How to Start a Book Club

1: Search for members: family, friends, and/or acquaintances. Ask around at your workplace, place of worship, civic organizations, neighborhood or neighborhood association, etc.

2: Decide what books to focus on: fiction, nonfiction, classic, contemporary, romance, bestsellers, biographies, travel literature or a mix of genres, etc.

3: Choose meeting place and time:
Where will you meet? At your house or someone else’s, at a local business or the library? Will you rotate meeting places each month? When will you meet? Some groups meet in the afternoon, others meet in the evening. If group members generally work during the day, their only available time may be in the evening or on weekends.

4: Set down guidelines: Who will moderate/lead the discussion? Some groups have the same person moderate the discussion, others rotate this position each month, and others have no moderator. Here are some general guidelines: look at the person talking, do not interrupt, stay relevant, give non-verbal cues to speaker (nod, smile), ask questions, stay focused, etc.

5: Check out kits at Henry Ford Centennial Library: currently we have over 175 kits shelved alphabetically by title in the Adult reference stacks. If interested, please see a list of all titles or a list of new titles.

6: Find more information: for starters, check out The Book Club Companion by Diana Loevy; search “how to start a book club” in your favorite search engine; and/or visit these websites: litlovers.com, readinggroupguides.com and bookbrowse.com. We also have a number of book-club related databases that you may find helpful: Books and Authors (book descriptions and reviews, author biographies, “read-a-like wizard,” etc.), NoveList Plus (book discussion guides, recommended titles, “read-alikes,” etc.), Literature Criticism Online (author biographies and literary criticism regarding contemporary classics), Literature Resource Center (author biographies and literary criticism regarding classics) and Biography In Context (biographies).

7: Have fun: definitely make this one of the guidelines!

If you are not interested in starting up a book club yourself, consider joining a book club already in existence. Ask around or visit bookclub.meetup.com/cities/us/mi/dearborn.