

About a novelist

Task 1 Your tastes in books or films

Tick the type of book or film that you enjoy most.

- Romantic stories
- Thrillers
- Horror stories
- Comedies
- Crime stories
- Spy stories
- Autobiographies
- Adventure stories
- Historical period dramas
- War stories
- Teenage stories
- Science fiction
- Other ...

Who do you think has had most influence on your taste?

- Parents
- Friends
- School teachers
- The media
- Other ...

Task 2 All in a title

Here are the titles of books and films by a mystery British writer.

- Fever Pitch
 - High Fidelity
 - About a boy
 - How to be good
 - 31 songs
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- Who is he?
 - What might these stories be about?
 - What type of books do you think they are?

Task 3 Find out about Nick Hornby

Read the text and answer these questions.

- What was Nick's job before he became famous?
- How did he use his passions in his job?
- What did he write about in his first book?
- What is the main subject of his latest work?

About a novelist

This is the story of an English teacher teaching foreign students in a language school in London. A teacher by day, but by night and at the weekends a passionate football fan and music lover. He even made lessons for his students using his favourite songs and his football results. He was a good teacher, a very good teacher. The students loved his lessons, his enthusiasms and his sense of humour, but he had one burning ambition. To become a writer. He wrote plays sent them to the BBC, he talked incessantly about music and football. If he wrote as well as he talked then he would one day get published. And he did. He became a writer, a very British writer.

Not just any writer. Nick turned his love of Arsenal Football into a diary of a fan and called the book 'Fever Pitch'. The book made him a household name and was made in to a film. Most importantly, his writing represents a generation of young British people. He continues to use his passions and personal life to make funny, sad and very readable books. His latest novel is really a group of essays. What about? Well, songs, of course.

If you love music it can be the soundtrack to your life. There are songs which stand out in time as favourites for many reasons. You might work or play with music in the background. You grew up with music or you associate music with a specific year in your life. Nick writes about that and much, much more in his latest book '31 songs'.

Nick's Books and films

- **Fever Pitch** - The autobiographical account of his love of football was turned into a film starring Colin Firth.
- **High Fidelity** - Nick writes about a man who lives his life for music and dreams in lists: his top 5 worst break ups with girlfriends, his top 5 best singles of all time, his top 5 best films. This book became a film starring John Cusack.
- **About a boy** - The tale of a single man who lives on inherited money. He meets a young boy and his mother who change his life. The story looks at the relationship between the boy and the man. This is now a film starring Hugh Grant.
- **How to be Good** - A look at an ordinary marriage and parents through the eyes of a woman whose husband decides to be a 'good person'.
- **31 Songs** - A description of 31 songs and why they are important to the author's life.

Task 4 Writers and their themes

Look at the films and book summaries.

- Which book would you prefer to read?
- Which film sounds good?
- Have you ever read a Nick Hornby book?
- Have you ever seen one of his films?
- What qualities do you think Nick needed to become a famous writer?
- Are there any writers in your country writing about similar themes to Nick?
- Who are the most popular writers working in your country today?
- What type of themes do they write about?

Task 5 Describing stories

Look at these descriptions of stories.

- Which appeal to you most?
- Do you like romantic stories?
- Can you put the adjectives into groups?
- What type of adjectives can be used to describe Hornby's books?

Adventurous	Funny
Fast-paced	Investigative
Romantic	Daring
Thought-provoking	Light-hearted
Autobiographical	Hilarious
Shocking	Gentle
Spine-chilling	Witty
Gory	Silly
Honest	Imaginative
Scar	Intense

Task 6 Favourite books or films

Pick your favourite books or films. Make a top 3 list

- Think of ways to describe the book or film in one or two sentences.
- Choose adjectives to say what you think of the book or film.
- Interview your partner about their choices. Ask them as many questions as you can about their book.

Task 7 Your passions

Nick Hornby has the pleasant job of making his interests into books that millions can enjoy. We all have passions and dreams that can be used to shape our future. Complete these sentences about yourself and think about how you could use your interests in your studies or your working life.

- One of my greatest passions in life is ...
- My three main interests are ...
- My greatest ambition is to ...
- In the future I would like to ...

Task 8 Films of books

Which of these sentences do you agree with?

- Films made from well known books are always a little disappointing.
- If a film is good I usually want to read the book.
- It is better to read a book before you see the film so you can imagine it for yourself.
- A book is far richer than a film and better for your brain.
- Young people in my country do not read enough.
- People do not have time to read so watching a film of a book is an easier option.

Think of 3 ways to encourage more young people to read and to make reading fun

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