

WTBBL Recommended Reads: Talking Animals



Every pet owner wishes they could know what their pets are thinking. If only they could talk! These authors have taken a shot at what all sorts of critters might say, given the chance. Enjoy these books about a myriad of talking animals!

Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt, 2022. ([BRO24204](#), [DB107924](#), en español [DB116570](#))

After Tova Sullivan's husband died, she began working the night shift cleaning at the Sowell Bay Aquarium. Tova becomes acquainted with curmudgeonly Marcellus, a giant Pacific octopus living at the aquarium. Marcellus knows more than anyone can imagine but wouldn't dream of lifting one of his eight arms for his human captors--until he forms a remarkable friendship with Tova. – Book description from BARD

Wild Magic [#1, Immortals Quartet] by Tamora Pierce, 1992. ([DB048501](#), [LPO10517](#))

Young Daine's knack with horses gets her a job helping the royal horsemistress drive a herd of ponies to Tortall. Soon it becomes clear that Daine's talent, as much as she struggles to hide it, is downright magical. Horses and other animals not only obey, but listen to her words. Daine, though, will have to learn to trust humans before she can come to terms with her powers, her past, and herself. – Book description from Goodreads

A Dog's Life by Peter Mayle, 1995. ([BR010858](#), [DB044236](#))

Boy, an uncannily shaggy canine of unknown origins, and now undisputed master of the Mayle household, recounts his event-filled life in Provence in this unique, rollicking memoir. Boy's reflections on life and the relationship between man and dog - and his occasional revelation about the human condition - come from a refreshingly new perspective, that is, approximately knee-height, making him an irresistible, if often irascible, companion. – Book description adapted from Goodreads

Hollow Kingdom by Kira Jane Buxton, 2019. ([DB096119](#))

S.T. is a domesticated crow. He is a bird of simple pleasures: hanging out with his owner Big Jim, trading insults with Seattle's wild crows (those idiots) and enjoying the finest food humankind has to offer: Cheetos. But when Big Jim's eyeball falls out of his head, S.T. is left with no choice but to venture out into a frightening new world, where he discovers that the neighbors are devouring each other, and the local wildlife is abuzz with rumors of dangerous new predators roaming Seattle... – Book description from NLS catalog

Mort(e) by Robert Repino, 2014. ([BR020839](#), [DB081576](#))

A race of intelligent ants seeks to eradicate mankind. They intend to run a utopia free of violence, exploitation, and superstition. The final step in their plan is to transform surface animals into sentient beings to rise up and kill their masters. Former housecat turned war hero, Mort(e) fights through the

dystopia to find his old friend, a dog named Sheba. – Book description adapted from NLS catalog

I am a Cat by Sōseki Natsume, 1906. ([DB110894](#))

Written from 1904 through 1906, Soseki Natsume's comic masterpiece, *I Am a Cat*, satirizes the foolishness of upper-middle-class Japanese society during the Meiji era. With acerbic wit and sardonic perspective, it follows the whimsical adventures of a world-weary stray kitten who comments on the follies and foibles of the people around him. – Book description from Goodreads

The Bees by Laline Paull, 2014. ([DB080129](#))

Flora 717 is a worker bee born into the lowest caste of her totalitarian hive society. Though prepared to sacrifice everything for the Queen and work herself to death, she is a survivor who escapes internal massacres, religious purges, and can even successfully confront a huge marauding wasp. With each act of bravery her status grows, revealing both the enemies within, and the sinister secrets that rule the hive. But when Flora's devotion to a life of service is overwhelmed by fierce and forbidden maternal love, she must break the most sacred law of all, and embark on a collision course with everything she holds most dear. – Book description from author's website

Maus: A Survivor's Tale by Art Spiegelman, 1986. ([DB111228](#))

A brutally moving work of art-widely hailed as the greatest graphic novel ever written-Maus recounts the chilling experiences of the author's father during the Holocaust, with Jews drawn as wide-eyed mice and Nazis as menacing cats. Maus is a haunting tale within a tale, weaving the author's account of his tortured relationship with his aging father into an astonishing retelling of one of history's most unspeakable tragedies. It is an unforgettable story of survival and a disarming look at the legacy of trauma. – Book description from NLS catalog

Mink River by Brian Doyle, 2010. ([DBC00562](#))

In a small fictional town on the Oregon coast there are love affairs and almost-love-affairs, mystery and hilarity, bears and tears, brawls and boats, a garrulous logger and a silent doctor, rain and pain, Irish immigrants and Salish stories, mud and laughter. It's the tale of a town, written in a distinct and lyrical voice, and readers will close the book more than a little sad to leave the village of Neawanaka, on the west coast of Oregon, beneath the

hills that used to boast the biggest trees in the history of the world. – Book description from NLS catalog

The Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein, 2008. ([BR017801](#), [DB066787](#))

Enzo knows he is different from other dogs: a philosopher with a nearly human soul (and an obsession with opposable thumbs), he has educated himself by watching television extensively, and by listening very closely to the words of his master, Denny Swift, an up-and-coming race car driver. Through Denny, Enzo has gained tremendous insight into the human condition, and he sees that life, like racing, isn't simply about going fast. On the eve of his death, Enzo takes stock of his life, recalling all that he and his family have been through. A heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of family, love, loyalty, and hope, *The Art of Racing in the Rain* is a beautifully crafted and captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life ... as only a dog could tell it. – Book description from Goodreads

Nightbitch: A Novel by Rachel Yoder, 2021. ([DB120469](#))

An ambitious artist puts her career on hold to raise her new baby boy. Her husband works out of town 5 days a week and is scarcely home to help Annie with childrearing, let alone housekeeping. Two years later, left alone with only her increasingly rambunctious toddler and her thoughts, she begins to exhibit signs of lycanthropy; thick fur coats her skin, and the urge to eat raw meat and chase squirrels into the forest behind her backyard only worsens with her husband's dismissal of her worry. Is she really turning into a dog? Or is the pent-up rage from being sequestered to a life of domestic labor and motherhood manifesting into something more sinister? – Book description from library staff

The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame, 1908. ([BR012977](#), [DB024592](#), [LP013020](#))

For more than a century, *The Wind in the Willows* and its endearing protagonists—Mole, Water Rat, Badger, and, of course, the incorrigible Toad—have enchanted children of all ages. Whether the four friends are setting forth on an exciting adventure, engaging in a comic caper, or simply relaxing by the River Thames, their stories will surprise and captivate you. – Book description from Goodreads