

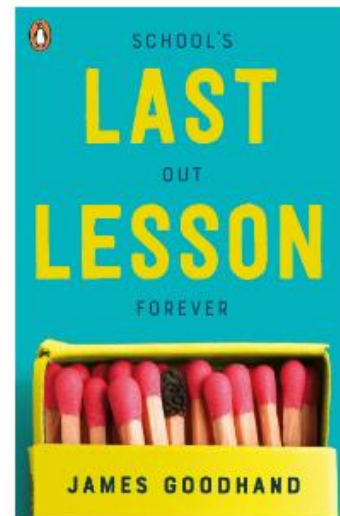
St Martin's School

Year 11 Reading List

Last Lesson by James Goodhand

After a life-changing incident, Ollie Morcombe's life spirals from being a star pupil to a prime target for the school bullies. He's had enough and wants revenge. So when it comes to the end of the school year, Ollie decides to go out with a bang. This unforgettable novel explores teenage mental health, toxic masculinity and bullying. It's a gripping portrait of a vulnerable young man on the brink. 'Last Lesson' is ideal to discuss in book clubs and read as part of a school 'Prevent' strategy.

Thriller



I Loved You In Another Life by David Arnold

Evan Taft and Shosh Bell, both grappling with personal hardships, are drawn together by a mysterious singer's voice in this poignant love story that transcends time and space. As their connection deepens, the novel explores themes of love, loss, and destiny. David Arnold's lucid prose, convincing characters and unique plotting make I Loved You In Another Life a memorable read. [Read our full review.](#)

Love story



You Think You Know Me by Ayaan Mohamud

17-year-old Hanan Ali's world changes in an instant when a dark and pervasive sense of fear, racism and prejudice leads some to blame Muslims for the murder of a local man. A high achiever working towards a career in medicine, Hanan is a model student. But how can she stay silent in the face of growing race hatred, family tension and injustice? Exploring the lives of teenage inner city refugees, gang life and Islamophobia, You Think You Know Me tempers a visceral urban storyline with richly realised vignettes of Somali tradition, culture and the healing powers of family and community. [Read our full review.](#)

Racism



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Year 11 Reading List

The Loop by Ben Oliver

Luka Kane is falsely accused of a crime and faces a grim fate in The Loop, a brutal and hi-tech juvenile prison. In this page-turning dark dystopia, he battles to survive and uses the prison's sinister secrets to spark a daring rebellion against a society dominated by surveillance and control. Ideal for sparking debate in book clubs.

Thriller | Dystopia



Six of Crows by Leigh Bardugo

Criminal prodigy Kaz Brekker leads a group of young criminals on a daring heist to breach an impenetrable fortress in this engrossing tale of resilience and cunning. A dark and gritty adventure with anti-heroes, witches, and gang wars; Six of Crows is an epic tale of heists, justice and redemption. Highly recommended, this is the first in a popular fantasy series.

Fantasy | Romance | Series



Last One To Die by Cynthia Murphy

16-year-old Niamh arrives in London, looking forward to summer in the city. But she soon finds out there's been a series of attacks on young women who all look just like her. Caught between drama school and her new friend Tommy, she gets entangled in a chilling mystery with ties to the past. A blend of horror, suspense, and a dash of local mythology, 'Last One To Die' will keep teen readers guessing until the final page.

Horror | Ghost story



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Year 11 Reading List

They Both Die at the End by Adam Silvera

Imagine a world where people expect to receive a call from 'Death Cast' on the day they will die. This story follows Mateo and Rufus – two strangers – who connect through 'Last Friend', an app designed for those facing their final hours. Their poignant journey explores love, friendship, and making the most of life's fleeting moments. It's a thought-provoking novel to discuss in book clubs.

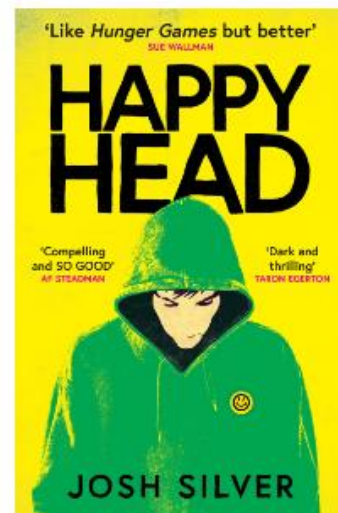
Heartbreaking love story



HappyHead by Josh Silver

Seb just wants to make his parents proud. So he agrees to join a program that claims to help solve the 'national crisis of teenage unhappiness'. However, as he grows closer to the mysterious Finn, Seb realises organisers of the 'HappyHead' retreat might have sinister motives. Can he escape before it's too late? HappyHead is a convincing dystopia that turns the notion of happiness upside-down and might cause teens to question what society has decided is good for them. Highly recommended.

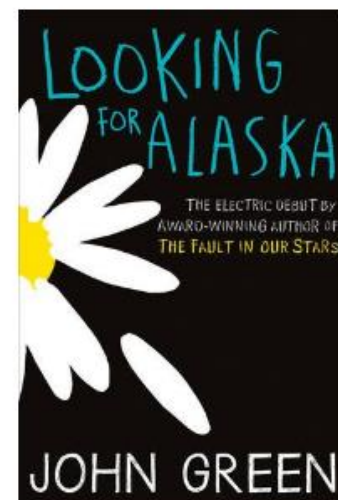
Mental health | Dystopia



Looking for Alaska by John Green

Teenager Miles' life is turned on its head when he meets Alaska and her world of risk and demanding friendship.

Adventure | Romance



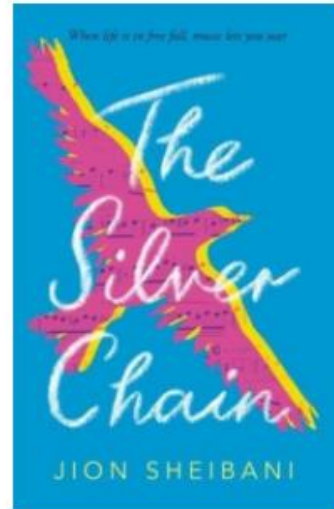
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Year 11 Reading List

The Silver Chain by Jion Sheibani

16-year-old Azadeh seeks solace in her violin playing as she navigates a transition dealing with a new school, friendship difficulties and trouble at home. Compelling and intimate – The Silver Chain is a peek into random corners of her private world, with joyful humour, and bursts of raw candour. The variety of poetry and radiant graphic presentation makes this a wonderful book to become disorientated by. Highly recommended for KS4 – if the poem 'Keys' doesn't intrigue your year 11 students, perhaps no poetry ever will. [Read our full review.](#)

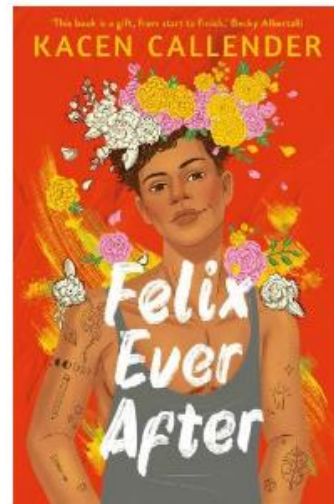
Verse novel



Felix Ever After by Kacen Callender

Teen Felix Love allows us an unfiltered peek into his world of angst, romantic longing and bullying as he reaches a realisation that he might never find the love that he craves. With complex themes of transphobia, racism, destructive relationships and self-discovery, this modern coming-of-age novel is perfect for book club discussions with Y11-13 students. Not only is this a sharply framed and beautifully written contemporary teen novel, but it's one that may well become a period benchmark for future generations.

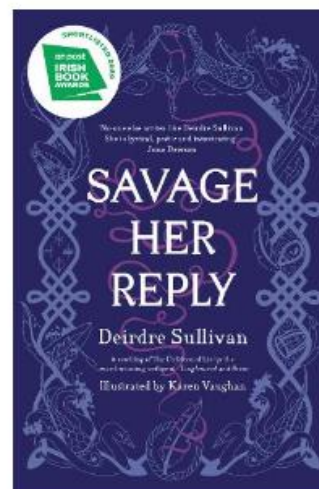
LGBT



Savage Her Reply by Deirdre Sullivan

Told in uniquely magnetic and flowing prose, this novel is a modern interpretation of The Children of Lir – a dark Irish folk tale where the King's children are turned into swans by a jealous witch. Unexpectedly told from the point of view of the witch, this groundbreaking book explores her thoughts and desires in a compelling journey that will given older teens pause for thought.

Fairy tale



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Year 11 Reading List

When Shadows Fall by Sita Brahmachari

Told using a fresh blend of an edgy first-person recount and contemplative narrative verse, this YA novel explores the lives of Kai, Orla and Zak, and all the complicated connections, ties, dreams and difficulties that bind them. When Kai's life is turned upside down, will his friends be enough to get him back on track? A bracingly frank story that will spark vigorous debate in KS4 classrooms.

Verse novel | Mental health



The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin

When Samuel Westing dies, 16 people are invited to the reading of his will of millions – 16 people no one would ever expect. Has Westing created a game to control from beyond the grave?

Classic



The Time Machine by H.G Wells

A timeless classic of science fiction and adventure. A short novel that explores man's impact on the world and the pointlessness of war.

Science fiction | Classic



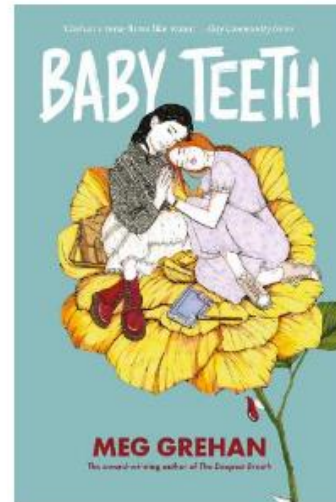
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Year 11 Reading List

Baby Teeth by Meg Grehan

This quite unique novel tangles the reader in a web of narrative verse that acts as both an intimate confidante and a surprising mirror into the mind of a vampire. Think of the disorientation of *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird*, the complex bond of *Let The Right One In* and the honesty of *Solitaire*. There's queerness, defamiliarisation, surprise and fangst in this accessible and compelling text that will provoke and appeal to students in KS4.

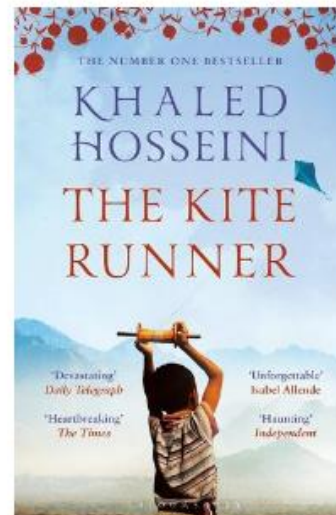
Fantasy | Romance



The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

A highly anticipated and competitive local kite championship attracts Amir and Hassan, who are keen to win. Set in Afghanistan in 1975, this novel hinges on one event afterwards which will change Hassan's life forever, and one which years later he seeks to put right.

Historical fiction



Game of Thrones by George R.R. Martin

A fantasy epic spanning generations of warring families, factions and political intrigue. Turned into a highly-rated TV franchise, the plots, escapes and some very nasty character endings made this a bestselling series.

Fantasy | Adventure



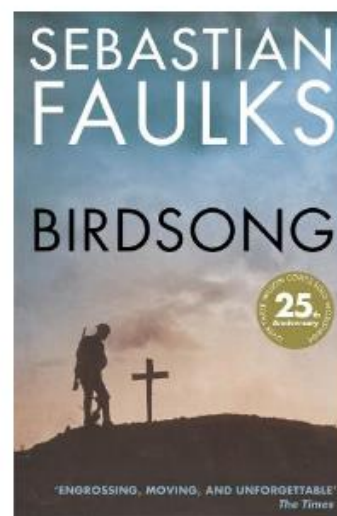
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Year 11 Reading List

Birdsong by Sebastian Faulkes

Stephen moves to live with a family in northern France and soon falls in love. But as tensions rise in the build-up to the first world war, so do tensions in his relationship. Although he escapes fighting for his country, he does not realise what awaits him.

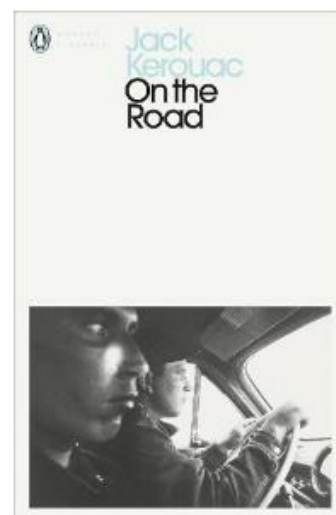
Historical fiction



On the Road by Jack Kerouac

Sal Paradise sets off on an American dream road trip with Dean Moriarty without either truly knowing what they are looking for. With risk-taking, limit-pushing and thrill-seeking at every turn, the pair's story is told in a gripping autobiographical style. The defining novel of the 'beat generation.'

Classic



The Three Musketeers by Alexandre Dumas

A classic tale of intrigue and subterfuge. Aramis, Porthos and Athos; led by the hero D'Artagnan, try to save the queen and the state from the designs of the evil Cardinal Richelieu.

Classic | Adventure



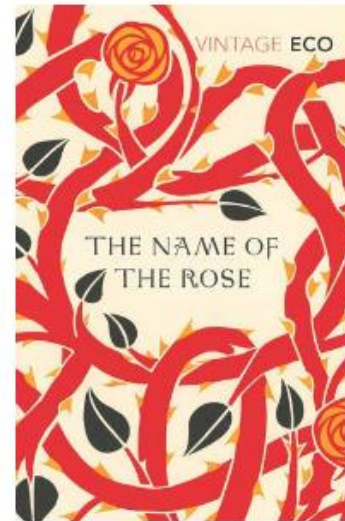
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Year 11 Reading List

The Name of the Rose by Umberto Eco

Serial murders in the historical backdrop of a fourteenth-century Franciscan monastery in rural Italy captivate William, who is hired to solve the crimes. A page-turning plot and rich atmospheric description fuel this historical bestseller. A more challenging read for Year 11 pupils.

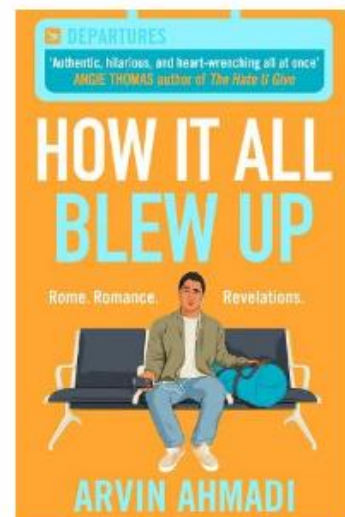
Mystery



How It All Blew Up by Arvin Ahmadi

A groundbreaking and hard-hitting novel for teens. When Amir runs away to Rome after high school bullies find out that he's gay, he has no idea of the ordeal in store after one incident on a plane turns his, and his family's lives upside-down. A cleverly woven story, told from different perspectives and timelines, this is an easy – yet thought-provoking – read that will spark debate in book clubs.

LGBT



The Trial by Franz Kafka

The book that perhaps coined the term "Kafkaesque". This unfinished story details the experiences of a man arrested for seemingly no reason and his futile fight against faceless power and bureaucracy.

Crime | Dystopia



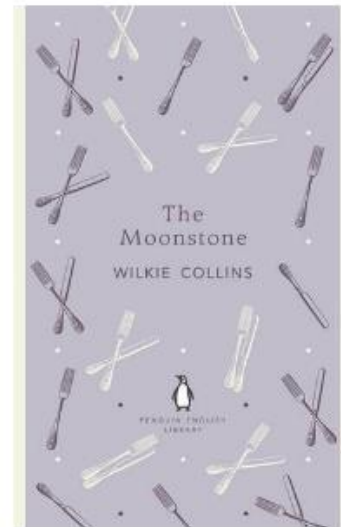
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Year 11 Reading List

The Moonstone by Wilkie Collins

The Moonstone is a hugely valuable, and cursed, diamond smuggled out of a war zone. When it vanishes from an English country house all hell breaks loose, and it's up to Sergeant Cuff to solve the puzzle. A classic detective novel. An easier reader for Year 11 students.

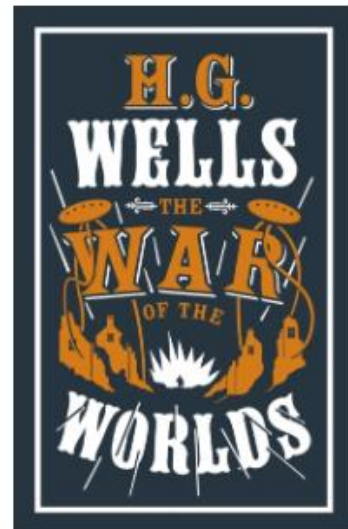
Mystery



War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells

A science-fiction classic. Earth is being watched by an advanced and clever alien race. It's only a matter of time before they pick a moment to conquer all mankind.

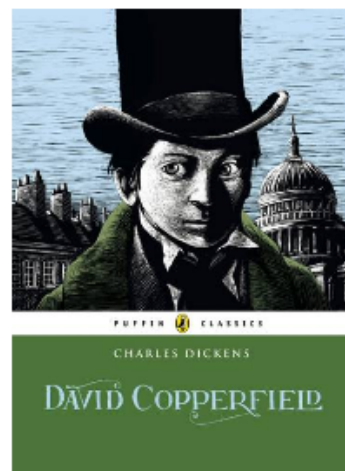
Science fiction



David Copperfield by Charles Dickens

Perhaps Dickens' greatest novel features unforgettable characters as seen through the eyes of the ever-suffering David Copperfield.

Classic



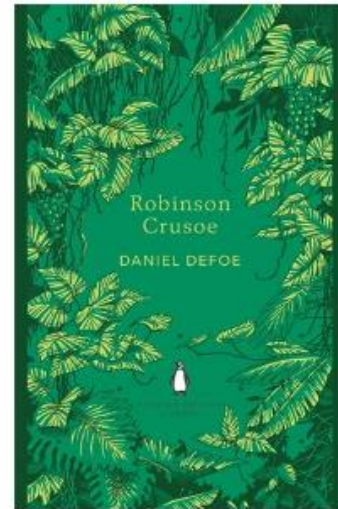
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Year 11 Reading List

Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe

The original and ultimate castaway shipwreck survival story set on a remote tropical island with cannibals.

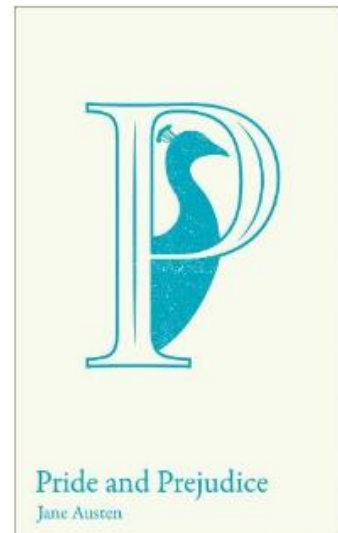
Adventure | Classic



Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

A classic story of family instability, with well-meaning but unsubtle Mrs Bennett looking to marry off all her daughters.

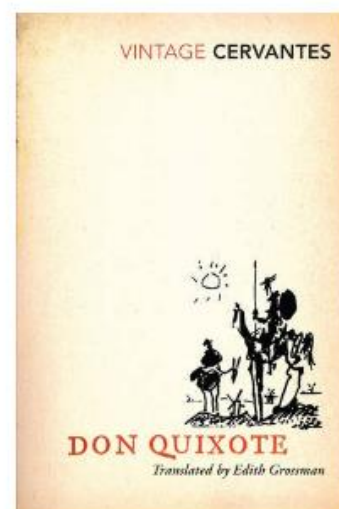
Classic



Don Quixote by Miguel Cervantes

Don Quixote is a Spanish man sent slightly mad in his quest to live the life of a noble knight. Can his more level-headed aide, Sancho Panza, help save him from himself?

Classic



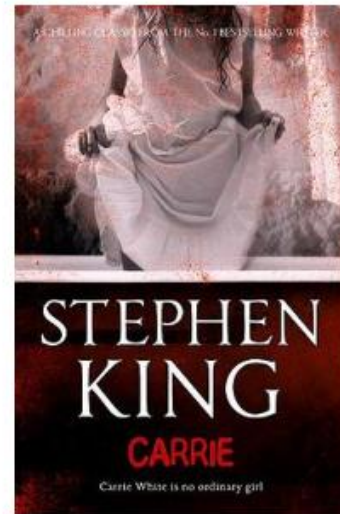
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Year 11 Reading List

Carrie by Stephen King

A must-read modern horror genre novel. Teen Carrie starts to exhibit supernatural powers, and she focuses on those bullying her with spectacular and unexpected consequences. A good counterpoint book to compare to Frankenstein in Year 11.

Horror



The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch

Suffering from terminal cancer, Professor Randy Pausch gave one final lecture. In it, he described, how to dream, how to overcome obstacles and how to live those dreams. "Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams" is something everyone should read at least once in their lifetime.

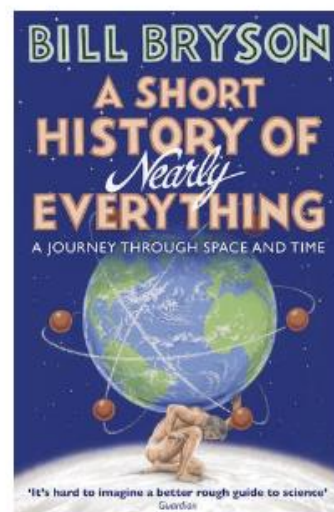
Growth mindset



A Short History of Nearly Everything by Bill Bryson

A masterful and accessible synthesis of mankind written with zip and flair. Funny and yet thought-provoking, Bill Bryson's book is great for sparking interest in areas such as Physics, History and Geography which school teaching might have dampened.

History | Funny



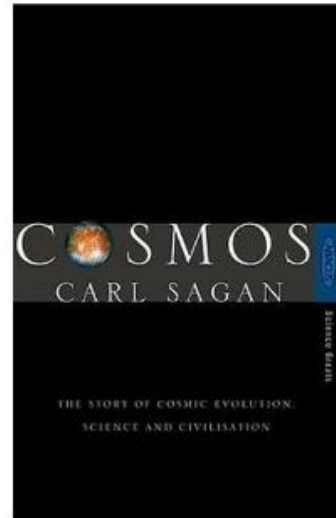
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Year 11 Reading List

Cosmos by Carl Sagan

A sharp and inspiring book that places human life into a wider context of history, science, philosophy and religion. A literary reality check, this text is bound to provoke further reading. Good to stretch Year 11 students who are interested in science.

Science



Maus by Art Spiegelman

Legendary in the comic book genre, this graphic novel story depicts the Holocaust in a deeply moving, tender and personal way. Ideal for KS4 and GCSE pupils learning about the effects of WW2.

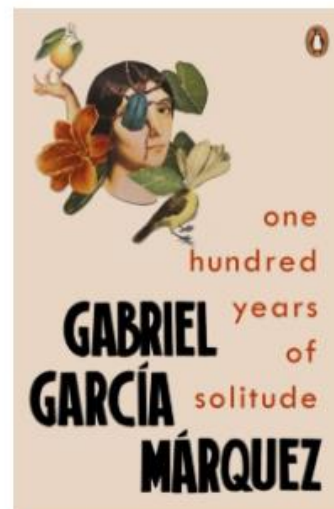
Graphic novel | War



One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriela Garcia Marquez

An epic historical fantasy that spans seven generations of one family and their lives in rural Columbia. Blending drama, history, fantasy and humour this is an unforgettable novel.

Historical fiction | Fantasy



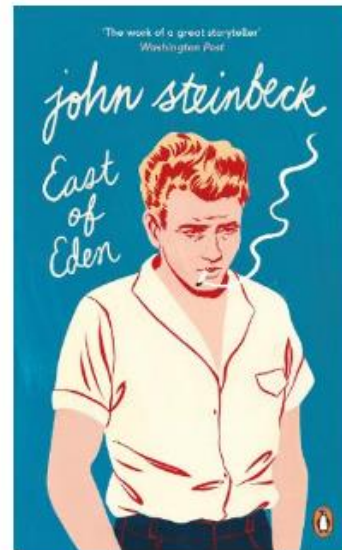
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Year 11 Reading List

East of Eden by John Steinbeck

The descendants of Adam and Eve are recast as the warring Trask and Hamilton families in this tale of rivalry, lust and murder. Brilliantly written. A great book for discussion in Year 11.

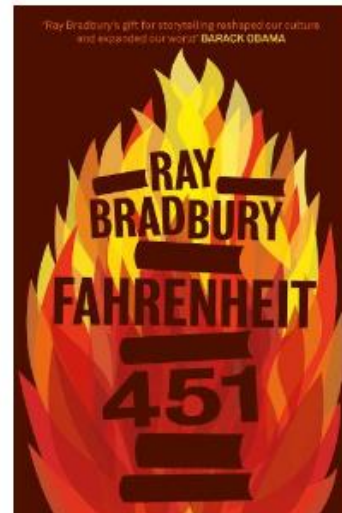
Classic



Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

In a fantasy dystopia where books are forbidden and subject to enforced bureaucratic burning, a small group tries to keep knowledge, reading and freedom alive. Shocking and realistic.

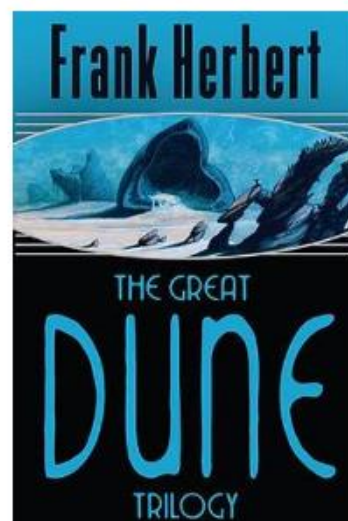
Dystopia



Dune by Frank Herbert

A very readable and gripping science fiction trilogy with memorable characters. It's like Lord of the Rings meets Games of Thrones set on a remote desert planet system.

Science fiction



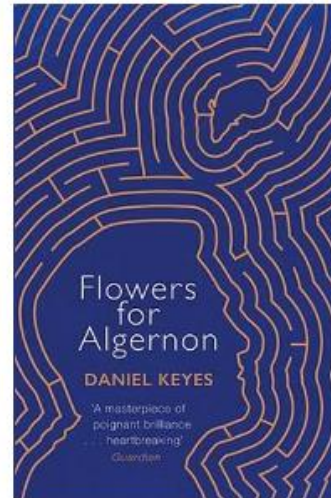
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Year 11 Reading List

Flowers For Algernon by Daniel Keyes

Charlie Gorden is a nice bloke with a very low IQ. He's the target of banter – not all of it at all pleasant – but he doesn't really notice and gets on with his life. That's until he volunteers for a radical treatment which causes his intelligence to grow day by day. Soon he sees a very different world.

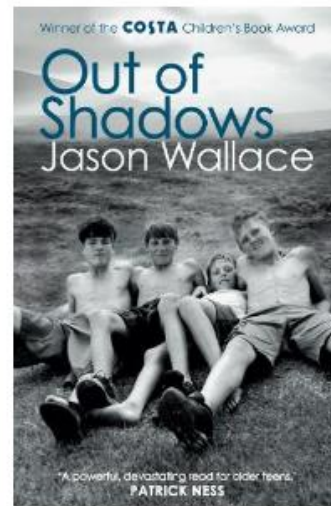
Science fiction



Out of Shadows by Jason Wallace

Set in 1980s Zimbabwe during the rise of Robert Mugabe, times are changing fast in Robert's new boarding school. But one pupil is determined to resist change, determined at any cost. A gripping coming-of-age page-turner with a shocking ending.

Historical fiction | Contemporary



#MurderTrending by Gretchen McNeil

#crime #app #victim #revenge #game #false accusation
#gangs #murder #must-read

Crime | Thriller



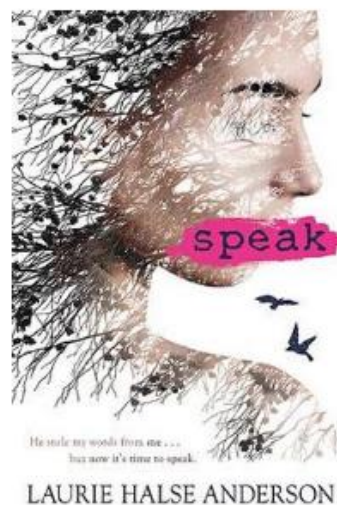
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Year 11 Reading List

Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson

When Melinda tries to do the right thing, she finds herself shunned by friends and on the street. Nothing she does seems to make things better and her parents are no help at all. Cleverly written so the reader only finds out exactly what Melinda did at the end.

Crime | Thriller



The Lovely Bones by Alice Sebold

Suzie is the victim of a brutal serial killer. Narrated by her spirit, this book tells the story of her life and her family in the past, present and future. This coming-of-age drama is imaginative and moving.

Ghost story | Contemporary

