

Recommended reading list: KS3

Action and Adventure

* Malorie Blackman **Noughts and Crosses**

In an alternative world the issues of racism are tackled in a (Trilogy) society which has only two types of people: "noughts" and "crosses". This novel is about friendship that goes beyond these barriers. The sequel set a generation later is also an absolute knock out.

* William Nicholson **Wind on Fire Trilogy**

Breathtaking trilogy about a society governed by exams. But what happens when you rebel? Read to find out. A truly excellent book with two outstanding sequels.

* SE Hinton **Outsiders**

Stunning study of hatred, violence, loyalty and friendship set in the gangland of New York.

Family and Relationships

* Elizabeth Laird **The Garbage King**

Original novels set in the slums and streets of Ethiopia.

* Meg Rosoff **How I Live Now**

Odd and dreamy novel set in the backdrop of an undisclosed war with an American teenage girl getting to know her family in England. Now regarded as a modern classic.

* Jerry Spinelli **Stargirl**

Brilliant and brave novel about a teenager daring to be different in an American high school. Highly recommended.

Classics

* Charlotte Bronte **Jane Eyre**

Jane falls in love with her rich employer, only to find out he has a dark secret.... Classic stuff that has thrilled generations.

* Penelope Farmer **Charlotte Sometimes**

Dream like novel where Charlotte, whilst sleeping, somehow slips back in time to 1919 and becomes Clare... Wonderful.

* Dodie Smith, **I Capture the Castle**

Great novel of first love, with an eccentric family of sisters living in a dilapidated castle.

* J. Vance Marshall **Walkabout**

In the Australian desert, two children, survivors of an air crash, make their journey across the harsh landscape, aided by an Aboriginal boy on "walkabout".

Fantasy

* Frank Beddor **Looking Glass Wars**

Challenging novel which develops the characters from "Alice in Wonderland" creating a whole new fantasy adventure.

* Cliff McNish **Doomspell** (trilogy)

Powerful fantasy series about children snatched from our world to satisfy the evil of a witch from a different dimension.

* Garth Nix **Sabriel, Lirael, Abhorsen**

Powerful and complex fantasy trilogy. Sabriel sets out on a quest to avenge the death of her father in the land of dark, dark magic. Absolutely superb from book one to three.

* Philip Pullman **His Dark Materials**

One of the most brilliant children's trilogies of the last 20 years. Has more surprises, scares and twists that you can cope with!

* Philip Reeves **Mortal Engines** (series)

*Blinding fantasy novel where moving cities trawl the globe. Tom and Hester are thrown from their beloved "London" and try to get back on board. Highly original read now recently concluded with book 4: **A Darkling Plane**.*

Ghosts and Horror

* Kate Cann **Leaving Poppy**

A new genre for the great Kate Cann in this spooky haunted house, possession novel. Genuinely creepy!

* Cliff McNish **Breathe: A ghost Story**

A true ghost story. The kind that says its cold fingers on you grips tight and doesn't let you go under the last pages have been turned. Wonderfully spine chilling.

* Celia Rees **Witch Child, Sorceress**

Interesting read about the daughter of a woman accused of being a witch in 18th century England. Beautifully written and asks many intelligent questions and now followed by a great sequel.

* Marcus Sedgwick **My Swordhand is Singing**

Chilling vampire tale set in 17th Century Europe, inspired by the original Transylvanian Vampire folk tales. Scary stuff!

Humour and Comedy

* Meg Rosoff **Just in Case**

Quirky and funny follow up to How I Live Now in which 15-year-old David is obsessed Fate is out to get him.

* Louis Sacher **There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom**

Another highly entertaining (and funny) tale from the writer of Holes. Has much to identify with.

* Sue Townsend **Secret Diary of Adrian Mole**

Classic series of diaries featuring 13-year-old Adrian and his obsession with the lovely Pandora.

Mystery and Thrillers

* Kevin Brooks **Martyn Pig**

Martyn's life is turned on its head when he accidentally kills someone very close to him in this sublime novel. Brilliant.

* F. Cottrell-Boyce **Millions**

Imagine the scenario: Britain is about to join the Euro, you find 250K and have 10 days to spend it before it becomes obsolete.

History

* Julie Hearn. **The Merrybegot**

Magical English Civil War novel, with a supernatural twang, and a trainee witch.

* Phillip Pullman **Ruby in the Smoke**

Exceptional mystery yarn, about a girl trying to find out why her father was murdered. Has two sequels with the same characters, which are also excellent.

* Nancy Werlin **Killer's Cousin**

Ingenious thriller with gothic flair about a 17-year-old who was acquitted of murder and forced to move towns to live with distant relatives. An exceptionally well-paced thriller.

* Tim Wynne-Jones **Boy in the Burning House**

Beautifully crafted mystery novel of 2 friends trying to solve a mystery from a previous generation.

* Scott Westerfield **Uglies**

In the future plastic surgery is taken to the extreme. Those who reject the process are known as "Uglies". A riveting thriller.

School Stories

* Robert Cormier **The Chocolate War**

Stunning and shocking novel about the power of gangs in school and how one small act of defiance starts a chain reaction in the school. Highly recommended for strong readers. Has a very good sequel.

* Catherine Forde **Fat Boy Swim**

Great novel about a misfit who will do anything to fit in at school.

* Matt Peet **Tamar**

Winner of the 2006 Carnegie Medal. Complex mix of time travel, World War II and love across time.