

20

# Abingdon

## Summer Reading Challenge

19

### First Year Recommendations

1. **The Extinction Trials - S.M. Wilson:** It's a land of monsters - both human and reptile. The only chance of surviving is to enter a contest more dangerous than anyone can imagine. Stormchaser and Lincoln will do anything to win. They can trust no-one - perhaps not even each other.
2. **Gladiator: Fight for Freedom - Simon Scarrow:** Forced to train as a gladiator, young Marcus Cornelius Primus is determined to find his father's old commander, seek justice for his family and set his mother free. But Marcus is hiding a secret. If the Romans discover it, there will be no escape.
3. **Finding the Fox - Ali Sparkes:** Dax is glad to accept the offer of a place at a secret school. Now he can learn to control his shape-shifting powers. But he soon realises that the school is not all it seems, and sets out to find out who controls it and what they want from the children there.
4. **The Way of the Warrior - Chris Bradford:** August 1611. Jack Fletcher is shipwrecked off the coast of Japan, his father and the crew slaughtered by ninja pirates. Rescued by the legendary sword master Masamoto Takeshi, Jack's only hope is to become a samurai warrior. And so begins his training - and his fight for survival.
5. **Smith - Leon Garfield:** In the dangerous streets of 18th century London, a 12-year old pickpocket robs a man, then shortly after witnesses his murder. On the run from the killers and the police, Jack desperately seeks to clear his name and find the real killers.
6. **The Longest Night of Charlie Noon - Christopher Edge:** Charlie, Dizzy and Johnny are lost in the woods. In the darkness lurk strange dangers and impossible puzzles. Having set out to find the truth of what lies at the heart of the trees, now they find themselves trapped in a nightmare that seems to have no end.
7. **Malamander - Thomas Taylor:** Twelve-year-old Violet Palmer engages Herbert Lemon, Lost-and-Founder at the Grand Nautilus Hotel, to find her missing parents. They discover that the disappearance might have something to do with legendary sea-monster, the Malamander...
8. **The Hobbit - J.R.R. Tolkien:** Bilbo Baggins enjoys a quiet and contented life, until one day the wizard Gandalf and a band of dwarves persuade him to help them on a dangerous expedition to raid the treasure-hoard of Smaug the dragon. Bilbo's life will never to be the same again.
9. **Who Let the Gods Out? - Maz Evans:** After a shooting star crashes through the roof of his shed, Elliot has to deal with the threat of an escaped death daemon and the arrival of the Olympian Gods to recapture him. It's not at all clear that they're up to the job.
10. **Siege - Chris Ryan:** A top-secret military programme is recruiting teenagers for missions where adults would attract suspicion. Will Max Johnson, desperate to win a place, make it through the gruelling selection process, when someone seems determined to prevent him?

20

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19

## Second Year Recommendations

1. **And Then There Were None - Agatha Christie:** Ten strangers are lured to an island mansion. On their first night, the voice of an unseen host accuses each person of hiding a secret. Then one of them is murdered - and the survivors realise the killer is among them and will strike again... and again.
2. **In the Shadow of Heroes - Nicholas Bowling:** Fourteen-year-old Cadmus has been a slave since he was a baby. Then his master, the only family he knows, is murdered, he receives a secret message, and he finds himself on a quest that will take him to the edge of the Roman Empire.
3. **My Family and Other Animals - Gerald Durrell:** Moving to the island of Corfu to escape the British weather, the Durrells find themselves sharing their new home with a variety of local wildlife, including geckos, bats, toads and scorpions - much to the delight of the youngest son!
4. **Children of Blood and Bone - Tomi Adeyemi:** The night that magic disappeared, everything changed for the worse. Now teenager Zolie, with the help of a rogue princess, has one chance to bring back magic and strike against the despotic monarchy. But danger lurks, within and without.
5. **Here Lies Arthur - Philip Reeve :** Gwynneth is just a girl when she is bound in service to Myrddin, a traveller and spinner of tales. Then Myrddin transforms her - into a goddess, a boy warrior, and a spy - to help him turn the leader of a raggle-taggle war-band into King Arthur, the greatest hero of all time.
6. **The Territory - Sarah Govett:** England 2059 - or what's left of it. Noa Blake is just another normal 15 year old with exams looming. Except in The Territory normal isn't normal. Anybody who fails the exams will be shipped off to the Wetlands, which means a life of misery, if not death.
7. **Ender's Game - Orson Scott Card:** The earth is under threat of alien invasion. If humanity is to survive, the government must create the greatest military commander in history. Ender Wiggin is their last hope. But first he must survive the brutal training that will see him emerge victorious - or be utterly destroyed.
8. **Boys Don't Knit - Tom Easton:** After an unfortunate incident, Ben Fletcher is forced to undertake community service. To his horror he ends up in a knitting group - but then it turns out that he's really good at it. If only he can stop his friends finding out.
9. **This Mortal Coil - Emily Suvada:** A terrible virus is raging across the world. One girl has been left clues that could lead her to the vaccine created by her now dead father. The closer she gets, the more she finds herself at risk from a shadowy organization. But it's far too late to turn back.
10. **A Skinful of Shadows - Francis Hardinge:** Every night, Makepeace protects herself from the ghosts which try to possess her. Then a dreadful event causes her to drop her guard. Now there's a ghost inside her - but in a time of fear and danger, it might be her only defence.

20

# Abingdon

## Summer Reading Challenge

19

### Third Year Recommendations

1. **The Knife of Never Letting Go - Patrick Ness:** In New Prentissstown, everyone can hear everyone else's thoughts in a constant, overwhelming Noise. There is no privacy - no secrets. Until one boy encounters a spot of complete silence, and finds himself on the run from everyone he thought he knew.
2. **Scythe - Neil Shusterman:** In a world without disease, war and crime, population growth is limited by professional killers - 'scythes'. Chosen by lottery, Citra and Rowan are competing to be an apprentice scythe. Whoever wins has to kill the loser.
3. **After the Fire - Will Hill:** Father John controls everything inside The Fence. Because Father John knows the truth. He knows what is right, and what is wrong. He knows what is coming. But one person is starting to have doubts.
4. **Nyxia - Scott Reintgen:** Nine teenagers are travelling to a distant planet, where they will hunt for Nyxia, the most extraordinary substance in the universe. But before they get there, they must face frightening tests, deadly rivalry - and the realisation that they've been lied to.
5. **The Gilded Cage - Vic James:** It's Britain, but not as we know it. Magically skilled aristocracy compels all commoners to serve them for ten years. While the elite compete for power, a rebellion is rising - and everyone must decide what side they're on and what they're prepared to sacrifice.
6. **Looking for Alaska - John Green:** Miles Halter is hoping for excitement at his new boarding school. What he didn't expect and could never be ready for is Alaska Young. Funny, sexy and completely screwed-up, she will pull his life inside out.
7. **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy - Douglas Adams:** For Arthur Dent, it's an ordinary day, until his house is demolished by bulldozers and the earth is demolished to make way for a hyper-space bypass. At least he has The hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy to help him, with its hopeful message: Don't Panic.
8. **Reaper Man - Terry Pratchett:** Death is missing - presumed...er...gone. Chaos ensues, as the newly dead see no reason not to continue life as usual. But on a little farm far, far away, a tall, thin - some might say, skeletal - stranger is turning out to be really good with a scythe...
9. **One of Us is Lying - Karen McManus:** One of Us Is Lying is the story of what happens when five strangers walk into detention and only four walk out alive. Everyone is a suspect, and everyone has something to hide. Pay close attention and you might solve this.
10. **The Gifted, The Talented and Me - William Sutcliffe:** Sam is the only ordinary person in an extraordinary family, and absolutely fine with it - until he's forced to attend the North London Academy for the Gifted and Talented, where everyone but Sam is determined to make him famous.

20

Abingdon

Summer Reading  
Challenge

19

## Fourth Year Recommendations

1. **The Gilded Cage - Vic James:** It's Britain, but not as we know it. Magically skilled aristocracy compels all commoners to serve them for ten years. While the elite compete for power, a rebellion is rising - and everyone must decide what side they're on and what they're prepared to sacrifice.
2. **Spin - Robert Charles Wilson:** One night in October, the stars go out. The moon disappears, but tides remain. When the sun rises, it's a featureless disk. And that's only the start of it. For three friends, along with everyone else on earth, life is getting stranger - and stranger.
3. **All Creatures Great and Small - James Herriot:** In this funny memoir, a young vet in 1930s Yorkshire finds himself on a steep learning curve. His challenges include eccentric colleagues, incomprehensible farmers, herds of semi-feral cattle, a pet pig called Nugent and an overweight Pekingese dog called Tricki Woo.
4. **Dear Evan Hansen - The novel of the Acclaimed Musical:** When a letter never meant to be seen draws Evan Hansen into a family's grief, he has the chance of a lifetime: to belong. He just has to stick to a lie he never meant to tell, which gets more complicated by the day.
5. **Wool - Hugh Howey:** Inside a giant underground silo, men and women live a life of rules and regulations, of secrets and lies. Rule breakers are dangerous, liable to infect others with their hopes and dreams of outside. One of these people is Jules. She may well be the last.
6. **Ready Player One:** Wade Watts wanted only to escape his depressing reality by entering the virtual utopia of the OASIS. Now he finds himself part of a desperate race to claim the ultimate prize in a competition with terrifying real-world implications.
7. **Fatherland - Robert Harris:** It's April 1964 and Adolf Hitler is approaching his 75th birthday. A Berlin detective investigating a murder uncovers signs of a conspiracy that could go to the very top of the German Reich.
8. **The Gifted, the Talented and Me - William Sutcliffe** : Sam is the only ordinary person in an extraordinary family, and absolutely fine with it - until he's forced to attend the North London Academy for the Gifted and Talented, where everyone but Sam is determined to make him famous.
9. **Magician - David Eddings:** On the world of Midkemia, in the westernmost province of the Kingdom of the Isles, an orphan kitchen boy named Pug is made apprentice to the magician Kulgan. Unknown to Pug, this is his first step on the path to his destiny.
10. **The Girl With All the Gifts - M.R. Carey:** Every morning, Melanie waits in her cell to be collected for class. When the soldiers come, Sergeant Parks keeps his gun pointing at her while two of his people strap her into the wheelchair. Melanie jokes that she won't bite. But they don't laugh.

# Abingdon

20

## Summer Reading Challenge

19

### Fifth Year Recommendations

1. **I Am Legend - Richard Matheson:** The last living man on Earth spends his days as a hunter, seeking out and killing the vampires that were once human, like him. At night he barricades himself in his home and prays for the dawn. How long can he survive?
2. **Flowers for Algernon - Daniel Keyes:** A man with an IQ of 68 has his intelligence vastly increased through experimental surgery, but being intelligent turns out to be a bitter reward, as he discovers what people really think of him.
3. **The Talented Mr Ripley - Patricia Highsmith:** Sociopath Tom Ripley is struggling to stay one step ahead of his creditors and the law, when an unexpected acquaintance offers him a free trip to Europe. It's a chance to start over - and he's determined that no-one will stand in his way.
4. **The Martian - Andy Weir:** He's stranded on Mars for at least two years in a habitat designed to last one month. With death by suffocation, thirst or hunger all looking extremely likely, there's only one way to survive: he's going to have to science his way out of it.
5. **The Three-Body Problem - Cixin Liu:** Beijing police ask nanotech engineer Wang Miao to infiltrate a secretive cabal of scientists after a spate of inexplicable suicides. Wang's investigation will lead him to a mysterious online game and immerse him in a conspiracy that spans light-years.
6. **Into the Wild - John Krakauer:** The true story of a young man who walks deep into the Alaskan wilderness and whose SOS note was found four months later. Into the wild explores the obsession which leads some people to explore the outer limits of self and leave civilization behind.
7. **White Fang - Jack London:** White Fang tells the story of a young wolf-dog's journey from the wild into human territory. In the process, White Fang learns that civilisation is every bit as vicious and violent as nature - and that survival is only awarded to the fittest.
8. **How to Stop Time - Matt Haig:** Tom Hazard might look like an ordinary 41-year-old, but he's been alive for centuries. As long as he keeps changing his identity he can keep one step ahead of his past - and stay alive. The one thing he mustn't do is fall in love.
9. **Touching the Void - Joe Simpson:** Descending from the peak of the remote Siula Grande, Simon Yates saves his own life by letting his climbing partner fall 150 feet to his death - or so he thinks. But his partner survives, and begins an agonising crawl back to base camp.
10. **Orphan X - Greg Hurwitz:** Raised and trained in a top secret programme, Evan Smoak used to be sent to bad places to do bad things to bad people. Now he's broken with the past and dreams of a normal life, whatever that is. The problem is, the past isn't finished with him.

20

Abingdon

# Summer Reading Challenge

19

## Sixth Form Recommendations

1. **The Quiet American - Graham Greene** : A cynical journalist enjoying the dubious pleasures of 1950s Indo-China meets an idealistic 'quiet American'. They become friends, until spiralling tensions force the journalist to pick a side and decide who is a friend and who an enemy.
2. **Kafka on the Shore - Haruki Murakami**: In a land where cats talk with people., fish tumble from the sky and a forest harbours soldiers apparently un-aged since World War II, a troubled man struggles to find the identity of both a killer and their victim.
3. **A Tale of Two Cities - Charles Dickens**: Two men, enmeshed by their love for the same woman, are drawn against their will to the vengeful, bloodstained streets of Paris at the height of the Reign of Terror and soon fall under the lethal shadow of La Guillotine.
4. **Half of a Yellow Sun - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**: As the horrific Biafran War erupts, a boy from a poor village, a young woman who has abandoned a life of privilege to live with her lover, and a shy English writer are drawn together and torn apart in ways they couldn't imagine.
5. **Wolf Hall - Hilary Mantel**: Thomas Cromwell, a political genius with a deadly expertise in manipulating people and events, battles to defeat a self-interested parliament and keep the goodwill of King Henry VIII, whose moods fluctuate between romantic passions and murderous rage.
6. **Wyrd Sisters - Terry Pratchett**: Meddling in royal politics turns out to be a lot more complicated than certain playwrights would have you believe, particularly when the blood on your hands just won't wash off and you're facing a future with knives in it.
7. **Crime and Punishment - Fyodor Dostoevsky**: In this 'psychological record of a crime', the perpetrator of a brutal double murder plays a cat and mouse game with a suspicious prosecutor, all the time struggling with his feelings of being above society's laws yet also desperate to redeem himself.
8. **Look Who's Back - Timur Vermes**: Berlin, Summer, 2011. Adolf Hitler wakes up on a patch of open ground, alive and well. The world has changed, Seeking to restore his beloved Fatherland, he becomes a YouTube star, gets his own T.V. show, and people begin to listen.
9. **The Goldfinch - Donna Tartt**: After Theo survives a bomb blast that tears most of his life apart, he becomes obsessed with a painting. 'The Goldfinch'. His obsession draws him into a criminal underworld and towards the centre of an increasingly dangerous circle.
10. **How to Stop Time - Matt Haig**: Tom Hazard might look like an ordinary 41-year-old, but he's been alive for centuries. As long as he keeps changing his identity he can keep one step ahead of his past - and stay alive. The one thing he mustn't do is fall in love.



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20

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### Challenges: How You Can Win A Prize...

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. 8 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.

