

PiXL Reading

SECONDARY NEWSLETTER



We hope that the February break was a restful time for you and your family. In this half-term's newsletter, we have collated another selection of books which cover a range of reading ages and topics of interest which your child may like to explore. We hope that amongst the variety of books shared in this newsletter, you and your child may find some to enjoy!

Please note that unless otherwise stated, the texts shared within this newsletter are suitable from Year 7 and up, but please do research the books before selecting them to ensure that they are appropriate for your child, as these are just the publishers' guide.

In addition to exploring the books mentioned in this newsletter, you may like to know about some of the key events coming up this half term which your school might be highlighting – or which you may like to discuss with your child at home and read around too – especially as 2026 is the National Year of Reading!



5th March
World
Book Day



8th March
International
Women's Day



6th-15th March
British
Science Week



20th March
World
Storytelling Day



21st March
World
Poetry Day



27th March
World
Theatre Day

There are so many books and types of texts that your child may enjoy exploring. For example, they may like researching some of the topics, such as British Science Week – or discovering more about inspiring women such as Malala Yousafzai. Alternatively, they may like to dip into a poetry anthology – or explore some short plays, like Philip Ridley's *Sparkleshark!*

Whatever your child chooses to read, we hope they enjoy it and that the rest of the Spring term goes well for you.

SHORTER-LENGTH READS

In this section, we have collated a selection of shorter-length texts which may capture your child’s interest. As well as being short, they are also published in a dyslexia-friendly font to help make them accessible to all. If your child doesn’t have dyslexia, they can of course still read these wonderful books!



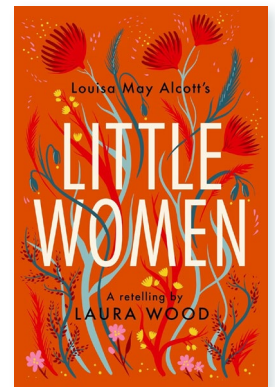
Game Over SERENA PATEL

Can you be true to yourself without losing your friends along the way? Jay is excited about a game-design project being worked on by the Computing Club at school. He wants to join in, but there’s a big problem: Jay’s friends think Computing is only for nerds and they want him to join a new football team with them. Both activities happen at the same time, so Jay has to choose. Can he find the courage to tell his friends how he really feels and, if he does, will it mean their friendship is over?

Little Women, a re-telling of Louise May Alcott’s novel

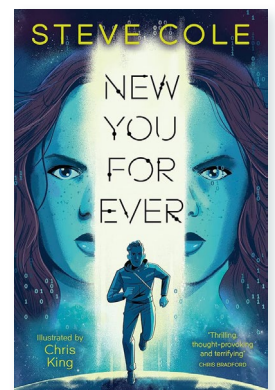
LAURA WOOD

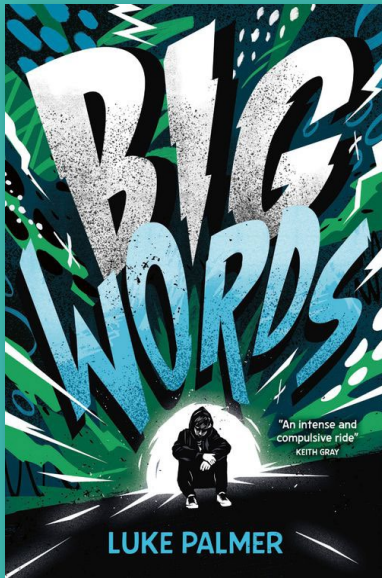
Little Women, the charming story of the brave and resilient March sisters, has been adored by generations of readers who have identified with the struggles of kind and pretty Meg; gentle, delicate Beth; precocious, artistic Amy; and of course wild, tomboyish Jo, determined to forge her own path and become a writer. Follow the girls as they come of age during the American Civil War and fall in love with the story all over again in this retelling by award-winning writer Laura Wood.



New You Forever STEVE COLE

The year is 2070, and the New You Foundation claim to have found the ultimate answer to the climate crisis. They want human beings to transform themselves into Pleekas – perfect artificial replicas. Pleekas can go on for ever but won’t create waste or use the Earth’s resources. Too good to be true? When a chance meeting leads young journalist Anders Jones to the sinister truth, he must risk everything to expose New You – if it’s not already too late...





Big Words LUKE PALMER

PRE-ORDER FOR RELEASE ON 12TH MARCH!

Biggest goes first – always. That’s one of the unspoken rules of Kiln, the forbidden wasteland where Sam and his mates hang out. So when Sam comes up with a plan to go sledging on the rust-ridden bonnet of a rotting car, he goes first. To show the others how it’s done. His mates aren’t so keen. But there’s no complaining. No backing down. Those are the other rules of Kiln. Even when they lead to disaster. Will their friendship survive the wreckage that follows, or is it time for the rules to be changed?

13+



One Shot

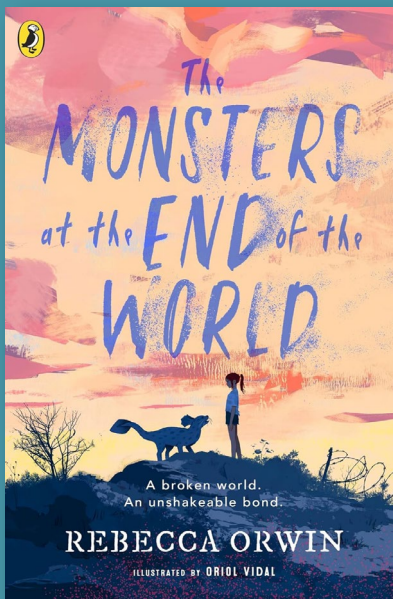
TANYA LANDMAN

After the death of her beloved father, Maggie and her family are thrown into a life of destitution. With little income and no way to live off their poor land, Maggie tries to provide for her family the way her father always had – with his hunting rifle and whatever animals the forest would provide. But, when her mother is confronted with her ‘unladylike’ behaviour, Maggie is thrown into a life of unthinkable cruelty and abuse. With no one to care for her and only the hope of escape, all Maggie can do is survive.

LONGER-LENGTH READS

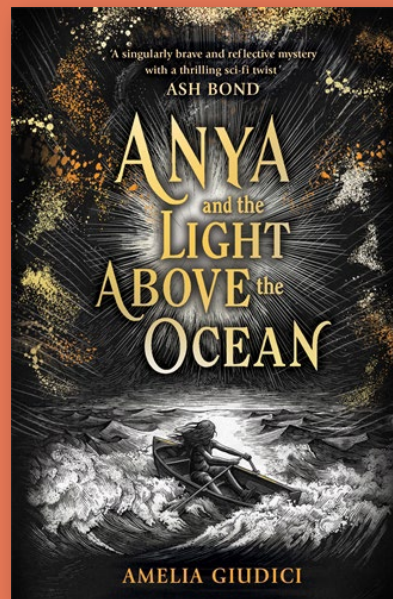
The Monsters at the End of the World REBECCA ORWIN

All her life, Sunny has known three truths about the creatures that prowl the seas off her tiny coastal town. They are dangerous. They are violent. They are monsters. But when a chance encounter leads to an unexpected connection, Sunny discovers just how wrong she has been. The monster she meets – Mo – is intelligent, gentle, and searching for his lost brother. Sunny desperately wants to help, and to keep her new friend a secret. But other people are keeping secrets too. And, as hunger grips the town, new truths will emerge about the real monsters in Seawaren...



Anya and the Light Above the Ocean AMELIA GIUDICI

When her mum disappears, Anya sets out to find her in the middle of a storm. Taking a boat out to sea, she encounters a strange window of light hovering above the waves. Transfixed, she reaches out to touch it. She then wakes in her boat, the sea now eerily silent. With her mum still missing, Anya is packed off to stay with an odd, unwelcoming couple. Trapped under their watchful gaze, she uncovers a shocking secret that changes everything she thought she knew. Anya must now battle to find the truth: about her mum, about the Light, and about herself.





The Girl Who Raced the World

NAT HARRISON

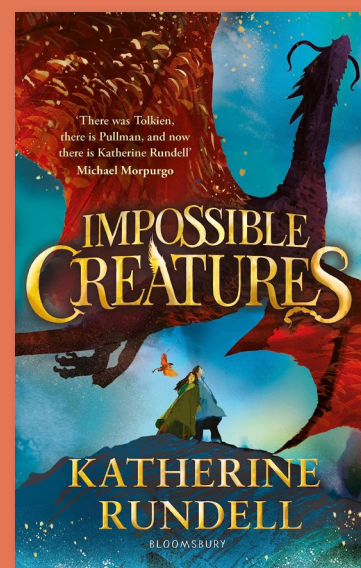
It is 1872 and, when Maggie Appleton's beloved mother dies, she is left with nothing but a letter for a mysterious stranger called Passepartout. With nowhere else to turn, Maggie seeks out Passepartout and, in doing so, is drawn into an adventure beyond her wildest dreams. Together with Passepartout's employer, the enigmatic Mr Phileas Fogg, Maggie journeys to Italy, India, Hong Kong, Japan and America, in a daring race against time to win the wager Mr Fogg has accepted. But with a bank robber on the loose, an angry Inspector on their tail and unread secrets in her mother's letter, Maggie soon discovers that there is much more at stake than keeping on schedule to win the bet. Who can she really trust - and will she ever find out where she truly belongs?

Impossible Creatures

KATHERINE RUNDELL

Christopher is stunned when he discovers a Way-Between from our world to the Archipelago: a cluster of magical islands where all the creatures of myth still live and breed and thrive in their thousands. There he meets Mal: a girl from the islands, who is in possession of a flying coat and a baby griffin, and who is being pursued by a killer. Together they embark on an urgent quest to discover why the creatures are suddenly perishing, voyaging across the wild splendour of the Archipelago, where sphinxes hold secrets and centaurs do murder, in a bid to save both the islands and the world beyond them from a rising evil - before it's too late.

The sequel, *The Poisoned King*, is out now!



The Last Bard

MAZ EVANS

Will Davenant has known more tragedy than laughter. But in an unexpected twist, he inherits his grandfather's copy of *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* – and makes a surprising discovery. As the last living relative of William Shakespeare himself, Will can summon the Bard's heroes from the pages and now he has some extraordinary new friends to help turn things in his life around...

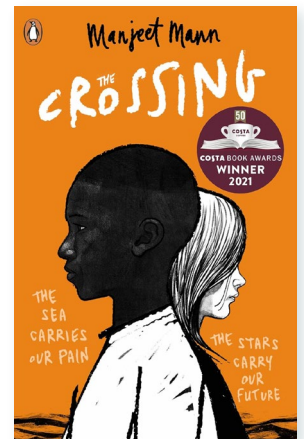


The Crossing

MANJEET MANN

12+

Natalie's world is falling apart. She's just lost her mum and her brother marches the streets of Dover full of hate and anger. Swimming is her only refuge. Sammy has fled his home and family in Eritrea for the chance of a new life in Europe. Every step he takes on his journey is a step into an unknown and unwelcoming future. A twist of fate brings them together and gives them both hope. But is hope enough to mend a broken world?

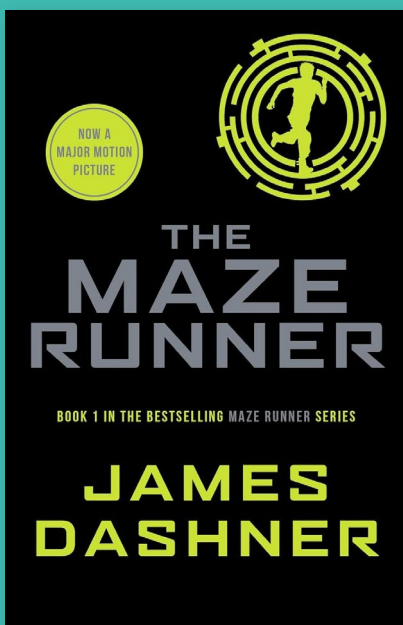


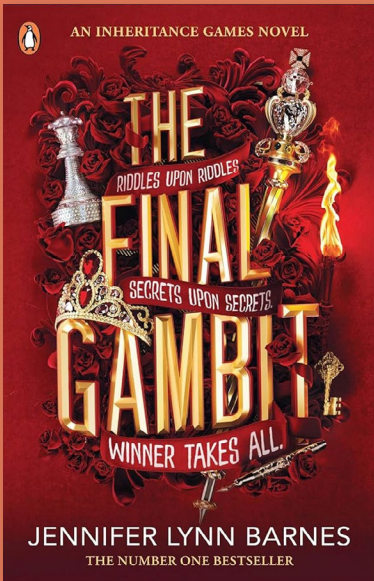
The Maze Runner

JAMES DASHNER

The first title in The Maze Runner series – and also a film on Disney+!

When the doors of the lift crank open, the only thing Thomas remembers is his first name. But he's not alone. He's surrounded by boys who welcome him to the Glade – a walled encampment at the centre of a bizarre and terrible stone maze. Like Thomas, the Gladers don't know why or how they came to be there – or what's happened to the world outside. All they know is that every morning when the walls slide back, they will risk everything – even the Grievers, half-machine, half-animal horror that patrol its corridors, to try and find out...





Final Gambit

JENNIFER LYNN BARNES

15+

The final book in The Inheritance Games series.

WINNER TAKES ALL...

One Last Game. Against all odds, Avery has survived nearly a year of secrets, schemes, and love lost and found at Hawthorne House. She's weeks away from fulfilling the terms of Tobias Hawthorne's will and inheriting his billions.

One More Player. Avery thinks she knows all the family secrets, but when a familiar face arrives with shocking news and a plea for help, it's clear there is one last puzzle to solve.

One Final Twist. Soon, Avery and the Hawthorne brothers are drawn into a last deadly game against an unknown and powerful opponent. Hearts and lives are at stake - and there is nothing more Hawthorne than winning.

Beth is Dead

KATIE BERNET

13+

A gripping murder mystery inspired by the classic *Little Women* novel by Louisa May Alcott. After a New Year's Eve party, Beth is found dead. All the March sisters see Beth's body and wonder how - and who - could have killed their sweet little sister. And what was their motive? The March sisters have always been close, but will Beth's murder bring them closer together, or further apart? As each of the girls' motives are uncovered, the March sisters might not be quite as sweet as they seem...

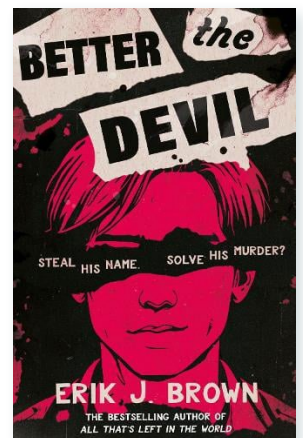


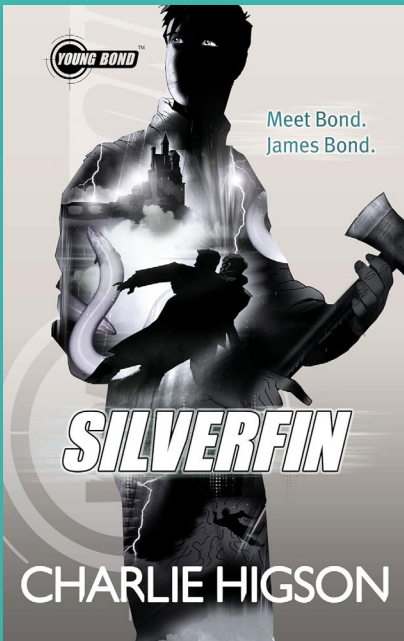
Better the Devil

ERIK J. BROWN

14+

Desperate to escape a family who will never accept him, a runaway in police custody borrows the identity of a boy who vanished years ago: Nate Beaumont. But when Nate's family come to take him home, he's trapped in a web of lies. Then, he meets Miles - the cute, clever and true-crime obsessed boy next door - who knows more than it seems. Unexpectedly, Miles agrees to help, in exchange for uncovering the truth about what happened years ago to his childhood best friend. As their investigation turns dangerous, their feelings turn real.





SilverFin

CHARLIE HIGSON

The first book in the Young Bond series.

Before the name became a legend. Before the boy became a man. Meet Bond. James Bond.

There's something in the water at Loch Silverfin. Something deadly. Something that must be kept secret...

It's James Bond's first day at Eton, and he's already met his first enemy. This is the start of an adventure that will take him from the school playing fields to the remote shores of Loch Silverfin and a terrifying discovery that threatens to unleash a new breed of warfare.

The Recruit

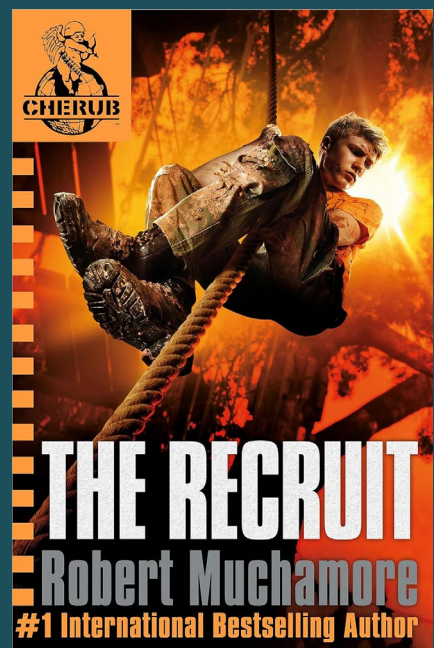
ROBERT MUCHAMORE

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The first title in the CHERUB series.

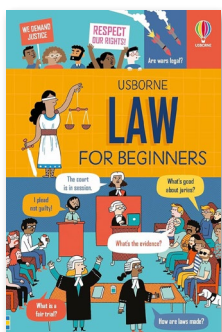
A terrorist doesn't let strangers in her flat because they might be undercover police or intelligence agents, but her children bring their mates home and they run all over the place. The terrorist doesn't know that one of these kids has bugged every room in her house, made copies of all her computer files and stolen her address book. The kid works for CHERUB.

CHERUB agents are aged between ten and seventeen. They live in the real world, slipping under adult radar and getting information that sends criminals and terrorists to jail. For official purposes, these children do not exist...



NON-FICTION RECOMMENDATIONS

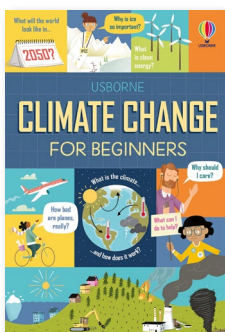
Law for Beginners



An entertaining and thought-provoking guide to what laws are, who makes them and

how people enforce them. It covers crime and punishment as well as social and citizenship issues such as politics and international law, using a mixture of debates, cartoon strips and clear diagrams.

Climate Crisis for Beginners



The climate crisis is real. It is already changing the world around us. This book uses simple language and vivid illustrations to explain complex questions clearly. How does the

climate work? What are we doing to change it? What can we do differently to avoid the worst outcomes? Why do we all find change so hard? The climate crisis is a troubling and sensitive topic, so the book includes vital tips on how to set realistic goals and not get overwhelmed by bad news.

Staying Safe Online LOUIE STOWELL



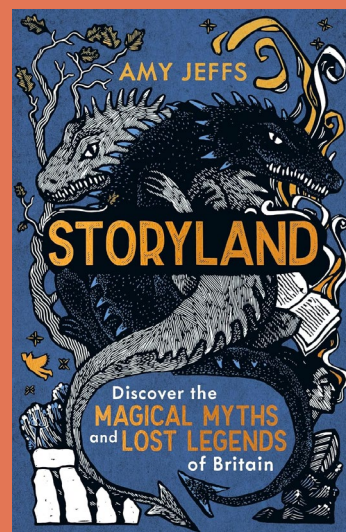
The internet is full of amazing possibilities but, just like the real world, there are a lot of potential dangers and

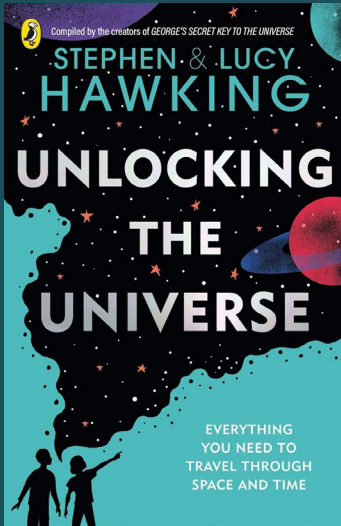
difficulties too. You need to know what to watch out for and how to protect yourself. Whether you're worried about oversharing on social media or coming across dangerous people, this guide gives you tips and tools to take control and stay safe online.

Storyland AMY JEFFS

You will have heard of Thor, Medusa and Hercules. But what about the myths of the British Isles? The Trojan heroes who wrestled giants. The Syrian sisters who found safety. The dragons who slept in hollow hills. And the kings who talked to the dead...

In this vivid and beautifully illustrated mythology of Britain, you will discover tales of magic and adventure, giants and demons, princesses and prophecies. Travelling across the wildest of landscapes - as far north as Orkney and south as Cornwall - you will build Stonehenge with the young Merlin, ride stags into the forests of Scotland, and sail with Trojans along the rivers of Britain, discovering a land steeped in myth, monsters and heroes.





Unlocking the Universe

STEPHEN AND LUCY HAWKING

*Have you ever wondered how our universe began?
Or what it takes to put humans on the moon?
Do you know what happens in the microscopic world of a life-saving vaccine?
What would you do if you could travel through space and time?*

Discover the universe in a nutshell, with chapters on everything from the creation of the universe to time travel to the future of humanity, all in an easy-to-read, illustrated package by the world's leading scientists, including Professor Stephen Hawking.

Sapiens: A Graphic History

YUVAL NOAH HARARI

12+

One hundred thousand years ago, at least six different species of humans inhabited Earth. Yet today there is only one -homo sapiens. What happened to the others? And what may happen to us?

In this first volume of the adaptation of his ground-breaking book, renowned historian Yuval Harari tells the story of humankind's creation and evolution, exploring the ways in which biology and history have defined us and enhanced our understanding of what it means to be 'human'. From examining the role evolving humans have played in the global ecosystem to charting the rise of empires, *Sapiens* challenges us to reconsider beliefs, connect past developments with contemporary concerns, and view specific events within the context of larger ideas.

