



Identifying Your Ideal Reader

It is generally acknowledged that an author should not write for themselves but for their reader and, to do so, they must first identify who that reader is.

So, who is your ideal reader? What type of person will fall in love with your writing? Who will want to curl up in a chair and read your book from cover to cover? If you don't know, it's time to figure it out.

As an author, you need to write in a style and at a reading and educational level for your ideal reader.

For example, if you are writing a book on quantum mechanics and using the thought experiment known as "Schrödinger's Cat" to illustrate a paradox of quantum superposition, it's reasonable to identify your ideal reader as having a good educational background, probably at College/University level, as opposed to a ten-year-old child.

Here's a guide to help you to identify your ideal reader.

1. Define your book's genre and category

- start by clearly defining the genre and category of your book, for example, romance, mystery, self-help, fantasy, etc.
- identify the key characteristics and conventions of books within your genre to understand the typical reader expectations.

2. Consider Demographic Factors & Psychographic Traits

- Gender
- Age
- Race/cultural background
- Geographical location
- Living situation – i.e. house, apartment, city-dweller, country dweller, renter, property owner
- Personality
- Job/Career
- Life focus
- Hopes & dreams
- Problems & fears

- Books/genres they like to read and why
- What books they have read most recently
- Educational level
- Income
- Marital Status
- Children, if so, what are their ages
- Pastimes/hobbies

You get the idea ...

3. **Conduct Market Research**

- analyse similar book similar to yours in genre, style or subject matter to identify their target audience;
- read reviews of comparable books to understand reader feedback and preferences; and
- engage in online forums, social media groups or book clubs related to your genre to observe reader discussions and preferences.

4. **Create Reader Personas**

- develop fictional profiles representing different segments of your ideal reader base;
- include demographic details, psychographic traits and specific preferences related to reading habits and book consumption; and
- use these personas as reference points to guide your writing, marketing strategies and engagement efforts.

5. **Solicit Feedback**

- share excerpts or summaries of your book with beta readers or target readers to gather feedback; and
- pay attention to their reactions, preferences and suggestions to gain insights into your ideal reader's tastes and preferences.

6. **Reflect on Your Own Motivations**

- consider why you wrote your book and the audience you envisioned while writing; and
- reflect on your personal experiences, interests and values that influenced the content and themes of your book.

7. **Iterate and Refine**

- continuously refine your understanding of your ideal reader based on feedback, observations and market trends; and
- adapt your approach to better connect with your target audience and to grow your reader base.

Knowing your ideal reader will help you tailor your writing, marketing efforts and overall approach to best resonate with your target audience.