
Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Ibn Pickthall - 14-04-2008 13:16

Identify the author and book title from the following first lines, a point for each correct.

1. It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife
Pride and Prejudice - Jane Austen ID'ed by Lyra
2. Mother died today
The Stranger - Albert Camus ID'ed by The Horse
3. It was a pleasure to burn
Fahrenheit 451 - Ray Bradbury ID'ed by Ursus Arctos
4. It was the day my grandmother exploded.
The Crow Road - Iain Banks ID'ed by Andy C
5. Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice
100 Years of Solitude - Gabriel Garcia Marquez ID'ed by ToastBasedKillah
6. If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth
Catcher in the Rye - JD Salinger ID'ed by Lyra
7. All this happened, more or less
Slaughterhouse Five - Kurt Vonnegut ID'ed by Ursus Arctos
8. It was love at first sight
Catch 22 - Joseph Heller ID'ed by Zombie
9. Time is not a line but a dimension, like the dimensions of space
Cat's Eye - Margaret Atwood ID'ed by Carlo Ginzberg
10. It was a queer, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs, and I didn't know what I was doing in New York
The Bell Jar - Sylvia Plath ID'ed by Ursus Arctos

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Lyra - 14-04-2008 13:17

- 1) Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen
 - 6) Catcher in the Rye, JD Salinger
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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Gangster Octopus - 14-04-2008 13:20

Bastard.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Lyra - 14-04-2008 13:21

Hahaha I know

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Zombie - 14-04-2008 13:32

8) Catch-22

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Andy C - 14-04-2008 13:35

4 is The Crow Road by Iain Banks.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by ToastBasedKillah - 14-04-2008 13:36

5 - 100 years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by The Horse - 14-04-2008 13:37

2. L'Etranger

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Andy C - 14-04-2008 13:38

And 5 is 100 Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Andy C - 14-04-2008 13:38

Drat.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-04-2008 13:39

10. The Bell Jar, Sylvia Plath.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-04-2008 13:40

7. Slaughterhouse Five, Kurt Vonnegut.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-04-2008 13:41

Is 3 Fahrenheit 451, Ray Bradbury? I really don't remember.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by The Horse - 14-04-2008 13:42

Bugger, I've read 7 and 10 but didn't recognise them - disappointing, given how ill-read I am.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Ibn Pickthall - 14-04-2008 13:55

I'm at work and having difficulty re-editing the initial post due to our slow internet connection. I'll edit it later but all the answers so far have been correct, I think it leaves only number 9.

I'll try and add some others later and, clearly, need to make them harder.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Andy C - 14-04-2008 14:02

Nice quiz, IP.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Mighty Mudhsuden - 14-04-2008 14:02

I was thinking about #6 before I even opened the thread.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Matej - 14-04-2008 14:17

#2 is The Stranger.

"Aujourd'hui, maman est morte. Ou peut-être hier, je ne sais pas."

Never mind, The Horse already said.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Lyra - 14-04-2008 14:19

I was hoping for

"It was the afternoon of my eighty-first birthday, and I was in bed with my catamite when Ali announced that the archbishop had come to see me."

and

"The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there."

as those are the only ones I ever remember.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Gangster Octopus - 14-04-2008 14:24

Liar! You've just got the only one I can remember!

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Crusoe - 14-04-2008 14:33

Damn you Andy C, that was the only one I knew.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Carlo Ginzburg - 14-04-2008 15:19

#9 is "Cat's Eye".

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Purves Grundy - 14-04-2008 15:48

8 is Catch-22 by Joseph Heller

edit - damn, someone got it. And number 10, which I knew as well.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by ooh aah - 14-04-2008 16:28

4 is The Crow Road by Iain Banks.

And there was me thinking it was George's Marvellous Medicine

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by nefertiti - 14-04-2008 17:26

5 is 100 years of Solitude by Garcia Marquez

"t was love at first sight" is Lolita - Nabokov

"All this happened more or less" is Slaughterhouse 5 -Kurt Vonnegut.

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Not me - 14-04-2008 19:55

Right, seeing as the books forum has picked up lately, let's keep this going and make it nastier. Some OTF favourites here, plus a couple of trickier ones with great opening lines. (Character names blanked out, cause they're giveaways.)

11. So here I was, home again after all those years.

12. Stately, plump **** * came from the stairhead, bearing a bowl of lather on which a mirror and a razor lay crossed.

James Joyce - Ulysses (guessed by ursus)

13. Beyond the Indian hamlet, upon a forlorn strand, I happened on a trail of recent footprints.

David Mitchell - Cloud Atlas (got by S. aureus)

14. May it please heaven that the reader, emboldened and having for the time being become as fierce as what he is reading, should, without being led astray, find his rugged and treacherous way across the desolate swamps of these sombre and poison-filled pages; for, unless he brings to his reading a rigorous logic and a tautness of mind equal at least to his wariness, the deadly emanations of this book will dissolve his soul as water does sugar.

15. Having placed in my mouth sufficient bread for three minutes' chewing, I withdrew my powers of sensual perception and retired into the privacy of my mind, my eyes and face assuming a vacant and preoccupied expression.

Flann O'Brien - At Swim-Two-Birds (guessed by Andy C. When I say "guessed" I mean "identified" don't I? Why do I keep saying "guessed"?)

16. "What's it going to be then, eh?"

Anthony Burgess - A Clockwork Orange (guessed by Kowalski)

17. Over two months elapsed before *** * could immerse himself in the peaceful silence of his house at Fontenay, for purchases of all sorts still kept him perambulating the streets and ransacking the shops from one end of Paris to the other.

JK Huysmans - A Rebours (Against Nature/Against The Grain) (guessed by The Horse)

18. Once upon a time in Westphalia, in the castle of Baron *****-***-*****, there lived a young boy whom nature had endowed with the gentlest of dispositions.

Voltaire - Candide (dead heat between Crusoe and Ursus)

19. For a long time, I went to bed early.

Marcel Proust - Swann's Way (guessed by Carlo Ginzburg)

20. The studio was filled with the rich odour of roses, and when the light summer wind stirred amidst the trees of the garden, there came through the open door the heavy scent of lilac, or the more delicate perfume of the pink-flowering thorn.

Oscar Wilde - The Picture of Dorian Gray (pieced together by Ibn and Ursus)

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Kowalski - 14-04-2008 19:59

16. A Clockwork Orange

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Carlo Ginzburg - 14-04-2008 20:19

#19. Swann's Way

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Inca - 14-04-2008 20:36

A hello to Carlo Ginzburg, and if I may say so, a kickass choice for a username. I was disappointed I never got to take a class with Prof. Ginzburg while I was in college.

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-04-2008 20:58

18. Candide, Voltaire.

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Crusoe - 14-04-2008 20:58

18. Candide

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Crusoe - 14-04-2008 21:03

Damn you, Ursus!

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-04-2008 21:04

Genuinely sorry, Crusoe.

12. Ulysses, James Joyce.

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Not me - 14-04-2008 21:15

Wow, you lot are fast.

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by The Horse - 14-04-2008 21:29

I haven't read it yet so I'm not sure but:

17. Against Nature

?

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Not me - 14-04-2008 21:40

Impressive.

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by S. aureus - 14-04-2008 21:55

I think 13 is Cloud Atlas, by David Mitchell.

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by The Horse - 14-04-2008 22:05

I bought A Rebours recently after you and Barry Humphries both recommended it within a week of each other; I may have skimmed the first page, I dunno.

(He didn't recommend it personally. He talks about it in John Lahr's biography of him.)

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Ibn Pickthall - 14-04-2008 23:16

20. Is Oscar Wilde. I can't think of the book/play.

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-04-2008 08:46

Ibn having done all the hard work, I will claim an Inzaghi-like tap in off my shin by noting that it is almost certainly The Picture of Dorian Gray

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Andy C - 15-04-2008 08:50

15 is At Swim-Two-Birds by Flann O'Brien.

Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Ibn Pickthall - 15-04-2008 09:43

I hope that makes me Kaka or Gattuso rather than Ibrahim Ba, Ursus.

I'll update the initial post a little later. I've a few more too, but will wait until the majority of the second batch have been

answered.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Carlo Ginzburg - 15-04-2008 09:48

Thanks Inca. Reading a lot of Italian history at the moment, but that's a whole other thread.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-04-2008 10:04

Definitely Kaka or Pirlo, Ibn. I was just loitering with intent in a very Pippoesque way.

And another warm welcome to Sig. Ginzburg.

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Re:Fiction Quiz - First Lines

Posted by Not me - 15-04-2008 10:25

Andy C's got the one I thought would go first.

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