

Research Brief for a Live Presenter

Cricket in Literature

- Cricket has appeared in literature since Victorian times.
- Cricket appears in all genres in many different ways.
- Tied up in ideas of empire, whiteness, and colonialism.
- Cricket in novels examines the roles of masculinity, empire, class, and race.
- Revolutionary novels in the twenty-first century from Pakistani and Sri Lankan authors that look at cricket from the perspective of the colonised people.
- Each country with literature featuring cricket has explored it in different ways
- Cricket has a long and varied history from a children's game to the professional game that we know today in its various forms from Test cricket to Twenty20 games.

Interesting Moments in Cricketing History

- May to October 1868 – First Australian cricketing tour of England – an all-Indigenous team
- 1874 – women's cricket credited with inventing overarm bowling
- 1877 – England and Australia played the first Test match
- 1882 – Start of the Ashes tournament
- 1889 – South Africa became third nation to play Test cricket
- 1890 – Sheffield Shield (Australia), The County Championship (England), and the Currie Cup (South Africa) formed
- By 1952, there were seven members of the International Cricket Council – England, South Africa, and Australia (1909), West Indies (1928), New Zealand (1930), India (1932), and Pakistan (1952).
- 1932-1933 Controversial Bodyline tour of England
- 1934 – England undertook a six-week Test tour of Brisbane – first Test Match with an all-women's team
- 1970 controversy – South Africa banned from Test cricket due to apartheid laws

Key Books Featuring Cricket

- Willowman by Inga Simpson
- The Bodyline Fix: How Women Saved Cricket by Marion Stell
- The Gift of Speed by Steven Carroll
- The Call by Martin Flanagan
- Death Before Wicket by Kerry Greenwood
- A Private Man by Malcolm A Knox
- Cricket Kings by William McInnes
- The Rules of Backyard Cricket by Jock Serong
- Jasper Jones by Craig Silvey
- Universe, and Everything by Douglas Adams

- The Pickwick Papers by Charles Dickens
- The Go-Between by L.P Hartley
- Memoirs of a Foxhunting Man by Siegfried Sassoon
- Lord Peter Wimsey Mystery #10: Murder Must Advertise by Dorothy L Sayers
- Psmith in the City by P.G. Wodehouse
- Selection Day by Aravind Adiga
- The Taliban Cricket Club by Timeri N Murari
- Netherland by Joseph O'Neill
- The Goat, The Sofa and the Swami by R. Chandrasekar
- Best of Friends by Kamila Shamsie
- In the City by the Sea by Kamila Shamsie
- Chinaman by Shehan Karunatilaka

Themes Explored

- Each novel engages with cricket within empires
- Some take a satirical look at cricket
- Cricket starts out as white and becomes diverse
- Is very male in most books
- Kamila Shamsie and Timeri N Murari look at cricket through a feminist lens
- Some books question the role of class and empire
- Cricket is played across the classes
- It is how and what type of cricket played that is key to the individual stories
- Cricket represents empire
- It has been used as a pushback against empire in Indian, Sri Lankan, and Pakistani novels