

On Becoming a Doctor...

Some books/documentaries/television you might enjoy before arriving at medical school.

As a student, you will be under intense pressure to read what appears to be huge numbers of tracts directly related to medical science. This is clearly crucial to training to become a doctor. However, there are other books and resources you should not ignore. The practice of medicine is not purely scientific; the art of medicine is ill defined but involvement in other people's lives, other people's worlds, their hopes and fears, demands that you keep in touch with the humanities. The insights that you gain will help you to understand your patients a little better.

Communication skills are central to being a doctor. All doctors have to write, and this skill, often taught well at school, can atrophy. Reading literature can prevent this happening. Fiction is full of lies but these illuminate truths that no cramming will ever help you with.

This suggested resource list, selected by BSMS faculty and students, is by no means comprehensive. It is merely an eclectic selection of things you may enjoy but which also possess a deeper resonance. You have probably read/watched some of them already, and you certainly won't be examined on any of them. Feel free to pick and choose as you wish; there is no requirement to read/watch them all.

Books:

- **A Child Called 'It'** by Dave Pelzer
- **A Country Doctor's Notebook** by Mikhail Bulgakov
- **Bad Pharma** by Ben Goldacre
- **Bad Science** by Ben Goldacre
- **Being Mortal** by Atul Gawande
- **Brave New World** by Aldous Huxley
- **C - Because Cowards get Cancer Too** by John Diamond
- **Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science** by Atul Gawande
- **Cutting for Stone** by Abraham Verghese
- **Darkness Visible** by William Styron
- **Down & Out in Paris and London** by George Orwell
- **Five Great Short Stories** by Anton Chekhov
- **Hunger** by Knut Hamsun
- **If This Is a Man/The Truce** by Primo Levi
- **Joe: The Only Boy in the World** by Michael Blastland
- **Madame Bovary** by Gustav Flaubert
- **Me Before You** by Jojo Moyes
- **Medical Humanities: A Practical Introduction** by Deborah Kirklin & Ruth Richardson (Eds)
- **Mountains Beyond Mountains** by Tracy Kidder
- **On Death and Dying** by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross
- **One in Three** by Adam Wishart
- **The Appointment** by Dr Graham Easton
- **The Bell Jar** by Sylvia Plath
- **The Brain** by David Eagleman
- **The Citadel** by AJ Cronin

- **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time** by Mark Haddon
- **The Diving Bell and the Butterfly**, by J.D. Bauby
- **The Doctor, His Patient and The Illness** by Michael Balint
- **The Emperor of all Maladies: a biography of cancer** by Siddhartha Mukherjee
- **The House of God** by Samuel Shem
- **The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks** by Rebecca Skloot
- **The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Hat** by Oliver Sacks
- **The Periodic Table** by Premi Levi
- **The Prison Doctor** by Amanda Brown
- **The Private Life of The Brain: Emotion, Consciousness And The Secret Of The Self** by Susan Greenfield
- **This is Going to Hurt**, by Adam Kay
- **Trust me, I'm a Junior Doctor** by Max Pemberton
- **War Doctor: Surgery on the Front Line**, by David Nott

Documentaries/Television:

- **24 Hours in A & E**, Channel 4
- **An Hour to Save Your Life** BBC Two
- **Body Donors** Channel 5
- **Doctors on Trial** BBC One
- **GPs: Behind Closed Doors** Channel 5
- **Junior Doctors: Blood, Sweat & Tears** BBC Three
- **One Born Every Minute**, Channel 4

Websites:

- **Brainbook** <http://www.realbrainbook.co.uk/>
- **Futurelearn (free online short courses)** www.futurelearn.com