



Recommended Reading

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Please use this list in conjunction with our more regularly updated reading suggestions on the intranet.

The Classics: A Taster

Homer, *The Odyssey*

The epic tale of Odysseus and his ten-year journey home after the Trojan War forms one of the earliest and greatest works of Western literature. Confronted by natural and supernatural threats - shipwrecks, battles, monsters and the implacable enmity of the sea-god Poseidon - Odysseus must test his bravery and native cunning to the full if he is to reach his homeland safely and overcome the obstacles that, even there, await him.

Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*

As Pip unravels the truth behind his own 'great expectations' in his quest to become a gentleman, the mysteries of the past and the convolutions of fate through a series of thrilling adventures serve to steer him towards maturity and his most important discovery of all - the truth about himself.

Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

Elizabeth Bennet is the perfect Austen heroine: intelligent, generous, sensible, incapable of jealousy or any other major sin. That makes her sound like an insufferable goody-goody, but the truth is she's a completely hip character who, if provoked, is not above skewering her antagonist with a piece of her exceptionally sharp, yet *always* polite, 18th-century wit.

Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*

Jack London's tale of a dog's fight for survival in the harsh and frozen Yukon is one of the greatest animal stories ever written. It tells of a dog born to luxury but sold as a sledge dog, and how he rises magnificently above all his enemies to become one of the most feared and admired dogs in the North.

Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

When Huck escapes from his drunken father and the 'sivilizing' Widow Douglas with the runaway slave Jim, he embarks on a series of adventures that draw him to feuding families and the trickery of the unscrupulous 'Duke' and 'Dauphin'. Beneath the exploits, however, are more serious undercurrents - of slavery, adult control - which threaten his deep and enduring friendship with Jim.

Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women*

Set in a small New England community, it tells of the March family: Marmee looks after daughters in the absence of her husband, who is serving as an army chaplain in the Civil War, and Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy experience domestic trials and triumphs as they attempt to supplement the family's small income. In the second part of the novel the girls grow up and fall in love.

Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*

Anne Frank kept a diary from 1942 to 1944. Initially she wrote it strictly for herself. Then, one day in 1944, a member of the Dutch government in exile announced in a radio broadcast from London that after the war he hoped to collect eyewitness accounts of the suffering of the Dutch people under the German occupation, which could be made available to the public. Anne Frank decided that when the war was over, she would publish a book based on her diary. Anne's diary ends abruptly when she and her family were betrayed.

Harper Lee, *To Kill A Mockingbird*

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. 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 thirties.

- William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*
- A plane crashes on an uninhabited island and the only survivors, a group of schoolboys, assemble on the beach and wait to be rescued. By day they inhabit a land of bright fantastic birds and dark blue seas, but at night their dreams are haunted by the image of a terrifying beast.
- JD Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*
- Lazy in style, full of slang and swear words, it's a novel whose interest and appeal comes from its observations rather than its plot intrigues. Salinger's style creates an effect of conversation, it is as though Holden is speaking to you personally, as though you too have seen through the pretences of the American Dream.
- S.E. Hinton, *The Outsiders*
- Greasers, Rockers, different place, different name - but wherever they are, they're outsiders; the rough, tough, long-haired boys from the other side of town, with little hope of Mustangs, madras shirts and the good things of American life in the Sixties. Their story is told by Ponyboy, a greaser with good reason to rear the lucky boys in Mustangs, and a witness to the savage baiting that leads his best friend to manslaughter.

Real Teen Issues

- Melvin Burgess, *Junk*
- Tar and Gemma are in love. Tar has reasons for running away from home that run deep and sour, whereas Gemma, with her middle-class roots firmly on show, has a deep-rooted lust for adventure. Together they explore the dark world of the streets as, together, they explore the dark world of drugs, moving quickly on from bliss, to despair.
- Louis Sachar, *Holes*
- A complex story, riddled with the harsh imagery and barren despair, *Holes* is a perceptive and intricate homage to family and friendship which never shies away from the harshest of realities yet injects the story of a seemingly hopeless boy with a sly, sideways humour that crackles against the backdrop of the arid wastelands of the desert.
- Ed Hussain, *The Islamist*
- When I was sixteen I became an Islamic fundamentalist. Five years later, after much emotional turmoil, I rejected fundamentalist teachings and returned to normal life and my family. By describing my experiences inside these groups, the reasons I joined them and how, after leaving I recovered my faith and mind, I hope to explain the appeal of extremist thought, how fanatics penetrate Muslim communities and the truth behind their agenda of subverting the West and moderate Islam. This is the first time an ex-member openly discusses life within radical Islamic organisations. This is my story.
- Carl Hiassen, *Hoot*
- Roy Eberhardt has recently, and unhappily, arrived in Florida. Roy's family moves a lot so he's used to the new-kid drill - and to bullies like Dana Matherson. Anyway, it's because of Dana that Roy gets to see the mysterious running boy. Suddenly life in Florida is looking up.
- Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog In the Night-Time*
- Christopher is fifteen and has Asperger's, a form of autism. He knows a very great deal about maths and very little about human beings. He loves lists, patterns the truth; he hates the colours yellow and brown and being touched. When he finds a neighbour's dog murdered he sets out on a terrifying journey which will turn his whole world upside down.

Sue Monk Kidd, *The Secret Life of Bees*

Lily has grown up believing she accidentally killed her mother when she was four. Now fourteen, she yearns for her mother, and for forgiveness. When racial tension explodes one summer afternoon, and Rosaleen is arrested and beaten, Lily starts a journey as much about her understanding of the world, as about the mystery surrounding her mother.

Michael Lewis, *The Blindside*

The young man at the centre of this story will one day be among the most highly paid athletes in the National Football League. When introduced to the reader, he is one of thirteen children by a crack-addicted mother; he does not know his real name, his father, his birthday or any of the things a child might learn in school - such as how to read or write. Nor has he ever touched a football. He takes up American football and school, after a rich, Evangelical, Republican family plucks him from the mean streets. Their love is the first great force that alters the world's perception of the boy, whom they adopt. The second force is the evolution of professional American football into a game where the quarterback must be protected at any cost.

David Almond, *Skellig*

Michael can feel his sick baby sister's heart beating inside him, and as long as he can feel it he knows she is alive. But as her condition becomes life-threatening and the family faces the nightmare of an operation to save her life, Michael turns to his new friend Mina and the strange being, Skellig, who has been living beneath the crumbling garage at the family's new home.

Barbara Kingsolver, *The Bean Trees*

Plucky Taylor Greer grows up poor in rural Kentucky with two goals: to avoid pregnancy and to get away. She succeeds on both counts when she buys an old car and heads west. But midway across the country motherhood catches up with her when she becomes the guardian of an abandoned baby girl she calls Turtle.

Love, Family & Relationships

Julie Burchill, *Sugar Rush*

It's survival of the fittest at Ravensdene Comprehensive - the terrifying teenage jungle for which Kim Lewis must trade her safe, posh private school. But help is at hand in the unlikely form of the rude, toxic and tantalising Maria (aka Sugar) Sweet, queen of the 'Ravers'. As Kim falls quickly under her spell, she must ask herself a disturbing question: has she fallen in love with her best friend?

Jodi Picoult, *My Sister's Keeper*

The only reason Anna was born was to donate her cord blood cells to her older sister. By age thirteen, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots so that her sister, Kate, can somehow fight the leukaemia that has plagued her since she was a child. Now that she has reached an age of physical awareness, she can't help but long for control over her own body. And so she decides to sue her parents for the rights to her own body.

JD Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*

Franny Glass is a pretty, effervescent college student on a date with her intellectually confident boyfriend, Lane. They appear to be the perfect couple, but as they struggle to communicate with each other about the things they really care about, slowly their true feelings come to the surface.

- Michelle Magorian, *Back Home*
- WW2 has just ended and twelve-year-old Rusty comes back home to Britain after being evacuated to the US. The greyness and bleakness of life in England is a shock, but even worse is adapting to the strict discipline of her family. Rusty is sent to a horrific boarding school, before finally running away as her search for happiness becomes more and more desperate.
- Nickolas Evans, *The Smoke Jumper*
- The fire that was to change so many lives started with a single shaft of lightning that struck a mountain ridge on a still and moonless night. The woman who camped nearby with her group of troubled teenagers slept on and heard nothing. Until the deadly inferno engulfed the mountain, and into the flames leaped The Smoke Jumper. His name is Connor Ford and he braves the flames to save the woman he loves but cannot have.
- David J. Pelzer, *My Story – A Child called It, The Lost Boy, A Man Called Dave*
- With extraordinary generosity of spirit, Dave takes us on a journey into his past. At last he confronts his father and ultimately his mother. Finally, Dave finds the courage to break the chains of the past and learn to love, trust and live for the future.
- Alice Sebold, *The Almost Moon*
- Helen Knightly has spent a lifetime trying to win the love of a mother who had none to spare. And as this electrifying novel opens, she steps over a boundary she never dreamt she would even approach. But while her act is almost unconscious, it also seems like the fulfilment of a lifetime's buried desire. Over the next twenty-four hours, her life rushes in at her as she confronts the choices that have brought her to this crossroads.
- Ian McEwan, *A Child in Time*
- Stephen Lewis, a successful author of children's books, takes his 3-year-old daughter on a routine Saturday morning trip to the supermarket. While waiting in line, his attention is distracted and his daughter is kidnapped. Just like that. From there, Lewis spirals into bereavement that has effects on his relationship with his wife, his psyche and time itself.
- Jon Krakauer, *Into the Wild*
- By examining the true story of Chris McCandless, a young man, who in 1992 walked deep into the Alaskan wilderness and whose SOS note and emaciated corpse were found four months later, internationally bestselling author Jon Krakauer explores the obsession which leads some people to explore the outer limits of self, leave civilization behind and seek enlightenment through solitude and contact with nature.
- Malorie Blackman, *Naughts & Crosses*
- Sephy and Callum have been best friends since childhood, and now they are older and they realise they want more from each other. But the harsh realities of lives lived in a segregated society are beginning to take their toll: Callum is a nought--a second-class citizen in a world dominated by the Crosses--and Sephy is a Cross, and the daughter of one of the most powerful men in the country. The barriers they would have to cross to be together at first seem little more than minor obstacles to the two idealistic teenagers, but soon those barriers threaten not only their friendship but their lives.

Fantasy, Thrillers, Mystery and Detective Stories

JK Rowling, *Harry Potter Series*

Harry Potter is an ordinary boy who lives in a cupboard under the stairs at his Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon's house, which he thinks is normal for someone like him who's parents have been killed in a 'car crash'. He is bullied by them and his fat, spoilt cousin Dudley, and lives a very unremarkable life with only the odd hiccup to cause him much to think about. That is until an owl turns up with a letter addressed to Harry and all hell breaks loose!

Libba Bray, *The Gemma Doyle Trilogy*

It's 1895, and after the death of her mother, 16-year-old Gemma Doyle is shipped off from the life she knows in India to Spence, a proper boarding school in England. Lonely, guilt-ridden, and prone to visions of the future that have an uncomfortable habit of coming true, Gemma's reception there is a chilly one. To make things worse, she's being followed by a mysterious young Indian man, a man sent to watch her.

Phillip Pulman, *His Dark Materials*
(Series)

The extraordinary story moves between parallel universes. Beginning in Oxford, it takes Lyra and her animal-daemon Pantalaimon on a dangerous rescue mission to the ice kingdoms of the far north, where she begins to learn about the mysterious particles they call Dust - a substance for which a terrible war between different worlds will be fought.

Stephanie Meyer, *Twilight* (Series)

When 17 year old Isabella Swan moves to Forks, Washington to live with her father she expects that her new life will be as dull as the town. But in spite of her awkward manner and low expectations, she finds that her new classmates are drawn to this pale, dark-haired new girl in town. But not, it seems, the Cullen family. These five adopted brothers and sisters obviously prefer their own company and will make no exception for Bella. He, and his family, are vampires and he knows how dangerous it is for others to get too close.

Christopher Paolini, *The Inheritance Trilogy – Eragon, Eldest and Brisingr*

When Eragon finds a polished stone in the forest, he thinks it is a lucky discovery, but when the stone becomes a dragon hatchling, Eragon soon realizes he has stumbled upon a legacy nearly as old as the Empire itself. Overnight his simple life is shattered and he is thrust into a perilous new world of destiny, magic and power. Chaos and betrayal plague him at every turn, and as his cousin Roran fights a new battle back home in Carvahall, Eragon is put in even graver danger, bound by promises that he might not be able to keep.

Susan Cooper, *The Dark is Rising Sequence* (Series)

Barney, Jane and Simon discover an ancient map in Cornwall; the mysterious Merriman reveals his secret purpose; and Will Stanton realizes that he is not just an ordinary boy but has a far greater role in fulfilling his destiny. Creating a magical world where the everyday mingles with the supernatural, *The Dark is Rising Sequence* weaves a story of secret codes, strange prophecies, the legend of King Arthur and a centuries-old conflict between the power of good and the forces of evil.

Cornelia Funke, <i>The Inkheart Trilogy</i>	Although a year has passed, not a day goes by without Meggie thinking of the extraordinary events of Inkheart, and the story whose characters strode out of the pages, and changed her life for evr. But for Dustfinger, the fire-eater, torn from his world of words, the need to return has become desperate. When he finds a crooke storyteller with the magical ability to read him back, he setsn motion a dangerous reversal that sees the characters of Inkheart transported to a charmed Inkworld, about to be fought over by rival rebels and princes.
Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, <i>The Edge Chronicles</i> (Series)	Twig, on the verge of manhood at the age of 13, is told that the Woodtrolls who brought him up are not his real parents and that he must venture forth into the Deepwoods, keeping only to the path, to discover the truth about himself. Armed with just a few magical gifts from his adopted mother, Spelda, Twig steps off the path and tumbles into a terrifying other world where nothing and no-one can be trusted.
Rachel Caine, <i>The Morganville Vampire Series</i>	Claire has her share of challenges. Like being a genius in a school that favours beauty over brains; homicidal girls in her dorm, and finding out that her college town is overrun with the living dead. On the up side, she has a new boyfriend with a vampire-hunting dad. But when a local fraternity throws the Dead Girls' Dance, hell is really going to break loose.
Agatha Christie, <i>The 4.50 from Paddington</i>	For an instant the two trains ran together, side by side. In that frozen moment, Elspeth witnessed a murder. Helplessly, she stared out of her carriage window as a man remorselessly tightened his grip around a woman's throat. The body crumpled. Then the other train drew away.
Alice Sebold, <i>The Lovely Bones</i>	On her way home from school on a snowy December day, 14-year-old Susie Salmon is lured into a cornfield and brutally raped and murdered, the latest victim of a serial killer. Susie narrates and keeps watch over her grieving family and friends, as well as her brazen killer and the sad detective working on her case.
Dan Brown, <i>Angels and Demons</i>	Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon is shocked to find proof that the legendary secret society, the Illuminati is alive, well, and murderously active. Brilliant physicist Leonardo Vetra has been murdered, his eyes plucked out and the society's ancient symbol branded upon his chest. Langdon and Vittoria, Vetra's daughter and colleague, embark on a frantic hunt through the streets, churches and catacombs of Rome, following a 400-year-old trail to the lair of the Illuminati, to prevent the incineration of civilisation.
Dan Brown, <i>The Da Vinci Code</i>	A murder in the silent after-hours halls of the Louvre museum reveals a sinister plot to uncover a secret that has been protected by a clandestine society since the days of Christ. The victim is a high-ranking agent of this ancient society who, in the moments before his death, manages to leave gruesome clues at the scene that only his granddaughter, noted cryptographer Sophie Neveu, and Robert Langdon, a famed symbologist, can untangle.
Sebastian Faulks, <i>Devil May Care</i>	Bond is back. With a vengeance. M has summoned agent 007 to London. It's the swinging Sixties and a flood of narcotics is pouring into Britain. Sinister industrialist Dr Julius Gerner is identified as the source and James Bond is dispatched to investigate. The trail takes Bond to Paris and then Persia– where the beautiful and enigmatic twins Scarlett and Poppy lead him to Gerner's secret desert headquarters.

Conrad Jones, <i>Soft Target</i>	Soft Target is the first book in a series of thrillers that follow the hunt for a nefarious killer. The book begins in famous US tourist destinations where suicide bombers cause carnage, before attacking the United Kingdom.
Arthur Conan Doyle, <i>The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes</i>	Out of his smoke-filled rooms in Baker Street stalks a figure to cause the criminal classes to quake in their boots and rush from their dens of inequity ... The twelve mysteries gathered in this first collection of Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson's adventures reveal the brilliant consulting detective at the height of his powers. Problems involving a man with a twisted lip, a fabulous blue carbuncle and five orange pips tax Sherlock Holmes' intellect alongside some of his most famous cases, including A Scandal in Bohemia and The Red-Headed League.
Susan Hill, <i>The Simon Serrailer Series</i>	The series opens with a woman vanishing in the fog up on 'the Hill', an area locally known for its tranquillity and peace. Young policewoman Freya Graffham is assigned to the case, she's new to the job, compassionate, inquisitive, dedicated and needs to know - perhaps too much. She and the enigmatic detective Chief Inspector Simon Serrailer have the task of unravelling the mystery behind this gruesome sequence of events. From the passages revealing the killer's mind to the final heart-stopping twist, <i>The Various Haunts of Men</i> is an astounding and masterly crime debut and is the first in a magnificent series featuring Simon Serrailer.
Anthony Horowitz, <i>The Power of Five</i> (Series)	Evil has been unleashed on the world and only five children with special powers can save it. Matt and the other three desperately need to find Scar, the final gatekeeper, who has been trapped in Hong Kong, where puddles of water turn into puddles of blood, where ghosts, demons and hideous creatures stalk the streets. Matt has no choice but to follow her. Now, both imprisoned, their only hope of survival is to reach a secret door in the Man Ho temple.
Anthony Horowitz, <i>The Alex Rider Series</i>	When his guardian dies in suspicious circumstances, fourteen-year-old Alex Rider finds his world turned upside down. Forcibly recruited into MI6, Alex has to take part in gruelling SAS training exercises. Then, armed with his own special set of secret gadgets, he's off on his first mission to Cornwall, where Middle-Eastern multi-billionaire Herod Sayle is producing his state-of-the-art Stormbreaker computers. Sayle has offered to give one free to every school in the country - but there's more to the gift than meets the eye.
Sergei Lukyanenko, <i>The Twilight Watch</i>	Walking the streets of Moscow, indistinguishable from the rest of its population, are the Others. Possessors of supernatural powers and capable of entering the Twilight, a shadowy world that exists in parallel to our own, each owes allegiance either to the Dark or the Light. Night Watch Agent Anton Gorodetsky's holiday is abruptly shortened when an urgent call from Gesar – his boss and Night Watch head – forces him to return to work.

Ghosts and The Supernatural

Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw*

A young, inexperienced governess is charged with the care of Miles and Flora, two small children abandoned by their uncles at his grand country house. She sees the figure of an unknown man on the tower and his face at the window. It is Peter Quint, the master's dissolute valet, and he has come for little Miles. But Peter Quint is dead.

Anthony Horowitz, *Horowitz Horror – Nine Nasty Stories to Chill You to the Bone* and *More Horowitz Horror – Eight Sinister Stories You'll Wish You'd Never Read*

It's a world where everything seems pretty normal. But the weird, the sinister and the truly terrifying are lurking just out of sight. Like an ordinary-looking camera with evil powers, a bus ride home that turns into your worst nightmare, and a mysterious computer game that nobody would play...if they knew the rules! Each story has a shocking sting in its tale...

M.R. James, *Selected Ghost Stories*

James is probably the finest ghost-story writer England has ever produced. These tales are not only classics of their genre, but are also superb examples of beautifully-paced understatement, convincing background and chilling terror.

Susan Hill, *The Woman in Black*

Proud and solitary, Eel Marsh House surveys the windswept reaches of the salt marshes beyond Nine Lives Causeway. Arthur Kipps, a junior solicitor, is summoned to attend the funeral Mrs Alice Drablow, the house's sole inhabitant, unaware of the tragic secrets which lie hidden behind the shuttered windows. It is not until he glimpses a wasted young woman, dressed all in black that a creeping sense of unease begins to take hold...

Cliff McNish, *Breathe – A Ghost Story*

Jack has always had an affinity with the supernatural, people who lived long ago and whose spirits remain in this world. Following his father's death, he and his mother move to an isolated house. Instantly, Jack senses the presence of the previous owner. But he is soon aware of other spirits reaching out to claim him. Jack's encounter with ghosts leads him to the terrifying Nightmare Passage - a kind of purgatory to which spirits are violently, viciously condemned.

Humour

Evelyn Waugh, *The Loved One*

The more startling for the economy of its prose and plot, this novel's story, set among the manicured lawns and euphemisms of Whispering Glades Memorial Park in Hollywood, satirizes the American way of death and offers Waugh's memento mori.

Sue Townsend, *Secret Diary of Adrian Mole aged 13 and ¾*

At thirteen years old, Adrian Mole has more than his fair share of problems - spots, ill-health, parents threatening to divorce, rejection of his poetry and much more - all recorded with brilliant humour in his diary.

Douglas Adams, *Life and the Universe and Everything*

After a series of events which have involved Arthur Dent being alternately blown up and insulted in more bizarre regions of the Galaxy that he has ever dreamt existed, he finds himself stranded on Prehistoric Earth. Luckily an amazing rescue by Ford Prefect and a time eddy, cleverly disguised as a sofa, lands them in the middle of Lords two days before the world is due to end.

Historical Fiction

Maggie Price, *Raider's Tide*

The year is 1578 and Queen Elizabeth 1 is on the throne. Sixteen year old Beatie, the daughter of a North Country farmer is defying her family over the matter of her proposed marriage to her cousin Hugh. She is too busy being the elder daughter and watching over her family -- overseeing the kitchen work; riding her horse, Saint Hilda, and most importantly keeping a watchful eye out for the first sign of marauding Scots from over the border.

Nerys Ann Jones, *Godiva*

Britain, 1045. Earl Lovric of Mercia and his powerful wife, Godiva - two of the most powerful of his Anglo-Saxon vassals are inevitably drawn into the machinations at Court. When Edward manipulates their son into a treasonable act and makes him a pawn in his power play, Godiva's maternal instincts rise to the fore. Intrigue and powerplay undermine her own trust in her husband . . . and the stage is set for one of the most powerful mythological stories of British history.

Robert Harris, *Conspirata – A Novel of Ancient Rome*

This Rome-set narrative deals with the years around 63BC when Cicero was Consul of Rome, building to the unstoppable accession to power of the canny and ruthless Caesar. Rome, in the process of consolidating its massive empire, resounds to the sounds of a no-holds-barred struggle for influence. The protagonists here are the canny consul Cicero, the equally Machiavellian Caesar, the Republic's eminent general Pompey and the hyper-rich Crassus. The trial and execution that follows plunges the city of Rome into a ferment as destabilising as anything it has faced.

Hilary Mantel, *Wolf Hall*

England, the 1520s. Henry VIII is on the throne, but has no heir. Cardinal Wolsey is his chief advisor, charged with securing the divorce the pope refuses to grant. Into this atmosphere of distrust and need comes Thomas Cromwell, first as Wolsey's clerk, and later his successor. Cromwell is a wholly original man: the son of a brutal

blacksmith, a political genius, a briber, a charmer, a bully, a man with a delicate and deadly expertise in manipulating people and events. Ruthless in pursuit of his own interests, he is as ambitious in his wider politics as he is for himself. His reforming agenda is carried out in the grip of a self-interested parliament and a king who fluctuates between romantic passions and murderous rages.

Conn Iggulden, *Bones of the Hill*

A boy was abandoned in the wilderness by his tribe -- but he did not die. This luckless boy has grown into one of the most feared and powerful figures in history, Genghis Khan. He has persuaded the tribes that had been tearing each other to pieces to ignore their differences and unite under his leadership to battle their oldest enemies. Under his ruthless leadership, a mighty nation has been forged. But this is only the beginning of his struggles. Soon, the Mongolian army is stretched to the furthest corners of Khan's realm, and destruction looms.

Tanya Landman, *Aztec: The Goldsmith's Daughter*

Siki is an orphan of the Black Mountain Apache. Her mother was killed by Mexicans three years ago and her father lost in an ambush the winter before that. When Siki witnesses the brutal murder of her little brother Tazhi, she vows to become an Apache warrior and avenge her brother's death.

Amitav Ghosh, *Sea of Poppies*

At the heart of this epic saga, set just before the Opium Wars, is an old slaving-ship, *The Ibis*. Its destiny is a tumultuous voyage across the Indian Ocean, its crew a motley array of sailors and stowaways, coolies and convicts. In a time of colonial upheaval, fate has thrown together a truly diverse cast of Indians and Westerners. As their old family ties are washed away they, like their historical counterparts, come to view themselves as jahaj-bhais or ship-brothers.

John Wilcox, *The Road to Kandahar*

The year is 1879, and Captain Simon Fonthill is ready for another challenge. Having survived the Zulu onslaught at Rorke's Drift, he is sent to the North-West Frontier - India's border with Afghanistan - and charged with a dangerous mission. Fonthill must infiltrate the warlike Pathan tribes and pass vital intelligence back to the British camp. He swiftly discovers a plot to massacre the regiments, but when his cover is blown, Fonthill steels himself for the harrowing consequences...

Science Fiction

Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game* (Series)

Set in Earth's future, the novel presents an imperiled humankind who have barely survived two conflicts with an insectoid alien race also known as the "Buggers". The world's most talented children are taken at a very young age to a training center known as the Battle School. There, teachers train them in the arts of war through increasingly difficult games including ones undertaken in zero gravity in the Battle Room where Ender's tactical genius is revealed.

Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*

Guy Montag is a book-burning fireman undergoing a crisis of faith. His wife spends all day with her television "family", imploring Montag to work harder so that they can afford a fourth TV wall. Their dull, empty life sharply contrasts with that of his next-door neighbour Clarisse, a young girl thrilled by the ideas in books. After fleeing to avoid arrest, Montag winds up joining an outlaw band of scholars who

keep the contents of books in their heads, waiting for the time society will once again need the wisdom of literature.

Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles*

The first men were few. Most succumbed to a disease they called the Great Loneliness when they saw their home planet dwindle to the size of a pin dot. Those few that survived found no welcome. The shape-changing Martians thought they were native lunatics and duly locked them up. More rockets arrived from Earth, piercing the hallucinations projected by the Martians. People brought their old prejudices with them -- and their desires and fantasies, tainted dreams.

Michael Crichton, *Timeline*

An old man wearing a brown robe is found wandering disoriented in the Arizona desert. He is miles from any human habitation and has no memory of how he got to be there, or who he is. The only clue to his identity is the plan of a medieval monastery in his pocket. So begins the mystery of *Timeline*, a mystery that will catapult a group of young scientists back to the Middle Ages and into the heart of the Hundred Years' War.

War and Conflict

Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*

A sequence of stories about the Vietnam War, this book also has the unity of a novel, with recurring characters and interwoven strands of plot and theme. It aims to summarize America's involvement in Vietnam, and her coming to terms with that experience in the years that followed.

Olga Levy Druker, *Kindertransport* (Non-Fiction)

When Eva's parents fail to escape Germany, the child changes her name and begins the process of denial of her roots. It is only when her own daughter discovers some letters in their attic that Eva is forced to confront the truth about the past. This new edition contains several personal memoirs by children whose lives were saved by the *Kindertransport*.

Andy McNab, *Bravo Two Zero* (non-fiction)

In January 1991, eight members of the SAS regiment embarked upon a top secret mission that was to infiltrate them deep behind enemy lines. Under the command of Sergeant Andy McNab, they were to sever the underground communication link between Baghdad and north-west Iraq, and to seek and destroy mobile Scud launchers. Their call sign: BRAVO TWO ZERO.

Irene Nemirovsky, *Suite Française*

In June 1940 France fell to the Nazis. In *Suite Française* Nemirovsky conjures up a vivid cast of wonderful characters who find themselves thrown together in ways they never expected. Amidst the mess of defeat, and all the hypocrisy and compromise, there is hope. True nobility and love exist, but often in surprising places.

John Boyne, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*

Nine-year-old Bruno knows nothing of the Final Solution and the Holocaust. He is oblivious to the appalling cruelties being inflicted on the people of Europe by his country. All he knows is that he has been moved from a comfortable home in Berlin to a house in a desolate area where there is nothing to do and no one to play with. Until he meets Shmuel, a boy who lives a strange parallel existence on the other side of the adjoining wire fence.

- Michelle Magorian, *Goodnight Mr Tom*
 Young Willie Beech is evacuated to the country as Britain stands on the brink of WW2. A sad, deprived child, he slowly begins to flourish under the care of old Tom Oakley - but his new-found happiness is shattered by a summons from his mother back in London.
- Sebastian Faulks, *Birdsong*
 Set before and during the great war, *Birdsong* captures the drama of that era on both a national and a personal scale. It is the story of Stephen, a young Englishman, who arrives in Amiens in 1910. His life goes through a series of traumatic experiences, from the clandestine love affair that tears apart the family with whom he lives, to the unprecedented experiences of the war itself.
- Meg Rosoff, *How I Live Now*
 Rosoff's story begins in modern day London, slightly in the future, and as its heroine has a 15-year-old Manhattanite called Daisy. She's picked up at the airport by Edmond, her English cousin, a boy in whose life she is destined to become intricately entwined. But their world changes forever when an unnamed aggressor invades England and begins a years-long occupation.
- Patrick Bury, *Callsign Hades*
 In summer 2006 Helmand Province erupted into violence as NATO forces struggled to crush Taliban strongholds. For six weeks the Royal Irish Regiment and the Paras defended Sangin in the face of ever-mounting attacks. At this point young officer Patrick Bury was learning the trade of the infantry in the Brecon Beacons. Paddy had always wanted to be a soldier. When he arrived in Afghanistan with 1st Royal Irish, he was surrounded by men oozing bloody combat experience. This was not Sandhurst. It was extreme violence and killing.
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun*
 Set in Nigeria during the 1960s, at the time of a vicious civil war in which a million people died and thousands were massacred in cold blood. The three main characters in the novel are swept up in the violence during these turbulent years. As these people's lives intersect, they have to question their own responses to the unfolding political events. This extraordinary novel is about Africa in a wider sense: about moral responsibility, about the end of colonialism, about ethnic allegiances, about class and race; and about the ways in which love can complicate all of these things.

Writing from Around The World

- Mende Nazer, *Slave* (Non-Fiction)
 Mende Nazer's happy childhood was cruelly cut short at the age of twelve when the Mujahidin rode into her village in the remote Nuba mountains of Sudan. She was taken and sold to an Arab woman in Khartoum. She was stripped of her name and her freedom. *Slave* is a shocking first-person insight into the modern day slave trade. It is also a fascinating memoir of an African childhood and a moving testimony to a young girl's indomitable spirit in the face of adversity.
- Khaled Hosseini, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*
 Mariam is only fifteen when she is sent to Kabul to marry Rasheed. Nearly two decades later, a friendship grows between Mariam and a local teenager, Laila, as strong as the ties between mother and daughter. When the Taliban take over, life becomes a desperate struggle against starvation, brutality and fear. Yet love can move a person to act in unexpected ways.

Khaled Hossieni, <i>The Kite Runner</i>	Amir, a 40-year-old novelist living in California, tells the story of a boyhood friendship destroyed by jealousy, fear, and the kind of ruthless evil that transcends mere politics. Running parallel to this personal narrative of loss and redemption is the story of modern Afghanistan and of Amir's relationship with city of his birth.
Slavomir Rawicz, <i>The Long Walk: The True Story of a Trek to Freedom</i> (non-fiction)	One of the world's greatest stories of adventure, survival and escape. Slavomir Rawicz was a young Polish cavalry officer. He was arrested by the Russians, sentenced to 25 years hard labour in the Gulags, for spying, escaped with six companions, crossed the trans-Siberian railway and headed south, climbing into Tibet and, finally, freedom nine months later in March 1942.
Matt Roper, <i>Street Girls: Hope on the Streets of Brazil</i>	Street Girls tells the story of Matt Roper, a young Englishman working to help children living rough on the streets of one of Brazil's major cities.
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>	The limits of fifteen-year-old Kambili's world are defined by the high walls of her family estate and the dictates of her repressive and fanatically religious father. Her life is regulated by schedules: prayer, sleep, study, and more prayer. When Nigeria begins to fall apart during a military coup, Kambili's father, involved mysteriously in the political crisis, sends Kambili and her brother away to live with their aunt. In this house, full of energy and laughter, she discovers life and love -- and a terrible, bruising secret deep within her family.
Amy Tan, <i>The Bonesetter's Daughter</i>	Set in San Francisco, Ruth and her mother LuLing exercise a frosty commitment to each other. When her mother begins to show signs of Alzheimer's, and her talk of bad luck and curses becomes more jumbled, Ruth realises that her encroaching dependency will change her life. She questions how she will care for a parent who she mostly resented throughout her childhood. The illness finally prompts Ruth to get her mother's autobiography translated and the central section of the book becomes LuLing's story of her mother, the bonesetter's daughter.
Kuki Gallmann, <i>I Dreamed of Africa</i>	Often, at the hour of day when the savannah grass is streaked with silver, and pale gold rims the silhouettes of the hills, I drive with my dogs up to the Mukutan, to watch the sun setting behind the lake, and the evening shadows settle over the valleys and plains of the Laikipia plateau; Kuki Gallmann's haunting memoir of bringing up a family in Kenya in the 1970s first with her husband Paulo, and then alone, is part elegaic celebration, part tragedy, and part love letter to the magical spirit of Africa.
Deborah Ellis, <i>The Breadwinner</i>	Narvana's father is arrested and taken away by the Taliban soldiers. Under Taliban law, women and girls are not allowed to leave the house on their own. Parvana, her mother, and sisters must stay inside. Four days later, the food runs out. They face starvation. So Parvana must pretend to be a boy to save her family. It is a dangerous plan, but their only chance. In fear she goes out - and witnesses the horror of landmines, and the brutality of the Taliban. She suffers beatings and the desperation of trying to survive. But even in despair lies hope.
Carlos Ruiz Zafon, <i>The Shadow of the Wind</i>	Hidden in the heart of the old city of Barcelona is the 'cemetery of lost books', a labyrinthine library of obscure and forgotten titles that have long gone out of print. To this library, a man brings his 10-year-old son Daniel one cold morning in 1945. Daniel is allowed to choose one book from the shelves and pulls out 'La Sombra del Viento' by Julian

Carax. But as he grows up, several people seem inordinately interested in his find. What begins as a case of literary curiosity turns into a race to find out the truth behind the life and death of Julian Carax and to save those he left behind.

Poetry

William Blake, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*

Blake's *Songs of Innocence* are products of this innocent imagination untainted by worldliness, while the *Songs of Experience* resulted from his feelings of indignation and pity for the sufferings of mankind.

Carol Ann Duffy, *New and Collected Poems for Children*

This stellar edition of her poems brings together work from her four award-winning collections for children, and sprinkles in a generous helping of new poems to match. From her dazzlingly debut *Meeting Midnight* through to her newest, brightest poems, Carol Ann Duffy's writing for younger readers has always bubbled with wit and humour, intelligence and affection.

Ted Hughes, *A March Calf*

From the trembling new-born calf in *Season Songs* to the gently sleeping one recorded in *Moortown Diary*, animal life as observed in the pages of *Flowers and Insects*, *Elmet*, *River*, *Lupercal* and *Hawk in the Rain* is seen afresh through the diversity and imaginative energy of this collected volume.

Billy Collins (ed.), *Poetry 180*

A collection of 180 poems by the most exciting poets at work today, *Poetry 180* represents the richness and diversity of the form, and is designed to beckon readers with a selection of poems that are impossible not to love at first glance.

Biography

Francis Elliott and James Hanning, *Cameron: Practically a Conservative*

David Cameron is the first Conservative Prime Minister in a generation, and also the first leader of a coalition government for eighty years. But what is the reality behind his brand of repackaged Conservatism? And who is Cameron the man? This independent biography explores the Prime Minister's rise from an idyllic, privileged childhood, to the heart of government by the age of 25, to leader of the country

Andrew Yule, *Sean Connery: Neither Shaken, Nor Stirred*

From milkman and coffin-polisher to one of the biggest box-office names there is, Sean Connery is one of Hollywood's and Britain's all time greats. In nearly eighty films, plus stage performances from Shakespeare to *South Pacific*, Sean Connery made only seven performances as James Bond. In this definitive biography, Andrew Yule reveals the early hopes and failures, both personal and professional, and looks at the little-known life behind the cameras.

Tony Blair, *The Journey*

In 1997, Tony Blair won the biggest Labour victory in history to sweep the party to power and end eighteen years of Conservative government. He has been one of the most dynamic leaders of modern times; few British prime ministers have shaped the nation's course as profoundly as Blair during his ten years in power, and his achievements and his legacy will be debated for years to come.

Barrack Obama, *Dreams of my Father*

The son of a black African father and a white American mother, Obama was only two years old when his father walked out on the family. Many years later, Obama receives a phone call from Nairobi: his father is dead. This sudden news inspires an emotional odyssey for Obama, determined to learn the truth of his father's life and reconcile his divided inheritance.

John McCain and Mark Slater, *Faith of My Fathers*

In this memoir, John McCain, the son of two US admirals, describes the search for meaning in his life as a soldier who fought in the Vietnam war. He describes with candour the life of a career in the US navy and how his daredevil attitude to life was shaped by his incarceration as a PoW in Vietnam. 'In prison I fell in love with my country. Freedom is America's honour, and all honour comes with obligations'.