

Spotlight on Historical

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It is difficult to define historical fiction because a lot of books are set in the past, but that doesn't mean they should all be called historical fiction. Generally, historical books are about real historical people or events, and are intended to give you an idea of what it felt like to live through those events.

History of the genre

People have always been interested in history, and so the historical genre has been around for as long as people have been telling stories.

During different eras of history, people have been interested in reading about different historical stories. Royalty and wars have always been popular subjects.

Common themes

Stories about a real historical figure (eg. Queen Victoria)

Stories about real historical events (eg. The bombing of Darwin)

A fictional story set in a particular time (eg. A family living through WWII)

Viewing historical figures and events through the eyes of a fictional character

Famous authors

Geraldine Brooks

Philippa Gregory

Kate Grenville

Jackie French

Carolyn Meyer

Belinda Murrell

Mary Hooper

Ruth Park

Links with other genres

Some historical novels cross into speculative fiction, asking questions like what would have happened if the Nazis had won World War II.

Romance is common in the historical genre.

A lot of historical novels are also set during wars.

A modern character travelling in time is another common plot; these are sci-fi historical novels.