

**Elizabeth College**  
**Independent Reading Lists for Fiction**  
**(Draft copy 2.0, July 2018)**

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## Introduction

Research has shown independent reading to be hugely beneficial for young people, both academically and socially. It's brain food and it's also soul food.

What's more – there is no need for an expensive, magical formula to improve children's reading. The most reliable guide to how much they will improve is how much they read. This makes getting children and teenagers into a regular reading habit vital for their confidence and progress. This is never truer than during the holidays when homework is off the menu.

But what should they read?

The simplest and probably best answer is whatever they enjoy. We're blessed at Elizabeth College with a wonderful library and fantastic librarian in Mrs Garnett who regularly matches pupils with just the right book to stimulate them and take them that little bit further in their reading. Some pupils find their fascination is in the world of non-fiction; others get fired up by graphic novels. As Head of English, my area of expertise is with fiction so this is the focus of my first foray into offering some lists which might help parents and pupils in choosing new books when they are out of school. Hopefully, some of these selections are page turners which will have that 'unputdownable' quality the more reluctant reader needs; others have been chosen for the challenge and thought-provoking content they offer.

There are pros and cons to lists. It's true that nothing quite beats the warmth of a word-of-mouth recommendation. And lists are often as notable for what they omit and as what they remember to include. If you're looking for a more complete guide for choosing titles, I strongly recommend [The Ultimate Teen Book Guide](#) which offers over 750 suggestions rather than the 75 or so in this provisional list so far. But I still hope that what follows here may be helpful to you and your children in starting conversations about reading at home.

I've read most of the books that the English team have placed on this list: the other choices have come from conversations with enthusiastic pupils and teachers at this school. In this way, this provisional list is intended as a beginning rather than an ending. What unmissable novels have I left out? Which novels are overrated or even unsuitable? I'd love this list to keep evolving in the coming years to fully represent the College community's vibrant reading.

I wish you and your children a relaxing and stimulating holiday. If you would like any further advice or have feedback/suggestions to offer, I'd be delighted to hear from you.

**Magnus Buchanan**  
**Head of English**  
**Elizabeth College**  
[mbuchanan@elizabethcollege.gg](mailto:mbuchanan@elizabethcollege.gg)

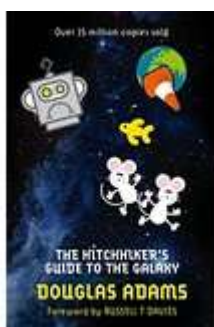
## How to use this guide

The books are arranged in alphabetical order of their authors in the three sections:

- Year 7 and above
- Year 10 and above
- Year 12 and above (forthcoming)

It's important to point out that these categories are just for guidance. While many of the selections in the first category have been written with younger readers in mind, quite a few have not. There is every chance that a pupil in Year 10 or higher will find a book which really appeals here; equally, ambitious younger readers should not feel that they can't try the books in the higher categories. It really depends on where pupils are in their reading and what they find most enjoyable. Evidently, books in the higher categories are likely to contain more mature material as well as being written in a more sophisticated style.

**Choosing a book:** The blurb accompanying the titles should give a first sense of whether the book is likely to appeal. My best advice would be to go to one of the larger book websites, find out more and try a sample of the book to get a sense of whether it is appealing and of the right level. This is one case where devices such as the Kindle can be useful as they allow this to be done for free on a dedicated reading platform.



You can read the openings of many books on the major websites such as Amazon or download samples. Even better, pop into your local bookshop or library and sample some of the shelves... the online Borrow Box service at Guille-Alles is brilliant too!



It's worth bearing in mind that some books are 'slow burn' pleasures so do try to give the author some time to 'hook' you in...

**Keeping reading going:** Holidays are a great time to read – they are the time when school lets us off the hook from homework! This is not the place to go into a long advice column on reading habits, but there are a few principles which may help:




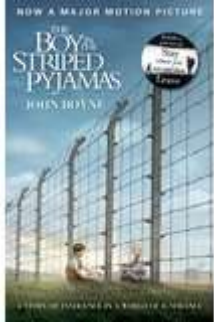
- 1. Make time and space for reading.** Make sure that bedrooms don't have an array of distractions in them; if they do, set a curfew for their use.
- 2. Read for short periods.** Whether at the bus stop or waiting to be picked up from an activity, these short periods will keep reading happening and keep up interest.
- 3. Share your reading.** Reading is an individual act but it should be a social activity. Talk about your books together!

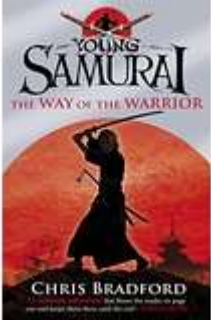


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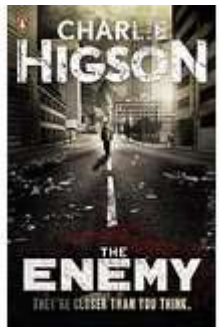
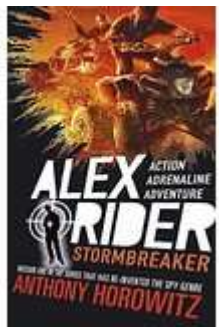
## Year 7 and up



*Enjoyment and regularity are the key factors for reading at this stage. Series are noted with the number of books in brackets; page counts are to the closest 50.*


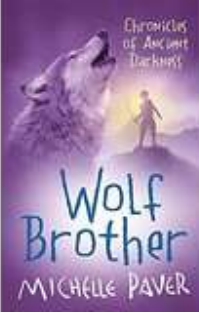



*Older readers may well enjoy many of these titles too!*

<b>Book cover</b>	<b>Title / Author / Genre</b>	<b>Details</b>
	<p><b><u>The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy</u></b> Douglas Adams</p> <p>Science Fiction Classic Series (5) 200 pages, 1979</p>	<p><i>It's an ordinary Thursday when Arthur Dent's house gets demolished. But within minutes, the Earth also gets the order to become an ex-planet... fortunately, Arthur is picked up by a passing spaceship and embarks on a hilarious and mind-boggling series of adventures.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Watership Down</u></b> Richard Adams</p> <p>Fantasy / Nature Classic 650 pages, 1972</p>	<p><i>When Fiver foresees disaster, a group of fellow rabbits head off together on a journey into the unknown. Richard Adams' animal epic is a thought-provoking and very moving book which makes us consider our impact on the natural world afresh.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>I, Robot</u></b> Isaac Asimov</p> <p>Science Fiction Classic / Short Stories 250 pages, 1950</p>	<p><i>Asimov's classic tales ask important moral questions about what it would mean to create artificial intelligence. With the Digital Age bringing the potential for ever more life-like and intelligent robots into society, these stories have never seemed more relevant.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas</u></b> John Boyne</p> <p>Historical / Fable 200 pages, 2006</p>	<p><i>This deceptively simple book takes the reader inside the horrors of the Holocaust through the innocence of a child's point of view. This is a moving novel which is also full of hope for the way in which children can forget the prejudices of their parents.</i></p>


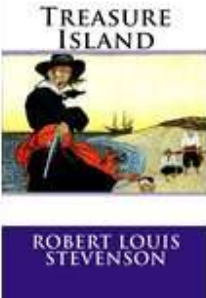
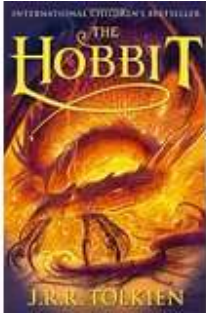
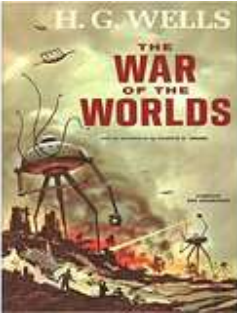
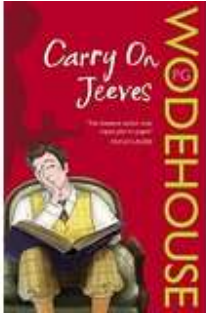
	<p><b><u>The Way of the Warrior</u></b>  <b><u>(Young Samurai)</u></b>  Chris Bradford</p> <p>Historical / Adventure  Series (8)  250 pages, 2008</p>	<p><i>These exciting tales take the reader to the heart of Samurai Japan in the company of shipwrecked sailor Jack Fletcher. Chris Bradford uses his own experience and expertise in martial arts to craft a taut and wonderfully evocative series of stories full of action.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>And Then There Were None...</u></b>  Agatha Christie</p> <p>Classic / Crime  200 pages, 1939</p>	<p><i>The Queen of Crime is in imperious form in this novel as she crafts a devastating plot in which murder after murder takes place on an isolated island. But who is the mastermind behind it all? A perfect read for Lihou! Christie is also famous for her Inspector Poirot series...</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Ready Player One</u></b>  Ernest Cline</p> <p>Science Fiction  400 pages, 2012</p>	<p><i>For any teenager who prefers the online world of heady space battles and endless adventures to the trickier offline one, this is a tale with a strong hook and great appeal. It's also ingeniously a love letter to the 1980s so parents may enjoy the nostalgia with their sons too!</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Hunger Games</u></b>  Suzanne Collins</p> <p>Sci Fi / Adventure  Series (3)  350 pages, 2008</p>	<p><i>The epic series began in book form. Taking inspiration from the Roman gladiatorial games, Suzanne Collins asks the disturbing question of what might happen if children were sacrificed for entertainment. Thought provoking, with a wonderful hero in Katniss Everdeen.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Hound of the Baskervilles</u></b>  Arthur Conan Doyle</p> <p>Classic / Crime  200 pages, 1902</p>	<p><i>The game is very much afoot in this spooky adventure featuring Sherlock Holmes, the world's greatest detective. Will Holmes and Watson be able to save the latest heir to the Baskerville fortune from death on Dartmoor at the jaws of a hellhound? Riveting stuff!</i></p>

	<p><b><u>The Dark is Rising</u></b> Susan Cooper</p> <p>Classic / Fantasy (5) 300 pages, 1984</p>	<p><i>This novel is a slightly forgotten gem which conjures a magical and threatening atmosphere amid the snow of Christmas. Can Will embrace his destiny to face the evil forces which have surrounded his family? Curl up with a torch for best enjoyment of this winter treat.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Graveyard Book</u></b> Neil Gaiman</p> <p>Fantasy / Gothic 200 pages, 1979</p>	<p><i>Neil Gaiman is one of the premier fantasy novelists at work today. His spooky and sometimes disturbing work is hugely popular with teenage audiences and has extended into the world of graphic novels with the award-winning Sandman series of comics. A modern master.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Gone</u></b> Michael Grant</p> <p>Sci Fi / Series (6) 300 pages, 2008</p>	<p><i>The simple premise of Michael Grant's popular series have made it a Lord of the Flies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century generation: what would happen if all the adults in your home town were to disappear in the blink of an eye? Threats of all kinds soon emerge to give these books a breakneck rhythm.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Enemy</u></b> Charlie Higson</p> <p>Adventure / Horror Series (8) 650 pages</p>	<p><i>The popularity of the post-apocalyptic zombie survival story finds a stylish voice in Charlie Higson, who has also penned a very successful series of Young Bond novels. Another exciting and page-turning series where the lurking threat is never far away.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Alex Rider: Stormbreaker</u></b> Anthony Horowitz</p> <p>Adventure / Espionage Series (9) 250 pages, 2006</p>	<p><i>Anthony Horowitz's spy series for teens benefits from clever plotting and an ironic voice which makes him a pleasure to read. This is very much James Bond for the new generations as espionage and high tech gadgets give Alex a life a world away from the usual homework and pimples of adolescence...</i></p>

	<p><b><u>Raven's Gate</u></b> <b><u>(Power of Five)</u></b> Anthony Horowitz</p> <p>Fantasy / Series (5) 200 pages, 2006</p>	<p>A group of friends are thrown into a global conspiracy when they discover that radiation has caused a gate to a hellish realm to open in South America. Can they stop the Old Ones from returning and wreaking havoc upon Earth? Next stop for Alex Rider fans...</p>
	<p><b><u>Skulduggery Pleasant</u></b> Derek Landy</p> <p>Fantasy / Series (5) 200 pages, 2006</p>	<p>Derek Landy mixes the detective adventure genre with dark humour by creating the world's first skeleton investigator. Alongside teen sidekick Stephanie, Skulduggery battles Nefarian Serpine's plans to unleash a weapon of terrible power on the world. Great jokes.</p>
	<p><b><u>A Wizard of Earthsea</u></b> <b><u>(The Earthsea Quartet)</u></b> Ursula Le Guin</p> <p>Fantasy Series (4) 250 pages, 1968</p>	<p>Ursula Le Guin is one of the major figures in science fiction and fantasy in the modern era. Long before Harry Potter was born, a young boy called Ged was uncovering his own unique talent for magic on a far flung island. Richly written and very atmospheric, this is wonderful stuff.</p>
	<p><b><u>Private Peaceful</u></b> Michael Morpurgo</p> <p>Historical 200 pages, 2003</p>	<p>The centenary celebrations for the Somme have recently reminded us of the noble and terrible sacrifice made by so many young men in the First World War. This moving novel charts the progress of two brothers as they pass from patriotic fervour to the brutal reality of war.</p>
	<p><b><u>Cherub: The Recruit</u></b> Robert Muchamore</p> <p>Military / Adventure Series (14) 350 pages, 2008</p>	<p>Robert Muchamore wrote the first novel in this military adventure series to keep his nephew occupied over summer. Since then, his training as a private investigator has enabled him to turn Cherub into a phenomenon for teenage boys: gritty and compelling reading.</p>

	<p><b><u>The Knife of Never Letting Go</u></b> Patrick Ness</p> <p>Sci Fi / Series (3) 300 pages, 2008</p>	<p>Todd Hewitt is 12, the last boy in Prentisstown, a town of only men. He lives in a world full of "noise" in which the private thoughts of every man and animal are audible. In one month he will be 13 and a man. But the town is keeping secrets from him, secrets that will force him to run away... a brilliantly voiced novel.</p>
	<p><b><u>Wolf Brother</u></b> Michelle Paver</p> <p>Historical / Fantasy (6) 200 pages, 2004</p>	<p>This is a vivid series which brings the struggles of a stone age tribe to life. Raging rivers, hostile tribes, fever, starvation and a demon in the shape of a bear make this a white-knuckle ride for readers. There's also a wonderful audio version read by Sir Ian McKellen available.</p>
	<p><b><u>Mort</u></b> Terry Pratchett</p> <p>Fantasy Series (40+) 300 pages, 1987</p>	<p>Terry Pratchett's recent death led to a massive outpouring of feeling from his massive readership and wide fan base. His novels are extremely funny but there is also a fierce intelligence at work in much of what he does. This one about the Grim Reaper is a fitting tribute...</p>
	<p><b><u>Mortal Engines</u></b> Philip Reeve</p> <p>Sci Fi Series (4) 300 pages, 2001</p>	<p>Philip Reeve's premise of cities on wheels is a brilliantly humorous one. But it also becomes convincing and compelling in this fantastically written series. There are twists and turns a plenty to come but Reeve's characters are also a real highlight, including the plucky Hester Shaw.</p>
	<p><b><u>Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief</u></b> Rick Riordan</p> <p>Adventure / Fantasy Series (5) 400 pages, 2005</p>	<p>Percy Jackson's exploits have turned into the stuff of blockbuster cinema and it's easy to see why... Riordan's novels mix modern teen attitude with the mythological greats of the Greek pantheon. The result is exciting, page-turning stuff which will probably lead younger readers towards the originals too.</p>



	<p><b><u>Holes</u></b> Louis Sachar</p> <p>Adventure / Humour</p> <p>250 pages, 1998</p>	<p><i>“There is no lake at Camp Green Lake...” So begins Louis Sachar’s very funny and cleverly plotted account of a boy who learns to stand up for himself after he is wrongly accused of stealing some trainers and sent to a juvenile detention centre. A perfect novel.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Treasure Island</u></b> Robert Louis Stevenson</p> <p>Adventure / Classic</p> <p>300 pages, 1883</p>	<p><i>This is arguably one of the must read books of childhood for boys. From the moment Billy Bones steps over the threshold of the inn where Jim Hawkins works, he’s thrust into a strange and dangerous plot which will take him far from home. A genuine classic in every sense.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Hobbit</u></b> J.R.R. Tolkien</p> <p>Fantasy Series / Classic)</p> <p>350 pages, 1937</p>	<p><i>Tolkien’s first novel is worlds apart from his later grand epic in spite of its similar cast and setting. There is much more room for humour and whimsy in Bilbo’s tale: it’s all the more fun for it. The scene of ‘Riddles in the Dark’ is one of the great moments in children’s literature.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The War of the Worlds</u></b> H.G. Wells</p> <p>Sci Fi / Classic</p> <p>150 pages, 1898</p>	<p><i>The original tale of Martian invaders still has great power and influence today. The invading aliens may destroy England while riding around in machines which look like “boilers on stilts”. Nevertheless, this novel perfectly captures the way technology has changed war.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Carry On, Jeeves</u></b> P.G. Wodehouse</p> <p>Classic Humour</p> <p>250 pages, 1925</p>	<p><i>Few people realised until recently that the master of wit P.G. Wodehouse was actually a pupil at Elizabeth College before packing his bags for the mainland. His light-hearted tales of the bumbling Bertie and his ever dependable butler Jeeves are pure reading pleasure.</i></p>



**The Book Thief**

Marcus Zusak



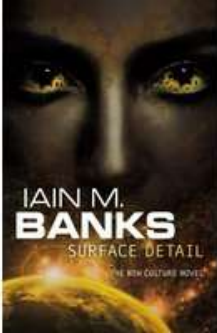
Historical / Fable

550 pages, 2005

*Another novel which deals with the horrors of the Holocaust by approaching them from a different angle. Liesel cannot bear to watch the book burnings of the Nazis and finds ways to keep her reading alive. But Death is watching, waiting and narrating this tale...*

## Year 10 and up


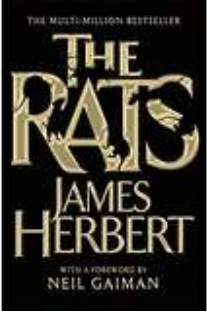
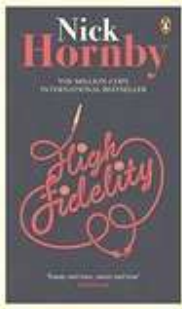
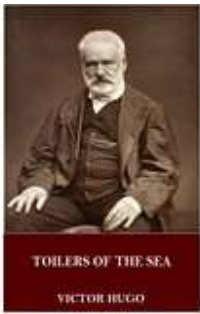
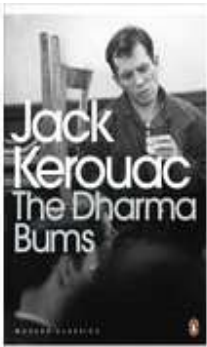
*Pupils should expand their horizons and challenge their thinking at this stage. Just rereading the favourite series from their childhood is not enough to sustain enthusiasm. The following are books which will appeal to ambitious younger readers, older teenagers and adults too.*


<b>Book cover</b>	<b>Title / Author / Genre</b>	<b>Details</b>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Half A King</u></b> Joe Abercrombie</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fantasy Series (3) 400 pages, 2015</p>	<p><i>On the back of the huge success of Game of Thrones, a host of other authors have grasped the gauntlet to produce gripping historical fantasy. This series, fresh with the sea air of the Viking sagas, is among the best around. It sees Yarvi, a prince with a withered arm, try to save his throne...</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Things Fall Apart</u></b> Chinua Achebe</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Classic 150 pages, 1958</p>	<p><i>An amazingly rich book for its length, this novel tells the story of the colonisation of Africa from the point of view of the tribes living there. Okonkwo, of the Ibo, is first and foremost a warrior. How will he adapt to the new ways of the European settlers?</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Empire of the Sun</u></b> J.G Ballard</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Historical / Coming of Age 350 pages, 1984</p>	<p><i>J.G. Ballard's semi-autobiographical novel tells the less known story of Asia during the Second World War. Living in comfort in Shanghai, Jim suddenly finds himself slung into a prisoner of war camp by the invading Japanese after Pearl Harbour. How will he survive?</i></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Surface Detail</u></b> Iain M Banks</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sci Fi Series (10) 500 pages, 2010</p>	<p><i>This is modern science fiction at its best. Mindbending ideas (what would it be like if we could download our consciousness into a device?) are combined with breathtaking action sequences (a very visceral escape from a digital Hell). A great series.</i></p>

	<p><b><u>Fahrenheit 451</u></b> Ray Bradbury</p> <p>Classic Science Fiction 150 pages, 1953</p>	<p><i>In a nightmare future, firemen are paid not only to put out fires but to set fire to books. Ray Bradbury rented a typewriter in a local library to outline his frightening vision. As he said himself though, sometimes books are written not to predict the future – but to prevent it.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>A Clockwork Orange</u></b> Anthony Burgess</p> <p>Classic Science Fiction 350 pages, 1962</p>	<p><i>15-year-old Alex likes lashings of ultraviolence. He and his gang of friends rob, kill and rape their way through a nightmarish future, until the State puts a stop to his riotous excesses. But what will his re-education mean? As thought-provoking and vital today as then...</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Outsider</u></b> Albert Camus</p> <p>Classic / Philosophy 150 pages, 1942</p>	<p><i>Camus is one of the coolest philosophers to emerge from France often pictured with his trademark cigarette smouldering. This strange and disturbing novel asks the big question: how do we make meaning in a universe from which God seems to have disappeared?</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Big Sleep</u></b> Raymond Chandler</p> <p>Classic Crime 250 pages, 1939</p>	<p><i>“Dead men are heavier than broken hearts.” The immortal voice of jaded private eye Philip Marlowe has become the stuff of a hundred and one cinematic spin offs. But there’s nothing quite like the original – clever plots and killer one liners make these essential reading.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Hunt for Red October</u></b> Tom Clancy</p> <p>Military / Thriller 600 pages, 1984</p>	<p><i>Silently, beneath the chill Atlantic waters, Russia’s ultra-secret missile submarine, the Red October, is heading west. The Americans want her. The Russians want her back. With all-out war only seconds away, the superpowers race across the ocean on the most desperate mission of a lifetime. A Cold War classic...</i></p>




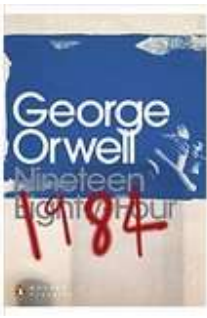

	<p><b><u>Heroes</u></b> Robert Cormier</p> <p>Military Thriller 150 pages, 1999</p>	<p>A provocative story about the return home of teenage war hero and war victim, Francis Joseph Cassavant. He is forced to confront his past - the youth leader he idolised and who betrayed him, and the girl he still loves. The book gets to the heart of human nature and the moral issues and choices we have to make.</p>
	<p><b><u>Minority Report</u></b> Philip K Dick</p> <p>Classic Science Fiction 250 pages, 1956</p>	<p>Imagine a world in which crime could be so accurately predicted that criminals could be arrested before they even acted. It sounds like a dream, but it becomes a nightmare for lawman John Anderson when he himself is accused... unmissable short stories!</p>
	<p><b><u>The Count of Monte Cristo</u></b> Alexander Dumas</p> <p>Classic Adventure 950 pages, 1845</p>	<p>One of the ultimate adventure stories, Dumas' brilliant tale of the jilted and betrayed Edmund Dantes taking justice into his own hands is hugely influential. It laid the founding archetype for such dark and brooding superheroes as Batman. It's a weighty tome but also a wonderful plot for summer.</p>
	<p><b><u>Paddy Clarke, Ha, Ha, Ha</u></b> Roddy Doyle</p> <p>Humour / Coming of Age 300 pages, 2005</p>	<p>Roddy Doyle's Booker Prize-winning novel describes the world of ten-year-old Paddy Clarke, growing up in Barrytown, north Dublin. From fun and adventure on the streets, boredom in the classroom to increasing isolation at home, Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha is a very funny but also emotionally engaging tale.</p>
	<p><b><u>The Circle</u></b> Dave Eggers</p> <p>Thriller 500 pages, 2014</p>	<p>When Mae is hired to work for the Circle, the world's most powerful internet company, she feels she's been given the opportunity of a lifetime. But the company wants increasing control over her – and everybody else's – life. A funny and very topical satire.</p>

	<p><b><u>The Beach</u></b> Alex Garland</p> <p>Adventure</p> <p>500 pages, 1996</p>	<p>William Goldings' 'The Lord of the Flies' is the original classic of this kind of story. However, Alex Garland's own slant on a group of backpackers who think that they've stumbled on a hidden paradise in Thailand is also hugely thought-provoking and compelling to read.</p>
	<p><b><u>The Fault in Our Stars</u></b> John Green</p> <p>Coming of Age / Humour</p> <p>350 pages, 2013</p>	<p>John Green's hugely popular novel has been sensitively adapted for cinema. It deals with the way in which teenagers Hazel and Augustus face their diagnoses of cancer with humour and bravery. The references to Romeo and Juliet should let the keen eyed know that a tragic romance is also afoot.</p>
	<p><b><u>Brighton Rock</u></b> Graham Greene</p> <p>Classic / Crime</p> <p>300 pages, 1938</p>	<p>Greene captures the gang war raging through the dark underworld of Brighton vividly. He exposes a world of loneliness and fear, of life lived on the 'dangerous edge of things' as his protagonist Pinkie tries to choose between saving his skin and saving his soul.</p>
	<p><b><u>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night</u></b> Mark Haddon</p> <p>Coming of Age</p> <p>250 pages, 2004</p>	<p>A murder mystery novel like no other... the detective and narrator, Christopher Boone, is 15-years-old and has Asperger's Syndrome. When he finds a neighbour's dog murdered he sets out on a terrifying journey which will turn his world upside down.</p>
	<p><b><u>Catch 22</u></b> Joseph Heller</p> <p>Classic / Humour</p> <p>550 pages, 1961</p>	<p>As the pilot of dangerous bombing missions in World War 2, Yossarian knows his days are numbered. If he makes any attempts to excuse himself from the perilous missions then he is caught in Catch-22: if he flies he is crazy, and doesn't have to; but if he doesn't want to he must be sane and has to...</p>

	<p><b><u>For Whom The Bell Tolls</u></b> Ernest Hemingway</p> <p>Military / Classic 500 pages, 1940</p>	<p><i>High in the pine forests of the Spanish Sierra, a guerrilla band prepares to blow up a vital bridge. Robert Jordan, a young American volunteer, has been sent to handle the dynamiting. In the mountains, he finds danger, the intense comradeship of war and tragic love. Completely compelling.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Rats</u></b> James Herbert</p> <p>Horror / Thriller 200 pages, 1974</p>	<p><i>Like his more famous fellow horror writer, Stephen King, James Herbert knows just how to suck readers into his plots before gradually revealing the true horror of his premise. Here, the question is what might happen if rats were to turn on humans – and the results are truly grisly...</i></p>
	<p><b><u>High Fidelity</u></b> Nick Hornby</p> <p>Romance / Humour 250 pages, 1995</p>	<p><i>For anyone who has become slightly obsessive about their music tastes (or even just the keeping of lists), this is a very funny and poignant look at love. Read it now to avoid the heartbreaks of the top five split ups described by the narrator Rob here!</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Toilers of the Sea</u></b> Victor Hugo</p> <p>Adventure / Classic 350 pages, 1866</p>	<p><i>Slightly more manageable than the mammoth Miserables, this great novel set in the wild waters surrounding Guernsey will introduce you to the island's greatest ever resident writer. Gilliat is a brave hero for whom no sacrifice is too noble – will he get his reward?</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Dharma Bums</u></b> Jack Kerouac</p> <p>Coming of Age / Classic 200 pages, 1958</p>	<p><i>After the road trip to end them all, Kerouac charts the spiritual quest of a group of friends trying to get to grips with Zen Buddhism and the search for enlightenment in the Sierra mountains. But back in wildly Bohemian San Francisco, things aren't so simple to keep under control...</i></p>

	<p><b><u>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</u></b> Ken Kesey</p> <p><i>Cult Classic</i> 300 pages, 1962</p>	<p><i>Kesey's novel perfectly captures the rebellious spirit of the 1960s. Tyrannical Nurse Ratched's rule of her ward in a mental hospital is disrupted by the arrival of McMurphy - a fun-loving trickster with a devilish grin who resolves to oppose her rules on behalf of his fellow inmates – but who will triumph in this battle?</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Flowers For Algernon</u></b> Daniel Keyes</p> <p><i>Science Fiction / Classic</i> 200 pages, 1966</p>	<p><i>Charlie Gordon, IQ 68, is a floor sweeper and the gentle butt of everyone's jokes - until an experiment in the enhancement of human intelligence turns him into a genius. But then the mouse who preceded him in the drug trial starts to get ill... brilliant and moving.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Shining</u></b> Stephen King</p> <p><i>Horror / Thriller</i> 500 pages, 1977</p>	<p><i>Danny is only five years old, but he is a 'shiner', aglow with psychic voltage. When his father becomes caretaker of the Overlook Hotel, Danny's visions grow out of control. As winter closes in and blizzards cut them off, the hotel seems to develop a life of its own...</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Spy Who Came In From the Cold</u></b> John Le Carre</p> <p><i>Espionage / Classic</i> 300 pages, 1963</p>	<p><i>Alex Leamas is tired. It's the 1960s, he's been out in the cold for years, spying in the shadow of the Berlin Wall for his British masters. He has seen too many good agents murdered for their troubles. Now Control wants to bring him in at last - but only after one final dangerous assignment...</i></p>
	<p><b><u>To Kill A Mockingbird</u></b> Harper Lee</p> <p><i>Classic / Coming of Age</i> 300 pages, 1960</p>	<p><i>'Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.'</i> A lawyer's advice to his children as he defends the real mockingbird of Harper Lee's classic novel - a black man charged with the rape of a white girl in the Deep South. A much loved classic.</p>



	<p><b><u>The Restraint of Beasts</u></b> Magnus Mills</p> <p>Humour 200 pages, 1998</p>	<p><i>'Tam and I took hold of Mr McCrindle and lowered him into the hole, feet first. We decided to leave his cap on'. This is a typical line in Mills' dark and very funny account of fencers trying to get by in the north of England. The accidental murders and jokes keep coming – but can the lads get themselves out of the hole they've dug?</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Black Swan Green</u></b> David Mitchell</p> <p>Coming of Age 500 pages, 2006</p>	<p><i>January, 1982. 13-year-old Jason Taylor - covert stammerer and reluctant poet - anticipates another boring year in his backwater English village. But he hasn't reckoned with bullies, his family, the Falklands War, a gypsy invasion and those mysterious entities known as girls. A great coming of age novel.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Master and Commander</u></b> Patrick O'Brien</p> <p>Historical / Series (20) 450 pages, 1969</p>	<p><i>Master and Commander is the first of Patrick O'Brien's now famous Aubrey/Maturin novels, regarded by some as the greatest series of historical novels ever written. Set sail into the Napoleonic era with great battle scenes and some sparkling dialogue too...</i></p>
	<p><b><u>1984</u></b> George Orwell</p> <p>Science Fiction 400 pages, 1949</p>	<p><i>Winston Smith inwardly rebels against the totalitarian world he lives in, with its all-seeing telescreens and the watchful eye of Big Brother ever upon him. But can he ever truly escape them? Hugely influential and still very relevant to us today as technology advances.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Bell Jar</u></b> Sylvia Plath</p> <p>Coming of Age 250 pages, 1963</p>	<p><i>When Esther wins an internship on a New York magazine in 1953, she believes she will realise her dream to become a writer. But between cocktail parties and manuscripts, her life begins to slide out of control. Plath's autobiographical novel still fascinates.</i></p>

	<p><b><u>Tales of Mystery and Imagination</u></b> Edgar Allen Poe</p> <p>Classic Short Stories 300 pages, 1845</p>	<p><i>This collection of Poe's best stories contains all the terrifying and bewildering tales that characterise his work. Whether it's a window into the mind of a madman or the grisly prospect of being buried alive, Poe makes the experience vivid and often completely terrifying for each new generation of readers.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>True Grit</u></b> Charles Portis</p> <p>Historical 200 pages, 1968</p>	<p><i>When her father is murdered, the single-minded 14-year-old Mattie travels to claim his body, then finds that the authorities are doing nothing to find his murderer. She takes the law into her own hands to hunt the outlaw down and avenge her father's murder. Stylishly told.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>All Quiet on the Western Front</u></b> E.M. Remarque</p> <p>Historical 200 pages, 1929</p>	<p><i>In 1914 a room full of German schoolboys, fresh-faced and idealistic, are goaded by their schoolmaster to troop off to the 'glorious war'. What follows is the moving story of a young 'unknown soldier' experiencing the true horror of life in the trenches.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Name of the Wind</u></b> Patrick Rothfuss</p> <p>Fantasy Series (3) 650 pages, 2008</p>	<p><i>A contemporary fantasy series that manages to create a rich and immersive world of magic. Kvothe, with his laconic wit and passionate nature, tells his story to a rapt audience as he details his battles with the Chandrian. A stylish and promising debut novel.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Catcher in the Rye</u></b> J.D. Salinger</p> <p>Coming of Age 200 pages, 1951</p>	<p><i>Holden Caulfield is a 17-year-old dropout who has just been kicked out of his fourth school. He heads to New York where he dissects the 'phony' aspects of society as well as the 'phonies' themselves. An incredibly voiced novel, this is one book which will always appeal.</i></p>

	<p><b><u>Cannery Row</u></b> John Steinbeck</p> <p>Historical / Humour 150 pages, 1945</p>	<p><i>A welcome relief from the unremitting tragedy of much of Steinbeck's other work, Cannery Row is a funny and shrewd look at how the motley crew around the coastal port of Monterrey make ends meet. A charming read, full of joie de vivre.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</u></b> Robert Louis Stevenson</p> <p>Thriller / Classic 100 pages, 1886</p>	<p><i>In seeking to discover his inner self, the brilliant Dr Jekyll discovers a monster. First published to critical acclaim in 1886, this mesmerising thriller is a terrifying study of the duality of man's nature, and it is a book which still asks questions as drugs grow ever more powerful.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Dracula</u></b> Bram Stoker</p> <p>Horror / Classic 350 pages, 1897</p>	<p><i>Bram Stoker's tale of a desperate battle against a powerful, ancient vampire is still making waves more than a century later. Perhaps it is the mix of fascination and revulsion for the creature which has made it such a central modern myth. Read it and judge for yourself...</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Perfume</u></b> Patrick Suskind</p> <p>Thriller / Horror 250 pages, 1985</p>	<p><i>An acclaimed bestseller and international sensation, Patrick Suskind's classic novel provokes a terrifying examination of what happens when one man's indulgence in his greatest passion - his sense of smell - leads to murder. A wonderfully macabre novel.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Secret History</u></b> Donna Tartt</p> <p>Coming of Age / Thriller 650 pages, 1992</p>	<p><i>A group of clever, eccentric misfits at an elite American college discover a way of thinking and living that is a world away from the humdrum existence of their peers. But they soon go beyond all the rules and their lives are changed profoundly and for ever.</i></p>

	<p><b><u>The Lord of the Rings</u></b> J.R.R. Tolkien</p> <p>Fantasy 1200 pages, 1954</p>	<p><i>“Longwinded balderdash” was the verdict of one of his contemporaries on Tolkien’s epic tale of good against evil. Not many agree and the novel has become one of the most loved of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. An astounding achievement in every sense.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>Slaughterhouse 5</u></b> Kurt Vonnegut</p> <p>Sci Fi / Historical Classic 200 pages, 1969</p>	<p><i>Prisoner of war, optometrist, time-traveller - these are the life roles of Billy Pilgrim, hero of this miraculously moving, bitter and funny story of innocence faced with apocalypse. Slaughterhouse 5 is one of the world's great anti-war books and utterly unique in its approach.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Martian</u></b> Andy Weir</p> <p>Science Fiction 350 pages, 2014</p>	<p><i>An amazing story – and that’s just the one of how amateur author Andy Weir shot to fame and secured himself a Hollywood deal with the help of the science community. This fairly crunchy sci-fi tale gives great insights into how to survive on Mars as well as grow potatoes too!</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Day of the Triffids</u></b> J.R.R. Tolkien</p> <p>Science Fiction 250 pages, 1951</p>	<p><i>“Cosy catastrophe” was the best phrase that reviewers could come up with to describe Wyndham’s pioneering work in describing how mankind’s meddling in Nature might one day go awry. Here, the Triffids bring a genuine threat before their B-movie incarnations.</i></p>
	<p><b><u>The Shadow of the Wind</u></b> Carlos Luis Zafon</p> <p>Historical 550 pages, 2005</p>	<p><i>10-year-old Daniel discovers the novel ‘The Shadow of the Wind’ in the Cemetery of Forgotten Books: from that moment his life becomes entwined with and begins to follow a similar path to that of the book’s author Julian Carax. Spellbinding atmosphere, Spanish style.</i></p>