



## Year Seven and Eight Scholarship Reading List

Below are some suggestions for your reading over the summer and beyond. It is essential for potential scholars to show that they read widely. Love of reading and of words is a central part of English scholarship papers and schools always expect scholars to enjoy books.

English scholarship papers also have very demanding comprehension texts: so prepare for this by reading demanding books.

With that in mind, here are some suggestions for reading. Try to write reviews of some of these and hand them in.

Books marked \* are written for children or teenagers: the rest were written for adults.

Some books contain very difficult moral or ethical ideas. It is important for potential scholars to look around and read books they can really think about but scholars should also make sure they read a range of teenage and children's fiction.

*Oliver Twist* or *A Christmas Carol*– Charles Dickens

*Macbeth* – William Shakespeare – see if you can read the original version of this!

*Jane Eyre* - Charlotte Bronte. A classic tale about a woman who falls in love with seemingly the wrong man; mysterious visitors and strange voices also pepper the novel.

*The Turn of the Screw* – Henry James (A classic ghost story –or is it?)

*Brighton Rock* or *The Power and the Glory*– Graham Greene. His novels are murky spy stories, often about someone who is a very flawed character.

*Beowulf* – Simon Armitage

*Fahrenheit 451* – Ray Bradbury. Set in a world where books are illegal and firemen set fire to things, this is an important work of science-fiction.

\**Smith* – Leon Garfield. The story of a Victorian pick-pocket.

*Brave New World* – Aldous Huxley. This is a very difficult book which is set in a world where people are given a Greek letter – alpha, beta, etc and their life chances are determined by it. Suitable only for the most mature Y8s.

*Decline and Fall* – Evelyn Waugh. A biting satire of inter-war privilege. Along the same lines, *Vile Bodies* by the same author.

*Journey to the Centre of the Earth* – Jules Verne (some very early science fiction)

\**Dune* – Frank Herbert (a classic work of science fiction)

*Nineteen Eighty Four* – George Orwell

*Coming Up for Air* – George Orwell (a man feels increasingly depressed as it seems war is inevitable)

*Of Mice and Men* – John Steinbeck. A classic tale of Depression America.

*The Catcher in the Rye* – JD Salinger

*On the Road* – Jack Kerouac This and the novel above are classic stories of rebellion and are often read by teenagers looking for a different approach to life.

*A Kestrel for a Knave* – Barry Hines. This is a story of poverty and ambition and of freedom, told through a teenage boy who hates school but loves birds.

*Watership Down* - Richard Adams

*Frankenstein* – Mary Shelley (The book that started a legend, that is also a classic in its own right).

*The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* – Agatha Christie (this is great fun and read it carefully!)

\**I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* – Maya Angelou

*Rebecca* – Daphne Du Maurier. This is a mysterious and haunting story of loss. You may also like to investigate *Jamaica Inn* by the same author, which is another haunting story set in a real Cornish pub.

\**The Scarecrows* – Robert Westall A ghost story and also about a troubled teenager with a troubled family background.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* – Harper Lee. The classic story of racism in 1950s America.

\**Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret* – Judy Blume

\**Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* – Mildred D Taylor

\**The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* – Muriel Spark

*A Fool's Alphabet* – Sebastian Faulks. This is a tricky novel by an extremely clever author. You'll see how it is meant to work as soon as you open the first page.

*The Day of the Triffids* – John Wyndham (intelligent plants attack!)

*Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*- John Le Carre (a traitor is unmasked –and this is proper literature)

*The Thirty Nine Steps* – John Buchan (adventure – this book really invented the spy genre)

\**The Outsiders* – SE Hinton

\**My Sister's Keeper* - Jodi Picoult (deals with serious issues such as illness and transplanting organs. Recommended for advanced readers only)

\**Alice in Wonderland* – Lewis Carroll. You should definitely read this if you haven't already.

\**Astercote* –Penelope Lively. This is a medieval –themed story by one of our greatest-ever children's writers.

*Things Fall Apart* – Chinua Achebe. A novel of the British Empire in Nigeria.

\**The Wind in the Willows* – Kenneth Grahame. You really should read the original version all the way through. It's a classic, it's beautiful and it is surprisingly hard.

\**Empty World* – John Christopher (John Christopher's adult fiction, often science fiction or apocalyptic fiction, is also worth reading, particularly *The Death of Grass*)

*Out of Africa* – Karen Blixen. The story of one woman's love of her life in Africa.

\**Bridge to Terabithia* – Katherine Paterson. A very powerful story about friendship and loss.

\**Narnia series* – CS Lewis. The opposite of this series is the *His Dark Materials* trilogy, by Phillip Pullman. Pullman does not like Lewis or his imagination and it is worth reading both to compare, as one was written partly in response to the other.

\**Buddy* – Nigel Hinton (Nigel Hinton also wrote *Collision Course*, about a boy who steals a motorbike and kills a pedestrian)

\**Our Island Story* – HE Marshall (This is an old-fashioned work of history and scholars will enjoy seeing the bias in its style)

*Aunts Aren't Gentlemen* – PG Wodehouse (OR any of the Jeeves and Wooster books. These are very classy, funny stories about a slightly dim aristocrat and his highly intelligent butler. Wooster (the aristocrat) keeps getting himself into scrapes through his childishness.

### Cross Curricular Books

*Amo, Amas, Amat* – Harry Mount. This is a book about one man's love of Latin. It also has lots of Latin revision in it and is very funny.

*Berlin or Stalingrad* – Antony Beevor. Both of these are fabulous and detailed books about key battles of World War II.

*The Unforgiven* – Rob Bagchi and Paul Rogerson. This is a book about the great Leeds United team of the early 1970s. A key work of football history.

*The Anatomy of England* – Jonathan Wilson. This book traces England's failures in football by examining 10 key international matches since the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. An intelligent and thoughtful read, anyone interested in football tactics will enjoy this.

*Sophie's World* – Jostein Gaarder. This is the story of a girl who gets some mysterious communications from a mentor. Through this, she learns about the history of philosophy.

*A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson. A non scientist's take on the science of the universe. Lots of brilliant scientific concepts such as quantum theory crop up throughout the book.

*The Penguin Dictionary of Curious and Interesting Numbers* – David Wells. This is a fascinating book, perfect for dipping in and out of, about interesting numbers and what makes them interesting.

*Longitude* – Dava Sobel. This is a book about the man who made the first really accurate watch and thus enabled the measurement of longitude.

Science and history in the same book!

*Selected Short Stories* – HG Wells. Many of these are scientific in theme – especially *The Truth About Pyecraft*, which examines the connection between mass and weight.

\**The Little Prince* – Antoine de Saint Exupery (French experts might like to try and read this in French)

Although reading Shakespeare is important, it is better to see him if you can. When preparing for Scholarship, try to see a few Shakespeare plays – especially *Henry V*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Richard III*, *Hamlet*...

### Suggested Activities:

Keep a reading journal over the summer. Record what you've read and what you thought of it. Write things inspired by what you've read and don't be afraid to write about confusions or difficulties you've had with your reading.

Write at least two book reviews, but DO NOT just tell the plot. Discuss the themes, the language, your impressions of the books.

Why not expand the journal to include your thoughts on what you've read in the papers, or what you think about current affairs?

KJD  
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