



# BOOKS FOR EVERYONE

## RGS Recommended reading for year 8

### About this list

Most of the books on this list are recommended by students. Their English teachers and the RGS librarians have added to it, and it is updated with a wide range of exciting new titles every year.

We aim to provide you with a starting point with this list: when you find a book you like, you can branch out into other books by the same writer or in the same style or genre. There are plenty of recommendations for further reading, but we can't list them all here! Ask your English teacher or the librarian for further suggestions; there are also new reading lists for years 7 and 9 so you may wish to consider them too – just ask your teacher.

If you read something which should be on the list, please do let us know. And if any title has over-stayed its welcome here, we want to know that too. **Use the Library, it's a wonderful resource** – these books (and very many more) are available through it.

Please make sure you keep a full list of the books you read this year – page 3 of this booklet has been set aside for you to keep a record, so keep it up to date and enjoy your reading. After all, there are plenty of books here for everyone!

## 2 Class readers and classic fiction

### Year eight class readers

**PLEASE NOTE:** these books may be read in your English class.  
**Please check with your teacher before you start reading**

Kevin Brooks	<i>Martyn Pig</i>
Suzanne Collins	<i>The Hunger Games</i>
Roald Dahl	<i>Kiss Kiss</i>
Siobhan Dowd	<i>Bog Child</i>
Michael Frayn	<i>Spies</i>
Barry Hines	<i>A Kestrel for a Knave</i>
Philip Pullman	<i>Northern Lights, The Ruby in the Smoke</i>
Marcus Sedgwick	<i>Midwinterblood</i>
Shakespeare	<i>A Midsummer's Night Dream, The Tempest, Twelfth Night</i>
Sarah Singleton	<i>Century</i>
Simon Stephens	<i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time</i> [play script]
<i>Stories from Different Genres</i> (New Windmill)	

### A selection of classics

Many students still make the strongest connections with established and well-loved classic novels, books which have been capturing the imagination of young readers for many generations...

John Buchan	<i>The Thirty-Nine Steps</i>
Agatha Christie	<i>Murder on the Orient Express</i>
Arthur C. Clarke	<i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i>
Arthur Conan Doyle	<i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> ; other Sherlock Holmes stories
Charles Dickens	<i>Oliver Twist, Great Expectations</i>
Gerald Durrell	<i>My Family and Other Animals</i>
James Herriot	<i>All Creatures Great and Small</i>
Harper Lee	<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>
Ursula K. Le Guin	<i>Earthsea, Tales from Earthsea</i>
Edgar Allan Poe	<i>Tales of Mystery and Imagination</i>
J. R. R. Tolkien	<i>Lord of the Rings</i>
H. G. Wells	<i>The Invisible Man</i>
P. G. Woodhouse	<i>The Inimitable Jeeves; Carry on, Jeeves</i>

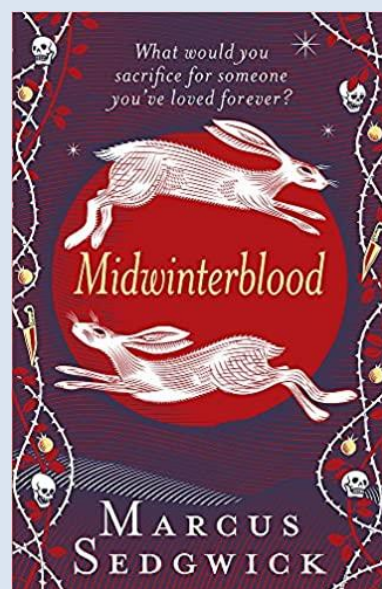
### Midwinterblood

Marcus Sedgwick

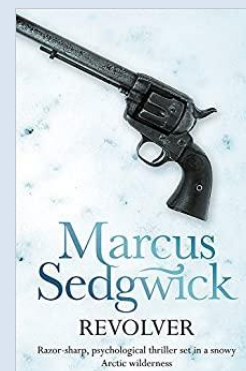
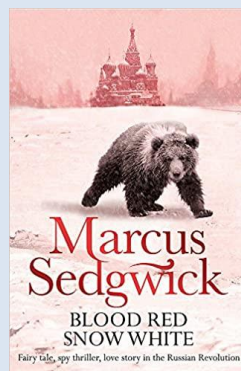
*A dark, breathtaking and cleverly crafted paranormal love story like no other, beautifully told in seven parts and spanning ten centuries.*

*Have you ever had the feeling that you've lived another life? Been somewhere that has felt totally familiar even though you've never been there before, or felt that you've known someone even though you are meeting them for the first time?*

*Eric and Merle loved and lost one another, and have been searching for each other through time ever since.*



You may also enjoy Marcus Sedgwick's other highly immersive novels, including **Blood Red** **Snow White** set in the rich and atmospheric landscape of Russia during the revolution, and **Revolver**, an unforgettable psychological thriller set in the snowy wilderness of the Arctic Circle.



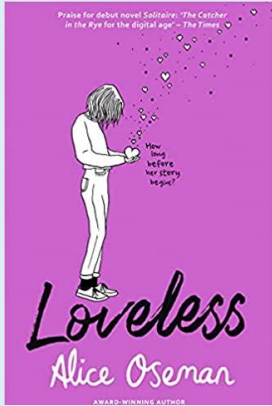
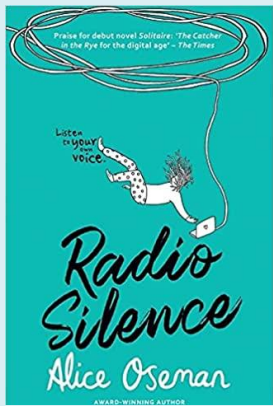
Use this space to keep a record of your own reading through the year...

	Title	Author	Date Finished	No. of Pages	Rating
1					☆☆☆☆☆
2					☆☆☆☆☆
3					☆☆☆☆☆
4					☆☆☆☆☆
5					☆☆☆☆☆
6					☆☆☆☆☆
7					☆☆☆☆☆
8					☆☆☆☆☆
9					☆☆☆☆☆
10					☆☆☆☆☆

Reward:

	Title	Author	Date Finished	No. of Pages	Rating
1					☆☆☆☆☆
2					☆☆☆☆☆
3					☆☆☆☆☆
4					☆☆☆☆☆
5					☆☆☆☆☆
6					☆☆☆☆☆
7					☆☆☆☆☆
8					☆☆☆☆☆
9					☆☆☆☆☆
10					☆☆☆☆☆

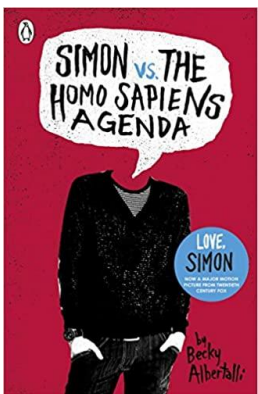
Reward:



Alice Oseman writes compelling novels about modern teenage relationships. In *Radio Silence*, Frances has always been a study machine with one goal, elite university. Nothing will stand in her way; not friends, not a guilty secret – not even the person she is on the inside. But when Frances meets Aled, the shy genius behind her favourite podcast, she discovers a new freedom. He unlocks the door to Real Frances and for the first time she experiences true friendship, unafraid to be herself. Then the podcast goes viral and the fragile trust between them is broken. *Loveless* introduces us to a clever teenage girl, Georgia, trying to understand her romantic feelings. Also suggested: the *Heartstopper* graphic novels.



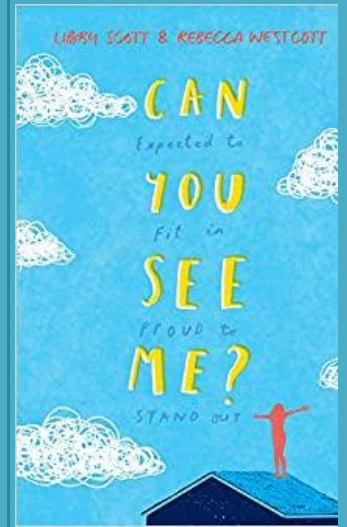
*The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak is the remarkable story of Liesel, a girl in Nazi Germany whose parents are taken away to a concentration camp, and of how she survives with the help of the books that she steals.



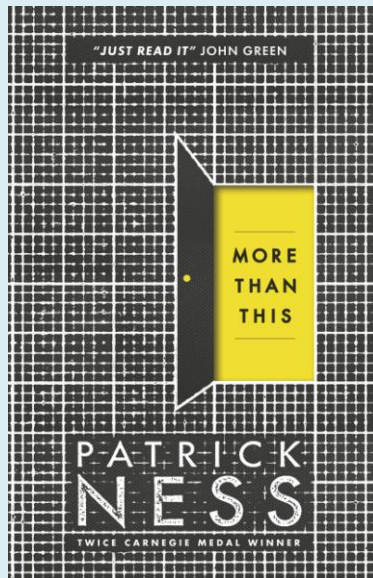
In Becky Albertalli's *Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda*, Simon Spier is a modern teenager trying to work out who he is - and what he's looking for. But when one of his emails to the mysterious Blue falls into the wrong hands, things get complicated.

*Can You See Me?* consists of diary entries written by eleven-year-old Libby Scott, based on her own experiences. This pioneering book, written in collaboration with esteemed author Rebecca Westcott, has been widely praised for its realistic portrayal of autism.

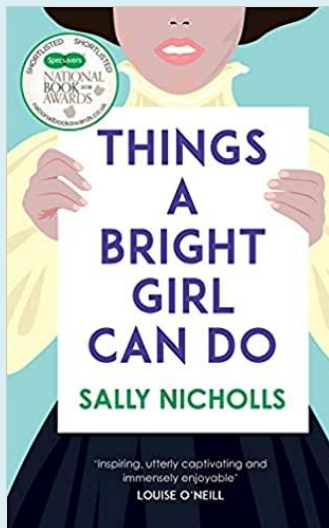
Tally is eleven years old and just like her friends. Well, sometimes she is. If she tries really hard to be. Because there's something that makes Tally not the same as her friends... Also recommended in the same series are *Do You Know Me?* and *Ways to Be Me*.



**More Than This by Patrick Ness**



A boy called Seth drowns, desperate and alone in his final moments, losing his life as the pounding sea claims him. But then he wakes. He is naked, thirsty, starving. But alive. How is that possible? He remembers dying, his bones breaking. So how is he here? And where is this place? It looks like the suburban English town where he lived as a child. Seth begins a search for answers, hoping that there might be more than just this. Try other Patrick Ness books such as *The Knife* or *Never Letting Go*.



**Things a Bright Girl Can Do Sally Nicholls**

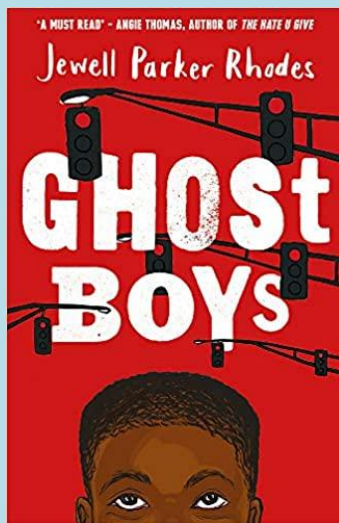
Through rallies and marches, in polite drawing rooms and freezing prison cells and the poverty-stricken slums of the East End, three courageous young women join the fight for the vote. A highly vivid and engaging account of what it was like to be a Suffragette.

Try also Sally Nicholl's other historical novels, such as *All Fall Down* which tells the moving tale of a family trying to survive during the time of the Black Death.

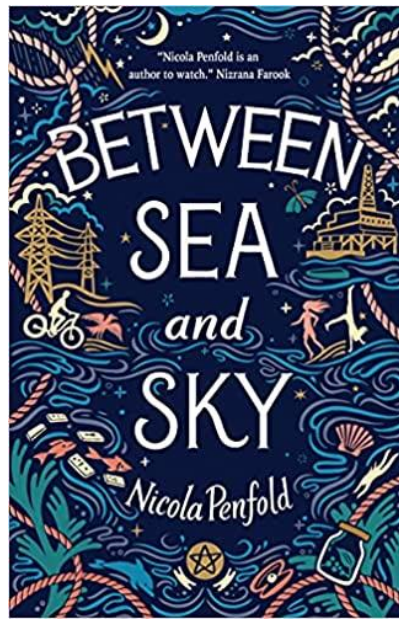


**Jamila Gavin's *The Wheel of Surya*** is set in India, August 1947: Fleeing from their burnt-out village as civil war rages in the Punjab, Marvinder and Jaspal are separated from their mother, Jhoti. Marvinder has already saved her brother's life once, but now they both face a daily fight for survival. *If you like this novel, try the other books in the Surya trilogy.*

**Elizabeth Laird's *Oranges in No Man's Land*** is another compelling human story, Since her father left Lebanon to find work and her mother tragically died in a shell attack, little Ayesha has been living in the bomb-ravaged city of Beirut. When Granny falls desperately ill, Ayesha must set off on a terrifying journey into enemy territory.



In **Jewell Parker Rhodes' *Ghost Boys***, the spirit of a black boy lives on after he has been shot dead in a police incident in modern America – his ghost watches as his family try to cope. After this, you could also explore **Angie Thomas' *The Hate U Give***.



***Between Sea and Sky*  
Nicola Penfold**

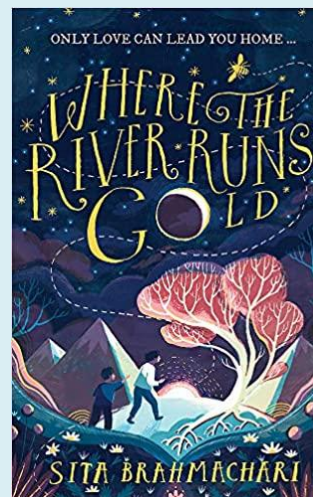
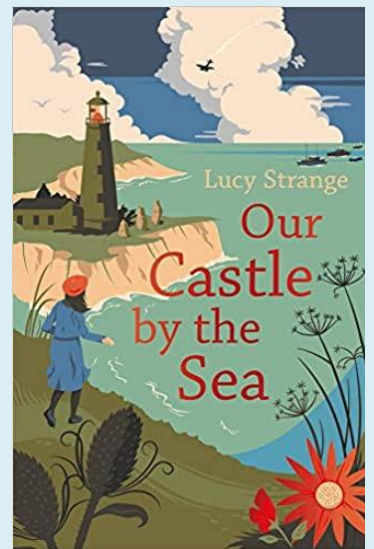
In a near future where a series of environmental disasters has left much of the country underwater, Pearl lives on a floating oyster farm with her father and younger sister, Clover. Following her mum's death several years earlier, Pearl refuses to set foot on land, believing her illness was caused by the poisons in the ground. Meanwhile, Clover dreams of school, friends and a normal life.

If you enjoy dystopian fiction, try **Gillian Cross's *After Tomorrow***. **Marcus Sedgwick's *Floodland*** tells another gripping story in a similar setting.

***Our Castle by the Sea*  
Lucy Strange**

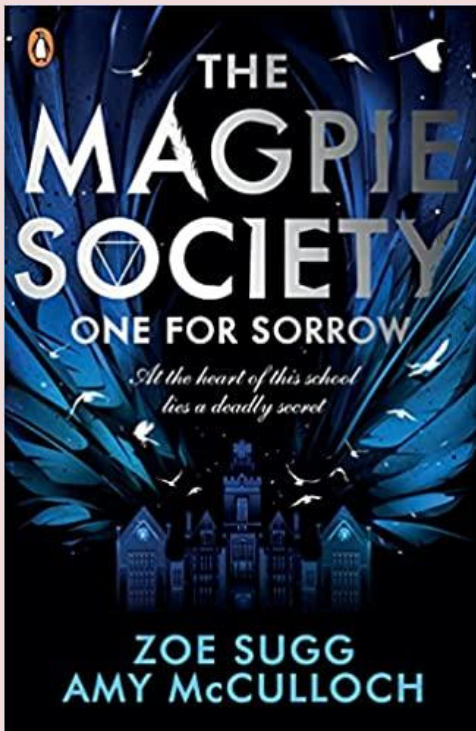
Growing up in a lighthouse in wartime England, Pet's world has been one of storms, secret tunnels and stories about sea monsters. But now the clifftops are a terrifying battleground, and her family is torn apart.

This is the story of a girl who is small, afraid and unnoticed. A girl who freezes with fear at the enemy planes ripping through the skies overhead. A girl who is somehow destined to become part of the strange, ancient legend of the Daughters of Stone ...



In **Sita Brahmachari's *Where the River Runs Gold***, Shifa and her brother, Themba, live in Kairos City with their father, Nabil. The few live in luxury, whilst the millions like them crowd together in compounds, surviving on meagre rations and governed by Freedom Fields - the organisation that looks after you, as long as you opt in.

Shifa comes up with a plan to break them out but they have no idea where they are - their only guide is a map drawn from the ramblings of a stranger. The journey ahead is fraught with danger, but Shifa is strong and knows to listen to her instincts - to let love guide them home.



Welcome to *The Magpie Society*, Zoe Sugg's fantastic world of mystery.

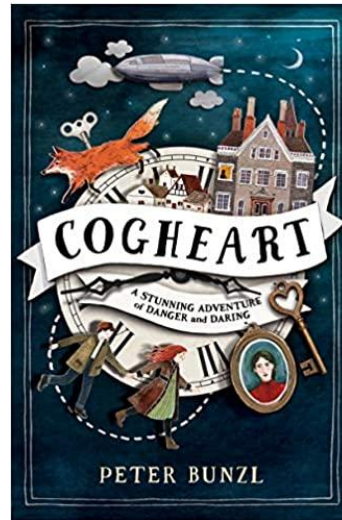
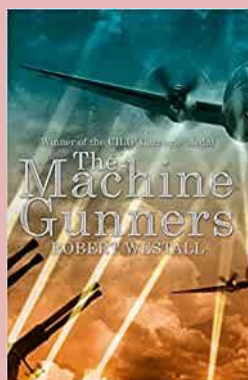
In the first book, *One for Sorrow*, Tragedy has struck Illumen Hall, a prestigious boarding school of tradition and achievement. The body of student Lola Radcliffe is discovered on the beach, and on her back someone has tattooed an elaborate magpie. For new student Audrey, it's just another strange and unsettling thing about her new surroundings. For her roommate Ivy, the death of her friend Lola is something she's desperate to get past - and Audrey's presence isn't helping. But the two girls are thrown together when a mysterious podcast airs, with a sinister headline:

I KNOW WHO KILLED LOLA. AND ONE OF YOU IS NEXT.

If you love **Artemis Fowl**, Eoin Colfer now introduces *The Fowl Twins* in an epic adventure that proves genius runs in the family.

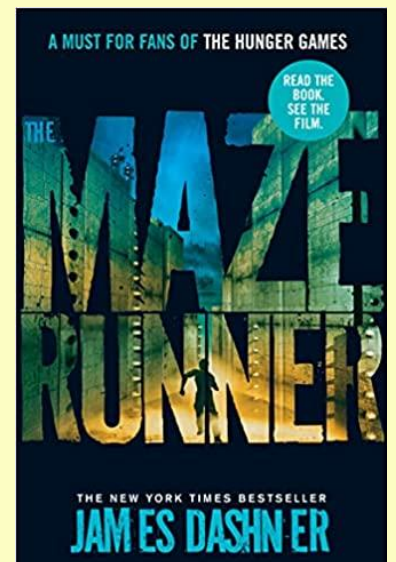


And if dramatic wartime adventures interest you, try **Robert Westall's** classic *The Machine Gunners* or **Kimberley Brubaker Bradley's** *The War That Saved My Life*.

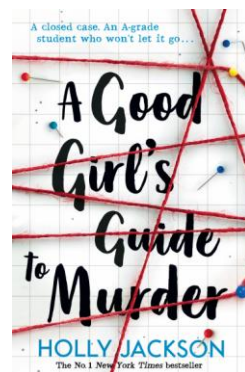


In **Peter Bunzl's** *Cogheart*, murder and mystery meet in a gripping Victorian adventure. Lily's life is in mortal peril. Her father is missing and now silver-eyed men are stalking her through the shadows.

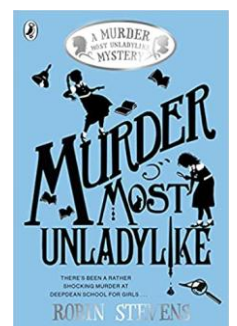
**James Dashner's** *The Maze Runner* and its sequels are recommended for fans of *The Hunger Games*. The only thing Thomas remembers is his first name. But he's not alone. He's surrounded by boys who welcome him to the Glade – a walled encampment at the centre of a bizarre and terrible stone maze. Like Thomas, the Gladers don't know why or how they came to be there – or what's happened to the world outside.



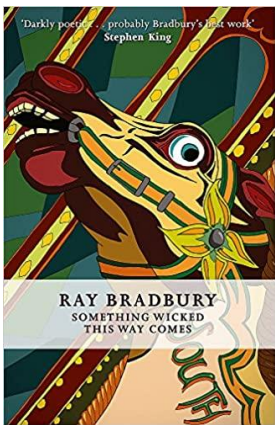
In **A Good Girl's Guide to Murder** by **Holly Jackson**, the case is closed. Five years ago, schoolgirl Andie Bell was killed by Sal Singh. The police know he did it. Everyone in town knows he did it. But having grown up in the small town that was consumed by the crime, Pippa Fitz-Amobi isn't so sure. When she chooses the case as the topic for her final project, she starts to uncover big secrets.



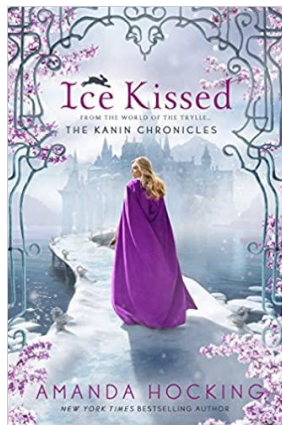
**Robin Stevens' Murder Most Unladylike** is the first of a series of dazzling detective stories set in Deepdean School for Girls, where Hazel and Daisy are searching for answers. If you like smart stories about adventurous girls, you might also try **Ella Risbridger's** *The Secret Detectives* and **J. T. Williams** *The Lizzie and Belle Mysteries*



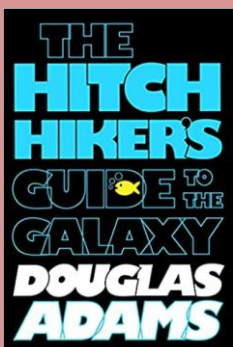
What could be more thrilling for two teen boys than the funfair that arrives in their town one Hallowe'en? If you enjoy **Ray Bradbury's** dark classic ***Something Wicked This Way Comes***, try also **R. L. Stine's** ***Fear Street*** series and **Jennifer Killick's** ***Crater Lake*** books.



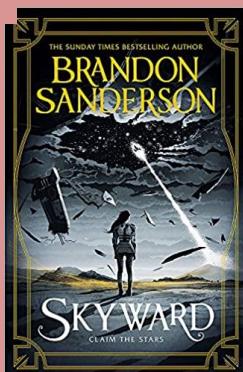
In **Amanda Hocking's** ***Ice Kissed***, Bryn Aven refuses to give up on her dream of serving the kingdom she loves. It's a dream that brings her to a whole new realm...the glittering palace of the Skojare. But in the majestic halls of the palace lies a secret that could destroy her kingdom.



One Thursday lunchtime the Earth is demolished to make way for a new hyperspace bypass. Join clueless earthling Arthur Dent on an epic intergalactic journey in **Douglas Adams' comic sci-fi masterpiece, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy***.



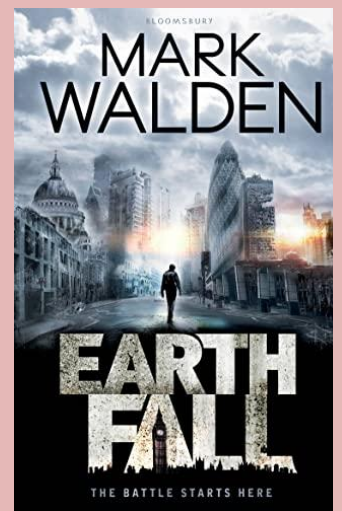
**Brandon Sanderson** tells a thrilling modern science fiction tale in ***Skyward***, as Spensa dreams of leading the human resistance into battle against alien attack and proving her bravery, as she deals with her father's tragic legacy,



In **Darren Simpson's** ***Furthermore***, the real world is a hostile place for twelve-year-old Bren, his schooldays stalked by vicious bully, Shaun, and his family life fractured at home. Ever since his sister Evie died in an accident, Bren's only safe space is Furthermore, an imagined world of mechanised trees and clockwork animals, where Evie is still alive. In Furthermore, no one can hurt Bren...until the mysterious Featherly arrives... If you like this, try ***Scavengers*** and ***The Memory Thieves*** by the same author.

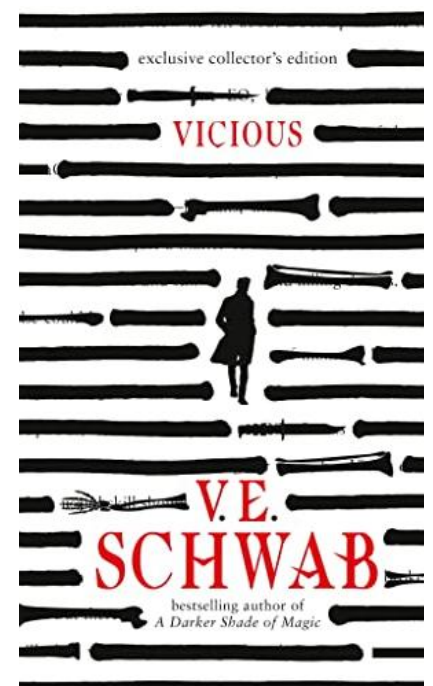
Sam wakes to see strange vessels gathered in the skies around London in **Mark Walden's** modern science fiction thriller ***Earthfall***. As he stares up, people stream past, walking silently towards the enormous ships which emit a persistent noise. Only Sam seems immune to the signal.

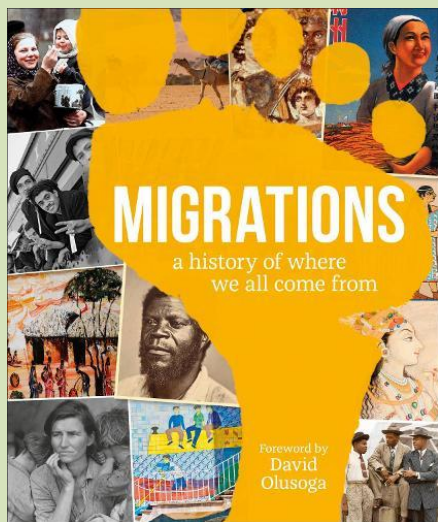
Six months later, Sam is absolutely alone. Injured by one of the flying drones which now populate London, Sam realises that without medical supplies he will die, with the fate on the whole world lying in the balance.



In ***Vicious*** by **V.E. Schwab**, Victor and Eli start out as college roommates—brilliant, arrogant, lonely boys who recognise the same sharpness and ambition in one another. A shared research interest in adrenaline, near-death-experiences, and supernatural events reveals an intriguing possibility: that under the right conditions, someone could develop extraordinary abilities. Then their experiments go horribly wrong.

In a more comic vein, you might also enjoy **Neil Gaiman's** ***The Graveyard Book*** or **Jonathan Stroud's** supernatural detective stories, ***Lockwood and Co***



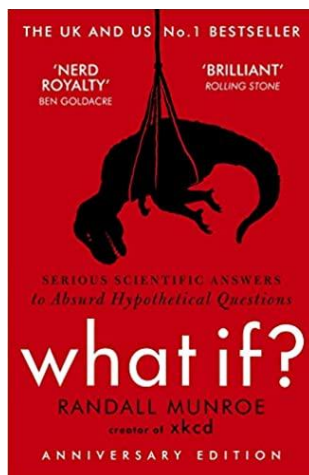


Emma Hignett's *Migrations: A History of Where We All Came From* takes a broad look at the patterns of human movement over thousands of years in order to understand more clearly our origins and what makes us migrate.

You might also appreciate Dorling Kindersley's *Timelines from Black History*.



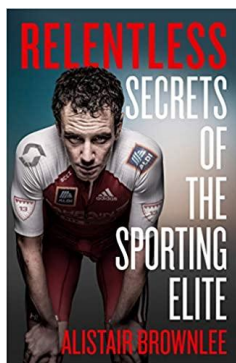
*Powers of a Girl* is the perfect start or addition to any Marvel fan's collection! Using her in-depth knowledge and passion for Super Heroes, **Lorraine Cink** explores the lives of the exceptional and diverse women of the Marvel Universe. Filled with inspirational lessons and clever observations, each section digs into what these relatable women can teach us all about growth, bravery, and the true meaning of strength. You might also be interested in Dorling Kindersley's *The Marvel Book* and **Stan Lee's How to Draw Comics**.



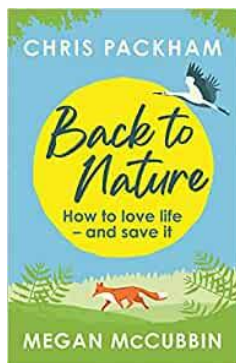
**Randall Munroe** writes quirky books for smart people: *What If?: Serious Scientific Answers to Absurd Hypothetical Questions* gives the reader full and elaborate scientific explanations in response to inane, useless and often quite pointless questions.

'If you're the kind of person whose brain whizzes with questions, Munroe's book may calm the noise.' – *Shortlist magazine*

You should also investigate Munroe's *How To: Absurd Scientific Advice for Common Real-World Problems*



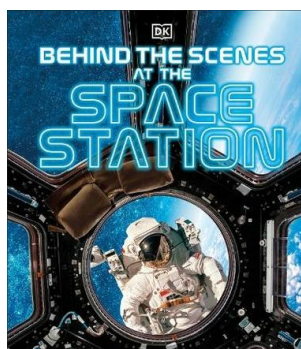
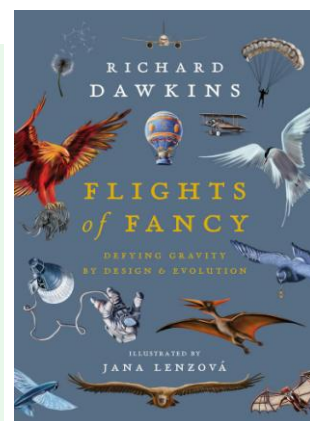
In *Relentless*, his quest to define 'sporting greatness', double Olympic champion **Alistair Brownlee** has spent nearly 4 years interviewing and training with some of the greatest minds in sport to discover what it takes.



In *Back to Nature*, TV's **Chris Packham** explores the wonder and the solace of nature, and the ways in which we can connect with it - and protect it, from our balconies and gardens to our woodlands, national parks and beyond.

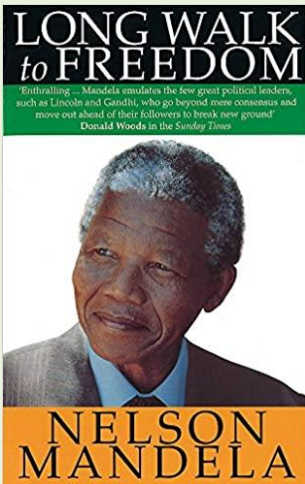
In *Flights of Fancy*, **Richard Dawkins** explains how nature and humans have learned to overcome the pull of gravity and take to the skies. - from the mythical Icarus, to the sadly extinct but spectacular bird *Argentavis magnificens*, from the Wright flyer and the 747, to the Tinkerbella fairyfly and the Peregrine falcon.

Try also **David Long's Survivors** and **Heroes: Incredible True Stories of Courageous Animals**.



The Dorling Kindersley book *Behind the Scenes at the Space Station* takes you behind the scenes at the International Space Station. Ever wondered whether plants can grow in space? Or how astronauts go to the loo in zero gravity? Or what it feels like to orbit Earth at 17,500 mph? This book has all the answers as well as giving the reader a complete guided tour of the Space Station itself.

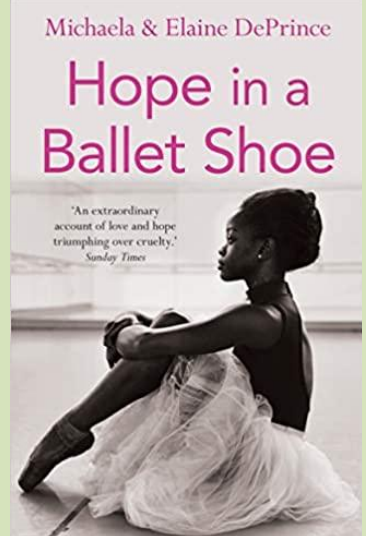




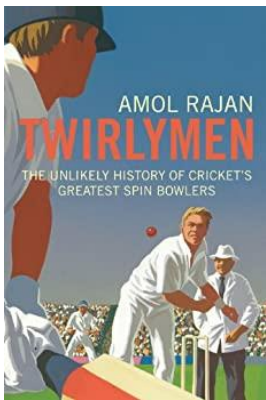
**Long Walk to Freedom**  
Nelson Mandela

The riveting memoirs of the outstanding moral and political leader of our time, *A Long Walk to Freedom* brilliantly re-creates the drama of the experiences that helped shape Nelson Mandela's destiny. Emotive, compelling and uplifting, *A Long Walk to Freedom* is the exhilarating story of an epic life; a story of hardship, resisting and ultimately overcoming Apartheid in South Africa to become the country's distinguished President.

You might also enjoy **Barak Obama's *Dreams From My Father***

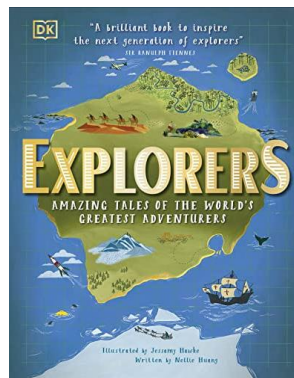


*Hope in a Ballet Shoe* tells the story of **Michaela DePrince**, growing up in war-torn Sierra Leone, witnessing atrocities that no child ever should. Her parents dead, Michaela survived an orphanage to begin a new life in America that would culminate in an international ballet career.

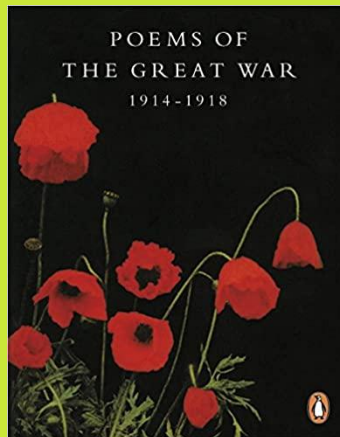
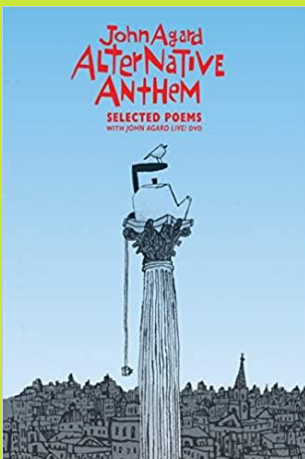


**Twirlymen** by **Amol Rajan** is a fascinating set of portraits of cricket's amazing spin bowlers from Shane Warne to Muralitharan – the men and their artisty.

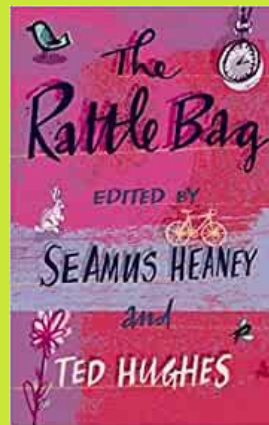
**Explorers** by **Nellie Huang** is jam-packed with intrepid, globe-trotting adventures, telling the stories throughout history of those who dared to leap into the unknown.



In *Alternative Anthems*, the Guyanese-born word magician **John Agard** gives an outsider-insider view of British life in sharp and funny poems which both challenge and cherish our peculiar culture and hallowed institutions. If you like this, try also **Grace Nichol's *I Have Crossed an Ocean***.

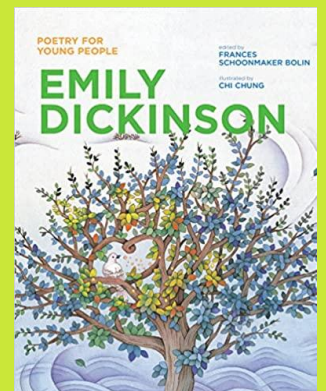


First published to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of Armistice, *Poems of the Great War* is intended to be an introduction to the great wealth of First World War poetry, collecting together major poems by writers including Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon whose work powerfully evokes their strong personal experiences of war.

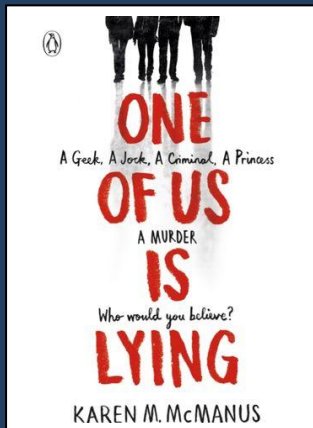


Edited by **Seamus Heaney** and **Ted Hughes**, *The Rattle Bag* has established itself as the classic anthology of poetry for young readers. Including writers from Shakespeare and William Blake to Sylvia Plath and T. S. Eliot, it is eclectic, instructive and inspiring at the same time.

Check out the *Poetry for Young People* series, which includes this powerful selection of observant poems about life and nature by **Emily Dickinson**, one of America's best-loved poets. The same series also features other original poets for you to investigate, such as **William Wordsworth** and **Robert Frost**.



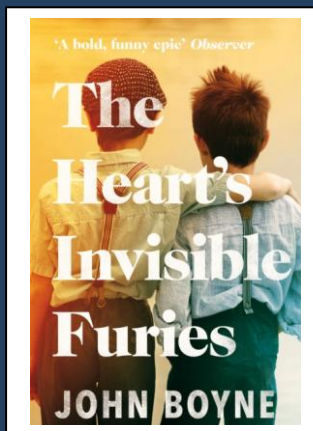
## A selection of student recommended titles



### ***One of Us is Lying* by Karen M. McManus**

*Recommended by Iris Bains Lewis*

Five students walk into detention. Only four come out alive. Yale hopeful Bronwyn has never publicly broken a rule. Sports star Cooper only knows what he's doing in the baseball diamond. Bad boy Nate is one misstep away from a life of crime. Prom queen Addy is holding together the cracks in her perfect life. And outsider Simon, creator of the notorious gossip app at Bayview High, won't ever talk again. He dies before he can post their deepest secrets, and it's no accident.



### ***The Heart's Invisible Furies* by John Boyne**

*Recommended by Oliver Wall*

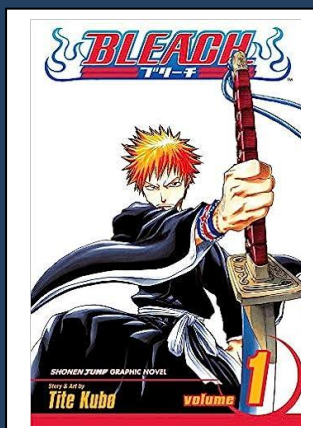
Forced to flee the scandal in her hometown, Catherine Goggin finds herself pregnant and alone, in search of a new life at just sixteen. She knows she has no choice but to believe that the nun she entrusts her child to will find him a better life... Cyril Avery is not a real Avery, or so his parents are constantly reminding him. Adopted as a baby, he's never quite felt at home with the family but it is all he has ever known. So begins a desperate search to find his place in the world.



### ***There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom* by Louis Sachar**

*Recommended by Hareeka Singh*

Meet Bradley Chalkers. He's the oldest child in the class. He tells ENORMOUS lies. He picks fights with girls. The teachers say he has 'serious behaviour problems'. And no one likes him ... Except Carla, the new school counsellor. She thinks Bradley is kind and generous, and she even enjoys his far-fetched stories. Carla knows that Bradley could change, if only he would try. Sometimes the hardest thing in the world is believing in yourself.



### ***Bleach* (a manga graphic novel) by Tite Kubo**

*Recommended by Raffy Bonner*

Ichigo Kurosaki has always been able to see ghosts, but this ability doesn't change his life nearly as much as his close encounter with Rukia Kuchiki, a Soul Reaper and member of the mysterious Soul Society. While fighting a Hollow, an evil spirit that preys on humans who display psychic energy, Rukia tries to lend Ichigo some of her powers so that he can save his family; but much to her surprise, Ichigo absorbs every last drop of her energy.

# New titles for 2023-24

The following is a selection of books published in the last twelve months



## FICTION

Kalynn Bayron *You're Not Supposed to Die Tonight*

*Charity's dream job at summer camp turns into her worst nightmare – horror thrills from the author of Cinderella is Dead*

Elizabeth Wein *Stateless*

*With war looking, a young pilot has to prove herself in a dangerous world – if you like this, try the same authors Code Name Verity and The Enigma Game*

Namina Forna *The Merciless Ones*

*The sequel to The Gilded Ones returns readers to the enchanted West African kingdom*

Laura Wood *The Agency for Scandal*

*A female detective agency with a difference, investigating the scandals of high society – see also Laura Wood's A Sky Painted Gold*

Philip Womack *Wildlord*

*Audrey and Ivy form an unlikely alliance when terror strikes their school*

## NON-FICTION

*Wonders of the World: The Past Brought Back to Life*

Yeve Skalietska's account of war in Ukraine, *You Don't Know What War Is*

Jane V. Adams *Nature's Wonders: Moments That Mark the Seasons*

## **My personal book notes**