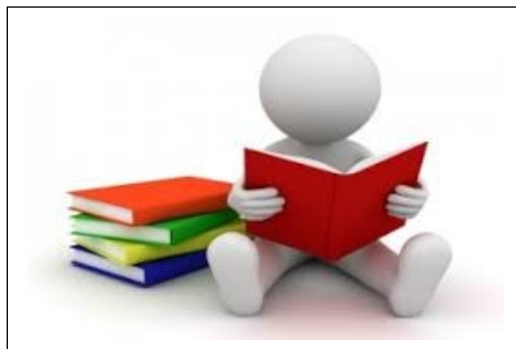


## KS4 Reading suggestions



### Adventure/Thriller

***Alone in Berlin*** Hans Fallada – A magnificent work of fiction based on a true story, as an elderly couple, living in wartime Berlin, engage in a secret war against Hitler, knowing they cannot win, but fighting on regardless.

***The Shadow of the Wind*** Carlos Ruiz Zafon – A beautifully written and atmospheric book, with well-developed characters and an intricate tale, including love, murder, adultery and family ties.

***Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*** John le Carré – More of a psychological suspense novel than an action-packed thriller. Set in the Cold War. Carefully constructed, with well thought out characters.

***The Liberation*** Kate Furnivall – Set in post-war Italy, the Americans are in Naples trying to restore order to a city devastated by the war. Meanwhile, Caterina Lombard is trying to support her family, whilst trying to uncover the mystery surrounding her father's death.

***Gentlemen & Players*** Joanne Harris – A psychological thriller set in a North of England boys' school. It uses a chess analogy throughout as the plot gradually unfolds, with a number of surprising twists and turns.

### General fiction

***White Teeth*** Zadie Smith – Chronicles the lives of immigrant families in the UK and how they form a tapestry of multicultural life in their community.

***The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency*** Alexander McCall Smith – Not a mystery or crime book, as the title suggests. Precious Ramotswe of Botswana solves problems. She is wise, funny and insightful, with a big heart.

***Eleanor and Park*** Rainbow Rowell – Captures the essence of first love, and the perils of high school, but also tackles some serious issues such as abuse.

***Captain Corelli's Mandolin*** Louis de Bernières – A well-written novel set on the Ionian island of Cephalonia during WWII. It works on different levels, as a love story, a war story and a story about a small Greek community, combining elements of humour, romance and tragedy as it progresses.

***Possession*** A.S. Byatt – A highly-rated literary novel, with two major themes running through it. The first theme is the relationship of two fictional Victorian poets, as revealed through their journal, letters and poems. The second theme is a literary detective novel with a contemporary love story.

***Catch 22*** Joseph Heller – A satirical novel by an American author. It is regarded as one of the most significant works of the twentieth century.

***Elizabeth is missing*** Emma Healey – A sophisticated psychological mystery, but also a story which deals with memory, identity and aging as it is written from the perspective of an elderly woman with dementia.

## Classic

***Far from the Madding Crowd*** Thomas Hardy – Published in 1874, this book is set in rural Wessex (Dorset), and is the story of a young woman who inherits a large farm. During the course of the book, she has three different suitors and makes some unwise decisions. A great depiction of rural life in nineteenth century England, and includes romance, tragedy, death and despair.

***Rebecca*** Daphne du Maurier – Contains all the elements of a classic gothic novel: a man, a woman, another woman's shadow, a big house and a mysterious past. The suspense builds as the story develops.

***Dr Zhivago*** Boris Pasternak – An epic novel of Russia in the throes of revolution and one of the greatest love stories ever told.

***Great Expectations*** Charles Dickens – Considered to be one of Dickens' best novels, Pip, who is an orphan boy, is apprenticed to work at a forge, but dreams of becoming a gentleman. With compelling characters, such as Estella, Magwitch and Miss Havesham, this is a gripping tale of crime and guilt, revenge and reward.

***Pride and Prejudice*** Jane Austen – Since its publication in 1813, this novel has been regarded as one of the greatest works of fiction in the English language. Do not expect an action-packed read; the world of Jane Austen was very narrow and uneventful by modern standards. However, the humour, and vivacity of the heroine, and the wit and humour which is evident throughout, along with the depiction of life in the early nineteenth century have made this a story for all times.

***Beau Geste*** P.C. Wren – A cleverly-structured, classic rip-roaring tale of adventure and mystery.

***Watership Down*** Richard Adams - Described as a rabbit story to entertain children on a car journey. However, it is much more than that. Hair-raising chase scenes, espionage episodes, folk tales, fights and alliances, all form part of the story, with a number of enduring characters, making this a really great book.

## Fantasy/Science Fiction

***The Knife of Never Letting Go*** Patrick Ness – Todd Hewitt is the only boy in a town of men. There are no women as they have all been killed by 'the germ'. All the men have been infected by the Noise germ, which enables all the men and Todd to hear what each other is thinking. Todd knows that something is being hidden from him, so terrible that he is forced to flee with only his dog.

***Sabriel*** Garth Nix – This tale is not for the faint hearted. A number of ghoulish subplots are included as part of the good-versus-evil story line.

***'Salem's Lot*** Stephen King – A vampire book, heart-breaking and terrifying. Stephen King explores the effects of evil on unsuspecting innocent people.

***Exodus*** Julie Bertagna – The year is 2100 and Earth is under water due to global warming. The only city that anyone knows of is New Mungo, and that is guarded to keep anyone else out.

***The Maze Runner*** James Dashner – A dystopian novel, part of a series, of a similar type to ***The Hunger Games*** trilogy.

***I am Number 4*** Pittacus Lore – An interesting young adult novel, with plenty of action.

**Gone** Michael Grant - A page-turning thriller combining something of *Lord of the Flies* with Stephen King horror.

### Historical

**Dissolution** C.J. Sansom – The first in the Shardlake series. This series is part historical and part murder/mystery. The period is very well researched and the fabric of the story is woven well into historical reality.

**The Ballroom** Anna Hope – 1911. Inside an asylum at the edge of the Yorkshire moors, where men and women are kept apart by high walls and barred windows, there is a beautiful ballroom. Once a week the patients are allowed to dance together. An evocative story of love and despair: a shocking, haunting, unforgettable and painful historical novel.

**Birdsong** Sebastian Faulks – A powerful novel which spans the First World War and portrays the horrors of life in the trenches. Alongside this is the story of a passionate love affair.

**The Help** Kathryn Stockett – A glimpse of life in deep south Mississippi in the 1960s, when life was very different for people depending on the colour or their skin. A group of women from different backgrounds and cultures come together at the dawn of the Civil Rights movement.

**For whom the bell tolls** Ernest Hemingway – The story of an idealist during the Spanish Civil War. It explores many wartime themes, including mortality, betrayal, camaraderie and escape.

**Girl with a Pearl Earring** Tracy Chevalier – Is the title of a painting by Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer, finished around 1665. Not much is known about this artist, so this fictional work imagines the story of how the painting came into being.

**Wake** Anna Hope – A moving novel set in 1920 about the aftermath of WWI and its impact on the lives of three individual women.

### Mystery/Crime

**Enigma** Thomas Harris – A gripping fictionalised work based on events at Bletchley Park during WWII where the code-breakers worked day and night to crack the German Enigma code.

**These Shallow Graves** Jennifer Donnelly – A well-planned, atmospheric, historical mystery book.

**Killer Instinct** Lynn Barnes – A good murder/mystery book with a few twists!

**The Body Farm** Patricia Cornwell – Part of a series, featuring Dr Kay Scarpetta. Expect a fast-paced psychological thriller.

**Snow falling on cedars** David Guterson – The death of a fisherman on a Pacific island turns into a murder trial for a Japanese-American. Set in 1954, just over 10 years since the attack on Pearl Harbour, it reveals the dark cloud of suspicion, tension and prejudice that was displayed towards this group of people.

**The Moonstone** Wilkie Collins – Published in 1868, this book is considered to be the first detective novel. The plot is compelling and although it has a slow start, it soon draws the reader into it.

### Family and Relationships

**Atonement** Ian McEwan – Set during WWII, the story is about a 13-year old girl, Briony Tallis, who observes an encounter between her older sister and the family gardener. Her innocence,

misunderstanding and partial understanding of the world result in setting off a change of events which tear the family apart and have devastating consequences.

***Behind the Scenes at the Museum*** Kate Atkinson – A sprawling saga of a dysfunctional family, from a Yorkshire writer.

***Boys don't cry*** Malorie Blackman – This is an emotionally charged story which tackles issues around love, family and relationships.

***Falling into Glory*** Robert Westall – Growing up in a Northern town, after WWII, Robbie is a bright student and a formidable rugby player, until he falls in love with a young teacher.

***Thin Air*** Kate Thompson – This book is set on a horse farm on the west coast of Ireland. To outsiders, the Keane family look perfectly normal, with their children growing up in an uneventful way. One day Martina, the eldest daughter disappears, as if into 'thin air' and the story charts the different ways that each other family member deals with this crisis.

### **Emotional and thought provoking**

***The Road Home*** Rose Tremain – Lev, recently bereaved, with a small daughter and Mother to support in Eastern Europe, is on his way to find work in Britain. His friend Rudi dreams of the wealthy prospects that await Lev, as he establishes himself in London. However, the reality is quite different, as Lev has to adjust to a new environment with a different culture.

***Me before you*** Jojo Moyes – Is about life and making choices. A disturbing book in many ways, dealing with the subject of euthanasia.

***House Rules*** Jodi Picoult – Anyone who has read a book by this author will know that the subject matter will be controversial and thought-provoking. Jacob, a teenage boy with Asperger's, is accused of murder. His mother believes he is innocent.

***Falling*** Anne Provoost – This is a deep disturbing book about the seductive power of extreme nationalism, the gulf between intentions and consequences, and the need to understand the past and take responsibility for one's actions.

***Caught in the Crossfire*** Alan Gibbons – Written in short chapters, this book gives a good sense of why things can go wrong in a community when bigotry and racism are foremost in people's lives.

***We need to talk about Kevin*** Lionel Shriver – For older readers. This book is written as a series of letters from Eva, the mother of Kevin, to Franklin, her estranged husband. Kevin committed an horrific act, and now, two years later, his mother is trying to come to terms with what happened.

### **Stories from other cultures**

***Out of Shadows*** Jason Wallace – A debut novel, set in Zimbabwe during the early days of Robert Mugabe's Premiership. It is a gripping story that explores many compelling themes and subjects, including, colonialism, racism, guilt, bullying, inequality, justice and revenge.

***A Thousand Splendid Suns*** Khaled Hosseini – A breath-taking book showing the beauty and strength buried under the surface of the cruel and capricious life imposed upon two Afghani women.

***Someone to run with*** David Grossman – A book which studies the inner lives of two teenagers in Jerusalem, but also a novel which has pace, bite and a well-drawn plot with fascinating characters.

***The White Tiger*** Aravind Adiga – A debut novel which provides a darkly humorous perspective of India's class struggle.

***Mister Pip*** Lloyd Jones – Focuses on the power of imagination and the ability of literature to act as an escape from reality. Set on a small island in the South Pacific, where the inhabitants are caught up in a war, the only white man on the island decides to teach the children, to help them to 'escape' from what is happening around them, and uses Dickens' ***Great Expectations*** to do so.