



## What Makes a Good Book

One of the first steps of becoming an author is to read. Reading books and especially the top books in the category you are writing in will really help you with recognizing what makes a good book.

Reading will also help you in recognizing what books are not as good as others, and why. (Take notes)

And it will help you in recognizing what issues you are passionate about and want to write about on your own. (Important for ideas!) So, what makes a good book?

To me:

How I engage with the text is what marks a good book. A good book is one that moves me, one in which I feel the main character's struggles and emotions and identify with them. A good message is also essential to me!

I have identified a few things that really stand out to me in books.

1. Developed Characters. (This is the hardest struggle for me!) The characters in the story, especially the protagonist, must have personality traits and characteristics that make them special. A flat character that doesn't have any unique thoughts or quirks is never engaging. (Example- one reason my kids love Migo and Ali books is all the silly names Migo calls Ali)

2. A Story- there must be an actual story in which the main character has a fault or struggle, and we the reader see them change and overcome it. It shouldn't be a question they have, or a too simple issue. A good story is where there are both internal and external struggles to face and go through. (Think of Laila's lunchbox- and her struggles in her new school)

3. No Preachiness- honestly this is probably the number one problem I find in Islamic books. Children don't like this-they like to be the heroes in their own books. They don't like to read how "mom" or "dad" answered their issues. They want to solve the problems themselves. (Think of Nusaiba and the fifth grade bullies- and how she faces the bullies on her own)

While these are primarily Picture book examples, and of course there are always exceptions, in general, they are the basics of any good book.

Disclaimer: recognizing this stuff is easy, figuring out how to apply it is the hard part.

Hope it helps!