

Challenge Reading List

Reading for success at GCSE



Modern Novels

The Wasp Factory by Iain Banks
Cloud Atlas by David Mitchell
White Teeth by Zadie Smith
Birdsong by Sebastian Faulks
Asylum by Patrick McGrath
Captain Corelli's Mandolin by Louis de Bernieres
A History of the World in 10½ Chapters by Julian Barnes
The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy

Nineteenth Century Classics

Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoyevsky
The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson
Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
David Copperfield by Charles Dickens
Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë
Moby-Dick by Herman Melville
Middlemarch by George Eliot

A NOTE TO PARENTS AND READERS

These texts have been selected to challenge pupils who are already showing a high level of ability in English. Reading as many of these texts as possible will certainly help your son/daughter in their quest for the top grades in the subject. A wider depth and breadth of reading, and exposure to more complex vocabulary, forms and themes will benefit them not just in English but in all of their subjects. As you may expect from more difficult texts, some deal with adult themes. We feel that your son/daughter has the maturity to cope with these concepts but please do get in touch if you would like to query any of the content before they begin reading them.

Twentieth Century Classics

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad
The Stranger by Albert Camus
The Lord of the Rings by JRR Tolkien
Catch-22 by Joseph Heller
One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel García Márquez
The Catcher in the Rye by JD Salinger
Jazz by Toni Morrison
Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe
The Great Gatsby by F Scott Fitzgerald
The Big Sleep by Raymond Chandler
Brighton Rock by Graham Greene
Slaughterhouse Five by Kurt Vonnegut
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams
The Code of the Woosters by P G Wodehouse

Dystopia

The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood
1984 by George Orwell
A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess
The War of the Worlds by HG Wells
A Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
The Road by Cormac McCarthy
Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
High Rise by J G Ballard
The Iron Heel by Jack London

"The more you **read**
the more **things** you know.
The more that you **learn**
the more **places** you'll go."
-Dr. Seuss

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Year 9 Reading Recommendations



This reading list has been compiled to challenge and entertain you with a variety of fiction and non fiction books. You can give the books you have read a star rating. Reading Levels (RL) are out of 10 for challenge and based on the word count of the book.

Classics

	RL	Rating
• Little Women - Louisa May Alcott	7.5	☆☆☆☆☆
• Treasure Island - Robert Louis Stevenson	4.1	☆☆☆☆☆
• Black Beauty - Anna Sewell	7.7	☆☆☆☆☆

Adventure

	RL	Rating
• Looking for JJ - Anne Cassidy	4.9	☆☆☆☆☆
• The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn - Mark Twain	6.6	☆☆☆☆☆

Historical

	RL	Rating
• The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas - John Boyne	5.8	☆☆☆☆☆
• Pompeii - Robert Harris	6.7	☆☆☆☆☆
• Goodnight Mr Tom - Michelle Magorian	5.1	☆☆☆☆☆
• Captain Corelli's Mandolin - Louis de Bernieres	8.1	☆☆☆☆☆
• Buffalo Soldier - Tanya Landman	5.3	☆☆☆☆☆

Fantasy

	RL	Rating
• His Dark Materials - Northern Lights - Philip Pullman	6.0	☆☆☆☆☆
• Midwinterblood - Marcus Sedgwick	5.0	☆☆☆☆☆
• The Metamorphosis - Franz Kafka	10	☆☆☆☆☆
• Eragon - Christopher Paolini	5.6	☆☆☆☆☆

Detective/Crime/Spy

	RL	Rating
• Pigeon English - Stephen Kelman	3.7	☆☆☆☆☆
• The Ruby in the Smoke - Philip Pullman	5.3	☆☆☆☆☆

Sport

	RL	Rating
• Bend It Like Beckham - Narinder Dhani	4.4	☆☆☆☆☆

Magical Realism

- Life of Pi - Yann Martel
- The Red Necklace - Sally Gardner

RL

5.7

☆☆☆☆☆

5.8

☆☆☆☆☆

Gothic Horror

- My Swordhand is Singing - Marcus Sedgwick
- The Woman In Black - Susan Hill
- Close Your Pretty Eyes - Sally Nicholls

RL

4.9

☆☆☆☆☆

7.2

☆☆☆☆☆

4.5

☆☆☆☆☆

Humour

- The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole - Sue Townsend
- Dead Gorgeous - Malorie Blackman

RL

5.1

☆☆☆☆☆

4.3

☆☆☆☆☆

Realism

- How I live Now - Meg Rosoff
- Ketchup Clouds - Annabel Pitcher
- A Kestrel for a Knave - Barry Hines

RL

6.7

☆☆☆☆☆

5.0

☆☆☆☆☆

5.4

☆☆☆☆☆

Award Winners

- Ruby Holler - Sharon Creech
- In Darkness - Nick Lake
- All the Truth That's In Me - Julie Berry

RL

4.3

☆☆☆☆☆

5.6

☆☆☆☆☆

4.1

☆☆☆☆☆

The Big Read

- The Lovely Bones - Anna Sebold
- Tuck Everlasting - Natalie Babbitt
- The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian - Sherman Alexi
- The Book Thief - Marcus Zusak
- The Fault in our Stars - John Green
- Paper Towns - John Green

RL

6.0

☆☆☆☆☆

5.0

☆☆☆☆☆

4.0

☆☆☆☆☆

5.1

☆☆☆☆☆

5.5

☆☆☆☆☆

5.4

☆☆☆☆☆

Liked these book? Why don't you try a book by the same author or of the same genre.

Not interesting enough? Challenge yourself and try a harder book.

Year 8 Reading Recommendations



This reading list has been compiled to challenge and entertain you with a variety of fiction and non fiction books. You can give the books you have read a star rating. Reading Levels (RL) are out of 10 for challenge and based on the word count of the book.

Classics

- | | RL | Rating |
|---|-----|--------|
| • The Secret Garden - Frances Hodgson-Burnett | 3.6 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • Treasure Island - Robert Louis Stevenson | 4.1 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |

Historical

- | | RL | Rating |
|---|-----|--------|
| • The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas - John Boyne | 5.8 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • War Horse - Michael Morpurgo | 5.9 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • Goodnight Mr Tom - Michelle Magorian | 5.1 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • The Book Thief - Markus Zusak | 5.1 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |

Fantasy

- | | RL | Rating |
|---|-----|--------|
| • His Dark Materials - Northern Lights - Philip Pullman | 6.0 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • The Silver Sword - Ian Serrailier | 5.5 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • Skellig - David Almond | 3.5 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |

Challenge Yourself

- | | RL | Rating |
|---------------------------------------|------|--------|
| • Metamorphosis - Franz Kafka | 10.5 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • The Fault in our Stars - John Green | 5.5 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • To Kill a Mockingbird - Harper Lee | 5.6 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |

Detective/Crime/Spy

- | | RL | Rating |
|-----------------------------------|-----|--------|
| • Stormbreaker - Anthony Horowitz | 5.1 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • Nevermore - James Paterson | 5.1 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |

Humour

- | | RL | Rating |
|--|-----|--------|
| • The Demon Dentist - David Walliams | 4.8 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole - Sue Townsend | 5.1 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |
| • Diary of a Wimpy Kid - Jeff Kinney | 5.2 | ☆☆☆☆☆ |

Gothic/Horror

- My Swordhand is Singing - Marcus Sedgwick
- The Woman in Black - Susan Hill

RL

4.9

7.2

Rating



Mythical/Legends

- The Owl Service - Alan Garner
- Percy Jackson & The Lightning Thief - Rick Riordan

RL

3.7

3.1

Rating



Realism

- Wonder - RJ Palacio
- The Curious Incident of the Dog In the Night Time - Mark Haddon

RL

4.8

5.4

Rating



Dystopian

- Noughts & Crosses - Malorie Blackman
- Divergent - Veronica Roth

RL

4.0

4.8

Rating



Sport

- Divided We Fall - Alan Gibbons
- Keeper - Mal Peet

RL

3.8

5.1

Rating



Magical Realism

- Tom's Midnight Garden - Phillipa Pearce
- Across the Nightingale Floor - Lian Hearn

RL

6.1

5.9

Rating



Non Fiction

- I am Malala - Malala Yousafzai

RL

5.9

Rating



Award Winners

- Maggot Moon - Sally Gardner
- Bog Child - Siobhan Dowd
- The Bunker Diary - Kevin Brooks

RL

4.5

3.6

4.0

Rating



Liked these book? Why don't you try a book by the same author or of the same genre.

Not interesting enough? Challenge yourself and try a harder book.

Year 7 Reading Recommendations



This reading list has been compiled to challenge and entertain you with a variety of fiction and non fiction books. You can give the books you have read a star rating. Reading Levels (RL) are out of 10 for challenge and based on the word count of the book.

Classics

	RL	Rating
• Watership Down - Richard Adams	6.2	☆☆☆☆☆
• The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe - CS Lewis	5.7	☆☆☆☆☆
• The Secret Garden - Frances Hodgson-Burnett	3.6	☆☆☆☆☆
• Treasure Island - Robert Louis Stevenson	8.3	☆☆☆☆☆
• Black Beauty – Anna Sewell	7.7	☆☆☆☆☆

Adventure

	RL	Rating
• Kensuke's Kingdom - Michael Morpurgo	4.7	☆☆☆☆☆
• Lord of the Flies - William Golding	5.0	☆☆☆☆☆
• How to Train your Dragon – Cressida Cowell	6.7	☆☆☆☆☆

Award Winners

	RL	Rating
• Millions - Frank Cottrell Boyce	4.0	☆☆☆☆☆
• Flour Babies - Anne Fine	5.1	☆☆☆☆☆
• The Graveyard Book - Neil Gaiman	5.2	☆☆☆☆☆

Non Fiction

	RL	Rating
• The Diary of Anne Frank - Anne Frank	4.7	☆☆☆☆☆
• Swimming the Dream - Ellie Simmonds	5.7	☆☆☆☆☆

Fantasy /Sci-fi

	RL	Rating
• Matilda - Roald Dahl	5.0	☆☆☆☆☆
• Northern Lights - Philip Pullman	6.2	☆☆☆☆☆
• Harry Potter & the Philosopher's Stone		☆☆☆☆☆
• - JK Rowling	6.0	☆☆☆☆☆
• A Boy and a Bear in a Boat - Dave Shelton	5.0	☆☆☆☆☆

Detective/Crime/Spy

	RL	Rating
• The Hound of the Baskervilles - Arthur Conan Doyle	8.3	☆☆☆☆☆
• Murder on the Orient Express - Agatha Christie	6.2	☆☆☆☆☆
• Thief Lord - Cornelia Funke	4.8	☆☆☆☆☆

Sport

	RL	Rating
• Keeper - Mal Peet	5.1	☆☆☆☆☆
• The Kick Off - Dan Freedman	4.9	☆☆☆☆☆

Gothic/Horror/Ghost

	RL	Rating
• The Woman in Black - Susan Hill	7.2	☆☆☆☆☆
• Twilight - Stephanie Meyer	4.9	☆☆☆☆☆

Mythical/Legends

	RL	Rating
• The Owl Service - Alan Garner	3.7	☆☆☆☆☆
• King of the Middle March- Kevin Crossley	4.2	☆☆☆☆☆

Realism

	RL	Rating
• Wonder - RJ Palacio	4.8	☆☆☆☆☆
• Holes - Louis Sachar (pronounced 'sacker')	4.6	☆☆☆☆☆
• The Curious Incident of the Dog In the Night	5.5	
• Time - Mark Haddon	5.4	☆☆☆☆☆

Historical

	RL	Rating
• The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas - John Boyne	5.8	☆☆☆☆☆
• War Horse - Michael Morpurgo	5.9	☆☆☆☆☆
• Goodnight Mr Tom - Michelle Magorian	5.1	☆☆☆☆☆

Challenge Yourself

	RL	Rating
• Jane Eyre - Charlotte Brontë	7.9	☆☆☆☆☆
• The Knife of Never Letting Go - Patrick Ness	4.4	☆☆☆☆☆
• Skellig - David Almond	3.5	☆☆☆☆☆
• Looking for JJ - Anne Cassidy	4.9	☆☆☆☆☆

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