



Reading Group 2025-26

We read texts by or about women writers of the (very) long eighteenth century, many of which are in the Chawton House collection. Our reading group meetings are informal, with all levels of education and knowledge welcome.

Session Details

From September 2025, we will continue to hold two reading groups on the third Monday of each month, facilitated by Kim Simpson (Deputy Director, Chawton House): one onsite at Chawton House (12pm in the Billiards Room), and one online (3.30/4pm). The group usually runs for an hour and a half, and details of timings and Zoom joining details are sent out one week in advance. An online sign-up sheet is available for members. To join the mailing list, please email kim.simpson@chawtonhouse.org

Subs

For those joining in person, the £3 fee includes tea/coffee and cake, and we'd encourage our online participants to donate if possible. For those wanting to pay online, [please use this site](#). You can either pay as you go for individual sessions, or pay for the year (suggested donation: £30 for onsite, £10 for online).

Schedule

Click the book title for a link to an online version.

22 September, 2025

Selections from [The Ladies Magazine](#) (September & October issues, 1805), pp. 451-560

* Short 109pp

20 October, 2025

Ann Radcliffe, [The Romance of the Forest](#) (1791)

*** Long – OUP modern edn.: 432pp

17 November, 2025

Jane West, *A Gossip's Story* (1796)

[Vol. 1](#)

[Vol. 2](#)

**Mid-length – Devoney Looser modern edn. available online: 260pp

15 December, 2025

Jane Austen, [Pride & Prejudice](#) (1813)

***Long – Penguin Classics: 448pp

19 January, 2026

Susan Allen Ford, *What Jane Austen's Characters Read (And Why)* (2024)

From £12.95 (E-book) / £15 paperback.

** Mid-length: 280pp

16 February, 2026

Aphra Behn, [The Rover](#) (1677)

*Short: OUP modern edn.: 87pp

16 March, 2026

Maria Edgeworth, [Helen](#) (1834)

***Long: c. 500pp

20 April, 2026

Jane Austen, [Sanditon](#) (1925)

*Short: Penguin modern edn.: 208pp

19 May, 2026

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie, or the New Heloise* (1761)

[Available on Amazon](#) – the cheapest version (linked here) is a Kindle edition

***Long: Philip Stewart & Jean Vache trans.: 612pp

We may consider discussing only Part One (c. 150pp), which I can provide as a digital photocopy

15 June, 2026

Joanna Martin (ed.), *A Governess in the Age of Jane Austen: The Journals and Letters of Agnes Porter* (1988)

Not widely available so will provide photocopies

***Mid-length: 372pp

20 July, 2026

Frances Burney, [*Cecilia*](#) (1782)

Links to all three volumes

***VERY Long: Oxford World Classics modern edn.: 941pp