

**Author Bio:**

MONICA WOOD is a novelist, memoirist, and playwright; the 2024 recipient of the Sara Josepha Hale award for excellence in New England literary arts; the 2019 recipient of the Maine Humanities Council Carlson Prize for contributions to the public humanities; and the 2016 recipient of the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance Distinguished Achievement Award for contributions to the literary arts. She lives in Portland, Maine, with her husband, Dan Abbott, and their cat, Susie.

**Synopsis:**

A charming, deeply moving novel about second chances, unlikely friendships, and the life-changing power of sharing stories.

*Our Reasons meet us in the morning and whisper to us at night. Mine is an innocent, unsuspecting, eternally sixty-one-year-old woman named Lorraine Daigle...*

Violet Powell, a twenty-two-year-old from rural Abbott Falls, Maine, is being released from prison after serving twenty-two months for a drunk-driving crash that killed a local kindergarten teacher. Harriet Larson, a retired English teacher who runs the prison book club, is facing the unsettling prospect of an empty nest. Frank Daigle, a retired machinist, hasn't yet come to grips with the complications of his marriage to the woman Violet killed.

When the three encounter each other one morning in a bookstore in Portland—Violet to buy the novel she was reading in the prison book club before her release, Harriet to choose the next title for the women who remain, and Frank to dispatch his duties as the store handyman—their lives begin to intersect in transformative ways.

*How to Read a Book* is an unsparingly honest and profoundly hopeful story about letting go of guilt, seizing second chances, and the power of books to change our lives. With the heart, wit, grace, and depth of understanding that has characterized her work, Monica Wood illuminates the decisions that define a life and the kindnesses that make life worth living...