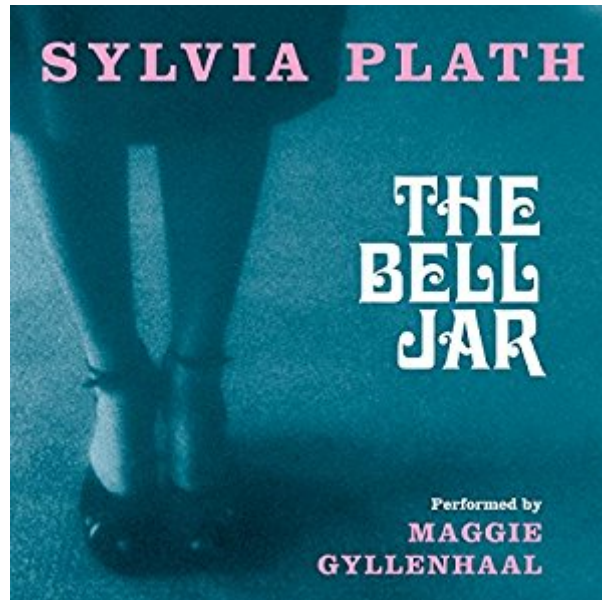




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# The Bell Jar



## Synopsis

The Bell Jar chronicles the crack-up of Esther Greenwood: brilliant, beautiful, enormously talented, and successful but slowly going under - maybe for the last time. Sylvia Plath masterfully draws the reader into Esther's breakdown with such intensity that Esther's insanity becomes completely real and even rational, as probable and accessible an experience as going to the movies. Such deep penetration into the dark and harrowing corners of the psyche is an extraordinary accomplishment and has made The Bell Jar a haunting American classic.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Reading this was a bit like being a peeping tom into an exasperating yet intriguing woman's early adulthood and adventures in mid-20th century America. As interesting for the look at then current mental health practices as for her navigation of gender norms, sexual mores, and her own poorly managed insecurities.

I have had and written mercilessly in the softcover version of this book and I decided to treat myself to the hardcover version and I LOVE it!

Sylvia Plath is known for committing suicide. She wrote The Bell Jar shortly before she made her fatal decision. I wanted to like this novel, but I had a difficult time getting into it. I didn't like the main character, especially in the beginning of the book. (I found her more relatable towards the end of the story.) The main character's tale slips between past and present at odd moments. There are many "loose ends." If Sylvia Plath had lived longer, I'm sure I would have enjoyed her other works. She

does have a certain...something, but this book was only okay. It had been on my reading pile for awhile, so I'm glad to get it checked off my list. It's a famous book, but I would no longer consider it a classic, nor would I recommend it to others. Luckily it's only twenty chapters long, a quick read.

This was my first time reading Plath- I stumbled across this book while searching books on and decided to give it a go. I can usually tell from the very beginning if I'll like a book or not and this one I was hooked on right away. It's not as depressing as the other reviews say it is- just merely an account of a mind that views the world differently and a little somberly. I highly recommend. Plath's style of writing is just beautiful. I not am going to purchase her books of poetry.

This is Sylvia Plath's shocking, realistic, and intensely emotional novel about a woman falling into the grip of insanity. The story follows Esther Greenwood who is brilliant, beautiful, enormously talented, and successful, but slowly going under. Plath brilliantly draws the reader into Esther's breakdown with such intensity that her insanity becomes palpably real, even rational— as accessible an experience as going to the movies. A deep penetration into the darkest and most harrowing corners of the human psyche, *The Bell Jar* is an extraordinary accomplishment and a haunting American classic.

It's a very good book chock full of descriptive passages. Sylvia Plath was an excellent writer and even though this is a very depressing book, I suggest people read it to get a feel for who Sylvia Plath was. It is what it is.

Although this is listed as fiction, it is actually semi-autobiographical. For this reason it was difficult for me to read. That said at the same time it is wonderfully honest and detailed that every step of it was a joy. If the serious theme can be absorbed then readers will be well rewarded for the story and how well she writes it.

In high school, I couldn't get my hands on enough books. I loved to escape through the pages, be in someone else's life for a while. I was a typical moody teen, dealing with body issues and depression. I took a class on creative writing and we had a month that was dedicated to poetry. This was when I first found Sylvia Plath. Her poems were dark but filled with beautiful messages; my favorite by her was *Lady Lazarus*. I'm much more of a novel reader than a poetry fan, so I had to get my hands on '*The Bell Jar*'. I was enthralled. I couldn't put the book down. I wasn't the suicidal type,

my depression manifested in other ways. But there was something about Sylvia's life, something about her work, that touched me. After reading the book, I journaled much, much more. I wanted all of my feelings and thoughts that I kept to myself, to be kept somewhere and to help me grow. This is definitely a must read for high school students! It's not hard to understand. She writes very clearly, and it is definitely relatable. Granted, with technology being a huge part of kids' lives today, it might be a little harder for some to understand the character's life from decades ago - as so much has changed in the world - but, the feelings will still ring true.

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