

Staff Picks



Many Voices, One Story

Looking for a more film-like approach to the novel? Tired of one character telling his or her story in chronological sequence? For a more symphonic approach, try these books that offer a many-character, storytelling approach.

Compiled by: Keith C.



A Long Way Down

Nick Hornby Ho

On New Year's Eve four strangers come together on a rooftop where each has decided to commit suicide. They spend the night together commiserating, arguing and ultimately saving each other's lives.



A Visit from the Goon Squad

Jennifer Egan Egan

This book runs the gamut of characters from the young sister of an autistic boy to a dying sleazy record executive whose lives intersect in various ways. The characters are depicted throughout various times and phases in their lives



Cloud Atlas

David Mitchell Mitchel

Five separate narratives at different points in time revolve around the sixth, an oral history of a post apocalyptic island. The puzzling stories come together in the novel's second half.



Let the Great World Spin

Colum McCann Mccann

New York in 1974 as a man walks on a high wire Ten characters tell their stories in between the World Trade Center towers. The varied narratives include heroin addicted prostitutes, a street priest, mothers mourning the sons they lost in Viet Nam and a Park Avenue judge.

Love Medicine

Louise Erdrich Er

Erdrich's first novel tells the story of several families all living on a North Dakota Ojibwe reservation. Each chapter is told from a different perspective spanning the generations. Winner of the National Book Critics Circle award,



Snuff

Chuck Palahniuk Palahni

While the premise sounds shocking, the story is actually engaging. An aging porn queen decides to end her career by filming herself having sex with 600 men in one day. The novel is a character study told from the varying points of view of the men waiting for their numbers to be called.



The Help

Kathryn Stockett Stocket

Three women narrate the events in Stockett's book- two black domestic workers and a white recent college grad who has returned home to Jackson, Mississippi in 1962. Each brings a unique perspective to the time and events.



The Kitchen God's Wife

Amy Tan Tan

A Chinese mother and her American-born daughter share their lives in this compelling novel. Pearl, the mother, recounts her difficult childhood and first marriage in China, while her daughter worries about her superficial relationship with her mother.



The Poisonwood Bible

Barbara Kingsolver Kingsol

A mother and four daughters tell their stories as a missionary family in the Congo in 1959. The family is horribly unprepared for life in Africa, especially as war looms.



Whirligig

Paul Fleischman

YFI

An alienated teen's drunk driving accident has irreversible consequences. As he makes restitution the other lives he affects are depicted within his own story.
