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Annotated Bibliography: Free Books Online

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Annotated Bibliography:

Free Books Online



**Murl Winters, Associate Library Director
Evangel University**

There are millions of books now freely available online. Many of these may be downloaded to an electronic device. Generally, the websites listed below will lead to larger collections – some with well-known names. Two of the websites are master lists of many such sites covering a range of options from newly written fiction to the classics.

1. Larger Lists

- *Book-Bot*: <http://www.book-bot.com/>

This has over 14,570 books available.

- *Project Gutenberg*: <http://www.gutenberg.org/>

Its opening page states that it offers “free epub books (and) free kindle books” to be read online or downloaded. Besides the over 49,000 titles that it mentions, I have found a link to over 100,000 titles with the link entitled “Partners, Affiliates and Resources” to be particularly helpful. There is also an additional site, Project Gutenberg Australia (<http://gutenberg.net.au/>), for those who prefer to use its link.

- *Online Books Page, University of Pennsylvania Library*:
<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/books/>

This resource is consistently mentioned within the lists of those offering access to free books. It is arranged by broad subjects. It now contains HathiTrust public domain titles as well. As a bonus, for those seeking specialized collections, scroll down to the link entitled, “the inside story” and click on “about the online books page.” From there, click on the link entitled “pointers to significant directories and archives of online texts.” It is a veritable treasure trove. Note all the collections arranged by language.

- *Internet Archives.org*: <https://archive.org/>

I think of this as a place to find a classic book. The website is trying to archive everything on the Internet including digitized books. Float the cursor over the symbols in the middle ribbon. The books symbol is on the left. Click on

it and then search by author, title, or subject. Click a book. Available formats are displayed on the right to download the book, or a PDF link is available for reading online.

- *ReadCentral.com*: <http://www.readcentral.com/>

It offers over 8,600 free books that can be read online. Its strength is in the wide variety of genres available and it is not limited to English.

- *Questia Public Library*: <https://www.questia.com/library/free-books>

This resource offers over 5,000 public domain and classic books that may be read.

- *eBooks @ Adelaide (Steve Thomas, University of Adelaide)*:
<https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/>

Besides the books, if you go to the link entitled, “about eBooks @ Adelaide,” it takes you to an ebook. The table of contents of this ebook provides a link entitled, “A Brief History Lesson.” In this link Steve Thomas, the creator of eBooks @ Adelaide, provides an overview of the types of digital displays extant and gives ways to improve the online reading experience. This is a great resource for those interested in e-reading.

- *Alex Catalogue of Electronic Texts*: <http://infomotions.com/alex/>

This resource is designed to facilitate and support a person’s ongoing liberal arts education.

- *Open Library.org*: <https://openlibrary.org/>

This is one of the larger groups of free books. You may register for a membership and borrow books or you may look for those marked with “Read,” if you want to read them online.

- *Google Books*: <https://books.google.com/>

When a search for a book is made, look for a copy with the word “read” under the entry. Most of the content available full text was printed prior to 1923, but all must be in the public domain.

2. Children’s Books

- *Children’s Library (Archive.org)*: <https://archive.org/details/iacl>

This resource contains books for children from around the world. It has 2,800+ children’s books.

- *International Children’s Digital Library*: <http://en.childrenslibrary.org/>

This website contains the texts of pages that may be displayed in various languages, including: English, Spanish, and French. Among the popular searches is one by country that may be made on a map or by named continent or region. There are books in at least 19 languages.

3. Audiobooks

- *Librivox.org*: <https://www.librivox.org/>

This resource contains free public domain audiobooks read by volunteers from around the world. Users should anticipate that some volunteers may have better reading voices which may affect the overall experience.

4. Master Lists of Sources

a. Audiobooks

- *Audiobooks Online (Gizmo's Freeware)*:
<http://www.techsupportalert.com/free-books-audio>

This is a master list of 224 places for free audio books online.

b. Books

- *Best Sites to Read Books Online without Download or Registration (Gizmo's Freeware)*: <http://www.techsupportalert.com/free-books-read-online>

This is an annotated list of 346 sites where books may be read for free without download or registration. It offers a link for a more extensive list of 913 sites where eBooks are available but may require downloading or registration.

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