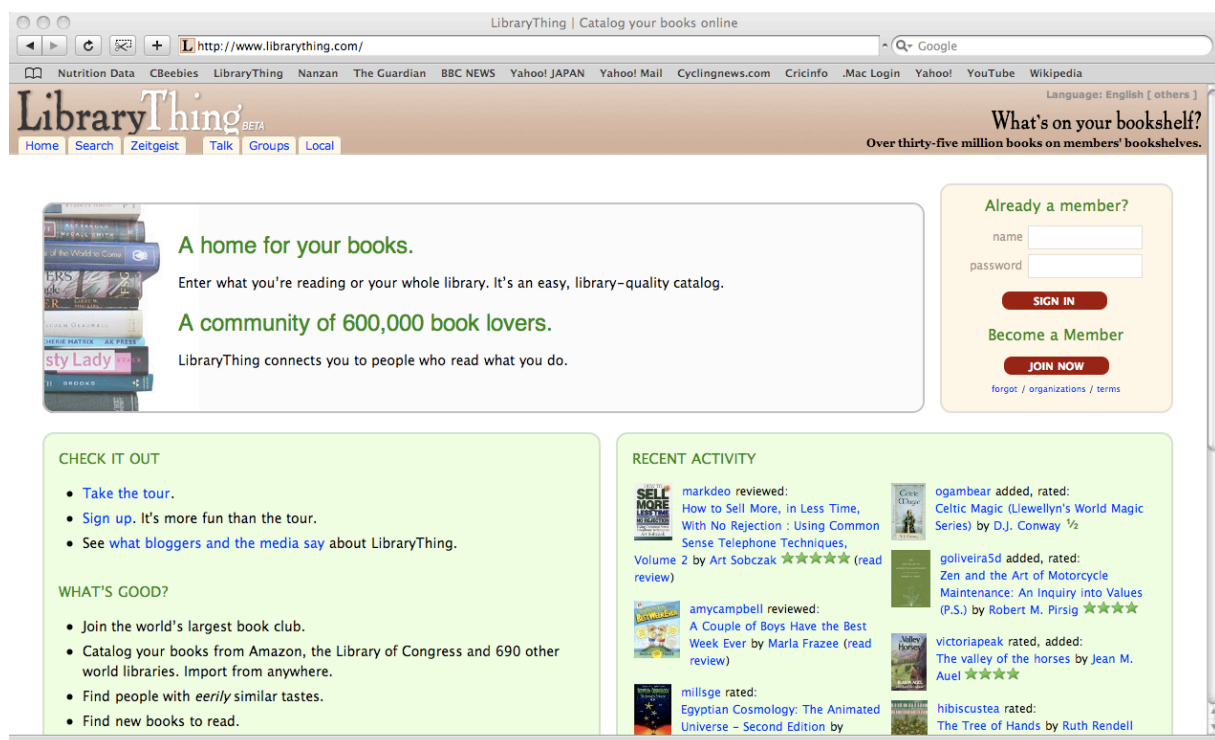


Using Librarything.com to Encourage Extensive Reading: A Guide for Teachers



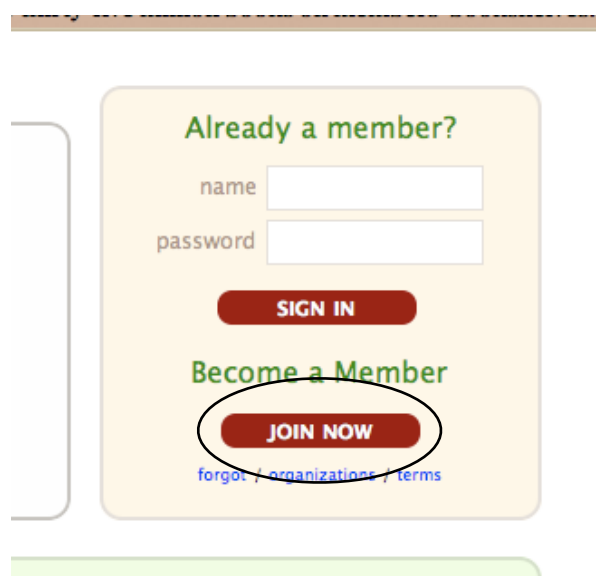
Dale Brown
Nanzan University

April 2009

Introduction

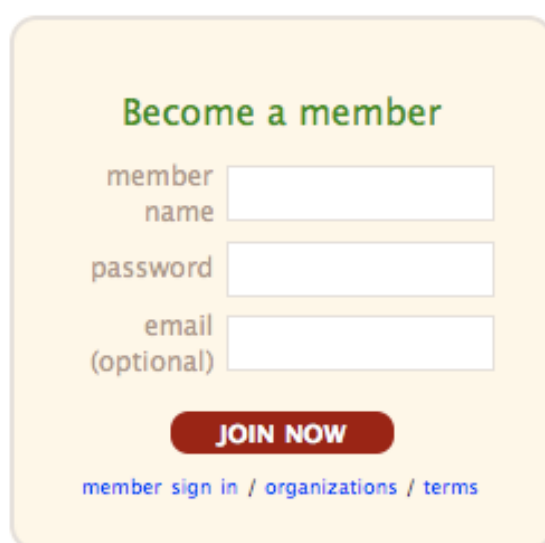
Librarything.com is a website that allows you to catalogue your books. Users create their own page within the site (rather like social networking sites such as Facebook or MySpace) and record their books through this page. Librarything is not designed for language learners, and is a vast site with a vast array of features. This guide shows how I use Librarything with my students, and so introduces only a limited portion of the website.

Creating your page



A screenshot of the Librarything website's login and sign-up interface. The interface is divided into two main sections: 'Already a member?' and 'Become a Member'. The 'Already a member?' section has input fields for 'name' and 'password', followed by a red 'SIGN IN' button. The 'Become a Member' section has a red 'JOIN NOW' button, which is circled in black. Below the 'JOIN NOW' button are links for 'forgot', 'organizations', and 'terms'. The entire form is set against a light yellow background with a white border.

Creating your own page on Librarything is very simple. From the homepage simply click on Join now in the box on the right-hand side (above). The box will then change to a Become a member box (below). Enter a member name and password, then click Join now.



A screenshot of the Librarything 'Become a member' form. The form is titled 'Become a member' in green text. It contains three input fields: 'member name', 'password', and 'email (optional)'. Below these fields is a red 'JOIN NOW' button. At the bottom of the form are links for 'member sign in', 'organizations', and 'terms'. The form is set against a light yellow background with a white border.

Things to note

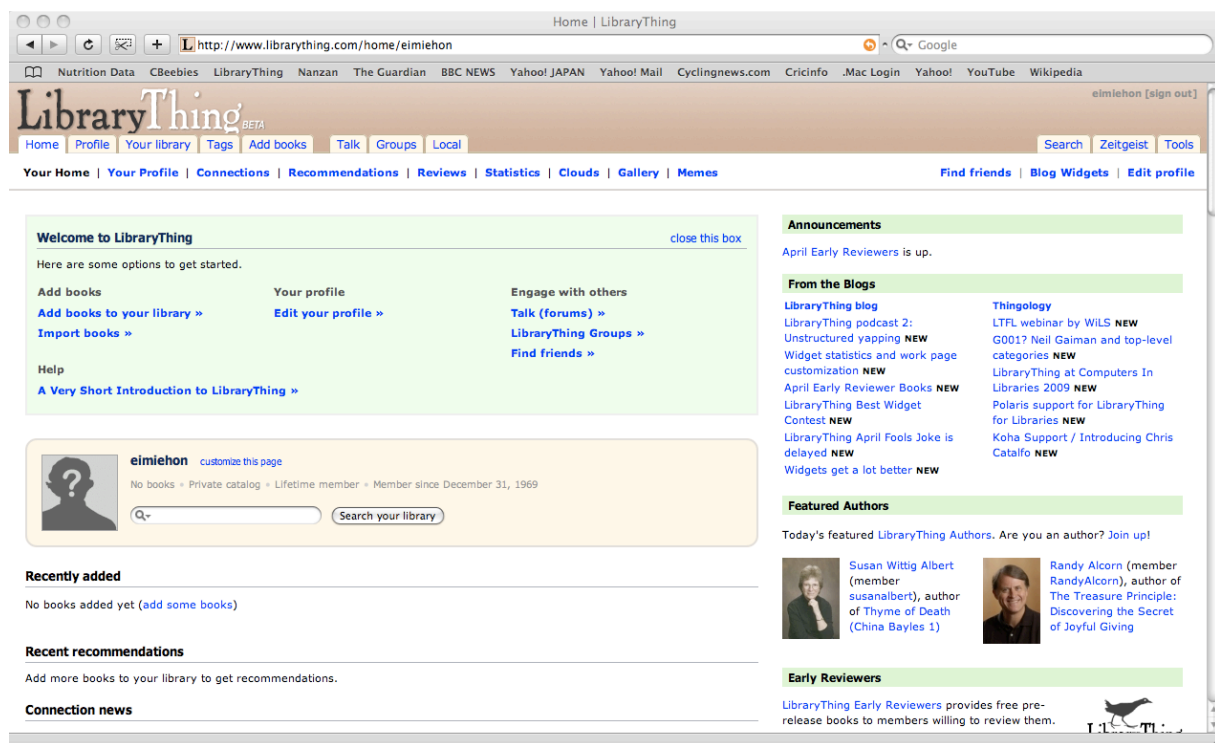
Your member name cannot contain a space. I am not aware of any other password rules.

The member name appears on the page and can be viewed by other users of the site, so I tell my students to not use their real names as their member name.

In the Become a member box you have the option of entering an email address. I tell my students to not do so. This makes joining wonderfully simple, but also means that if they lose or forget their member name or password, there is no way to retrieve it. I get them to write down their member name and password in at least two different places, and explain that if they lose or forget either, the only thing they can do is start all over again.

Adding books to your library

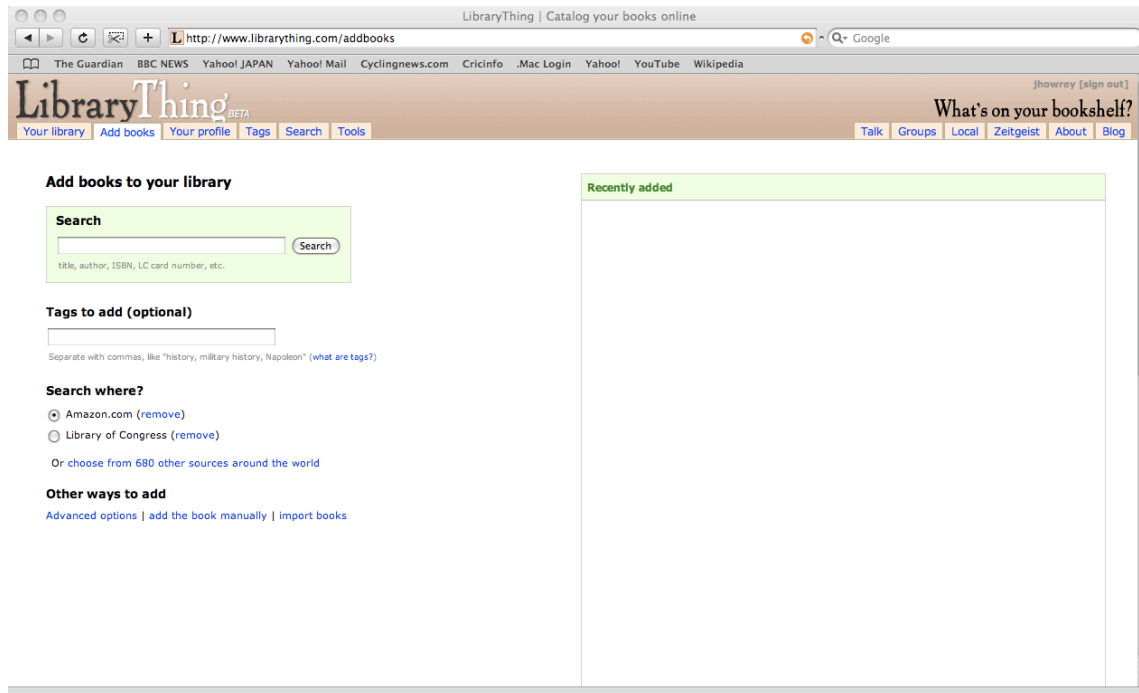
Having joined, you will first be presented with a welcome page.



At the top of this page the navigation bar will have changed, as shown here.



Click on Add books and you will see this page.



LibraryThing | Catalog your books online

http://www.librarything.com/addbooks

The Guardian BBC NEWS Yahoo! JAPAN Yahoo! Mail Cyclingnews.com Cricinfo .Mac Login Yahoo! YouTube Wikipedia

LibraryThing BETA

Your library Add books Your profile Tags Search Tools

What's on your bookshelf? Talk Groups Local Zeitgeist About Blog

Add books to your library

Search

Search

title, author, ISBN, LC card number, etc.

Tags to add (optional)

Separate with commas, like "history, military history, Napoleon" ([what are tags?](#))

Search where?

☒ Amazon.com ([remove](#))

☐ Library of Congress ([remove](#))

Or [choose from 680 other sources around the world](#)

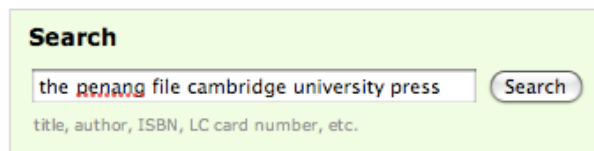
Other ways to add

[Advanced options](#) | [add the book manually](#) | [import books](#)

Recently added

Click in the search box and type the title of the book you wish to add. For graded readers enter both the title and series name so as to avoid getting too many hits.

Add books to your library

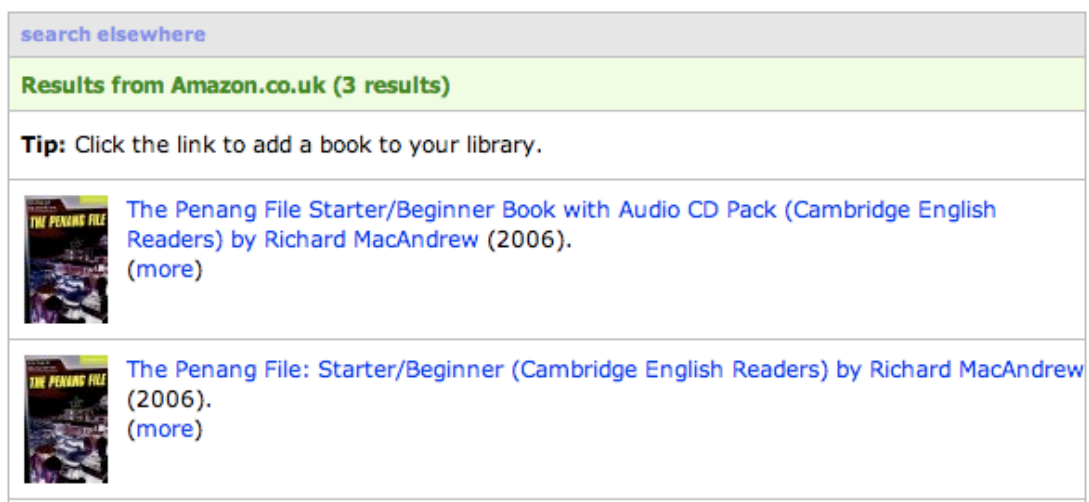


Search

Search

title, author, ISBN, LC card number, etc.


Click on Search and on the right side of the page your search results will appear.




[search elsewhere](#)

Results from Amazon.co.uk (3 results)

Tip: Click the link to add a book to your library.


 **The Penang File Starter/Beginner Book with Audio CD Pack (Cambridge English Readers) by Richard MacAndrew (2006).**
([more](#))


 **The Penang File: Starter/Beginner (Cambridge English Readers) by Richard MacAndrew (2006).**
([more](#))

Click on the book you want. The Results box will now become a Recently added box. Click on Show quick edit and you will be able to enter further information about the book. I require my students to rate each book and to write a brief review of it.

Recently added

The Penang File Starter/Beginner Book with Audio CD Pack (Cambridge English Read... by Richard MacAndrew


edit book 

delete book 

5 other members; Tags: None

▼ hide quick edit

Tags Save tags

Rating  Review None ([click to review](#))

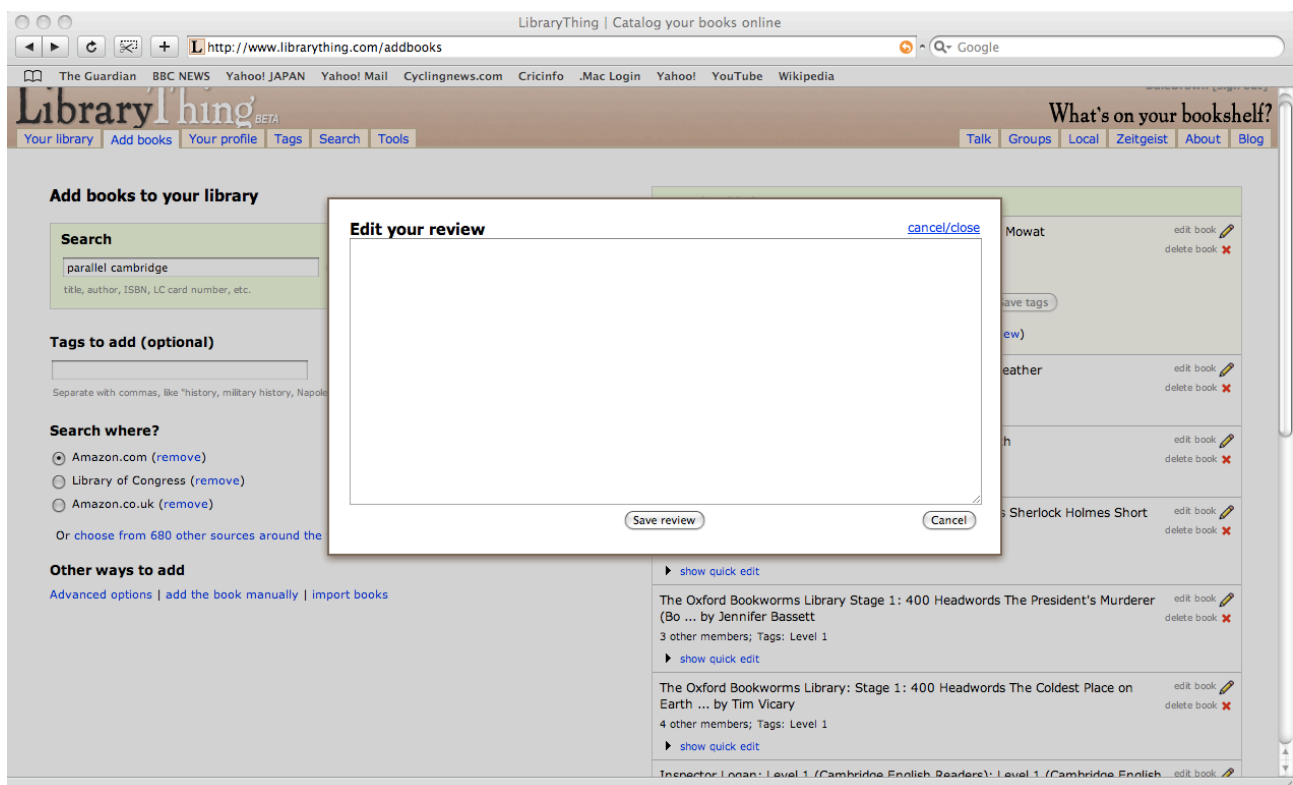
Rating books

To rate the book simply click on one of the grey stars and the same number will turn green. Clicking a second time allows you to give half stars.

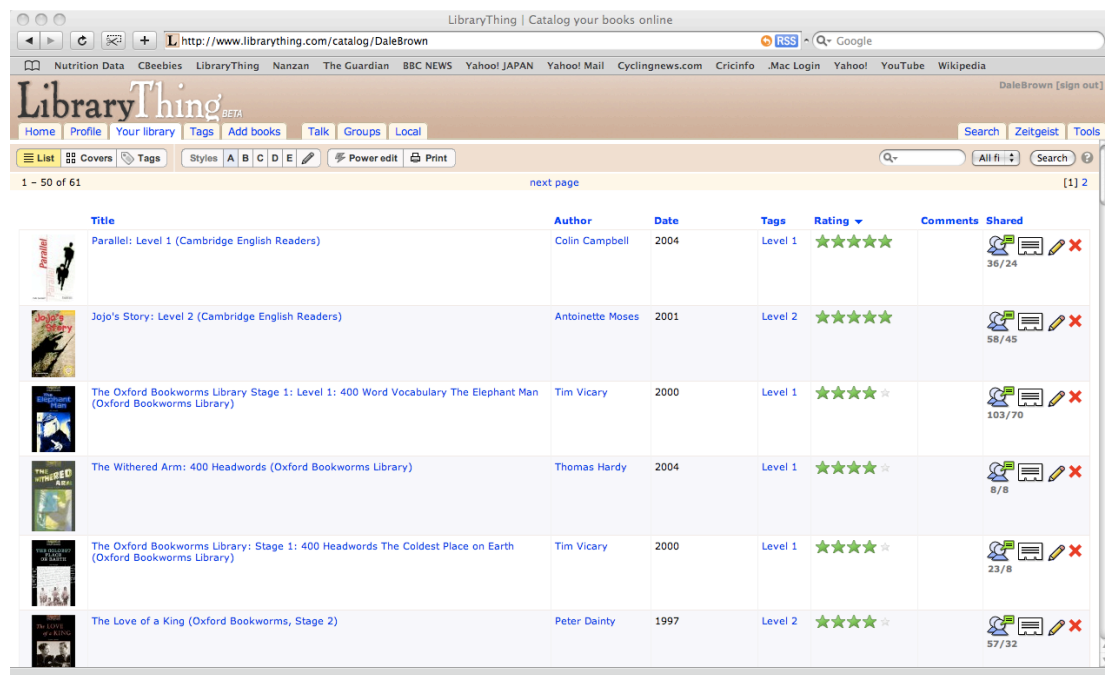


Reviewing books

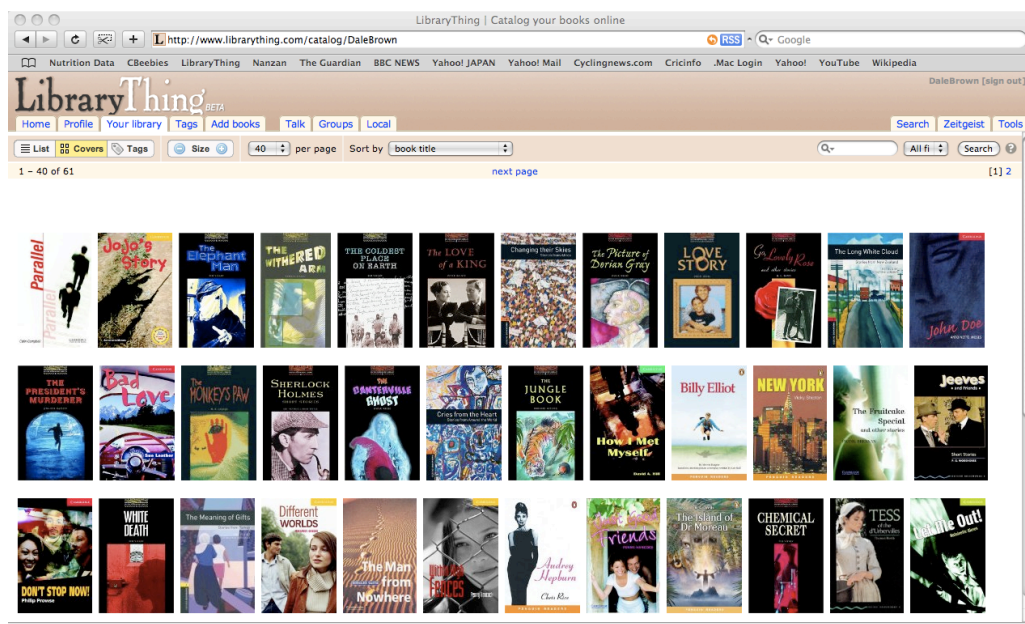
Click on click to review and a new window will appear. Just type your review and click Save review.



Viewing your library



In the top navigation bar click on Your library. This page displays the books you have entered. It can be formatted in a number of ways, but I just show students the standard format, List, as above, and also the Covers format below. As students read more and more books they get to really like the Covers format as it gives them a sense of how much they have read.



Getting recommendations

As well as recording what they have read, Librarything is also a great way for students to find other books that might interest them. I show students two ways to do this.

Members with your books

In the top navigation bar click on Profile. On the right side you will find Members with your books. This lists Librarything members with the most similar libraries to your own.

The screenshot shows the LibraryThing profile page for a user named DaleBrown. The page is divided into several sections:

- Member: DaleBrown**
 - Books:** 62 books cataloged
 - Reviews:** 57 reviews — see reviews
 - Tags:** Level 1 (22), Level 3 (15), Level 2 (15), Starter level (3), Level 4 (2), Level 5 (1), Level 6 (1) — see all tags
 - Clouds:** tag cloud, author cloud
 - Groups:** None
 - About me:** I teach at Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan. My library shows all the graded readers I have read, and what I think of them.
 - Favorite authors:** None specified (how to add)
 - Account type:** public, free (upgrade to paid account)
 - Connection News:** Connection News
 - URLs:** <http://www.librarything.com/profile/DaleBrown> (profile), <http://www.librarything.com/catalog/DaleBrown> (library)
 - Member since:** Jun 28, 2007
- Most recent activity**
 - DaleBrown added: The Penang File Starter/Beginner Book with Audio CD Pack (Cambridge English Readers) by Richard MacAndrew
 - DaleBrown reviewed, rated, added: The Long White Cloud: Stories from New Zealand: 1000 Headwords (Oxford Bookworms Library) ★★½ (read review)
 - DaleBrown reviewed, rated, added: What a Lottery!: Starter/Beginner (Cambridge English Readers) by Colin Campbell ★★ (read review)
 - DaleBrown reviewed, rated, added: The Jungle Book: 700 Headwords (Oxford Bookworms Library) by Rudyard Kipling ★★½ (read review)
- Members with your books**
 - weighted | raw | recent
 - getreadingAAW (29/391), yuuka (14/48), miyoed (13/53), pukreaders (41/1934), getreadingdmc (24/588), goma (12/20), cox (12/17), bluerose69 (12/45), getreadingFMC (17/322), dalered (11/17), cocoan (11/18), Bucccho (10/33), getreadingadw (28/948), getreadingswc (27/921), daleyellow (11/13), geesehaward (10/17), misakit (10/14), K2Bwds19 (10/12), yktr (10/20), masashiyoshida (10/15), wantaro (9/16), yorozuya (8/25), mayutama (9/16), getreadingdmc (28/1498), sibakei (9/16), gachapin (8/23), luvfruit (9/31), projectyou (13/226), gaki.sas (8/23), 5526 (9/35), aobozu (8/10), nicki (21/1204), shihomi (8/15), natsuki (8/14), ayamasaka (8/31), kasapon (8/17), yahooo (7/25), Kaori. (7/12), torako (7/8), shio (7/25), daleblue (7/18) — (show more)
- Connections**
 - Connections list is empty (edit)
 - (Edit/see other members' connections)
- Random books from DaleBrown's library**
 - Hotel Casanova: Level 1 (Cambridge English Readers) by Sue Leather
 - The Meaning of Gifts - Stories from Turkey: 400 Headwords (Oxford Bookworms Library) by Jennifer Bassett

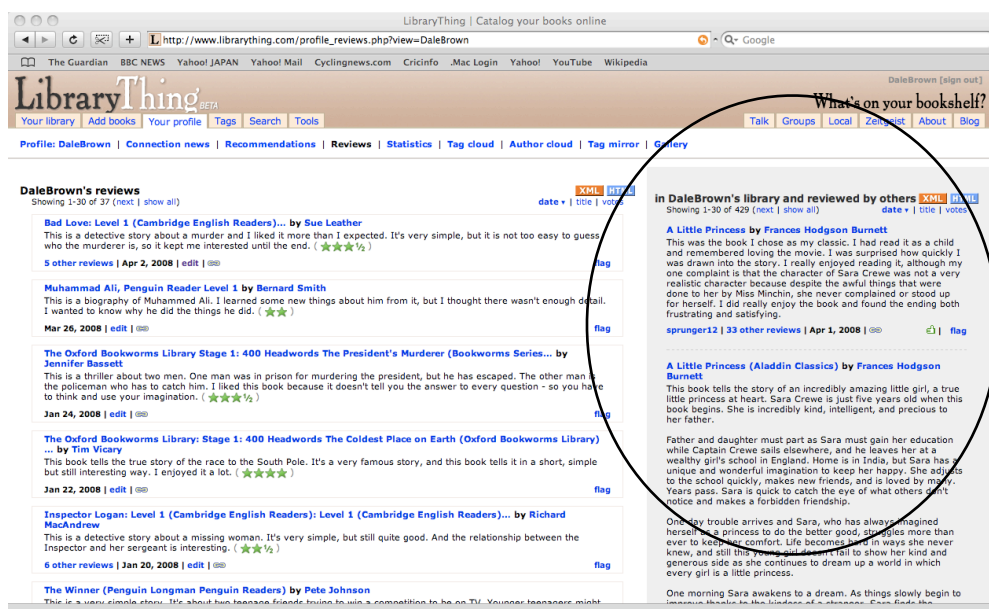
Click on a member's name to go to that member's profile page. Since you and this member have several books in common, you presumably have similar tastes, so looking at what else is in their library might reveal something that interests you. Click on X books cataloged to view their library or see reviews to view their reviews.

This screenshot shows the top part of the LibraryThing profile page for DaleBrown. The navigation bar at the top includes links for Home, Profile, Your library, Tags, Add books, Talk, and Groups. Below the navigation bar, the member's name is followed by a list of statistics:

- Books:** 61 books cataloged
- Reviews:** 57 reviews — see reviews
- Tags:** Level 1 (22), Level 3 (15), Level 2 (15), Starter level (3), Level 4 (2), Level 5 (1), Level 6 (1) — see all tags
- Clouds:** tag cloud, author cloud
- Groups:** None
- About me:** I teach at Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan them.

In your library and reviewed by others

From your Profile page click on [see reviews](#). Your reviews page shows all the reviews you have written on the left, and in your library and reviewed by others on the right. As the name suggests, this shows other member's reviews of books in your library. Read the other members' reviews and if you find one that you agree with, click on their name to go to their profile page.



Signing out

Click on [Sign out](#) in the top right-hand corner of any page.



Concluding remarks

I have found Librarything very helpful and have had positive feedback from students so far. It helps me, by allowing me to easily monitor their reading and by making the students clearly accountable for their reading. It helps my students by encouraging them to read more. Some seem to enjoy the collecting aspect of it, others enjoy looking around each other's libraries and reviews, while some get competitive and try to read more than their classmates. Whichever aspect appeals to them, the end result seems to be that they read more, which is what I am most interested in.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me.

Please note . . .

I have no relationship with or interest in Libarything.com other than as a user.

Librarything is a constantly evolving website and has undergone several substantial revisions in the two years that I have been using it. It therefore may not work exactly as presented in this guide.