

Instructions:

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para los bibliófilos, lectores y Librotraficantes en las Américas . . .

Well, here you go!

The labels placed on books,

once banned or challenged

by committees across the lands . . .

now read as follows:

1.
Humans read and question
in cold or hot weather
with humane care
and interest.
Stop when needed.
Tumble along with ideas.
Pat yourself on the back.
Turn pages or scroll
across the page
as needed
while reading
and re-reading.
Read on!

“There is no Frigate like a Book.” (from Poem 1286)
—Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)

2.

Wash and dry inside out
to retain the book's ideas
and make room for more.
Wash and dry with like
and unlike ideas.
Virtues are here.
Machine you are not.
Humanities enlighten.
Rest as needed. Tumble
ideas low-key if needed.
Be sure to iron out
some differences.
Keep learning and stretching.

“Disobedience, in the eyes of anyone who has read history, is man’s original virtue. It is through disobedience that progress has been made, through disobedience and rebellion.”

—Oscar Wilde (1854–1900)

3.

The glue and ink and paper
and string and water used
in the process of making
this book have been specially
and organically treated
by authors and workers
to ensure the book endures
for human reading value
and interpretation today.
Librarians-at-arms:
alert and beside us.
Arise, o readers!

“Siempre imaginé que el Paraíso sería algún tipo de biblioteca.”

—Jorge Luis Borges (1899–1986)

4.

Open open now.
Take a leap in
out and across
pages and scroll.
Listen deeply
inside outside out.
Languages and words
and images come
alive alive alive!

You are here
 home home home
 in these pages.
 Come on in,
 walk on in.
 Bienvenidx.

“I find ultimate delight when a story is matched by equally riveting language, but people read like they eat: Sometimes we want comfort, sometimes we want to work to crack something open.”

—Elizabeth Acevedo (born 1988)

5.
 Stories appear in DNA.
 Each cell carries stories:
 each book telling
 each structure
 linking strands
 twisted ladders
 and string forming
 backbones spines
 filled with genetic
 data and instructions.
 So much material
 in veins on our feet
 pedestals to thought
 threads of the world.
 Each of us threads
 forming shaping
 many steps and genes.
 Journeys from there
 to here from the laps
 of life and the world
 with minds aglow.
 Libre is akin to libro
 and here we go!

“I want to read the classics from the Américas, from México, from women, from the working class, from the Indigenous communities, from everyone who hasn’t been allowed to the podium before.”

—Sandra Cisneros (born 1954)

. . . and also dedicated to the People for Public Education, Celebration of Books, Freedom
 Fighters
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R. JOSEPH RODRÍGUEZ is a literacy educator and researcher. His most recent book is titled *[This Is Our Summons Now: Poems](#)* (FlowerSong Press, 2022). He has published research books on [literacy education](#) and [young adult literature](#). He is a former editor of *[English Journal](#)*, a publication of the National Council of Teachers of English and first published in 1912. He lives and teaches in Austin and Fredericksburg, Texas. Follow him via Instagram and Twitter [@escribescibe](#).