



Warwick School

READING LIST

We are excited to launch the official Warwick School Reading List. The books have been selected by teaching staff, choosing books to engage pupils; foster enjoyment of reading; increase empathy and understanding of the world around us. Some suggestions are suitable for older pupils – the librarian will be delighted to help advise pupils on the books that are right for them. We challenge pupils to read the entire list before they graduate from Warwick School.

THINGS FALL APART

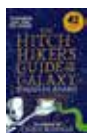
Chinua Achebe



Mrs Albrighton says: For those studying or with an interest in colonial history, this is a must. It was a privilege to read a novel written by a Nigerian and for the people of Western Africa- telling their story. At first, I came to this trilogy believing that it was my responsibility to read the story; it quickly became a story that I was engrossed in and one that I will revisit many times more. The consequences of colonialism, and the themes of power and identity will sadly, probably never grow old.

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

Douglas Adams



Mrs Taylor says: A brilliantly witty, comic science-fiction from the perspective of a permanently bemused narrator traveling through space- what's not to love?

THE READING LIST

Sara Nisha Adams



Mrs Richardson says: It will resonate with anyone who loves books, their power to impart wisdom, open our eyes to the world and the lives of others, and the priceless role played by libraries in our communities. Set

in Wembley in London with all its variety, colour, cultures, contrasts and contradictions it's a must! Alesha aged 17, discovers a crumpled reading list inside a book at the local library, the list comprises of To Kill a Mockingbird, Rebecca, Life of Pi, The Kite Runner, Pride and Prejudice, Little Women, A Suitable Boy and Beloved which she works her way through along with building the most unlikely of friendships with others in the library. It made me want to revisit and reread all of the classics.

AMERICANAH

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie



Mr Barker says: I have read all Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's novels, but this is the one I have chosen to recommend for our list. *Americanah* is an extraordinary story of love, identity, and belonging, told through the eyes of Ifemelu, a young Nigerian woman who moves to America. As Uju Asika, author of *Bringing Up Race*, writes: "books will save the world because they allow you to see it through others' eyes." That is exactly what this novel achieves. At a time when immigration is such a politically charged issue— too often reduced to stereotypes or dehumanising headlines—*Americanah* reminds us that behind every statistic or news story is a person, with hopes, struggles, and dreams not unlike our

own. This is a book that asks us to recognise our shared humanity and to respond with empathy and kindness. It is beautifully written, thought-provoking, and deeply moving—a novel that will challenge you to reflect on your own assumptions while also offering the sheer pleasure of a great story, told by one of the finest contemporary writers.

THE HANDMAID'S TALE

Margaret Atwood



Ms Davies says: A wonderfully gripping book exploring the roles of men and women in society. It's a fascinating and terrifying read about the consequences of gradual totalitarian takeover of the USA - elements of the story feel far-fetched and almost familiar at the same time.

OUTRAGEOUS

Paul Baker



Dr McKee says: A fascinating social history of the Section 28 legislation which made the "promotion of homosexuality" illegal in UK schools and other publicly-funded institutions between 1988 and 2003 and the impact that this had on generations of UK citizens, LGBTQ+ or otherwise.

GIOVANNI'S ROOM

James Baldwin



Dr McKee says: This classic novel of an American in Paris grapples with ideas of social isolation, gender and sexual identity and the conflicts of race and masculinity that come from growing up in a country where key parts of yourself are not allowed to be expressed.

EMPIRE OF THE SUN

J G Ballard



Mrs Albrighton says: Written by an amazing writer. Autobiographical. Provides a unique window into WW2 and the events in Shanghai, which are often overlooked when teaching this subject to year 9.

THE DROWNED WORLD

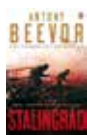
J G Ballard



Mr Walker says: Classic dystopian novel set in an Earth where global warming has flooded our cities and turned London into a tropical lagoon filled with reptiles and danger. The characters' dreams and nightmares begin to inhabit their waking hours as nature begins to devolve around them. Weird and wild. Radiohead's Pyramid Song video reminds me of this where you follow a diver exploring ruins that you slowly realise are very familiar.

STALINGRAD

Antony Beevor



Mr Miller says: Antony Beevor has written a lot of good books and he's rightly considered to be the preeminent historian of World War Two. I first read Stalingrad studying history during sixth form and it's magnificent and gripping. He took a story that hadn't been told for quite a while and did a lot of important new research. It's very easy to put down history books, especially big, long

ones like this. They're not usually written for the benefit of the casual reader or to be pageturners. This one is the opposite. It is very hard to put down and it's really good storytelling. It's an important read because it lays bare the brutality of the war on the Eastern front and its groundbreaking in the way it takes a big battle and makes it really accessible. For me, this is the best book that's ever been written on the Second World War. It's a classic.

THE PARIS ARCHITECT

Charles Belfoure



Mrs Lee says: Historical fiction with element of suspense.

NOUGHTS AND CROSSES

Malorie Blackman



Mrs Morgan says: Set in an alternative Britain, *Noughts and Crosses* tells the story of Sephy and Callum whose friendship blossoms into love despite the rules of laws of their society preventing them from being together. This is no mere 'soppy' love story, however, it is a real page-turner, packed with incident and plot twists. It also contains a serious message and provokes us to examine our own preconceptions about our own world and our place in it, leading us to challenge injustice and prejudice.

THE HEART'S INVISIBLE FURIES

John Boyne



Mrs Albrighton says: I felt that this was one of the most beautiful love stories I had read for a long time. There is an immense tenderness running through this novel, jarring alongside the harshness of an Ireland steeped in tradition and religion. You will weep for Cyril and you will laugh out loud at/with him. This is sure to become a favourite John Boyne book. Mrs

Browne says: The Heart's Invisible Furies is heart-wrenching, powerful and funny! I absolutely loved this book (and cried at the end of it!).

FAHRENHEIT 451

Ray Bradbury



Mr Sutherland says: Still deeply resonates with the issues we face in the world today (unfortunately).

HAMISH'S MOUNTAIN WALK

Hamish Brown



Dr Hodkinson says: It is an absolute classic of the outdoors.

QUIET: THE POWER OF INTROVERTS IN A WORLD THAT CAN'T STOPTALKING

Susan Cain



Ms Irani says: Not just for the introverts. It validates quieter strengths: deep thinking, careful listening, and introspection.

TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY

John le Carré



Mr Gibbs says: I love John le Carré's Cold War spy novels. This is arguably the best, and features the wonderful but unlikely hero George Smiley. Read it and then watch the 1979 BBC series with Alec Guinness playing Smiley.

THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER

Stephen Chbosky

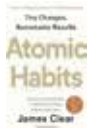


Mrs DeVouge-Bernards says: To read *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is to gain a friend in the book's main character. Charlie writes letters to an unknown friend, making the book intensely personal read. The reader experiences Charlie falling in love, going to

parties and making friends. He loves reading, music and movies. Charlie is exceptionally emotional and honest; a friend who wants to make everyone happy, sometimes at his own expense. As the book goes on, Charlie and the reader begin to realise that there is a reason he acts like this and trauma that hasn't been confronted. It's a book that teaches its readers that we need to participate in life. As Charlie tells us, "Standing on the fringes of life... offers a unique perspective. But there comes a time to see what it looks like from the dance floor."

ATOMIC HABITS

James Clear



Ms Irani says: It shows how small, consistent changes lead to massive results.

What I really like about it is its focus on identity: instead of saying "I want to get good grades," it's about becoming the kind of person who studies effectively.

THE GIRL WITH THE LOUDING VOICE

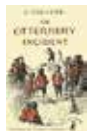
Abi Dare



Mrs Quinn says: The story of a Nigerian girl who is a daughter, wife and maid who learns to find her voice in a world determined to silence her.

THE OTTERBURY INCIDENT

C DayLewis



Mr Derrick says: It's a proper, old fashioned schoolboy story from the 1940's aimed more at a year 7-8 age group

but is an entertaining and fun short story by a great poet and author.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Charles Dickens



Mrs Hardiman says: Although this was reportedly Dickens's second favourite novel,

it's my number one. In this late Victorian novel, we follow the

protagonist, Pip, through the years as he transforms from a terrified and compassionate child into a deeply ambitious man. This is one of Dickens's leanest novels and the course of Pip's life is changed by dramatic encounters that start in Chapter One (set in a marshy graveyard). Famous for the bitter and ghostly Miss Havisham and the escaped convict Magwitch, it's a sinister novel in parts, but the characters are as intriguing and complex as they are creepy.

Read it before you finish school and read it again later. 'Great Expectations' is undoubtedly a book that grows up with you – quite rightly, too, since it is one of the most famous and fantastical rites of passage novels ever written.

THE CUT OUT GIRL

Bart van Es



Mr Jefferies says: A disturbing memoir of the Holocaust but not only disturbing about the Holocaust.

GIRL, WOMAN, OTHER

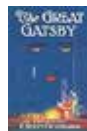
Bernardine Evaristo



Mrs Quinn says: I love this book. It is modern, full of energy and a celebration of 12 different characters whose lives connect in a variety of ways.

THE GREAT GATSBY

F Scott Fitzgerald



Mrs Quinn says: Expertly crafted and concise, we follow Nick as he is forced to confront the reality of the superficial world of the 1920s Jazz Age, leaving him disenchanted and isolated.

MYTHOS

Stephen Fry



Mr Town says: An incredible and charming retelling of myths from history. Really worth a read in terms of both the mythic stories and Fry's excellent storytelling!

A PATTERN OF ISLANDS

Arthur Grimble



Mr Stone says: For no other reason than it is a thoroughly entertaining read.

DIARY OF A NOBODY

George Grossmith



Mr Sutherland says: A genuinely laugh-out-loud novel.

THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST

Mohsin Hamid



Mrs Hodge says: A shocking, moving and disturbing first person narrative – as the title suggests – about American

post 9.11. This novel looks at the dark heart of the American Dream, and like my other suggestion (which is set in a claustrophobic post-war England) examines ideas about race and identity.

21 LESSONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Yuval Noah Harari



Ms Irani says: AI, fake news, nationalism, work, education, and identity in a rapidly changing world - it's readable, provocative, and idea-rich—perfect for future decision-makers!!

CATCH 22

Joseph Heller



Mr Hadley says: Humour and insight into evils of war and failings of mankind.

THE ODYSSEY

Homer



Mr Sutherland says: One of the cornerstones of western literature. Huge amounts of cultural capital is to be gained from reading it, as well as it still being a fantastically exciting story.



AI, fake news, nationalism, work, education, and identity in a rapidly changing world - it's readable, provocative, and idea-rich – perfect for future decision-makers!!"

Ms Irani, 21 Lessons for the 21st Century

THE KITE RUNNER

Khaled Hosseini



Mr Cooley says: Set in a country (Afghanistan) generally known for entirely negative reasons, this is

a beautiful and uplifting book by a great author.

NEVER LET ME GO

Kazuo Ishiguro



Dr McKee says: A thought-provoking piece of science fiction which really explores the idea that some of us

might be born for a particular purpose.

THE BOOK OF JOB

The Bible



Mr Preece says: Job is a righteous person from the land of Uz who suffers from the loss of his wealth

and family. The book of Job is very important, as it teaches that tragedy can strike the best of people, and continuing to work through the hardest of times is very important for a fulfilling life.

A BAG OF MARBLES

Joseph Joffo (romanticized autobiography)



Mme Thomas says: When Joseph Joffo was ten years old, his father gave him and his brother a little bit

of money and instructions to flee

Nazi-occupied Paris and, somehow, get to the south where France was free. It is a book full of adventure, humour showing France during WW2 seen through the eyes of a 10 year old Jewish boy.

PACHINKO

Min Jin Lee



Mr Mann says: This is a terrific insight into the historical atrocities that citizens of Korea and Japan mutually suffered in the 20th century, told through the individual story of a family over generations. One of the most interesting reads of 2024 for me, and I'd highly recommend to anybody who has an interest in East Asian culture and history, as well as people who love an epochal tragedy!

GOD'S UNDERTAKER: HAS SCIENCE BURIED GOD?

John C Lennox



Mrs Morgan says: This book evaluates modern science in relation to the debate between atheistic

and theistic interpretations of the universe and provides a fresh basis for discussion. John Lennox, Professor of Mathematics at Oxford (emeritus) is an internationally renowned speaker on the interface of science, philosophy and religion.

THE BEEKEEPER OF ALEPPO

Christy Lefteri



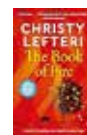
Mr Stephenson-Ray says:

The book touches on very important issues around civil war, migration and human

rights. It opened my eyes to some issues I was not aware of.

THE BOOK OF FIRE

Christy Lefteri



An incredible book about the terrible impact of a wildfire but also a story of hope and human redemption.

THE PERIODIC TABLE

Primo Levi



Mr Forth says: This book has been named the best science book ever written by the Royal Institution of

Great Britain, and is considered to be Levi's crowning achievement. The Periodic Table is an impassioned response to the Holocaust. Consisting of 21 short stories, each possessing the name of a chemical element, the collection tells of the author's experiences as a Jewish-Italian chemist before, during, and after Auschwitz in luminous, clear, and beautiful prose. It is suitable for all readers. Don't be put off if chemistry is not your thing. You will be missing out! Mr Cooley adds: Chemistry is NOT my thing, but this is a brilliant book.

SMALL ISLAND

Andrea Levy



Mrs Hodge says: This novel explores ideas about being 'othered'. In our current world it is fantastically

relevant and would be a great choice for year 11 up.

THE DISCARDED IMAGE

C S Lewis



Mr Field says: Lewis' book is foundational if you want to get to grips with Chaucer, Spenser, et.al.

KING SOLOMON'S RING

Konrad Lorenz



Mr Grant says: Written by Nobel Laureate Konrad Lorenz. It is a brilliant account of the study of

animal psychology and behaviour.

Perfect for anyone studying Biology for GCSE or A Level.

REBECCA

Daphne du Maurier



Ms Mells says: One of my favourite books! The protagonist struggles to settle into her new marriage with wealthy widower Maxim de Winter because she's constantly comparing herself to his ex-wife, the mysterious and glamorous, Rebecca. However, things aren't all as they seem...

THE TATTOOIST OF AUSCHWITZ

Heather Morris



Mrs Kitchen says: 1) It covers the events of the Holocaust 2) It is harrowing but beautifully written.

THE BLUEST EYE

Toni Morrison



Mrs Morgan says: Toni Morrison's first novel focuses on the lives of a poor black family in post-Depression

1940s Ohio. It is in many places a quite a harrowing read but it does encourage us to examine our own perceptions and preconceptions of privilege, identity and beauty. There is much to provoke further discussion.

OPEN WATER

Caleb Azumah Nelson



Dr McKee says: I read this book in one sitting. A beautifully written meditation on race, masculinity, love, and belonging in modern Britain.

MASTER AND COMMANDER

Patrick O'Brien



Mr Sutherland says: Only for older readers, but once you immerse yourself in O'Brien's literature it's spellbinding. It

has fantastic characters, is historically perfect and the plots are deeply engaging, especially for anyone interested in the navy in the age of sail, or Napoleonic era.

'ANIMAL FARM'

George Orwell



Mrs Doughty says: It tells us a lot about Power- the responsibilities which come with it and the dangers of its abuse.

'1984'

George Orwell



Mrs Wyatt says: It is probably the most important book ever written because it explains how easily human

minds can be corrupted by malevolent regimes. Room 101 is far less frightening than the psychological manipulation that occurs throughout the text. The everyday methods that are portrayed of those in power undermining truth and human relationships happen around us frighteningly regularly and the novel teaches us how to be alert to these methods.

HEARTSTOPPER

Alice Oseman



Mr McKee says: This whole series of graphic novels (which inspired the hit Netflix series) is wonderful in its

simplicity and depth. Telling the story of Nick and Charlie, two teenagers finding themselves, and each other, at school, it is both a love story and a coming of age story full of loveable characters and recognisable situations.

THE DESCENT OF MAN

Grayson Perry



Mr Stingemore says:

This book wryly explores how destructive fixed

gender roles and ideas of

masculinity can be. The book is critical of certain aspects of masculinity, but not of men generally, and helps all boys and men reflect on their own masculinity and its impact on themselves and those around them.

MY HIDDEN CHIMP

Dr Steve Peters



Ms Kirby says: An official youth version of The Chimp Paradox - child friendly

explanations of the chimp

brain and how to manage anger, anxiety, impulsivity etc.

SUCH A FUN AGE

Kiley Reid



Dr McKee says: A hugely readable debut novel about prejudice, privilege and the assumptions we make which could change someone's life forever.

SO YOU'VE BEEN PUBLICLY SHAMED

Jon Ronson



Ms Irani says: A funny yet sobering look at online culture, cancel culture, and the consequences of mob mentality. It's about growing up in a digital world—helping you reflect



"I read this book in one sitting. A beautifully written meditation on race, masculinity, love, and belonging in modern Britain."

Dr McKee, Open Water

on empathy, accountability, and the power of one voice.

THE HARRY POTTER SERIES

JK Rowling



Mrs Holton says: A fantastic series of books that allows you to escape into a magical world, sparking your imagination and they promote a love of reading.

THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS

Arundhati Roy



Ms Irani says: The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy is beautifully written and deeply moving. As someone

of Indian heritage living in the UK, I found the story incredibly powerful — not just because of its literary brilliance, but because of how honestly it portrays the complexity of family, love, and societal expectations in India. The novel, set in Kerala, weaves through the lives of twins Estha and Rahel and touches on issues like caste, class, colonial history, and forbidden love — themes that still feel relevant today. For pupils here, it's an eye-opening look into a world that might feel far away but is brought to life with rich detail and emotion. This isn't always an easy read, but it's one that stays with you and gets you thinking. It's a great book for developing

empathy, understanding different perspectives, and appreciating the power of storytelling.

THE MAN WHO MISTOOK HIS WIFE FOR A HAT

Oliver Sacks



A non-fiction account of patients lost in a world of neurological disorders. Compelling and insightful.

BEHAVE – THE BIOLOGY OF HUMANS AT THEIR BEST AND WORST

Robert M. Sapolsky



Mrs Hemming says: If you've ever wondered why people do what they do, this book is for you.

FRANKENSTEIN

Mary Shelley



Mr Prentice says: This fantastic gothic horror novel is considered one of the first works of Science

Fiction due to its use of current (pun intended) scientific ideas as an in road to questioning the morality of experimentation and humanity.

ANTIGONE

Sophocles



Mr Cooley says: Written almost 2,500 years ago, it deals with the absolutely contemporary issues of

clash between religious and secular values; and the question of how to respond to a leader who seems to be overstepping his powers. It is also perhaps the best example of Greek theatre, on which all Western drama is ultimately based.

THE SECRET HISTORY

Donna Tartt



Mr Bates says: It provides a powerful commentary on consequence, privilege and belonging. It may be a little dark for the younger lads but I found it very important when I was in sixth form.

THE NIGHT ALPHABET

Joelle Taylor



Dr McKee says: A woman in the year 2233 enters a tattoo parlour and asks for one more tattoo to connect all the tattoos on her body together. For each tattoo there is a story, and the Night Alphabet tells us these stories which span across history.

RELIGION AND THE DECLINE OF MAGIC

Keith Thomas (Perhaps Y10 upwards)



Mr Field says: Thomas' book is excellent reading by a deeply informed historian, discusses pre-scientific cultural enlightenment.

“

This is the finest collection of short stories from one of the world's funniest writers. Each short story is only a dozen or so pages, and can be easily read in half an hour or so, offering a escape into the timeless and preposterous world of high-jinx, farce, and bumbling chaos of Bertie Wooster."

Mr Andrews, *Very Good, Jeeves*

THE HOBBIT

J.R.R. Tolkien



Mr Milsom says: A charming adventure story with a kind and humble hero. A perfect introduction into the world of Tolkien and a far more manageable read than The Lord of The Rings. It's hard to believe that this classic story was written almost 100 years ago!

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

J.R.R. Tolkien



Mr Sutherland says: The start of modern fantasy, in many ways, and it remains one of the most evocative examples of high fantasy that is deeply grounded in history and mythology.

JOHNNY GOT HIS GUN

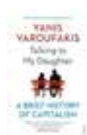
Dalton Trumbo



Dr McKee says: This fantastic anti-war novel reminds us that being a real soldier in a real war is far from the fantasy of CCF exercises. War is hell, and Trumbo weaves a horrifying tale of one soldier's harrowing reality.

TALKING TO MY DAUGHTER ABOUT THE ECONOMY

Yanis Varoufakis



Mr Keech says: It explains how market economies and monetary systems work in a way that can be understood by all.

BRIDESHEAD REVISITED

Evelyn Waugh



Mr Bennett says: The novel tells the story of the romances, tragedies, and transformations of Charles Ryder. It is a captivating journey into a world that has disappeared, from the dreaming spires of Oxford to the grand stately home of the Flyte family. Waugh's novel explores the themes of faith, love and friendship, and it is a powerful, yet wonderfully worded, narrative that is packed with nostalgia. It is considered one of the greatest novels of all time.

VERY GOOD, JEEVES

PG Wodehouse



Mr Andrews says: This is the finest collection of short stories from one of the world's funniest writers. Each short story is only a dozen or so pages, and can be easily read in half an hour or so, offering a escape into the timeless and preposterous world of high-jinx, farce, and bumbling chaos of Bertie Wooster, consistently rescued from disaster by the wisdom of his long-suffering valet, Jeeves. Even for the Warwick School leaver not destined for a life of aloof hedonism in various country houses, anything written by Wodehouse equips the young man with a chance to escape to a ludicrous world but with eminently relatable themes, as well as some of the finest and funniest turns of phrase in the western canon.

