

Recommended Reads Key stage 3



Key stage 3 recommended reads

The Polar Bear Explorers' Club – Alex Bell (Aged 10-12)



Join Stella Starflake Pearl and her three fellow explorers as they trek across the snowy Iceland and come face-to-face with frost fairies, snow queens, outlaw hideouts, unicorns, pygmy dinosaurs and carnivorous cabbages . . . When Stella and three other junior explorers get separated from their expedition can they cross the frozen wilderness and live to tell the tale?

Kick – Mitch Johnson (Ages 10-12)



Budi's plan is simple. He's going to be a star. Budi's going to play for the greatest team on earth, instead of sweating over each stitch he sews, each football boot he makes. But one unlucky kick brings Budi's world crashing down. Now he owes the Dragon, the most dangerous man in Jakarta. Soon it isn't only Budi's dreams at stake, but his life. A story about dreaming big, about hope and heroes, and never letting anything stand in your way.

And the Ocean Was Our Sky - Patrick Ness (Age 14+)



From the -award-winning author of *A Monster Calls* comes a haunting tale of power and obsession that turns the story of *Moby Dick* upside down. The whales of Bathsheba's pod live for the hunt. Led by the formidable Captain Alexandra, they fight a never-ending war against men. Then the whales attack a man ship, and instead of easy prey they find the trail of a myth, a monster, perhaps the devil himself... With their relentless Captain leading the chase, they embark on the final hunt, one that will forever change the worlds of whales and men.

The Witch Boy – Molly Ostertag (Age 13+)



In thirteen-year-old Aster's family, all the girls are raised to be witches, while boys grow up to be shapeshifters. Anyone who dares cross those lines is exiled. Unfortunately for Aster, he still hasn't shifted . . . and he's still fascinated by witchery, no matter how forbidden it might be. When a mysterious danger threatens the other boys, Aster knows he can help -- as a witch. It will take the encouragement of a new friend, the non-magical and non-conforming Charlie, to convince Aster to try practicing his skills. And it will require even more courage to save his family . . . and be truly himself.

Son of the Mob - Gordon Korman (Age 12-14)



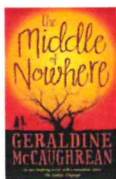
Vince Luca is just like any other high school guy. His best friend, Alex, is trying to score vicariously through him; his brother is a giant pain; and his father keeps bugging him to get motivated. There is just one thing that really sets him apart from other kids-his father happens to be the head of a powerful crime organization. Needless to say, Vince's family's connections can put a serious crimp in his dating life. How is he supposed to explain to a girl what his father does for a living? But when Vince finally meets a girl who seems to be worth the trouble, her family turns out to be the biggest problem of all. Because *her* father is an FBI agent-the one who wants to put Vince's father away for good.

Smith – Leon Garfield (Ages 9-12)



This novel follows the adventures of an illiterate young ragamuffin known only as Smith in Victorian London. Smith picks the pocket of a stranger, only to witness immediately the stranger's murder. Smith has unwittingly taken a document that is obviously worth quite a lot to somebody, as he is then pursued by two very shady characters. Smith manages to dodge them and winds up in the odd company of a wealthy blind man, who takes Smith into his home and provides him with an education. However, this new comfort is not to last.

The Middle of Nowhere – Geraldine McCaughrean (Age 12+)



When her mother dies from a snake bite, Comity Pinny's life in the middle of the Australian outback changes for ever. Her father, Herbert, retreats into his work transmitting telegrams, abandoning Comity when she needs him most. Comity turns to Fred, the young Aboriginal yard boy, and he becomes her only friend. But then a new assistant arrives who delights in playing cruel games. Soon Comity struggles to hold things together as events begin to spiral dangerously out of control.

The Silver Donkey – Sonya Hartnett (Ages 8 -11)



One morning in the woods of WWI France, two young sisters stumble upon an astonishing find — a soldier, temporarily blinded by war, who has walked away from battle longing to see his gravely ill younger brother. Soon the care of the soldier becomes the girls' preoccupation. They are fascinated by what he holds in his hand — a tiny silver donkey. As they devise a plan to get the soldier's safely home, he repays them by telling four wondrous tales about the humble donkey.

The Nowhere Emporium – Ross MacKensie (Ages 8 -11)



When the mysterious Nowhere Emporium arrives in Glasgow, orphan Daniel Holmes stumbles upon it quite by accident. Before long, the 'shop from nowhere' - and its owner, Mr Silver - draw Daniel into a breathtaking world of magic and enchantment. Recruited as Mr Silver's apprentice, Daniel learns the secrets of the Emporium's vast labyrinth of passageways and rooms. But when Mr Silver disappears, and a shadow from the past threatens everything, the Emporium and all its wonders begin to crumble. Can Daniel save his home, and his new friends, before the Nowhere Emporium is destroyed forever?

The London Eye Mystery –Siobhan Dowd (Ages 9 -11)



Monday, 24 May, 11.32 a.m. Ted and Kat watch their cousin Salim get on board the London Eye. He turns and waves and the pod rises from the ground. Monday, 24 May, 12.02 p.m. The pod lands and the doors open. People exit in all shapes and sizes – but where is Salim? Ted and his older sister Kat become detectives since the police are having no luck. Despite their prickly relationship, they overcome their differences to follow a trail of clues across London in a desperate bid to find their cousin.

Shadowsmith – Ross MacKenzie (Ages 10 – 12)



Are you brave? When mysterious Amelia Pigeon turns up at Kirby's bedroom window in the dead of night, this is the question she asks him - immediately before they tumble into a world of ancient malevolent spirits who have torn their way into Kirby's sleepy seaside village. Ross MacKenzie weaves a world of magic and adventure, which twists and turns magnificently and will keep thrilled young readers guessing right to the end.

John Diamond – Leon Garfield (Ages 10 – 12)



What is the matter with old Mr Jones? Endless footsteps and low groans can be heard from his room in the dead of night. Only his son William knows the terrible secret: his father betrayed his business partner Mr Diamond, and swindled him out of a great fortune. William resolves to go to London, find Mr Diamond and make amends. But the murky big city, with its sinister characters and treacherous back streets, is no place for a boy of twelve. And Mr Diamond's own son is not the sort of person to forgive and forget. Danger and deceit lie waiting...

The Mirror Image Ghost – Catherine Storr (Ages 9 - 11)



Lisa is sure she has seen a ghost in her mother's bedroom mirror, but who can she tell? Her grandparents are oddly secretive about ghosts and the past, her mother seems distant since her recent marriage, and Lisa definitely can't confide in her new stepsister and stepbrother - she loathes them! As Lisa explores further she unravels some truths about her family's history and begins to look at herself and those closest to her in a new light.

Eren – Simon P Clark (Ages 10 – 12)



People are keeping secrets from Oli - about where his father is, and why he hasn't come to join them at his uncle's house in the country. But Oli has secrets too. He knows what lives in the attic. Eren - part monster, part dream, part myth. Eren who always seems so interested, who always wants to hear more about Oli's life. Eren, who needs to hear stories to live, and will take them from Oli, no matter the cost.

The Owl Service – Alan Garner (Age 12+)



Something is scratching around in the attic above Alison's room. Yet the only thing up there is a stack of grimy old plates. Alison and her stepbrother, Roger, discover that the flowery patterns on the plates, when traced onto paper, can be fitted together to create owls - owls that disappear when no one is watching. With each vanished owl, strange events begin to happen around Alison, Roger, and the caretaker's son, Gwyn. As the kids uncover the mystery of the owl service, they become trapped within a local legend, playing out roles in a tragic love story that has repeated itself for generations... a love story that has always ended in disaster.

The Graveyard Book – Neil Gaiman (Age 11 +)



After the grisly murder of his entire family, a toddler wanders into a graveyard where the ghosts and other supernatural residents agree to raise him as one of their own. Nobody Owens, known to his friends as Bod, is a normal boy. He would be completely normal if he didn't live in a sprawling graveyard, being raised and educated by ghosts, with a solitary guardian who belongs to neither the world of the living nor of the dead. There are dangers and adventures in the graveyard for a boy. But if Bod leaves the graveyard, then he will come under attack from the man Jack—who has already killed Bod's family...

Coraline – Neil Gaiman (Age 11 +)



Coraline's often wondered what's behind the locked door in the drawing room. It reveals only a brick wall when she finally opens it, but when she tries again later, a passageway mysteriously appears. Coraline is surprised to find a flat decorated exactly like her own, but strangely different. And when she finds her 'other' parents in this alternate world, they are much more interesting despite their creepy black button eyes. When they make it clear, however, that they want to make her theirs forever, Coraline begins a nightmarish game to rescue her real parents and three children imprisoned in a mirror. With only a stone with a hole in it and an aloof cat to help, Coraline has to escape this scary world.

Rooftoppers – Katherine Rundell (Ages 10 - 12)



Everyone thinks that Sophie is an orphan. True, there were no other recorded female survivors from the shipwreck which left baby Sophie floating in the English Channel in a cello case, but Sophie remembers seeing her mother wave for help. Her guardian tells her it is almost impossible that her mother is still alive, but that still means it is possible. So, when the Welfare Agency writes to her guardian threatening to send Sophie to an orphanage, she takes matters into her own hands and flees to Paris to look for her mother, starting with the only clue she has - the address of the cello maker. Evading the French authorities, she meets Matteo and his network of rooftopers - urchins who live in the sky. Together they scour the city for Sophie's mother before she is caught and sent back to London, and most importantly before she loses hope.

The Magician's Elephant - Kate DiCamillo (Ages 8 – 11)



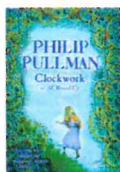
When a fortune teller's tent appears in the market square of the city of Baltese, orphan Peter Augustus Duchene knows the questions that he needs to ask: Does his sister still live? And if so, how can he find her? The fortune teller's mysterious answer (an elephant! An elephant will lead him there!) sets off a chain of events so remarkable, so impossible, that you will hardly dare to believe it's true. In this timeless fable, DiCamillo evokes the largest of themes — hope and belonging, desire and compassion — with the lightness of a magician's touch.

Millions - Frank Cottrell Boyce (Ages 9 - 11)



It was a one-in-a-million chance. A bag crammed with cash comes tumbling out of the air and lands right at Damian's feet. Suddenly the Cunningham brothers are rich. Very rich. They can buy anything they want. There's just one problem - they have only seventeen days to spend all the money before it becomes worthless. And the crooks who stole the cash in the first place are closing in - fast.

Clockwork - Philip Pullman (Ages 8 - 12)



Fritz, the writer, spins a spine-tingling tale to cheer up Karl, the apprentice clockmaker. But rather than helping matters, the story begins to come true.... The stories of Karl, the apprentice; Dr. Kalmenius, his nefarious 'savior'; Gretl, the brave daughter of the town innkeeper; and a young prince whose clockwork heart is in danger of winding down come together in surprising and magical ways in a story that has the relentless urgency of a ticking clock.

The Northern Lights – Philip Pullman (Age 10+)



Northern Lights, the opening instalment of Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy, sees Lyra and her shape-changing daemon embark on a dangerous quest. In Oxford, Lyra learns that children are being kidnapped by the mysterious Gobblers. When her friend Roger vanishes she determines to find him, and is given a powerful alethiometer which can reveal the truth in all things. After discovering that the adults around her are not what they seem, Lyra and Pantalaimon join forces with a band of gyptians. Travelling north they encounter witch-queens and armoured bears, before being captured and taken to Bolvangar - where children are being used in terrible and secret experiments.

How I live now - Meg Rosoff (Ages 13+)



15 year old Daisy is sent from Manhattan to England to visit her aunt and cousins she's never met: three boys near her age, and their little sister. Her aunt goes away on business soon after Daisy arrives. The next day bombs go off as London is attacked and occupied by an unnamed enemy. As power fails, and systems fail, the farm becomes more isolated. Despite the war, it's a kind of Eden, with no adults in charge and no rules, a place where Daisy's uncanny bond with her cousins grows into something rare and extraordinary. But the war is everywhere, and Daisy and her cousins must lead each other into a world that is unknown in the scariest, most elemental way.

Uncle Montague's Tales of Terror - Chris Priestley (Ages 9 - 11)



Uncle Montague lives alone in a big house and his regular visits from his nephew give him the opportunity to relive some of the most frightening stories he knows. But as the stories unfold, a newer and more surprising narrative emerges, one that is perhaps the most frightening of all.

The Lie Tree - Frances Hardinge (Age 13 +)



Faith Sunderly leads a double life. To most people, she is reliable, dull, trustworthy - a proper young lady who knows her place as inferior to men. But inside, Faith is full of questions and curiosity, and she cannot resist mysteries: an unattended envelope, an unlocked door. She knows secrets no one suspects her of knowing. She knows that her family moved to the close-knit island of Vane because her famous scientist father was fleeing a reputation-destroying scandal. And she knows, when her father is discovered dead shortly thereafter, that he was murdered. In pursuit of justice and revenge, Faith hunts through her father's possessions and discovers a strange tree. The tree bears fruit only when she whispers a lie to it. The fruit of the tree, when eaten, delivers a hidden truth. The tree might hold the key to her father's murder - or it may lure the murderer directly to Faith herself.

My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece – Annabel Pitcher (Ages 10 -12)



Ten-year-old Jamie hasn't cried since it happened. He knows he should have—Jasmine cried, Mum cried, Dad still cries. Roger didn't, but then he is just a cat and didn't know Rose that well, really. Everyone kept saying it would get better with time, but that's just one of those lies that grown-ups tell in awkward situations. Five years on, it's worse than ever: Dad drinks, Mum's gone and Jamie's left with questions that he must answer for himself. This is his story, an unflinchingly real yet heart-warming account of a young boy's struggle to make sense of the loss that tore his family apart.

The Girl of Ink and Stars – Kiran Millward Hargrave (Ages 10 -12)



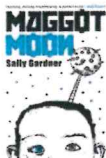
Forbidden to leave her island, Isabella Riosse dreams of the faraway lands her father once mapped. When her closest friend disappears into the island's Forgotten Territories, she volunteers to guide the search. As a cartographer's daughter, she's equipped with elaborate ink maps and knowledge of the stars, and is eager to navigate the island's forgotten heart. But the world beyond the walls is a monster-filled wasteland – and beneath the dry rivers and smoking mountains, a legendary fire demon is stirring from its sleep. Soon, following her map, her heart and an ancient myth, Isabella discovers the true end of her journey: to save the island itself.

Noughts and Crosses - Malorie Blackman (Age 12 +)



Two young people are forced to make a stand in this thought-provoking look at racism and prejudice in an alternate society. Sephy is a Cross - a member of the dark-skinned ruling class. Callum is a Nought -- a "colourless" member of the underclass who were once slaves to the Crosses. The two have been friends since early childhood, but that's as far as it can go. In their world, Noughts and Crosses simply don't mix. Against a background of prejudice and distrust, intensely highlighted by violent terrorist activity, a romance builds between Sephy and Callum -- a romance that is to lead both of them into terrible danger. Can they possibly find a way to be together?

Maggot Moon – Sally Gardner (Ages 10 – 13)



What if the football hadn't gone over the wall. On the other side of the wall there is a dark secret. And the devil. And the Moon Man. And the Motherland doesn't want anyone to know. But Standish Treadwell - who has different-colored eyes, who *can't read, can't write, Standish Treadwell isn't bright* - sees things differently than the rest of the "train-track thinkers." So when Standish and his only friend and neighbour, Hector, make their way to the other side of the wall, they see what the Motherland has been hiding. And it's big ... one hundred very short chapters, told in an utterly original first-person voice, propel readers through a narrative that is by turns gripping and darkly humorous, bleak and chilling, tender and transporting.

Coram Boy – Jamila Gavin (Age 12+)



In the late 1700s your circumstance of birth meant everything. Toby and Aaron may both find themselves living at Captain Thomas Coram's Hospital for parentless children, but their histories are as far apart as they could possibly be. Toby has been rescued from a life of slave labour in a faraway country; Aaron is the illegitimate son of the heir to a large country estate. They are watched over by Mish - a simple soul who has been with them since their arrival. His devotion to them is absolute, but his motives are not altogether straightforward. Could this curious man really be Meshak, the son of a wicked child-killer who was hanged at the gallows for his crimes?

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time – Mark Haddon (Age 12 +)



Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the colour yellow. Although gifted with a superbly logical brain, for fifteen-year-old Christopher everyday interactions and admonishments have little meaning. He lives on patterns, rules, and a diagram kept in his pocket. Then one day, a neighbour's dog, Wellington, is killed and his carefully constructive universe is threatened. Christopher sets out to solve the murder in the style of his favourite (logical) detective, Sherlock Holmes. What follows makes for a novel that is funny, poignant and fascinating in its portrayal of a person whose curse and blessing are a mind that perceives the world entirely literally.

The Knife of Never Letting Go – Patrick Ness (Age 12 +)



Prentissstown isn't like other towns. Everyone can hear everyone else's thoughts in an overwhelming, never-ending stream of Noise. Just a month away from the birthday that will make him a man, Todd and his dog, Manchee - whose thoughts Todd can hear too, whether he wants to or not - stumble upon an area of complete silence. They find that in a town where privacy is impossible, something terrible has been hidden - a secret so awful that Todd and Manchee must run for their lives.

The Kite Rider – Geraldine McCaughrean (Age 11+)



Strapped onto a beautiful scarlet - and-gold kite, Haoyou is sent into the sky to soar perilously among the clouds and entertain the awestruck crowds below. Traveling the Empire as part of the Jade Circus, Haoyou earns freedom, money, and unexpected fame - as he skillfully performs for local villagers who believe he can bring back messages from lost loved ones whose spirits haunt the sky. Miao even plans for Haoyou to perform before the Mongol conqueror Kublai Khan himself! But what about the duties that bind Haoyou to the ground - his duties to his family, especially to his widowed mother? And is the Great Miao all that he seems, or could he be using Haoyou?

The Ruby in the Smoke – Philip Pullman (Age 12 +)



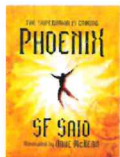
Sally is sixteen and uncommonly pretty. Her knowledge of English literature, French, history, art and music is non-existent, but she has a thorough grounding in military tactics, can run a business, ride like a Cossack and shoot straight with a pistol. When her dear father is drowned in suspicious circumstances in the South China Sea, Sally is left to fend for herself, an orphan and alone in the smoky fog of Victorian London. Though she doesn't know it, Sally is already in terrible danger. Soon the mystery and the danger will deepen - and at the rotten heart of it all lies the deadly secret of the ruby in the smoke...

The Many Worlds of Albie Bright – Christopher Edge (Ages 10 – 12)



When Albie's mum dies, it's natural he should wonder where she's gone. His parents are both scientists and they usually have all the answers. Dad mutters something about Albie's mum being alive and with them in a parallel universe. So Albie finds a box, his mum's computer and a rotting banana, and sends himself through time and space to find her...

Phoenix – S.F. Said (Ages 10 – 12)



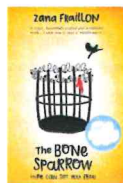
Lucky thinks he's an ordinary Human boy. But one night, he dreams that the stars are singing - and wakes to find an uncontrollable power rising inside him. Now he's on the run, racing through space, searching for answers. In a galaxy at war, where Humans and Aliens are deadly enemies, the only people who can help him are an Alien starship crew - and an Alien warrior girl, with neon needles in her hair. Together, they must find a way to save the galaxy. For Lucky is not the only one in danger. His destiny and the fate of the universe are connected in the most explosive way . . .

Beck – Mal Peet (Age 13+)



Born from a street liason between a poor young woman and an African soldier in the 1900s, Beck is soon orphaned and sent to the Catholic Brothers in Canada. Shipped to work on a farm, his escape takes him across the continent in a search for belonging. Enduring abuse and many hardships, Beck has times of comfort and encouragement, eventually finding Grace, the woman with whom he can finally forge his life and shape his destiny as a young man. A picaresque novel set during the Depression as experienced by a young black man, it depicts great pain but has an uplifting and inspiring conclusion.

The Bone Sparrow – Zana Fraillon (Ages 10 -12)



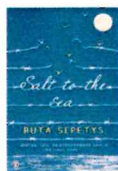
Subhi is a refugee. Born in an Australian permanent detention centre after his mother and sister fled the violence of a distant homeland, Subhi has only ever known life behind the fences. But his world is far bigger than that - every night, the magical Night Sea from his mother's stories brings him gifts, the faraway whales sing to him, and the birds tell their stories. And as he grows, his imagination threatens to burst beyond the limits of his containment. The most vivid story of all, however, is the one that arrives one night in the form of Jimmie - a scruffy, impatient girl who appears on the other side of the wire fence and brings with her a notebook written by the mother she lost. Unable to read it herself, she relies on Subhi to unravel her family's love songs and tragedies. Subhi and Jimmie might both find comfort - and maybe even freedom - as their tales unfold. But not until each has been braver than ever before.

RailHead – Philip Reeve (Ages 10 – 13)



Come with me, Zen Starling, she had said. The girl in the red coat. But how did she know his name? The Great Network is a place of drones and androids, maintenance spiders and Station Angels. The place of the thousand gates, where sentient trains criss-cross the galaxy in a heartbeat. Zen Starling is a petty thief, a street urchin from Thunder City. So when mysterious stranger Raven sends Zen and his new friend Nova on a mission to infiltrate the Emperor's train, he jumps at the chance to traverse the Great Network, to cross the galaxy in a heartbeat, to meet interesting people - and to steal their stuff. But the Great Network is a dangerous place, and Zen has no idea where his journey will take him.

The Salt to the Sea – Ruta Sepetys (Age 12 +)



Winter, 1945. Four teenagers. Four secrets. Each one born of a different homeland; each one hunted, and haunted, by tragedy, lies...and war. As thousands of desperate refugees flock to the coast in the midst of a Soviet advance, four paths converge, vying for passage aboard the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, a ship that promises safety and freedom. Yet not all promises can be kept. Inspired by the single greatest tragedy in maritime history, the author lifts the veil on a shockingly little-known casualty of World War II. An illuminating and life-affirming tale of heart and hope.

The Night Circus – Erik Morgenstern (Age 13 +)



The circus arrives without warning. No announcements precede it. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not. The black sign, painted in white letters that hangs upon the gates, reads:

Opens at Nightfall

Closes at Dawn

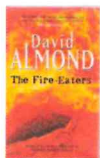
As the sun disappears beyond the horizon, all over the tents small lights begin to flicker, as though the entirety of the circus is covered in particularly bright fireflies. When the tents are all aglow, sparkling against the night sky, the sign appears. *Le Cirque des Rêves*. The Circus of Dreams. Now the circus is open. Now you may enter.

Skellig – David Almond (Ages 10 – 12)



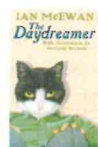
When a move to a new house coincides with his baby sister's illness, Michael's world seems suddenly lonely and uncertain. Then, one Sunday afternoon, he stumbles into the old, ramshackle garage of his new home, and finds something magical. A strange creature - part owl, part angel, a being who needs Michael's help if he is to survive. With his new friend Mina, Michael nourishes Skellig back to health, while his baby sister languishes in the hospital. But Skellig is far more than he at first appears, and as he helps Michael breathe life into his tiny sister, Michael's world changes forever . . .

The Fire-Eaters – David Almond (Ages 9 – 12)



Bobby Burns knows he's a lucky lad. Growing up in sleepy Keely Bay, Bobby is exposed to all manner of wondrous things: stars reflecting off the icy sea, a friend that can heal injured fawns with her dreams, a man who can eat fire. But darkness seems to be approaching Bobby's life from all sides. Bobby's new school is a cold, cruel place. His father is suffering from a mysterious illness that threatens to tear his family apart. And the USA and USSR are testing nuclear missiles and creeping closer and closer to a world-engulfing war.

The Daydreamer – Ian McEwan (Ages 9 – 11)



Peter Fortune is a daydreamer. He's a quiet ten year old who can't help himself from dropping out of reality and into the amazing world of his vivid imagination. His daydreams are fantastic and fascinating - only in the bizarre and disturbing world of dreams can he swap bodies with the family cat and his baby cousin, Kenneth, or wipe out his entire family with vanishing cream.

The Book Thief – Markus Zusak (Age 13 +)



It's just a small story really, about among other things: a girl, some words, an accordionist, some fanatical Germans, a Jewish fist-fighter, and quite a lot of thievery. Set during World War II in Germany, Markus Zusak's ground-breaking new novel is the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. Liesel scratches out a meagre existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbours during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement before he is marched to Dachau. This is an unforgettable story about the ability of books to feed the soul.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland – Lewis Carroll (Age 12+)



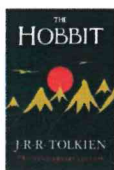
'Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, "and what is the use of a book," thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?"' So begins the tale of Alice, who follows a curious White Rabbit down a hole and falls into Wonderland, a fantastical place where nothing is quite as it seems: animals talk, nonsensical characters confuse, Mad Hatters throw tea parties and the Queen plays croquet. Alice's attempts to find her way home become increasingly bizarre, infuriating and amazing in turn.

Haroun and the Sea of Stories – Salman Rushdie (Age 10 +)



Haroun's father is the greatest of all storytellers. His magical stories bring laughter to the sad city of Alifbay. But one day something goes wrong and his father runs out of stories to tell. Haroun is determined to return the storyteller's gift to his father. So he flies off on the back of the Hoopie bird to the Sea of Stories - and a fantastic adventure begins.

The Hobbit – Tolkien (Age 11+)



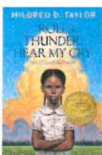
Bilbo Baggins is a hobbit who enjoys a comfortable, unambitious life, rarely travelling further than the pantry of his hobbit-hole in Bag End. But his contentment is disturbed when the wizard, Gandalf, and a company of thirteen dwarves arrive on his doorstep one day to whisk him away on an unexpected journey 'there and back again'. They have a plot to raid the treasure hoard of Smaug the Magnificent, a large and very dangerous dragon...

Time Travelling with a Hamster – Ross Welford (Ages 9-11)



"My dad died twice. Once when he was thirty nine and again four years later when he was twelve. The first time had nothing to do with me. The second time definitely did, but I would never even have been there if it hadn't been for his 'time machine'..." When Al Chaudhury discovers his late dad's time machine, he finds that going back to the 1980s requires daring and imagination. It also requires lies, theft, burglary, and setting his school on fire. All without losing his pet hamster, Alan Shearer...

Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry – Mildred D. Taylor (Age 11+)



Why is the land so important to Cassie's family? It takes the events of one turbulent year - the year of the night riders and the burnings, the year a white girl humiliates Cassie in public simply because she's black - to show Cassie that having a place of their own is the Logan family's lifeblood. It is the land that gives the Logans their courage and pride—no matter how others may degrade them, the Logans possess something no one can take away.

The Time Machine – H.G. Wells (Age 10 +)



The book's protagonist, referred to as The Time Traveller, by the author is a scientist by profession. The book begins with the narrator's interaction with his dinner guests. The protagonist insists on the existence of the fourth dimension, namely space and he demonstrates a model machine for traveling through it. Despite utter disbelief of his guests, the protagonist sincerely believes time traveling is a fact that cannot be done away with. He reveals to his guests that he has made a machine by which time traveling can be made possible. By the next week, the narrator joins his guests again, only to reveal astonishing, yet magnificent; experiences which he had while time traveling.