

People who read books are nicer

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Want to become a better person? Then you might want to consider picking up a book because according to a new study, reading regularly could make you kinder and more empathetic.

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After being quizzed on their preferences for books, TV and plays, 123 participants were tested on interpersonal skills including how much they considered other people's feelings and whether they acted to help others.

The study, conducted by Kingston University in London, found that readers were more likely to act in a socially acceptable manner compared to those who preferred watching television.

Instead, TV lovers came across as less friendly and less understanding of others' views.

But, no ordinary book will do because it turns out the type of literature you choose also has a huge impact on your emotional intelligence.

The study revealed that fiction fans showed more positive social behaviour while readers of drama and romance novels were found to be the most empathic.

Similarly, lovers of more experimental books showed the ability to see things from different perspectives but it was comedy fans who scored the highest for relating to others.

"Exposure to fiction relates to a range of empathetic abilities," researchers said.

"Engaging with fictional prose and comedy in particular could be key to enhancing people's empathetic abilities."

That being said, the authors were keen to highlight that the study did not prove cause-and-effect as it could just be that more thoughtful people are more likely to prefer reading.