic, Bittersweet
Spiritual: These nonfiction books represent a decidedly spiritual outlook when discussing issues related to religion and spirituality. Nonfiction use only.

Steamy: For adults, these sensual books contain lots of vividly described sex (not just innuendo!). When used for teen books, there will be an unmistakably sexy aura, whether they describe chemistry, sexual tension, mere innuendo, outright lust, or the act itself.

Strong sense of place: Powerfully depicted locales -- real or imaginary -- in these books come alive for readers and give them a good sense of the buildings, people, and ways of life that make a place unique.

Suspenseful: Ranging in intensity from subtle psychological unease to nail-biting suspense, these books keep readers on edge.

Sweet: With a light tone and appealing innocence, these endearing books are cute, playful, and otherwise delightful.

Thought-provoking: More than just telling a story, these books take on big ideas – anything from philosophical quandaries to time paradoxes – and in doing so stimulate continued interest or thought in the reader.

Upbeat: These fun books are lighthearted, hopeful, and optimistic.

Violent: Not for the faint of heart, these books contain explicit or graphic violence.

Whimsical: These fanciful and playful books will charm and enchant readers, and often include fairy tales or other elements of fantasy.

For some readers, the setting is as important as the story or the characters. You can direct these readers to books with a “strong sense of place,” and then pair that with a subject heading for an interesting location – anything from Provence to Winterfell to St. Petersburg, Russia!
Writing style as an appeal factor includes the language used in the book and the level of detail in the background. How is the book written? Are care and attention placed on the words or language used to convey the story, or is this secondary to the plot? Does the author excel at including “extras” that enrich the reader’s experience?

**Accessible:** These books explain a complicated or technical issue in an approachable manner. Nonfiction use only.

**Attention-grabbing:** Irresistible to young readers, these books instantly draw them in.

**Browsable:** These books enable or encourage the reader to browse. The information is arranged in short sections and is often accompanied by illustrations or other graphics. Nonfiction use only.

**Candid:** The narrative style of these books is frank and forthcoming, even when discussing potentially sensitive or discomfiting subjects.

**Compelling:** Incorporating a variety of narrative techniques, from foreshadowing to frequent changes in perspective, these gripping books have a powerful effect on readers, drawing them irresistibly into the story.

**Conversational:** Written in informal language, these books read as if a close friend were telling a story.

**Descriptive:** Full of elaborate descriptions, these books use illustrative, expressive language.

**Dialect-rich:** These books employ regional language, lingo, or slang to bring the setting to life.

**Dialogue-rich:** These books contain well-crafted, notable, or remarkable dialogue.

**Easy-to-understand:** These books make hard-to-understand things a little bit easier. Nonfiction use only.

**Engaging:** These appealing books capture the attention and imagination of readers through narrative style, character, or use of detail.

**Experimental:** These books employ language, narrative structure, or even setting in an unusual or unexpected manner.
Gritty: Characterized by a narrative style that includes dark and unsettling details, these books often depict violence.

Jargon-filled: These books use the specialized, technical language of a particular group, trade, or profession.

Journalistic: Often written about newsworthy issues, these books are well-researched but written in language that is relaxed and conversational, rather than academic or scholarly. Nonfiction use only.

Lush: The descriptive language in these books is specifically geared toward evoking the senses. Touch, taste, smell, hearing, or sight are strongly depicted, making readers feel as if they are actually experiencing what is being described.

Lyrical: The language in these titles is elegant and beautiful, often with a rhythmic or poetic quality.

Minimal text: Generally used with toddlers or very young children, these books have few words per page. The chosen words tend to be simple, and sentence structure is short and straightforward.

Persuasive: Written by authors who are advocating a certain point of view, these books may present both sides of an issue, but this is frequently used to bolster the original opinion. Nonfiction use only.

Richly detailed: In these books, a strong level of detail informs the story’s backdrop. Sometimes a special body of knowledge (e.g., of forensics, music, history, etc.) adds to the storyline, and sometimes there are so many “extras” included that the reader’s experience is greatly enriched.

Need a good way to start your conversations with readers? Ask them about a book they recently enjoyed, then listen for the appeal words in what they tell you. If they can’t remember their last good book, sometimes you can get just as much information if you ask about something they didn’t enjoy!
Scholarly: Thoroughly researched and often addressing complicated issues or topics, the language used in these books may be academic or technical. They frequently contain numerous footnotes or other supplemental material. Nonfiction use only.

Slang-heavy: Characters in these books make frequent use of slang, which often aids in character development.

Spare: The writing in these books is minimal and elegant. Words are seldom wasted, and great attention is paid to the use of language.

Stylistically complex: The language in these books is constructed with care, and may skillfully combine several style elements. Due to sophisticated narrative structure, these stories can often be read on a number of levels.

Thoughtful: Despite covering a sensitive or controversial topic, these books are considerately written and handle the subject with respect.

Witty: Through clever use of language, these books express amusing insights or perceptions.

Wordplay-filled: These books are full of puns, palindromes, anagrams, and other clever uses of language.

EXAMPLE: Gulp / Mary Roach
Tone: Darkly humorous
Writing Style: Witty, Richly detailed, Engaging

EXAMPLE: The Goldfinch / Donna Tartt
Storyline: Character-driven
Pace: Leisurably paced
Tone: Haunting, Atmospheric, Melancholy
Writing Style: Compelling, Lyrical, Richly detailed
Books featuring a lot of illustration – both picture books and graphic novels – have a unique set of qualities important to their readers. Illustration appeal is geared toward identifying these elements and includes a range of terms that cover everything from color and drawing style to the mood evoked in the reader by the illustrations.

**Abstract:** These illustrations deliberately distort perspective and proportion so that objects and people are removed from reality. In some cases this can heighten the emotional impact of the art, while at other times it simply adds visual interest.

**Big and bold:** These illustrations convey ideas in a simple manner that is easily understood by young children. The contrast between bright colors and bold lines makes the pictures easily visible from a distance, even within a large group (making these books a great choice for story time!)

**Black-and-white:** The artwork in these books is in black and white only, and may range from pen and ink drawings to watercolor-like effects in shades of grey.

**Bold:** The shapes or lines in these illustrations have a strong and striking appearance. The artwork may consist of simple, basic, or block-like shapes, and the lines may be dark, distinct, or thick.

**Cartoony:** This style of illustration features characters that are drawn with exaggerated, simplified features. Often humorous, this style may also be used to lighten difficult or disturbing themes.

**Charming:** The illustrations in these books are captivating and pleasing to the eye. They are often cute and playful, and offer visual support for the light or upbeat tone in a story.

**Colorful:** The full-color illustrations in these books feature vibrant colors. The artwork may vary widely, but the color palette is vivid.

**Dark:** Often used for emphasis in stories with a bleak, menacing, or serious tone, these illustrations are full of shadows and dark corners.
**Delicate:** Deft and fine in texture or structure, these illustrations display intricate workmanship and quality. Lines are thinly drawn, and the effect of these pictures is subtle.

**Detailed:** These books convey a lot of information through the quantity and clarity of the detail within the objects and offer readers the chance to pore over the pictures.

**Folk-art style:** Folk-style art can be recognized by its typically flat perspective, simplified or stylized shapes, and dramatic use of color. It frequently appears to have been created by either an untrained artist or one who does not adhere to academic standards for art.

**Impressionistic:** These evocative illustrations use soft lines, reflected light, and color to create an impression of reality. They often capture a sensory, emotion-filled impression of a scene or an object.

**Inventive:** These creative books challenge the reader’s perceptions with non-standard use of various illustrative elements (including line, panels, or color).

**Lavish:** Whether through use of color, line, detail, or over-the-top exuberance, these beautiful illustrations are elaborate, sumptuous, and striking.

**Minimally colored:** These books feature a limited color palette; sometimes the art is two-toned in a color other than black, and sometimes the illustrations are predominantly black-and-white or grayscale with one or two brighter colors used as an accent or for artistic effect.

**Muted:** The subtle color used in these images may have a washed out or subdued quality. This restraint in the use of color often serves to set the tone of the story.

**Nightmarish:** These illustrations are deliberately ugly, frightening, or unpleasant. They will most likely accompany a storyline that is also unpleasant, with a creepy, disturbing, or menacing tone.
Photographic: These books use photographs as illustrations. This is frequently found in nonfiction books where photographs are the primary illustrations.

Realistic: These illustrations utilize correct proportions and accurate use of perspective, and in appearance are very similar to the person or thing being represented. The content may not represent reality, but the drawing style does.

Rough-edged: These illustrations are not sophisticated, polished, or elegant; instead, they present jagged lines and imperfect images, which can serve to emphasize the strong emotions that are often being portrayed.

Sepia-toned: Sepia-toned illustrations are reddish-brown in color, and are often used to indicate nostalgia, reminiscence, or events that took place in the past.

Simple: Without much decoration or ornamentation, these uncomplicated illustrations are characterized by the use of basic or primary forms. This stripped-down quality is sometimes in contrast with the emotional depth of the story.

Surreal: These illustrations have a dreamlike or unreal quality, and attempt to express the workings of the subconscious. While typically painted in a realistic style, they employ unexpected juxtapositions and incongruities of people or objects.

Textured: The visible texture of these illustrations adds realistic depth and detail through the skillful use of the artistic medium.

Doing a story time or read-aloud to a big group of kids? You might want to look for “funny” books with “big and bold” illustration appeal. If you really want to get them worked up, look for one with the appeal term “NOISY” as well!
Audiobooks have a unique set of appeal characteristics based on the narration. Does the narrator have an accent? Are there multiple narrators or just one? Audio appeal covers everything from descriptions of the performance (full cast or read by the author) to terms describing voice quality, tone, and artistic delivery of the narrator.

**Audio drama:** These performances are either original audio productions, or were changed significantly from a book to a more dramatic form of the work. In these cases, the bridging narration is often incorporated into the dialogue or entirely removed.

**Approachable:** Through their clear and well-paced performances, these narrators make challenging concepts or language easier for listeners to understand.

**Brisk:** These narrators move their stories along with quick, agile readings.

**Character accents:** Incorporating accents into their performances, these narrators bring both characters and settings to life with their vocal versatility.

**Comedic:** Through good use of comic timing, these narrators channel the humor of the stories they read and convey it to listeners.

**Commanding:** These narrators deliver strong and authoritative performances.

**Crisp:** These narrators read in clear tones, with precise enunciation.

**Deadpan:** The humor in these books – sometimes wry and sometimes riotous – is delivered in a cool, understated manner.

**Detached:** These performances are emotionally removed from the story, which often separates the listener from the impact of violent or disturbing events.

**Distinctly voiced:** These narrators provide a multiplicity of voices for their characters, sometimes through use of accents, and sometimes through use of pitch, intonation, and tone. In all cases, however, the end result is that the listener can easily identify who is speaking by listening, without having to rely on textual clues for this information.
Emotionally connected: Because of their connection with the characters, these narrators successfully capture the emotional content of the books they read, and convey it to listeners.

Energetic: These narrators imbue their performances with spirit, animation, and enthusiasm; adding to the humor, excitement, or drama of the books they read.

Engrossing: These narrators skillfully draw listeners into the story, providing a memorable listening experience.

Folksy: These narrators highlight regional speech patterns, cadences, and dialects; often the characters they portray will be from rural areas, including but not limited to the South.

Full cast: In these performances, various narrators perform as individual characters during an interactive reading.

Gentle: These soothing voices are easy on the ear, and may serve to relax listeners. Sometimes this narrative style can make difficult subject matter easier to process.

Gravelly: These narrators have a husky, raspy, and throaty quality to their voices.

Immersive: Narration that captures the sensation of a time and place and immerses the listener in the story’s setting. This may be done through the use of character accents and/or sound effects.

Intense: Through dramatic, suspense-filled performances, these narrators keep listeners on the edges of their seats.

Live audience: In these productions, narrators or actors perform in the presence of a live audience.

Melodious: These lilting, dulcet voices offer a pleasing and almost hypnotic listening experience.

Multiple narrators: These performances include more than one narrator, often reading sections or chapters told from one character’s perspective.

Musically enhanced: Including anything from a few musical accents to a full musical score, this characteristic is most often found in full cast performances or in juvenile audiobooks.
Read by the author: In these performances, authors double as narrators, and listeners get the chance to hear the text as voiced by the author.

Resonant: These pleasing voices wash over the listener in rich and sonorous tones.

Sincere: With their heartfelt (although sometimes less-than-polished) performances, narrators of these nonfiction audiobooks imbue their readings with genuine conviction.

Somber: These performances underscore the serious nature of the stories they tell.

Sound effects: Most often found in full cast performances or in juvenile audiobooks, these productions rely heavily on added audio elements.

Understated: While they may not be all bells and whistles, these restrained performances provide quietly memorable listening experiences.

Unhurried: These narrators take their time with the stories they read, using slower cadences and measured rhythms, which gives listeners time to reflect on the story and savor the author’s writing.

Warm: These appealing voices have pleasant, inviting tones.

Well-characterized: More than by simply differentiating their voices, these narrators inhabit the characters in a way that is authentic and convincing, bringing one or more personalities to life for the listener.

Wry: These books are read by narrators who excel at drawing out subtle humor, ranging from understated irony to acerbic wit.

Youthful: These voices often impart an air of innocence and buoyancy to the stories they read.

Audio Characteristics

Prefer to listen to books read by the author? Do you love it when narrators do different character accents, or does that drive you crazy? The narration of an audiobook can make or break the reader (um… listener!) experience. Audio appeal terms help narrow down to the right choices.
Now that you know your appeal terms, it’s time to do a little exploring in NoveList.

Do you want to find sweet (“chaste”) romances with hand-holding but no dancing? Are you looking for a bleak, disturbing novel to make you feel a little better about your own life? Maybe you are in the mood for something set in Paris (with a “strong sense of place”)…

NoveList can help you take your reading list to the next level – combining appeal with other search terms like subjects, locations, or genres will uncover hidden gems that you might have missed or lost favorites that you forgot. A world of reading awaits!

Where to find NoveList: Ask for it at your local library

Learn more about NoveList: [www.ebscohost.com/novelist](http://www.ebscohost.com/novelist)

“Never apologize for your reading tastes.”

-- Betty Rosenberg
It was every librarian’s dream, but they made it come true…

In the rolling hills of central North Carolina, a small band of librarians set out to capture the experiences of a reading lifetime. Armed only with a passion for books and a fierce determination to help other readers find authors and titles they could fall in love with, they set forth on a journey of discovery. A journey which led them to readers’ advisors, database experts, reviewers and librarians across the country, all in search of a shared vocabulary of appeal.

Through the years, they forged a method for expressing the reader’s experience across thousands of books, succeeding in a way they never dared hope for…

“Engaging, richly detailed, and darkly humorous”

– Barry Trott
Digital Services Director,
Williamsburg Regional Library

“I laughed, I cried, it became a part of me”

– Joyce Saricks,
Readers’ Advisory Consultant and Audio Editor, Booklist