

Reading List (English Departments)

Year 9

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

Pip doesn't expect much from life. His sister makes it clear that her orphaned little brother is nothing but a burden on her. But suddenly things begin to change. Pip's narrow existence is blown apart when he finds an escaped criminal, is summoned to visit a mysterious old woman and meets the icy beauty Estella. Most astoundingly of all, an anonymous person gives him money to begin a new life in London. Are these events as random as they seem? Or does Pip's fate hang on a series of coincidences he could never have expected?

Lord of the Flies by William Golding

A plane crashes on a desert island.

The only survivors are a group of schoolboys. By day, they discover fantastic wildlife and dazzling beaches, learning to survive; at night, they are haunted by nightmares of a primitive beast.

Orphaned by society, it isn't long before their innocent childhood games devolve into a savage, murderous hunt ...

Life of Pi by Yann Martel

One boy, one boat, one tiger . . .

After the tragic sinking of a cargo ship, a solitary lifeboat remains bobbing on the wild, blue Pacific. The only survivors from the wreck are a sixteen-year-old boy named Pi, a hyena, a zebra (with a broken leg), a female orang-utan - and a 450-pound Royal Bengal tiger. The scene is set for one of the most extraordinary and best-loved works of fiction in recent years.

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

Here is a small fact - You are going to die

1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier. Liesel, a nine-year-old girl, is living with a foster family on Himmel Street. Her parents have been taken away to a concentration camp. Liesel steals books. This is her story and the story of the inhabitants of her street when the bombs begin to fall.

Some important information - This novel is narrated by Death

Year 10

Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier

A young and unassuming lady's maid, meets a wealthy and handsome widower, she is immediately swept off her feet in what many would have considered an unlikely 20th Century match. Maxim de Winter, the owner of a large country estate by the name of Manderley, whisks his new bride away to his home in Cornwall, hoping to rid himself of his sinister past. As the heroine begins her new life at Manderley, she comes to the realisation that the shadow of her predecessor, Rebecca de Winter, lives on through the masonry of the home and through the stern and scathing housekeeper, Mrs Danvers.

1984 by George Orwell

Hidden away in the Record Department of the sprawling Ministry of Truth, Winston Smith skilfully rewrites the past to suit the needs of the Party. Yet he inwardly rebels against the totalitarian world he lives in, which demands absolute obedience and controls him through the all-seeing telescreens and the watchful eye of Big Brother, symbolic head of the Party. In his longing for truth and liberty, Smith begins a secret love affair with a fellow-worker Julia, but soon discovers the true price of freedom is betrayal.

Catcher in the Rye by J.D Salinger

Holden is the son of a wealthy New York family who moves from boarding school to boarding school after being repeatedly expelled. Although he displays a number of typical teenage characteristics, his adolescent foibles become increasingly disturbing throughout the novel, revealing a self-destructive side. Holden, it seems, has been particularly devastated by the death of his brother Allie, who he considered the perfect child. This has thrown him into an existential crisis of sorts; he is unable to find joy in life or to cope with his loss. Ultimately on the brink, he capitulates to convention and comes back home.

Year 11

Behind the Scenes at the Museum by Kate Atkinson

Ruby Lennox was conceived grudgingly by Bunty and born while her father, George, was in the Dog and Hare in Doncaster telling a woman in an emerald dress and a D-cup that he wasn't married. Bunty had never wanted to marry George, but here she was, stuck in a flat above the pet shop in an ancient street beneath York Minster, with sensible and sardonic Patrica aged five, greedy cross-patch Gillian who refused to be ignored, and Ruby.....

Emma by Jane Austen

'If I loved you less, I might be able to talk about it more.'

Meet Emma Woodhouse: handsome, clever, and rich.

Our dear protagonist, a victim to the hubris of youth, takes delight from meddling in the romantic affairs of others, but soon these playful escapades unravel and ensnare her - until, inevitably, she is but a helpless player trapped in her own game.

A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess

"Is it better for a man to have chosen evil than to have good imposed upon him?"

When a flamboyant, Beethoven-obsessed, murderous gang leader agrees to undergo experimental violence-aversion therapy in exchange for early release from prison, he winds up cured of his own free will.

This book has since turned into a highly stylised piece of cinemaography by Stanley Kubrick.

The Magic Toyshop by Angela Carter

A coming of age tale which extends the nature and boundaries of love, as seen through the eyes of the youthful and naïve Melanie.

When tragedy strikes, young Melanie and her two siblings are forced to abandon their family home and sent to live in London with their aunt Margaret, a kindly and beautiful mute, and their abusive and highly manipulative uncle, Philip.