

# Abingdon

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## Summer Reading Challenge

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### Lower School Recommendations

- 1. House of Silk - Anthony Horowitz.** An agitated gentleman arrives unannounced at 221b Baker Street. He begs Holmes for help, telling the unnerving story of a scar-faced man who has stalked him in recent weeks. . .
- 2. The Tiger in the Well - Philip Pullman.** A terrifying thriller set in Victorian London. Sally Lockhart is content - her business is thriving. But her life is about to change - or rather someone has already changed it.
- 3. To Kill a Mockingbird - Harper Lee.** Through the young eyes of Scout and Jem Finch, Harper Lee explores with exuberant humour the irrationality of adult attitudes to race and class in the Deep South of the 1930s. The conscience of a town steeped in prejudice, violence and hypocrisy is pricked by the stamina of one man's struggle for justice.
- 4. Wolf by Wolf - Ryan Graudin.** Over ten years since the Nazis won the war, 17-year-old Yael has one mission: to kill Hitler. But first she's got to get close enough to him to do it.
- 5. The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole - Sue Townsend.** Meet Adrian Mole, a hapless teenager providing an unabashed, pimples-and-all glimpse into his parents' marital troubles, the dog, his life as a tortured poet and 'misunderstood intellectual'.
- 6. Going Postal - Terry Pratchett.** Moist von Lipwig is a con artist and a fraud and a man faced with a life choice: be hanged, or put Ankh-Morpork's ailing postal service back on its feet. It's a tough decision.
- 7. My Family and Other Animals - Gerald Durrell.** Sometimes it's pretty hard to tell them apart... my family and the animals, that is. I don't know why my brothers and sisters complain so much. With snakes in the bath and scorpions on the lunch table, our house, on the island of Corfu, is a bit like a circus.
- 8. Keeper - Mal Peet.** Paul Faustino sits opposite the man they call El Gato - the Cat - the world's greatest goalkeeper. El Gato tells his incredible story - the most remarkable part of this story is the man who teaches him - the mysterious Keeper, who haunts a football pitch at the heart of the claustrophobic forest...
- 9. Gladiator: Fight for Freedom - Simon Scarrow.** Recruited as a gladiator, young Marcus Cornelius Primus faces a new life of brutal training as he learns the skills of an elite warrior. But Marcus cannot simply forget his past. His father lies murdered by soldiers and his mother has been kidnapped and forced into slavery.
- 10. Mortal Engines - Philip Reeve.** Welcome to the world of the Traction Era, where mobile cities fight for survival in a post-apocalyptic future. Young apprentice Tom Natsworthy and the murderous Hester Shaw are flung from the fast-moving city of London into heart-stopping adventures in the wastelands of the Great Hunting Ground.

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### Middle School Recommendations

- 1. A Tale of Two Cities – Charles Dickens.** A Tale of Two Cities is one of Dickens's most exciting books, set against the backdrop of the French revolution, in which two generations struggle against the injustices of first a corrupt aristocracy and then the mindless rule of the mob.
- 2. The Martian – Andy Weir.** I'm stranded on Mars. 'I have no way to communicate with Earth. I'm in a Habitat designed to last 31 days.' The gripping story of survival in space.
- 3. Fatherland – Robert Harris.** What if Hitler had won the war? A thrilling read and an interesting 'what if' take on history.
- 4. Genesis – Bernard Beckett.** Anax is about to face her examination for the Academy, the institution which safeguards her society. The subject is Adam, a man whose struggle transformed the course of her country. But the examination will reveal new twists to Adam's history. Twists that will undermine Anax's assumptions about her country and who she is.
- 5. Flip – Martin Bedford.** Fourteen-year-old Alex Gray wakes up one morning to discover that he doesn't recognize his hands, or his legs... How is it possible that Alex has become another boy – a boy who everyone calls Philip?
- 6. Into Thin Air – John Krakauer.** This is the true story of a 24-hour period on Everest, when members of three separate expeditions were caught in a storm and faced a battle against hurricane-force winds, exposure, and the effects of altitude, which ended the worst single-season death toll in the peak's history.
- 7. I am Legend – Richard Matheson.** Robert Neville is the last living man on Earth. By day he is the hunter, seeking out and killing the vampires that were once human, like him. By night he is prey, barricading himself in his home and praying for the dawn. How long can he survive?
- 8. Bloodtide – Melvin Burgess.** In the ruins of London, its inhabitants locked inside behind high walls, the heads of two warring families agree a truce. But in a world in which the only universal language is violence, betrayal and vengeance are never far away.
- 9. 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.
- 10. The Knife of Never Letting Go – Patrick Ness.** Todd Hewitt is the only boy in a town of only men. He hears everything they think, just as they hear everything he thinks. When he discovers secrets that have been kept from him, he's forced to run.

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### Upper School Recommendations

- 1. 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!
- 2. A Place of Great Safety - Hilary Mantel.** An extraordinary novel of the French Revolution. Mantel explores its key figures: Danto and Robespierre, Desmoulins. As they taste the addictive delights of power, the darker side of the period's political ideals is unleashed - all must face the horror that follows.
- 3. The Mandibles - Lionel Shriver.** It is 2029. The Mandibles have been counting on a sizable fortune when their 97-year-old patriarch dies. Yet America's soaring national debt has grown so enormous it can never be repaid. As their inheritance turned to ash, each family member must contend with disappointment, but also the challenge of sheer survival.
- 4. Into the Wild - John Krakauer.** By examining the true story of Chris McCandless, a young man, who in 1992 walked deep into the Alaskan wilderness and whose SOS note was found four months later, Krakauer explores the obsession which leads some people to explore the outer limits of self, leave civilization behind.
- 5. The Beach - Alex Garland.** A young traveller in Thailand finds his way to a fabled hidden beach and a new way of life. But what seems like paradise turns out to be full of serpents, and soon turns into hell...
- 6. The Essex Serpent - Sarah Perry.** In the coastal parish of Aldwinter, recently-widowed Cora and Aldwinter's vicar find themselves drawn together, almost against their will, by rumours that the mythical Essex serpent has returned to haunt the marshes.
- 7. A Kiss Before Dying - Iran Levin.** A charming, intelligent young man kills two out of three sisters before moving on to the third, determined to claim her fortune; meanwhile, a friend of the family starts investigating the deaths.
- 8. The Martian - Andy Weir.** Astronaut Mark Watney is stranded on Mars. He has no way to communicate with Earth and is rapidly running out of food, water and oxygen. He's screwed. But desperation is a great motivator, even when the odds look impossible...
- 9. Flowers for Algernon - Daniel Hayes.** 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.
- 10. The Godfather - Mario Puzo.** Blackmail. Larceny. Murder. The actions of Don Corleone, lord of the American mafia's most powerful crime family, resonate across 1940s American.

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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.

