

# Guide to Starting a Book Club

1. **Gather participants.** Spread the word via e-mail, word of mouth, and flyers in the lunch room, copy room, or other common areas.

**Tip:** Give a certain date you want them to e-mail you regarding their interest.

**Tip:** Let them know they'll help choose the book! (Unless you chose already! Then hype up your choice and highlight how it will be valuable to readers.)

2. **Survey participants to choose a book. You could also use articles about wellbeing or TED Talks for engaging, less time consuming topics!**

Select titles you find interesting (look at the Employee Wellness Library built by OEA Choice Trust, or find your own) and ask participants to vote for their top choices.

**Tip:** You can use a free version of Survey Monkey to conduct a short voting survey. See below for *Example of Survey Questions*.

3. **Solidify dates and places to meet.** Propose a schedule for how often to meet and set dates. You can use the *Meeting Schedule* template below once you have set dates, or you can input them into your e-mail calendar and invite participants.

**Tip:** While you can plan your meetings one-by-one, it may be helpful to find a consistent date – the first Thursday each month or the second Wednesday – so you can easily plan ahead for future meetings.

**Tip:** Meeting at a central location or switching up where you meet can ensure that everyone takes turns commuting to meetings!

**Tip:** Be courteous and conscious of everyone's work-life balance. Since members have dinner to prepare, additional work to do, family responsibilities, etc., you might need to keep meetings to 45-60 minutes.

4. **Figure out a healthy snack schedule.** If some wellness funds are built into your wellness grant or district budget, reimbursement can be done so no one pays out of pocket!

**Tip:** As book club coordinator, provide snacks for the first meeting. This way participants just have to show up!

**Tip:** Create a list of healthy snack ideas. The OEA Choice Trust website and *Healthy Snacks* page of this guide have some suggestions.

5. **Have your first meeting!** Pass out books and share your excitement for reading together! Determine what chapters you want to read before each meeting, especially if your group would like to skip around.

**Tip:** Discuss how to use *Meeting Schedule* and *Reader's Reflections* tools if you and the group want to use them.

**Tip:** Create structure for how following meetings will be held.

Example:

- **10 minutes:** Get healthy snacks, settle in, welcome participants
- **20 minutes:** Discussion about the section everyone read
- **10 minutes:** Discuss how to apply the information to employee wellbeing
- **5 minutes:** Review what to read next, next meeting date, next snack provider

6. **Send out reminders a week before your meetings.** Be sure to encourage everyone to come, even if they only read part of the designated section for that meeting. Remind them that bringing questions and thoughts about the selection will help keep discussion lively!

7. **At the last book club meeting, have a celebration!** Ask participants to think ahead of time about their overall opinions of the book. (You can use the “Reader’s Review” page to prompt short responses if you’d like.) Ask them for ideas about holding a healthy celebration of all the reading and learning you’ve done.

**Tip:** Ask participants if they used ideas from the book (or TED Talks or articles) to improve their wellbeing. If so, how? If not, what barriers did they face? How could the wellness program use information from the book to better employee wellbeing?

**Tip:** Invite employees that haven’t been in book club to your celebration to spread enthusiasm for the experience. (Inviting administrators could be a great way to show how your book club is addressing wellbeing topics as well as nurturing participants’ social wellbeing!)

8. **Pick your next book!** Use this success as a springboard for your next book. There are many great resources related to the five elements of wellbeing; encourage your colleagues to help you find a book for next year.

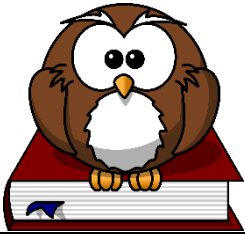
9. **Pass the baton if necessary.** If you anticipate having more on your plate next year or prefer to be a participant instead of the coordinator, encourage others to step up and coordinate. Your success has shown them it can be done!



# Examples of Survey Questions



Question	Possible Answers
Which element of wellbeing would you be most interested in learning about?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Physical well-being</li> <li>B. Social well-being</li> <li>C. Emotional well-being</li> <li>D. Purpose</li> <li>E. Financial well-being</li> </ul>
Which of the following titles about physical well-being sounds the best to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Food Rules: An Eater’s Manual</li> <li>B. Why Zebras Don’t Get Ulcers</li> <li>C. Fast Food Nation/Chew on This</li> <li>D. Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard</li> <li>E. The Deepest Well: Healing the Long Term Effects of Childhood Adversity</li> </ul>
Which of the following titles about social well-being sounds the best to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Collaborative Intelligence: Thinking with People Who Think Differently</li> <li>B. Mindful Relationships</li> <li>C. Beyond Measure: The Big Impact of Small Changes</li> <li>D. Strengths Finder 2.0</li> <li>E. Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships</li> </ul>
Which of the following titles about emotional well-being sounds the best to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Trauma Stewardship</li> <li>B. How to Live a Good Life</li> <li>C. The Stress Proof Brain</li> <li>D. Emotional First Aid</li> <li>E. 21 Days to Resilience</li> </ul>
Which of the following titles about purpose sounds the best to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. The Book of Joy</li> <li>B. How Full is Your Bucket?</li> <li>C. The Happiness Advantage</li> <li>D. Balance Me: A Realist’s Guide to a Successful Life</li> <li>E. The Four Agreements</li> </ul>



# More Examples of Survey Questions

<b>Question</b>	<b>Possible Answers</b>
Which of the listed titles would be your <b>FIRST</b> choice?	A. The Omnivore's Dilemma B. Fierce Conversations C. SuperBetter: The Power of Living Gamefully D. The 30 Day Mindfulness Challenge E. Success Under Stress
Which of the listed titles would be your <b>SECOND</b> choice?	A. The Omnivore's Dilemma B. Fierce Conversations C. SuperBetter: The Power of Living Gamefully D. The 30 Day Mindfulness Challenge E. Success Under Stress
Which of the listed titles would be your <b>THIRD</b> choice?	A. The Omnivore's Dilemma B. Fierce Conversations C. SuperBetter: The Power of Living Gamefully D. The 30 Day Mindfulness Challenge E. Success Under Stress
Which of the following types of writing interest you <b>MOST</b> ?	A. Writings by famous public figures (Dalai Lama, entrepreneurs) B. Writings by teachers (professors) C. Writings by researchers (data analysts, investigative journalists ) D. Writings by health professionals (doctors, psychologists) E. Writings by coaches (executive coach, life coach)
Which type of book interests you <b>MOST</b> ?	A. Data – I want to know research about the topic B. Stories – I want to learn through experiences of others C. Professional opinion – I want to hear from professionals in the field D. Strategies – I want ways to directly apply information to better my life



# Book Club Meeting Schedule

Coordinator's E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Meeting Time</b>	<b>Meeting Location</b>	<b>Pages to Read for This Meeting</b>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			

# Book Club Meeting Schedule Continued

Coordinator's E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_



<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Meeting Time</b>	<b>Meeting Location</b>	<b>Pages to Read for This Meeting</b>
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			



# Reader's Review



Book Title:

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I would rate this book \_\_\_\_\_ out of 5 stars.



- 1. What did you learn or find valuable from reading this book?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. Did you use ideas from the book to improve your wellbeing? If so, how? If not, what barriers did you face?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3. How could the wellness program support wellbeing by using ideas from this book?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4. Something you found particularly interesting was:**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5. Would you recommend this book to other school employees? Why/why not?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6. Other thoughts or opinions:**

**Thank you for your participation in this book club!**



# Reader's Reflection

These pages are optional and can be used by readers to reflect on what they've read. This can help the group kick start discussion at their next meeting. Also, if your group is not able to meet frequently (for example, only meets once a month) these reflections can be helpful notes that jog everyone's memory.

READER'S NOTES/THOUGHTS DURING AND AFTER READING:

**3 things I learned from this section of the text were:**

**2 questions I have are:**

**1 thing that really connected to my life or stood out to me was:**



**How does what we read connect to wellbeing? Which type of wellbeing is impacted the most? The least?**

**How can I improve my wellbeing based on what I read?**

**How can my district, ESD, or community college's SEW plan support wellbeing, using information from what I read?**

**How does what I read connect to my work environment? My community? The world?**

**Other people who might find this information helpful/interesting are:**



# (Optional) Extra Ideas for Coordinators

Here are some additional suggestions for engaging your book club participants. This list was made with help from Bustle.com articles about book clubs. A quick Google search may give you other fun adult book club activities, especially ice breakers you can use during your first get-together!



**Comradery Boosting:** Spend the first meeting getting to know a little about each other. Since no one's done any reading yet, be sure to indicate which section you'll read first. (Skip around or skip sections according to what you want to read most.) Other ideas for the first meeting include:

- Come up with a name for your book club
- Create bookmarks with cardstock, stickers, and other art supplies
- Set up a snack schedule if participants are being asked to bring healthy treats

**Chart Paper:** Bring feedback together with chart paper or butcher paper. You or another participant can take some notes related to the discussion. Not only can this visually link thoughts and ideas, but it can be synthesized later to see what readers got out of the text.

**Book Club Questions:** Some books, such as *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, have book club questions online. These may have been developed by another book group, a library, the publishers, etc. (Also, there might be discussion questions in the back of the book.) These questions, especially if you choose not to use the *Reader's Reflections*, can help kick start discussion.

**TED Talks:** Find a TED Talk that connects with the type of wellbeing you're reading about. (OEA Choice Trust has a list online; you can also search the TED Talk website for certain topics and keywords.) After discussing the section you read, play the talk. Share connections between the text, the talk, and your lives and well-being.

**Potluck Celebration:** At your last meeting, celebrate with a healthy potluck. Participants can bring simple snacks or get creative.

**Mix-up the Meet-up:** Is there a café, park, library, or bookstore that could be your meeting place? While a classroom or department office may do, breaking out of your normal spaces and routines can create an added sense of anticipation or excitement.



# Healthy Snack Ideas

Snacks can encourage attendance! In the spirit of well-being, make sure you have healthy snacks and be conscious of any allergies participants might have.

## **Banana oatmeal walnut cookies**

*Satisfies sweet tooth, whole grains, potassium*

Combine 2 medium ripe bananas, mashed, 1 cup uncooked quick oats in a bowl, then fold in ¼ cup crushed walnuts. Place tablespoon-sized scoops on a baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes in a 350-degree oven.

**Reader's Digest**

## **Healthy nachos**

*Individual servings, vegetables and protein*

Use multigrain chips, a few pinches of cheddar, and a zap in the microwave. Offer drained and rinsed canned black beans that have been tossed with chopped cilantro and lime juice. Chopped tomatoes and salsa are easy to set out. Add a dollop of guacamole (or just chopped avocado) or sprinkle of scallions or green onions.

**Reader's Digest**

## **Kale chips**

*Satisfying crunch, source of vitamins K/A/C*

Place 1 large bunch raw kale leaves, stems removed, on a cookie sheet, then drizzle with 1 teaspoon olive oil and a pinch of salt. Cook at 350 degrees F until crispy, about 10 to 12 minutes.

**Reader's Digest**

## **Chia pudding**

*Tapioca-like texture, omega-3s, fiber*

Place 2 and 1/2 cups unsweetened almond or coconut milk, 1/2 cup chia seeds, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, and 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon in a bowl. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight, stirring occasionally, until it has a pudding-like consistency.

**Reader's Digest**

## **Greek Yogurt Zucchini Bread**

*Vegetables in cake's clothing*

Preheat the oven to 350°F and grease a 9 x 5 in. loaf pan. Whisk the 1/3 cup oil, ½ cup agave, 1 egg, ½ cup plain Greek yogurt (at room temp.), and 1 ½ tsp. vanilla extract together in a medium bowl until combined. In a large bowl, whisk the 1 ½ cups flour, ½ tsp. baking powder, ½ tsp. baking soda, ½ tsp. salt, and 1 tsp. cinnamon together.

Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and mix with a large wooden spoon or spatula until combined. Avoid overmixing. Fold in the 1 cup zucchini, 2 tsp. orange zest, and ¾ cups walnuts (optional). Spread batter into the prepared loaf pan. Bake for ~ 40-50 minutes.

**sallysbakingaddiction.com**

## **Healthy breakfast cookies**

*Satisfies sweet tooth, no added sugar*

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a Silpat. In the bowl of a stand mixer beat together the 1 cup peanut butter, ¼ cup honey, 1 tsp. vanilla extract, 2 medium mashed bananas, ½ tsp. salt and 1 tsp. cinnamon.

Add the 2 ½ cup quick oats, ½ cup dried cranberries and 2/3 cup nuts (optional); mix until combined. Scoop about 1/4-cup mounds of the cookie dough onto the baking sheet, flattening each cookie slightly. Bake the cookies for 14 to 16 minutes until they're golden brown but still soft.

**justataste.com**

## **Ginger-tossed cole slaw**

Satisfying crunch, vegetables

Toss pre-sliced cabbage and carrots (bagged cole slaw mix) with a ginger dressing.

**Reader's Digest**

## **Hummus and veggie plate**

Satisfying crunch, vegetables

Offer carrots, celery, bell pepper strips, broccoli, and other crunchy vegetables with hummus.

**Reader's Digest**

## **5 ingredient granola bars**

Protein, can be gluten free/no added sugar

Process dates in a food processor until small bits remain (about 1 minute). It should form a "dough" like consistency. (Mine rolled into a ball.)

**Optional step:** Toast your oats (and almonds if raw) in a 350 degree F (176 C) oven for 10-15 minutes or until slightly golden brown. Otherwise, leave them raw. Place oats, almonds and dates in a large mixing bowl - set aside.

Warm honey and peanut butter in a small saucepan over low heat. Stir and pour over oat mixture and then mix, breaking up the dates to disperse throughout. Once thoroughly mixed, transfer to an 8x8-inch baking dish or other small pan lined with plastic wrap or parchment paper so they lift out easily. (A loaf pan might work, but will yield thicker bars.) Press down firmly until uniformly flattened - I use something flat, like a drinking glass, to press down and really pack the bars, which helps them hold together better.

Cover with parchment or plastic wrap, and let firm up in fridge or freezer for 15-20 minutes. Remove bars from pan and chop into 10 even bars (or 9 squares). Store in an airtight container for up to a few days.

**Minimalistbaker.com**

## **Apple "cookies"**

Crunchy, protein, toppings can be individualized

Slice apples into rings and remove the core. Spread peanut butter on one side of the ring. Add toppings such as chopped walnuts, sliced almonds, shredded coconut, and/or dark chocolate chips.

If you are pre-cutting the slices, toss them in a zip lock bag with a little lemon juice to keep them from browning.

**onelittleproject.com**

## **No-bake pumpkin breakfast bites**

Crunchy, sweet, protein

Combine 2 cups old fashioned oats, ¼ cup canned pumpkin puree, ¼ cup dried cranberries, ½ cup pumpkin seeds, 1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice, ¼ cup almond or peanut butter, ¼ cup honey in a large bowl. Mix well.

Wet hands with water and roll the mixture into 1 inch balls. Set on parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Place the sheet in the freezer for 10 min. or refrigerator for 20 min., then transfer to an air tight container to be kept in the refrigerator.

**onelittleproject.com**

## **Additional ideas**

- [greatist.com/eat/diy-energy-protein-bar-recipes](http://greatist.com/eat/diy-energy-protein-bar-recipes)
- [greatist.com/eat/chia-seed-pudding-recipes](http://greatist.com/eat/chia-seed-pudding-recipes)
- [chefdehome.com/Meals/90038/10-healthy-quinoa-salads](http://chefdehome.com/Meals/90038/10-healthy-quinoa-salads)
- [aspicyperspective.com/baked-sweet-potato-chips/2/](http://aspicyperspective.com/baked-sweet-potato-chips/2/)
- [pinterest.com/pin/56787645281484290/](http://pinterest.com/pin/56787645281484290/) (Greek yogurt mini cheese cakes)
- [sallysbakingaddiction.com/category/healthy-recipes/](http://sallysbakingaddiction.com/category/healthy-recipes/)
- [sallysbakingaddiction.com/2015/03/30/greek-yogurt-fruit-tart/](http://sallysbakingaddiction.com/2015/03/30/greek-yogurt-fruit-tart/)
- [sallysbakingaddiction.com/2015/08/17/zucchini-fritters-with-garlic-herb-yogurt-sauce/](http://sallysbakingaddiction.com/2015/08/17/zucchini-fritters-with-garlic-herb-yogurt-sauce/)
- [sallysbakingaddiction.com/2016/01/13/130-calorie-greek-yogurt-lemon-bars/](http://sallysbakingaddiction.com/2016/01/13/130-calorie-greek-yogurt-lemon-bars/)