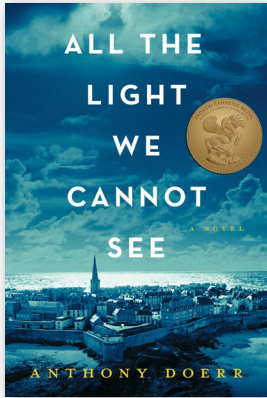


Andrew Carnegie

# Medals for Excellence in Fiction and Nonfiction



## 2015 FICTION WINNER

*All the Light We Cannot See*  
by Anthony Doerr  
published by Scribner, a division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

A blind French girl and a compassionate and thoughtful German boy come together in this gorgeous novel of WWII.

## BOOK GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. What do you think inspired the method Marie-Laure's father used to prepare his daughter for the loss of her sight?
2. What was the most surprising thing you learned about France's participation in WWII from reading this fictional book? (Did you check any non-fiction materials to make sure it was a true fact, not altered?)
3. How do you think the two story lines worked together? Was it satisfying when the two finally came together? Did you find yourself more interested in Marie-Laure's story, or in Werner's?
4. Did you have a favorite character? Was there someone you wanted to know more about?
5. Discuss the role of the radios in this novel. How do you think the impact of the radio would compare with the internet today?
6. One of the themes of this novel seems to be the way that art and music remind us of our humanity, and can in some ways save us. Have you found this to be true?
7. Marie-Laure's favorite book was Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. What is it about this book that appealed to her so much? Is there a book you feel the same about?
8. Some critics of the novel commented on the ragged timeline of the story. How do you feel about the way in which the story was presented? Would it have been better if the author had used a more linear timeline?
9. How do you interpret the title? What is "the light we cannot see"?

Cont. on next page

## BOOK GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE CONT.

10. Mobility (or lack thereof) plays a large role in these characters' lives. Discuss the impact of this limited mobility and how it contributes to the story. What kind of impact did it have?
11. Why do you feel this novel has been so successful?
12. Would you recommend this book to a friend? A book group? Why or why not?
13. This book took ten years for Anthony Doerr to write, and he mentioned in his acceptance speech for the Carnegie Medal that even as it was finally published, it wasn't fully the book he envisioned. What do you think he meant by that?
14. The writing in this book is very elegant, and in some places this serves as a sharp counterpoint to the horrors being depicted, or the terrible things happening off of the main stage. Do you think that the beauty of the writing distances the reader from the horror, or allows it to be seen in a different way? Did you have a favorite passage or metaphor from the book?

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## INTERESTED IN STARTING A BOOK GROUP?

The American Library Association offers resources on how to get started, how to structure a meeting, how to select books and how to facilitate a meaningful literary discussion.

For more information visit [ala.org/tools/atoz/book-discussion-grps](http://ala.org/tools/atoz/book-discussion-grps).

## ABOUT THE ANDREW CARNEGIE MEDALS FOR EXCELLENCE

Co-sponsored by *Booklist* and RUSA (Reference and User Services Association), a division of the American Library Association, these awards were established to recognize the best fiction and nonfiction books for adult readers with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. To learn more about the awards, books, and authors, visit [ala.org/carnegieadult](http://ala.org/carnegieadult).