

## Word of the Year Worksheet

*You may have heard about picking a Word of a Year. It's a practice that many people use to set an intention for their life each new year. But you can also do it to set intentions for your reading life. Want to try it out? Here's how:*

What were your favorite books in 2023?

Looking at the list, do they have anything in common? Were they all from the same genre? Was the protagonist in all of them a woman? Did they all take place in cities? Brainstorm and think about the similarities. You might be surprised to find that they have more common than you think!

What was your favorite reading experience last year? Where were you? What made it special?

What was the worst book you read last year? Why did you hate it?

Do you feel like you read enough? If not, what kept you from making time to read?

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## **Your Perfect Reading Day**

Time to imagine your perfect day! This is all fantasy. What if money wasn't in the equation? What if you could do anything with your time? What would your perfect day look like? Be detailed.

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What can you do **NOW** to bring elements of your perfect reading day into your life this year?

- Can you dedicate one day a month to a perfect reading day? Or an hour a week?
- If you dream of being locked in a library, could you go to the library and pretend it was after hours?
- Be creative with how you turn your dreams into reality!

Write down your ideas here.

# Word of the Year Worksheet

Now that you have reflected on what you want your reading life to look like let's find a word that will help guide you in your reading life. What word will serve as a simple reminder of your intention for the year?

## Step One:

Brainstorm a list of 10 words that you can think of that represent your intentions for the new year. Did any words come up while you were writing that kept appearing over and over?

Words of the year can be:

**Abstract Nouns:** Words that cannot be experienced by your five senses. Words like: Truth, Love, Happiness. These may represent the themes of the books you want to read this year.

**Concrete Nouns:** Something you can sense: People, Places, Things

**Verbs:** Something you do. Read, Dream, Sit, Walk (audio books on your daily walks?)

**Adjectives:** Modify a noun, the noun usually being you in this case! Adventurous, Mysterious, Calm (Your word of the year could describe your reading experience or the books you read.)

**Numbers:** Numbers can be a unique word of the year. Maybe it represents the number of books you want to read?

Write your list of 10 possible words of the year here:

- |    |     |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6.  |
| 2. | 7.  |
| 3. | 8.  |
| 4. | 9.  |
| 5. | 10. |

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## Step Two:

Write the three words that you are most drawn to here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Step Three:

Write 3 synonyms for each of the three words. Use a thesaurus to help you!

Word 1: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Word 2: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Word 3: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Do any of these synonyms resonate more than the original three words you choose? Which one?

\_\_\_\_\_

# Word of the Year Worksheet

## Step Four:

Now it's time to narrow it down to one choice. Which ONE word resonates the most with you. Sometimes it helps to whisper the words to yourself, one might make you tingle. Or simply pick one and know that you can use one of the others next year.

## MY WORD OF THE YEAR

Ways to PLAY with and remember your Word of the Year:

- Read books with your word of the year in the title.
- Create a piece of artwork with your word of the year and keep it somewhere you will see it daily. A bookmark would be fun!
- Get a piece of jewelry engraved with your word of the year.
- Use your word of the year in passwords. Just make sure no one knows it!
- Say your word of the year every morning.
- Collect signs that feature your word of the year.
- Watch movies with your word of the year in the title.
- Make a Pinterest Board for your word of the year.
- Create a collage of your word of the year.
- Use your word of the year as a mantra.
- Make your word of the year a screen saver on your computer, phone, or other device.

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### **About Laura K. Bray**

Laura is freelance writer and the head “librarian” of *The Cozy Library*, a Substack newsletter about *Reading, Writing, and Very Little Arithmetic*. If you love to read and/or write, please subscribe. There are free and paid subscriptions.