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GRE Verbal Toolbox: Recommended Reading

Below, you'll find suggested readings for your GRE verbal preparation, for improving critical reading attention/comprehension, building and retaining new vocabulary, and strengthen your own written style.

--Andrew Jungclaus, Guru GRE tutor

News

I know that it's annoying to only have one choice here, and in our world of paid content and advertising optimization, nobody's perfect. But in terms of literary writing style, in-depth reporting, and thoughtful coverage, you really can't beat them.

[The New York Times](#)

Publications for anyone

What I love about these – apart from how well and engagingly they're written – is their breadth of coverage. You could be interested in anything, from astronomy to medieval poetry, and find an article in any one of these to keep you interested.

[The New Yorker](#)

[Harper's](#)

[The New York Review of Books](#)

[The London Review of Books](#)

[The Paris Review](#)

[Lapham's Quarterly](#)



Fiction

These are a few of my favorite books, all of which I've read multiple times. A few are strange, but I can promise they'll certainly increase your vocabulary!

Moby Dick, by Herman Melville

Best to look at this one as less a gripping adventure story, more a meditative experience mediated through a nineteenth-century sea-faring vernacular.

The Master and Margarita, by Mikhail Bulgakov

The devil visits Russia with his valet and a talking cat with a gun. Trouble ensues.

Ada, or Ardor, by Vladimir Nabokov

Trigger warning: incest. But this is a comedy.

Non-fiction

anything by Joan Didion

Crystal prose and wit. You can't go wrong with anything she's written on New York, California, and everything in between.

anything by Bill Bryson

Another beautiful prose writer who explores and explains the natural world like nobody else.

anything by Oliver Sacks

Sacks writes psycho- and neurological case studies. They are fascinating, moving, and funny!