

# Summer Reading Challenge!

There's plenty of time to get lost in a good book during our long summer holiday, so it's time to get ambitious about reading! Could you read a book a fortnight? What about a book a week?

## Book recommendations for Lower School Pupils

1. *Wonder* - R J Palacio. 'A really unique storyline...enjoyable and full of comic moments.'
2. *Blitzcat* – Robert Westall. An engaging story of cat who survives the blitz and searches for its owner.
3. *A Monster Calls* - Patrick Ness. 'A stunning novel...I read it cover to cover in two hours.'
4. *Dark Lord: The Teenage Years* 'A wonderfully absurd take on beings from another planet'.
5. *My Family and Other Animals* - Gerald Durrell. 'A light hearted book which will introduce you to non-fiction writing.'
6. *Apple and Rain* – Sarah Crossan popular Carnegie medal nominee about an thirteen year old girl whose mother returns after 11 years.
7. *Once* - Morris Gleitzman. 'The story of a young boy who is determined to escape the orphanage he lives in to save his Jewish parents from the Nazis in the occupied Poland of the Second World War.'
8. *The Garbage King* - Elizabeth Laird. 'The Garbage King puts everything into perspective: it teaches us not to take things for granted in life. I recommend this for everyone who's anyone.'
9. *Hitler's Canary* - Sandy Toksvig. 'A good read about Nazi occupied Denmark which needs to be more widely known about.'
10. *Wolf Brother* - Michelle Paver. 'An excellent book. Gripping story and interestingly historically factual too. Can't wait to read more of the series!'
11. *A Boy Called Hope* – Lara Williamson. A moving story about a boy who wants to get his family back together.
12. *Goblins* – Philip Reeve. Hilarious and anarchic fantasy fiction about warring goblin clans.

### Did you know?

**\*\*Reading for pleasure at the age of 15 is  
The most important indicator of the  
future success of a child.\*\***

## Book recommendations for Middle School Pupils

1. *In Times of Fading Light* – Eugene Ruge. A sweeping story of one family over four generations in East Germany: the intertwining of love, life and politics under the GDR regime
2. *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold* - John Le Carre. 'A mature and interesting book. It has a very good twist in it that you won't see coming. Gives you a good idea of the foreign office in that period.'
3. *Rivers of London* - Ben Aaronovitch. 'Harry Potter grows up as a London policeman - easy beach read.'
4. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* – Stephen Chbosky. 'A bit American High School, but very readable and a good plot line.'
5. *The Chrysalids* – John Wyndham. Classic dystopian novel: a post-apocalyptic story about genetic mutation and the lengths the intolerant will go to to keep themselves 'pure'.
6. *I, Robot* - Isaac Asimov. The classic sci-fi story. Might only be available in a short story collection.'
7. *Who is Tom Ditto?* - Danny Wallace. 'Awesome read. Full of cliff-hangers that have that 'Can't put this book down' appeal. Just brilliant.'
8. *Fatherland* - Robert Harris. What would have happened if Hitler won the war? A thrilling read and an interesting 'what if?' take on history.
9. *White Fang* – Jack London. Set in the 1890s Klondike Gold Rush it charts the story of White Fang, a wolf, and his journey to domestication. A classic story about man and nature.
10. *Maggot Moon* - Sally Gardner. A thought-provoking book. 'One of those occasions where you want to tell people 'I won't give too much away - just read it!''
11. *The Life of Pi* - Yann Martel. 'Teaches you survival skills and is great to read.'
12. *Touching the Void* - the climbing disaster classic. And a real page turner!
13. *Empire of the Sun* - JG Ballard. Based on real experiences of being in a Japanese prisoner of war camp in WW2. Gripping plot and very informative about the period, too.
14. *Down and Out in Paris and London* - George Orwell. Orwell's non-fiction classic takes you into a life of poverty between the wars. Unsentimental and evocative as always with Orwell; a book you will learn a lot from as well as being a really good read.
15. *Snow Crash* – Neal Stephenson. Stephenson's breakthrough cyberpunk novel about a 21<sup>st</sup> century world in which the Mafia control pizza delivery and the US is a patchwork of corporate-franchise city states.

### Did you know?

**\*\*If you read for fewer than 20 minutes per day, your reading age will be advancing more slowly than your real age (i.e. you start lagging behind your peers).\*\***

## Book recommendations for Upper School Pupils

1. *The One Hundred Year Old Man Who Climbed Out of a Window and Disappeared* - Very amusing - ties in a century's worth of history with a brilliant plotline.
2. *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* - John Le Carre. A good spy story with an intricate plot.
3. *Dissolution* – C.J. Sansom. The first in a series of novels set in Tudor England about a lawyer solving murders that draw him into dangerous intrigue.
4. *Look Who's Back* – Timur Vermes. What would happen if Hitler were to wake up and find himself alive in modern Germany? Everyone recognises him but thinks he's a flawless impersonator. A brilliant satire on modern media and politics that's very funny.
5. *Never Let Me Go* - Kazuo Ishiguro (or anything else by him). School children who slowly discover they are anything but ordinary. A poignant dystopian novel about love and loss...
6. *Tesseract* - Alex Garland. The book for which he should be renowned, rather than *The Beach*... a clever interweaved series of events.
7. *A Month in the Country* - J.L. Carr. A First World War veteran comes to terms with his survival in a small village of rural England. A very moving story.
8. *The Good Soldier* - Ford Madox Ford. A great inspiration for later twentieth century writers, this novel gives an excellent portrayal of pre-war socialite Europe through the emotional intrigues of two sophisticated couples.
9. *The Humans* – Matt Haig. About an alien who inhabits the body of a middle-aged academic who is losing his wife and son. A brilliant exploration of self-identity and relationships – very funny!
10. *Burmese Days* - George Orwell. This early novel of Orwell's is set in British occupied Burma in the 1920s. Very different to his later works (*Animal Farm*, 1984) but very atmospheric and introduces many of the political themes that you will recognise from more famous works.
11. *Travels with Charley* - John Steinbeck. Steinbeck's real life account of travelling around the USA with a dog and a camper van. Full of well observed detail and a sharp eye for human life. Made me want to go on a journey!
12. *Burning Bright* - Ron Rash. A book of short stories set in the Appalachian Mountains. Very accessible, cleanly written, and short: these stories are dark but beautiful and each makes you see life in a bit of a different way.
13. *Mr Mercedes* – Stephen King. A crime-horror hybrid that will keep all but the most determined non-reader turning the pages.
14. *A Clockwork Orange* - Anthony Burgess. 'The narrator speaks in a different language and offers a shocking and graphic storyline.'

### Did you know?

If you read for 15 minutes per day, you would read 18 average length novels per year.

## Challenges

These are open to any year group. There will be **edible prizes** for EVERYONE who submits a complete entry (available at the start of term). The size of the edible prize will be relative to the quality of the entry.

The **top entries** will also receive Amazon vouchers. Again, size of prize will be relative to quality!

The **deadline** for entries will be the Friday of the first full week back at school.

### Reading Challenges

- **The 'book a week' challenge.** Read a book every week, including at least two from this list i.e. 9 books over the summer holidays. Submit a short review of your thoughts and rating out of 10 for each book together with a signature and comment from someone at home to confirm they've seen you reading these books. You can use the template we have attached or come up with your own format.

- **The 'book a fortnight' challenge.** Read a book every fortnight, including at least one from this list i.e. 4 books over the summer holidays. Submit a short review of your thoughts and rating out of 10 for each book together with a signature and comment from someone at home to confirm they've seen you reading these books. You can use the template we have attached or come up with your own format.

### Writing Challenge

- Write a piece in any form you like (narrative, descriptive, discursive, a collection of poems, an essay, a script...) on one of the following topics:

- The most powerful moment in a novel I have read...
- I had that familiar conviction that life was beginning over again with the summer....
- The limits of my language means the limits of my world...
- Can computers write poetry...

Guideline length - 500-1000 words. You can adapt these titles if you wish or come up with your own ideas.

### Did you know?

**Someone who only reads 1 minute of easier texts on a regular basis might learn only 30 new words per year**

**Whereas some who reads 20 minutes of slightly more challenging texts on a regular basis could learn over 1000 new words per year.**