



Reading Group 2026-27

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 2026, 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.

21 September, 2026

Jane Collier, [An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting](#) (1752)

* Short 232pp (but very small 1750s pages!). Also available to listen to on [LibriVox](#)

19 October, 2026

Emily Brontë, [Wuthering Heights](#) (1847)

***Long – Penguin modern edn.: 416pp

16 November, 2026

Hester Chapone, [Letters on the Improvement of the Mind](#) (1773)

**Mid-length – Cambridge University Press modern edn.: 270pp

21 December, 2026

Jane Austen, [*Mansfield Park*](#) (1814)

***Long – Penguin Classics: 480pp

18 January, 2027

Kate Chisholm, *Fanny Burney: Her Life* (2011)

***Long: 368pp

Available on Amazon c. £15.00 | Kindle £5.99

15 February, 2027

Elizabeth Gaskell, [*Wives and Daughters*](#) (1864-66)

***Long: Wordsworth Classics modern edn.: 624pp

15 March, 2027

Mary Russell Mitford, [*Our Village*](#), Volume 1 (1824)

Also available to listen to on YouTube

**Mid-length: 292pp

19 April, 2027

Charlotte Smith, [*Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle*](#) (1788)

***Long: Grandleaf Press modern edn.: 445pp

17 May, 2027

Aphra Behn, [*Love Letters Between a Nobleman and his Sister*](#) (1684-7)

*** Long: Penguin Classics modern edn.: 512pp

14 June, 2027

Mary Elizabeth Braddon, [*Lady Audley's Secret*](#) (1862)

*** Long: Penguin Classics modern edn.: 512pp