

Are You on Track to Read the Average Number of Books Before You Die? (See Chart)

Ever wonder how many books you'll have read by the time you die?

We may never know the answer to that question, but we might be able to guess how many we have remaining.

A [recent article](#) in *Quartz* highlights just that in two fascinating graphs. Based on the number of books the average American reads every year (12), the charts show estimates of the number of books men and women can expect to have left in their reading careers.



Commenting on the charts Kira Bindrim the article's author notes:

"The results aren't scary per se" I'm a 31-year-old "voracious reader" [50 books per year] and 2 800 books does sound like a lot" but they are illuminating and worth remembering the next time you're perusing a bookstore. Sure War and Peace is a classic but it may cost you five page-turners in the long run."

That last line gave me pause. I certainly understand what the author is saying. As a type-A list-oriented person myself it's easier "and even more satisfying" to read as many books as possible in order to check them off a list of accomplished tasks. To read a deep lengthy classic slows that process down considerably.

A similar approach is often advanced in today's schools. Many

teachers and reading experts are quick to say that they don't care what a child reads just as long as he is reading *some* book.

But that approach runs contrary to what Mortimer Adler the great philosopher educator and book expert once said about reading. [As he put it](#) in order for an individual's mind to stretch and grow that mind needs to be challenged:

"If you are reading in order to become a better reader you cannot read just any book or article. You will not improve as a reader if all you read are books that are well within your capacity. You must tackle books that are beyond you or as we have said books that are over your head. Only books of that sort will make you stretch your mind. And unless you stretch you will not learn."

It's great to encourage both ourselves and our children to read lots of books. But unless we choose titles which encourage mental growth and challenge are we simply wasting our time?

Image Credit: Juliana Dacoregio bit.ly/1ryPA8o