



Year Eight Reading List

Below are some suggestions for your reading over the summer and beyond. We will be studying **Romeo and Juliet** by Shakespeare in the Michaelmas Term, followed by **Animal Farm** by George Orwell in the Lent Term and **The Pearl** by John Steinbeck in the Summer Term.

Lord of the Flies – William Golding. Alongside this, how about *The Coral Island*, by RM Ballantyne? The two books give different views of how people trapped on a desert island might cope with it.

Skellig – David Almond In fact any of David Almond's books, all of which are strange, almost fabulistic, are suitable. His books look at life itself.

The Knife of Never Letting Go – Patrick Ness

Feather Boy – Nicky Singer

Witch Child – Celia Rees

Inventing Elliot – Graham Gardner (A boy decides to change himself to avoid bullies and ends up far deeper into a bullying network than he could have ever imagined)

Fat Boy Swim – Catherine Forde (An unhappy teenager decides to take up swimming and his life changes)

The Bad Beginning – Lemony Snicket (the Baudelaire children and their truly terrible story)

The Lost Island of Tamarind - Nadia Aguiar (children left without parents when they are blown overboard, who then arrive in a very strange place indeed)

Grey Wolves – Robert Muchamore (spying and being captured in World War II)

The Wind Singer – William Nicholson (trilogy) A family try to escape the rigid rule of their home city. The trilogy involves their quest for freedom and the truth about their legendary ancestors, the wind singers.

Noughts and Crosses – Malorie Blackman (trilogy but the first book is excellent on its own). This series explores racism.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time – Mark Haddon. This is the story of a boy with Asperger's Syndrome and is told from his perspective.
Northern Lights – Phillip Pullman (also a trilogy and covers some important religious topics).

I Capture the Castle - Dodie Smith (a coming of age story).

Drop Zone (series) – Andy McNab (lots of war stories!)

Teacher's Dead- Benjamin Zephaniah. Also by the same author, *Face* and *Refugee Boy* examine issues of identity, loss and discrimination. He writes very relevant books set in modern Britain.

Finding Violet Park – Jenny Valentine. This is a really moving story of a boy who finds the ashes of a old lady and makes friends with them...and his developing 'friendship' ties in with the story of his disappeared father. By the same author, *The Double Life of Cassiel Roadnight* tells the story of a missing boy who looks identical to another missing boy – and finds himself taking over the other boy's life.

The Dark is Rising (series) – Susan Cooper (fantasy – ancient powers slowly awake from under the land)

Surrender – Sonya Hartnett. This is an extremely powerful novel, told by a dying child, which reveals shocking things about his actions and leaves much for the reader to decide about how much is true.

The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole – Sue Townsend (the wonderful and funny diary of a thirteen year old who thinks he is an intellectual)

The Declaration – Gemma Malley (very much like George Orwell's books – about freedom in a world where having children is illegal)

Madame Doubtfire – Anne Fine (a man gets a curious disguise)

Divided City – Theresa Breslin (set around religious and cultural conflict in Glasgow)

When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit – Judith Kerr (about a family who flee the Nazis).

Across the Barricades – Joan Lingard (Northern Ireland and its conflict)

The Guardians – John Christopher (another political story about a tyrannical government)

The Scarecrow – Robert Westall – a teenage boy, trying to escape his family troubles, thinks he encounters ghosts in the countryside.

One – Sarah Crossen. A story of conjoined twins.

Hansel and Gretel –Michael Morpurgo (this is a wonderful re-telling)

Chinese Cinderella – Adeline Yen Mah (A young Chinese girl's struggle to be accepted by her family)

Little Women - Louisa May Alcott

Everything, Everything - Nicola Yoon (A sick girl falls in love)

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch - Alexander Solzhenitsyn (a story about a man sentenced to hard labour in a prison camp. Essential background for *Animal Farm*)

The Box of Delights – John Masefield (fantasy – a classic story about a magical box)

There Will Be Lies - Nick Lake. A dark story set in the aftermath of an accident.

Brother in the Land – Robert Swindells – a post-apocalyptic tale: set in the aftermath of a nuclear war in 1980s England, a boy tries to survive.

Postcards from No-Man's Land – Aidan Chambers (two stories, one set in World War II Holland and one set in the 1990s. This book examines some important issues, such as euthanasia)

The Ghosts of Heaven – Marcus Sedgwick – a story that spans time and place, connecting things together in surprising ways.

King of Shadows – Susan Cooper. This is an historical novel which has Shakespeare in it!

Maggot Moon - Sally Gardner. Although this is by the same author as *I, Coriander*, it is nothing like it at all! Conspiracy and totalitarianism create a strange story.

How I Live Now – Meg Rosoff (an American girl gets to know a new family in the middle of a devastating, mysterious war. She falls deeply in love and tries to survive an invasion while holding onto her love)

The Bunker Diary – Kevin Brooks. This novel won the prestigious Carnegie Medal in 2014. I don't particularly like it, and it is quite disturbing, but it might be good for you to make up your own mind. By the same author, *Being* explores what it means to be human.

The Woman in Black – Susan Hill. A genuinely unsettling ghost story!

Poetry

There are vast, snow-capped mountains of poetry for you to read and enjoy.

Anything by Ted Hughes but particularly his *Collected Poems for Children*, Seamus Heaney, Simon Armitage, Benjamin Zephaniah, Charles Causley, Vernon Scannell, Carol Ann Duffy, John Betjeman – these poets are usually fun and accessible while being thought-provoking. *Selected Poems of WH Auden* would provide some experience of a major twentieth century poet.

If you read something brilliant not on this list, tell me and I will add it to the next edition!

Summer Work Suggestions

I would like you to read **AT LEAST THREE BOOKS AND AT LEAST FIVE POEMS** from this list over the summer and to do some activities based on them. You could:

- Write a book review
- Write a story based on one of these books
- Write a poem inspired by one of the stories
- Write a sequel to the story yourself
- Design a new front cover that better reflects what the story means to you.

Choose at least 2 of these (or, if you have a better idea, do something different) and bring them to our first lessons in September. There will be rewards and prizes and, if the work is neat enough, a place on a new display. Hand in either to myself or Mr Martin.

Happy Reading!

KJD
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