

# King James's School Newsletter



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## Assemblies

Assemblies this week for all students marked LGBTQ+ history month. Miss Dixon, Miss Preston, Miss Gilbert, Mr Gaskin, Miss Hewitt, Mr Heddell and Mr Gordon all delivered passionate assemblies exploring how far we've come and how we as a school and wider community can work together to strengthen respect, equality, and diversity for everyone.

Students across all years were engaged and focused and enjoyed follow up discussions in tutor time. At KJS, we are proud of our whole school community for coming together to mark this occasion and continue to show our commitment to inclusion and kindness.

Next week - we will be celebrating International Women's Day on Friday with all students from Year 7 - 13 watching a virtual assembly delivered by Miss Carradice.

We also have Careers focused assemblies for Year 8,9 and 10 as part of National Careers Week.

## Message from Ms Oakley

Dear parents, carers and students,



Thank you for being Ready and Respectful!

Thank you to our students who have made a positive start to this half term, with excellent uniform, equipment and adherence to our updated Mobile Phone Policy. The full version of the updated policy can now be found on school website.

Year 11 Supporting Success - The Countdown is on!

Thank you to all the parents, carers and students who attended last night's Supporting Success event which outlined the exam road-map, revision strategies, details about Study Leave and the criteria for attending prom. A letter, with further details will follow early next week.

Year 11 should also be praised for the way that they have started their practical examinations, with preparations, planning and products being produced of an extremely high quality! Well done to all involved and good luck for the future examinations, including next week's mocks in English Language and Maths, taking place on Monday.

Looking Ahead

It may only be a five-week half-term, but it's a busy one! Next week the focus is on all things literary, with the whole school celebrating World Book Day and the Year of Reading. From the masked reader, a whole school page-turner, visiting author and more it looks to be a very exciting week for all!

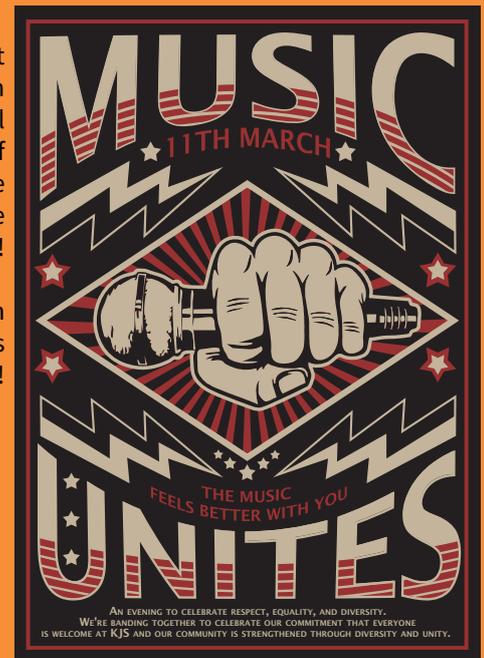
And don't forget our Music Unites concert which takes place on Wednesday 11th March, tickets are on sale on Parent Pay, so don't miss out!

Thank you as always for your on-going support,

Kind regards,

Miriam Oakley

Headteacher



## The Week Ahead: 2 March 2026

Day	Event	Year	Time	Location
Mon	House Book Quiz Week	All	Form	In school
Tue				
Wed				
Thur	World Book Day Paris trip departs	All	Various	In school
Fri				

### Little Shop of Horrors - Musical Stars!

At the end of last half term, musicians from Years 9–12 came together to perform in Little Shop of Horrors. This production would not have been possible without the dedication, commitment, and exceptional talent of these remarkable students. The score was incredibly demanding, and they spent months rehearsing—twice a week after school and on weekends—to achieve a truly professional sound. They were an absolute joy to work with; their energy and enthusiasm at every rehearsal created such a positive and inspiring atmosphere. I could not be prouder of each and every one of them.



### Careers

#### British Army Careers Events

We wanted to share a few upcoming British Army events that may be useful for your students exploring careers, skills development, or post-16 options. These sessions are free to attend and are suitable for students in Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13.

- Title: British Army - Seven Career Streams, Endless Opportunities
- About: Join us this National Careers Week and International Women's Day for an inspiring webinar exploring the breadth of career opportunities within the British Army.
- Date: Tuesday 3 March 18:30 – 19:30
- Event Type: Virtual
- Register Today: <https://britishar.my/SevenCareerStreamsEvent>
- Title: Women in the Army – Real Stories, Real Impact
- About: Join us for an online event celebrating women in the Army and the many career opportunities you can explore. You'll hear from soldiers and officers as they chat about their roles, the sports they get involved in, the places they've travelled, and how they balance Army life with family life.
- Date: Wednesday 11 March 18:00 – 19:00
- Event Type: Virtual
- Register Today: <https://britishar.my/RealStoriesRealImpact>

### Half Term 3 Recognition Points

Each Half Term students Recognitions Points are added up and shared with year groups to see which tutor groups have achieved the best average. Recognition Points are given daily for attendance, punctuality and meeting school expectations.



Half Term 3 Results:

	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
1st	7N1	8W3	9A3	10W3	11W1	12N1	13N1
2nd	7S1	8S1	9S2	10W1	11W2	12S1	13A2
3rd	7A1	8N1	9N1	10N3	11N1	12N2	13A1

7N1, 9A3 and 12N1 - Have been the top performing tutors groups in their years for the 3rd Half Term running. Well done!



# Attendance

Can you believe we are half-way through the school year?

As we reach this point in the academic year, it's a great opportunity to reflect on attendance and the positive habits our students are continuing to build every day. When attendance is calculated across the full year, there comes a stage when reaching certain milestones, such as the KJS expected attendance of 96% or remaining above the persistent absence threshold of 90%, becomes more challenging.

Current attendance	No further absences
85%	92%
86%	93%
87%	93%
88%	94%
89%	94%
90%	95%
91%	95%
92%	96%

We are approaching that point now, but the good news is that these goals are still very much within reach for many of our students. The examples below show how pupils at different attendance levels can still achieve these outcomes with strong attendance during the remainder of the year. Even students below 85% still have the opportunity to improve significantly and work towards 90% and beyond, every day in school really does make a difference.

You may hear the term persistent absence, which is defined nationally as attendance below 90%. While 90% can sound like a strong figure, it helps to look at what this means in practice.

Over a 190 day school year (38 weeks), 90% attendance equates to around 19 days missed, nearly four weeks of learning time. Of course, there are often genuine and unavoidable reasons for absence, and we fully understand that circumstances do vary from family to family.

Our aim is always to support students by helping them develop positive routines and habits that will benefit them both in school and in the future. When a student's attendance falls below 90%, we simply take a close look so we can understand whether any additional support may help and work together with families to remove barriers to attendance wherever possible.

If you ever have questions or concerns about your child's attendance, please feel free to get in touch. In addition, you are welcome to join us at school on Monday 9th March, 7pm - 8:30om, for our Parent Workshop: When Getting to School Feels Hard, Boundaries, Anxiety and Practical Strategies for Parents, click [here](#) to register.

9th-13th Feb	Whole School	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
	90.94%	94.48%	92.72%	87.57%	89.02%	90.83%	92.47%	89.68%

## When Getting to School Feels Hard,

Boundaries, Anxiety and Practical Strategies for Parents

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March, 7pm - 8:30pm

Click [Here](#) to Register



- Understanding EBSA and school refusal
- Common causes, anxiety, overwhelm, emotional regulation and avoidance cycles
- Boundaries that feel supportive, balancing empathy with consistency
- Practical tools for mornings, transitions and reducing power struggles
- When to seek extra support, next steps and helpful resources for parents

Presented By The Well Connections Therapy Team






**ONLINE WEBINAR SCHEDULE SPRING TERM 2026**

Thursday 29th January 4pm - 5pm - Sleep

Monday 2nd March 4pm - 5pm - Understanding and Managing Emotions

Monday 23rd March 4pm - 5pm - Self Esteem

Monday 20th April 4pm - 5pm - Exam Stress

All webinars can be accessed through Microsoft teams and are free to join. We welcome young people, parents and carers, teachers and other professionals to join. Joining information will be posted on our social media channels closer to the time.

@wellbeinginmind.mhst    @WIMT\_MHST

If you have any questions please contact [teww.wimtsa@nhs.net](mailto:teww.wimtsa@nhs.net)



# EMPOWER

Girls Support Girls

Aimed at ages 10-16 years

A safe, welcoming space for girls to build confidence, share experiences, and support each other's health and wellbeing, speaking up for change

Where Inspire Youth Yorkshire Community Hub, Halfpenny Close, Knaresborough, HG50TG

When- 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025 & alternative week from 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026 At 4-5:30pm

Scan below to sign up



Kindly Supported by THE LOCAL FUND



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@readingkjs

## Battle of the Books

On Thursday, St. John Fisher Catholic Academy hosted the annual Battle of the Books competition, welcoming teams from local secondary schools for what is always a challenging yet enjoyable quiz celebrating all things reading.

Our five students in Years 9 and 10, Aimée O (Y9), Keri G (Y10), Bethany R (Y10), Indigo S (Y10) and Isabel T (Y10), were a true credit to the school. Throughout the evening, they demonstrated impressive knowledge, great teamwork, and excellent sportsmanship-making new friends, supporting fellow competitors, and applauding the successes of other teams. Although they did not take home the overall trophy, they each won prizes for securing first place in one of the six rounds, and one member even received a book voucher for being the fastest to answer in a bonus round.



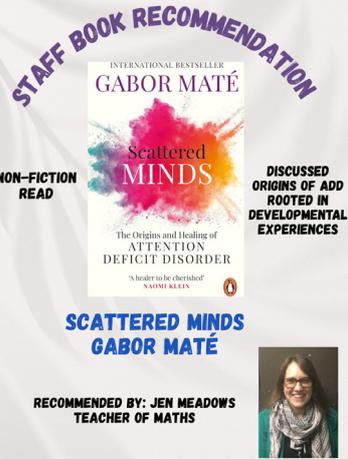
We extend a big thank you to St. John Fisher for being such fantastic hosts, providing a warm and welcoming venue, an enthusiastic and entertaining quizmaster and, most importantly, an abundance of cake!

We are already looking forward to next year's competition, which will be hosted by this year's winner, Ashville College.

## Fully Booked! A Celebration of Reading

As a reading school, we are committed to inspiring our students to read for pleasure and to develop the confidence to embrace new opportunities. Our annual literary festival, Fully Booked! A Celebration of Reading, brings the whole school together to share stories, celebrate authors and illustrators, enjoy creative writing and, most importantly, have fun.

We are delighted to share this year's festival programme with you (at the end of this newsletter). We encourage all students to take part in as many activities as possible and, thanks to the generous support of Knaresborough Rotary, there are numerous events and workshops for them to enjoy throughout this exciting week of reading and creativity.



Please note that the staff recommended reads are for KS5 students and adults.

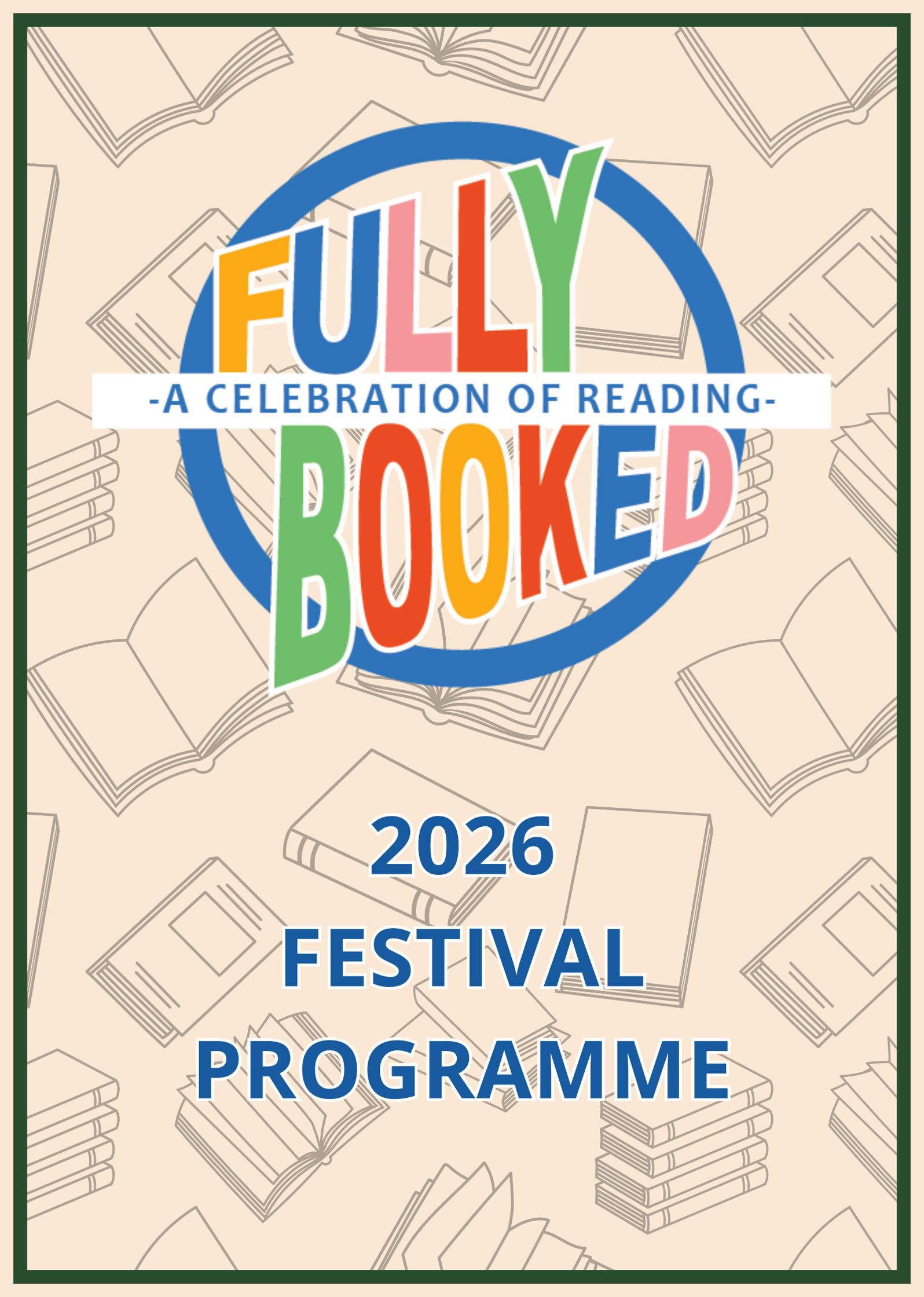
## Arts Award

We're pleased to share a new opportunity coming to King James's School: a weekly Arts Award programme delivered by Yorkshire CREATE and generously funded by Knaresborough Rotary. Starting soon, students in Years 8, 9, 10 and 12 can take part in a one-hour after-school session on Wednesdays in the Library each week. The programme uses creative practice to build real-world arts and literacy skills - through research, creative writing, reflective journals, and exploring artists and organisations. Students can work toward Explore, Discover, Bronze, Silver, or Gold Arts Awards, with higher levels carrying UCAS points.

This is a great chance for your child/children to pursue personal creative interests, strengthen communication skills, and join a supportive, mixed-age creative community.

Places are limited. If you think your child may be interested in this fantastic opportunity, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at [library@king-james.co.uk](mailto:library@king-james.co.uk) using 'Arts Award' as the subject heading.



The background is a light beige color with a repeating pattern of line-art books, some open and some closed, scattered across the page. A large blue circle is centered in the upper half of the image. Inside the circle, the word "FULLY" is written in large, colorful, outlined letters (F: yellow, U: blue, L: pink, L: red, Y: green). Below "FULLY", a white horizontal bar contains the text "-A CELEBRATION OF READING-" in blue, sans-serif, all-caps font. Below the bar, the word "BOOKED" is written in large, colorful, outlined letters (B: green, O: red, O: yellow, K: red, E: blue, D: pink).

**FULLY**  
-A CELEBRATION OF READING-  
**BOOKED**

**2026**  
**FESTIVAL**  
**PROGRAMME**



**Matt Abbott is a poet, award-winning lyricist, and educator from Wakefield.**

Matt is recognised as one of the UK's leading poetry facilitators. He has delivered workshops in schools as far afield as the Swiss Alps and the French Riviera, and also serves as an ambassador for Eureka! The National Children's Museum.

His spoken word show 'Two Little Ducks' gained critical acclaim at Edinburgh Fringe and on a UK theatre tour. His debut kids' poetry collection, 'A Hurricane in My Head', was published by Bloomsbury and led to a live appearance on 'Blue Peter' as well as a cameo in the Beano.

**Rowena Lloyd is the Director of local community arts organisation Yorkshire CREATE.**

With a background in theatre and literature, she is a keen advocate of creative self expression, artistic engagement, and access to impactful opportunities.

She has produced *The Knaresborough Eleven*, a community production, and is now working on *Orpheus: A New Musical*, which is heading to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this summer. She is excited to launch a new Arts Award programme at King James's School thanks to generous funding from Knaresborough Rotary, and is looking forward to talking to students about the programme during Fully Booked!



# ARTS AWARD

## KING JAMES'S SCHOOL

WEDNESDAYS  
3:30-4:30PM  
KJS LIBRARY

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YEAR 8, 9, 10, 12

CREATIVE PROJECTS, RESEARCH INTO ARTISTS,  
CREATIVE WRITING, REFLECTION, AND SHARING WORK

A CHANCE TO BE PART OF A SUPPORTIVE, CROSS-YEAR  
CREATIVE COMMUNITY

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COME ALONG TO THE LIBRARY AT LUNCH TIME ON  
WEDNESDAY 4TH MARCH TO FIND THE YORKSHIRE CREATE  
TEAM AND FIND OUT MORE!

## Computer Science - Years 7 - 12

**Years 7 and 8** will be reading extracts from 'The Wild Robot' and 'The Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy' followed by a series of tasks about Robotics and AI.

**Years 10, 11 & 12** will be reading 'The Martian' and exploring technology and space travel. They'll also practise communicating in ASCII HEX and take part in a coding survival game.



## Drama - Years 7 - 12

### Years 7-9

Throughout the week, all drama lessons will open with a special 'Do Now' task in celebration of our festival week. Students will be listening to their teachers read aloud extracts chosen to complement and enrich their current curriculum study.

Featured Texts:

### Year 7 – The Coral Island

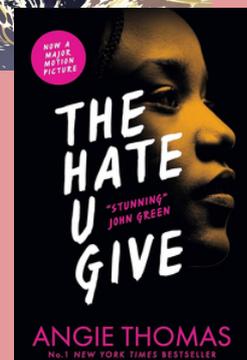
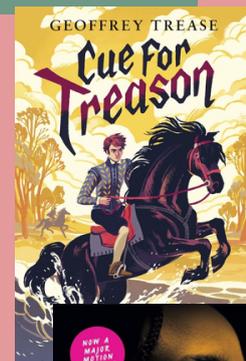
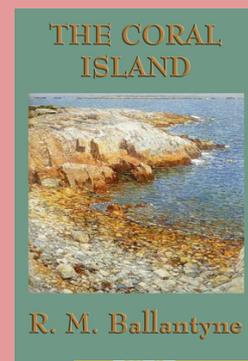
Embark on a classic adventure as students are transported to distant shores and introduced to the novel's themes of survival and friendship.

### Year 8 – Cue for Treason

Step into the intrigue of Elizabethan England, where rebellion, disguise, and high drama set the stage for this thrilling historical tale.

### Year 9 – The Hate U Give

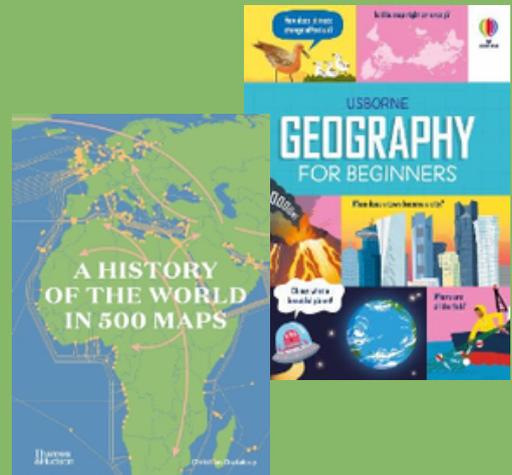
A powerful and contemporary voice takes centre stage as students hear an extract exploring identity, justice, and the courage to speak out.



In addition, staff will be recording videos for the department's Instagram, showcasing a variety of recommended reads for all our students throughout the week.

## Geography - Years 7 - 13

It's time to discover the 'Curriculum Reads' collection. Teachers will share their favourite books, and students can explore the Geography resources on display in the library window. Students will be encouraged to borrow a book, enjoy it, and to mark it off on their KJS bingo card!



## History - Years 7 - 13

All classes will take part in a short activity exploring the theme of 'banned books', highlighting issues of censorship throughout History. This includes links to the Year 11 topic of the 1933 Nazi book-burning ceremony, with opportunities to examine and discuss texts that were banned.

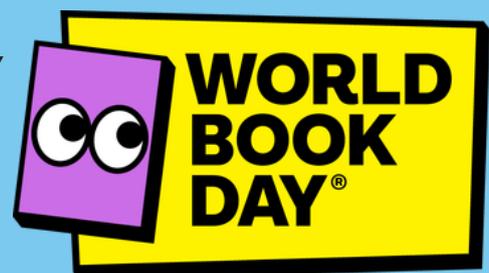
## Languages - Year 7

Students will take on a dynamic dual-translation challenge, exploring a text through two languages and testing their understanding with engaging comprehension activities.

## Library - Year 7

Year 7 students will receive their £1 book tokens and explore this year's *World Book Day* book selection.

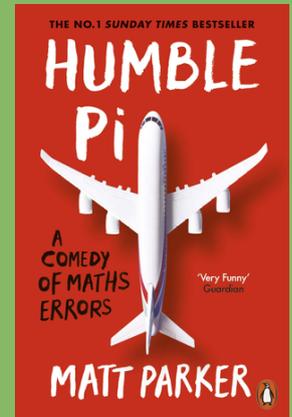
In Accelerated Reader lessons students will also share stories about their favourite books and take part in a quiz to decode book titles from emoji based clues.



## Maths - Years 7 - 10

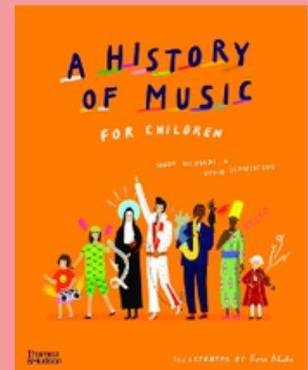
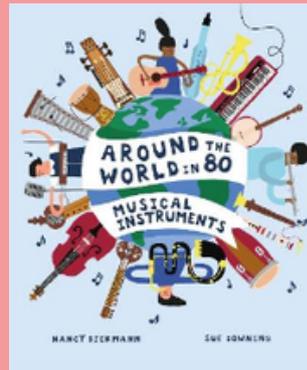
Students will explore the history of the metric system. They will read a book extract, tackle a vocabulary challenge, and take part in a range of fun activities!

Furthermore, all students (including KS5) will explore the maths 'Curriculum Reads' collection.



## Music - Year 7

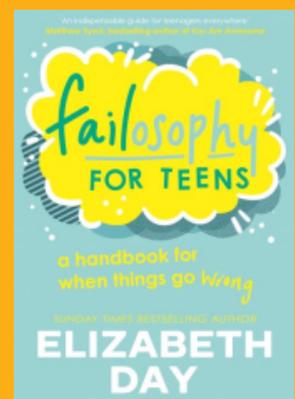
Students will enjoy a listening task inspired by the Harry Potter book series, bringing the wizarding world's atmosphere and adventure into the classroom.



## PSHCEE - Years 7 - 10

This week, lessons will be dedicated to *World Book Day*. Students will reflect on the mental health benefits of reading and will be introduced to the PSHCEE 'Curriculum Reads'.

Each group will listen to an extract from one of the selected books. Following this, students will choose from a range of activities to complete during the lesson, including the option to enter the *World Book Day* competition run by Jigsaw PSHE.



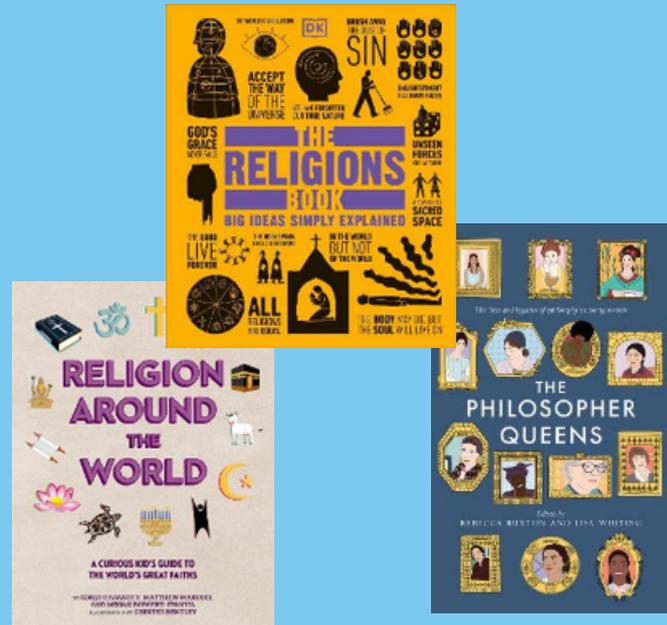
## Religious Studies - Years 7 - 13

### Years 7 - 9

Teachers will deliver selected extracts from the 'Curriculum Reads' to years 7, 8 and 9.

### Years 12 -13

KS5 students will delve into ideas explored in their philosophy and ethics anthologies.



## Science - Years 7 - 11

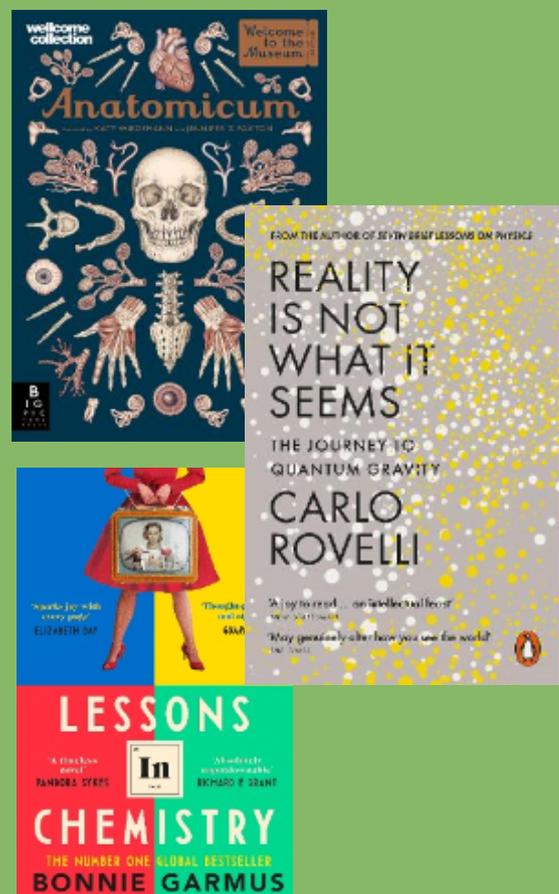
### Years 7-9

Students will take part in curriculum-linked reading activities inspired by *British Science Week*, with a special focus on Women in Science. Each session includes engaging follow-up activities designed to deepen understanding and encourage exploration.

### Years 10-11

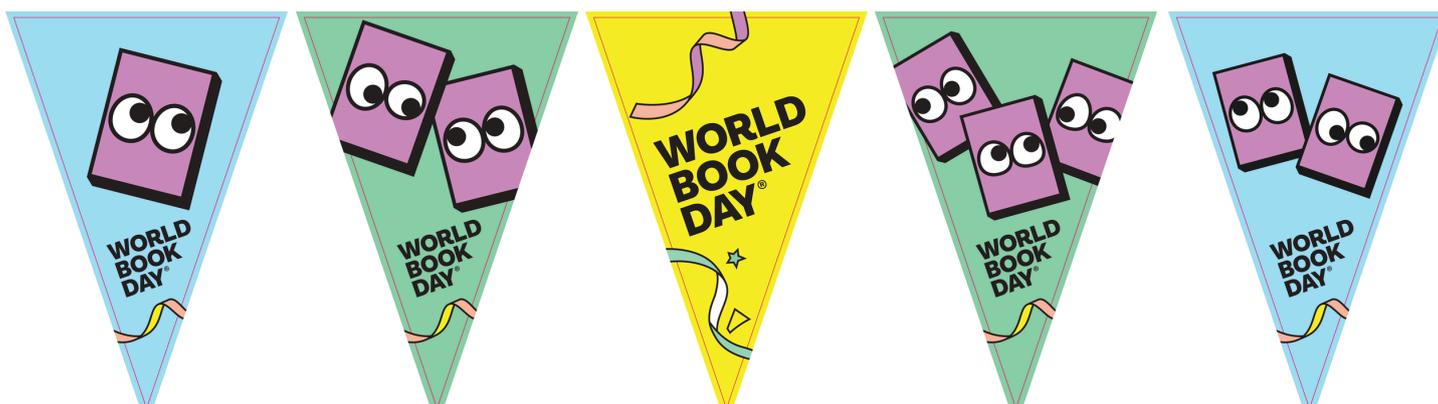
Teachers will share a selection of extracts and articles directly connected to current curriculum topics, accompanied by follow-up activities.

- Year 10: Bioenergetics
- Year 11: Mendel and genetics



Date	Event	Where	Year Groups	Time
Monday 2nd March	Tutor Time - Masked Reader	Form Rooms	All Year Groups	Tutor Time
	Skrentny Creative Writing Competition - Announcement of the winners	Library	All Staff and Students	Lunchtime*
Tuesday 3rd March	Matt Abbott	Library	KS3	P1, P2, P4, P5 and Break
Wednesday 4th March	Arts Award	Library	Years 8, 9, 10 & 12	Lunchtime*
Thursday 4th March	Whole School 'Big Read'	Whole School	All Year Groups	Start of each lesson
	New and used Book Sale	Library	Whole School	Lunchtime*
	Book Inspired Fancy Dress	Whole School	Staff and Year 7 students	All Day
Friday 6th March	Reading around the World	Library	All Year Groups	Lunchtime *

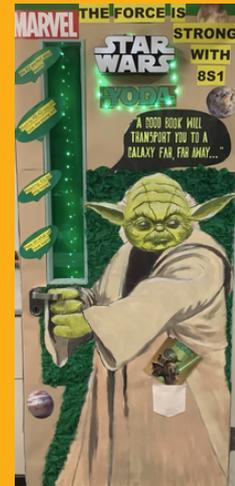
\* Please be advised the library has limited space for lunchtime activities. Please arrive as quickly as you can and you may also bring your packed/cold lunch.



## Dress Your Door

Bring a book to life on the door of your tutor or club room! Band together and pool your creativity in this challenge to show off your love of books and the characters and worlds they hold.

**The deadline is Thursday 19th March!**



## National Book Token Competition

Create a new design for National Book Tokens! Six winning entrants will bag HUNDREDS of pounds worth of National Book Tokens for their schools and themselves! Pick up a design sheet from the library and get creative. Remember it isn't all about artistic ability – a creative idea can stand out on its own merits! Return to the library before **13th March** to submit your entry.

### ONE OVERALL WINNER

£10 National Book Tokens gift card in their design for every child in their tutor group.

### FIRST PRIZE in each age range wins:

£350 National Book Tokens for the school and £100 National Book Tokens for the student.

### SECOND PRIZE in each age range wins:

£200 National Book Tokens for the school and £50 National Book Tokens for the student

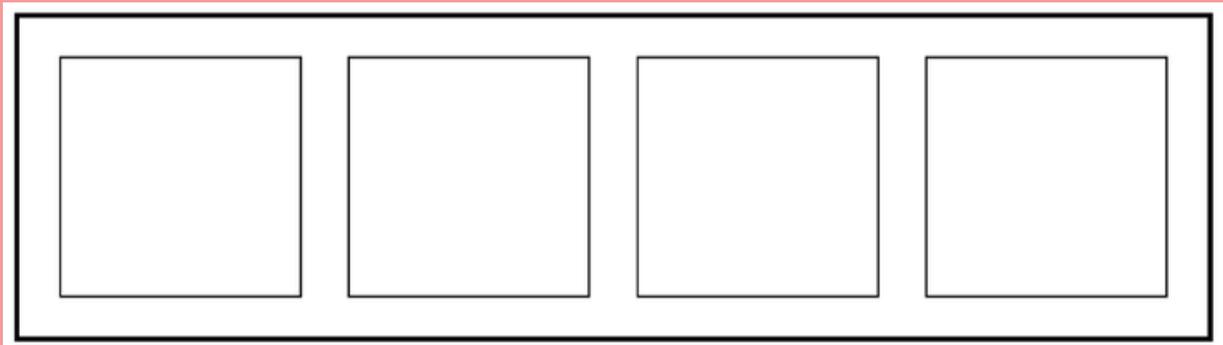




## House Graphic Novel Bookmarks

Create your own 4-panel graphic novel and enter it into this year's World Book Day house competition to express your creativity and win prizes. Collect your bookmark from the library during the week of *Fully Booked!* (2nd - 6th March).

Please return your completed bookmark to the library by 20th March.



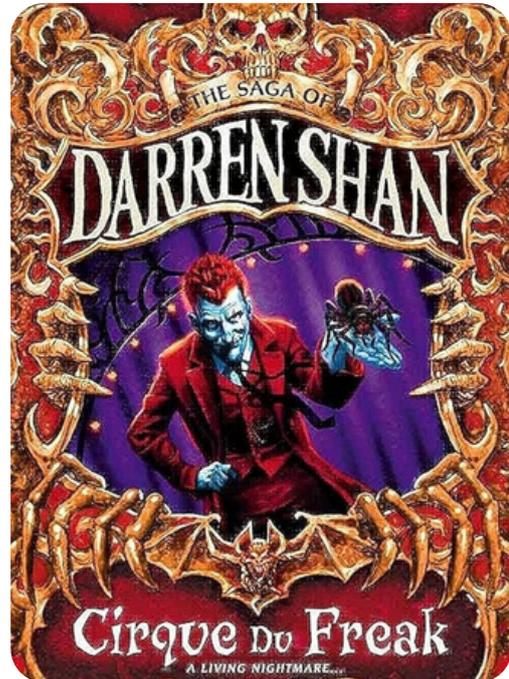
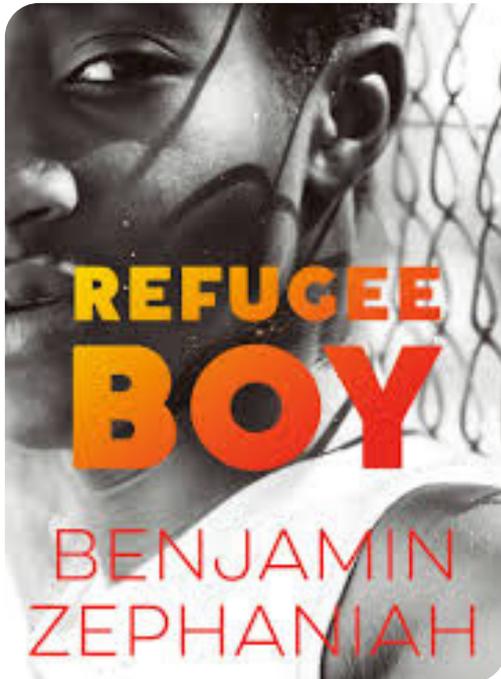
## The Masked Reader

Inspired by The Masked Singer, teachers will be reading excerpts from books while wearing costumes and masks to conceal their identities.

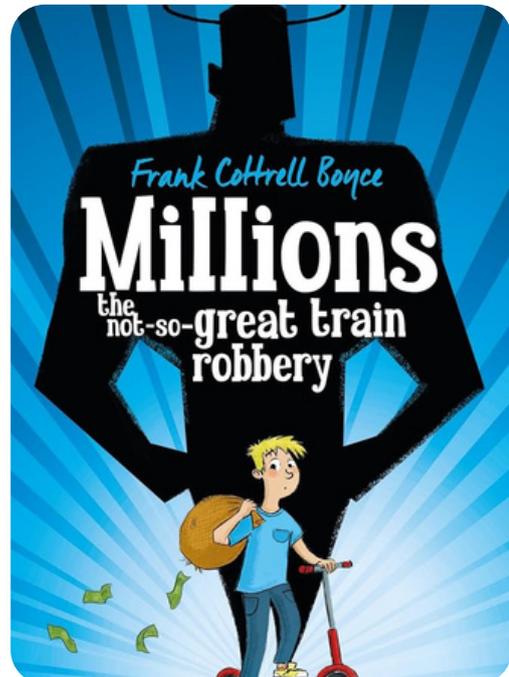
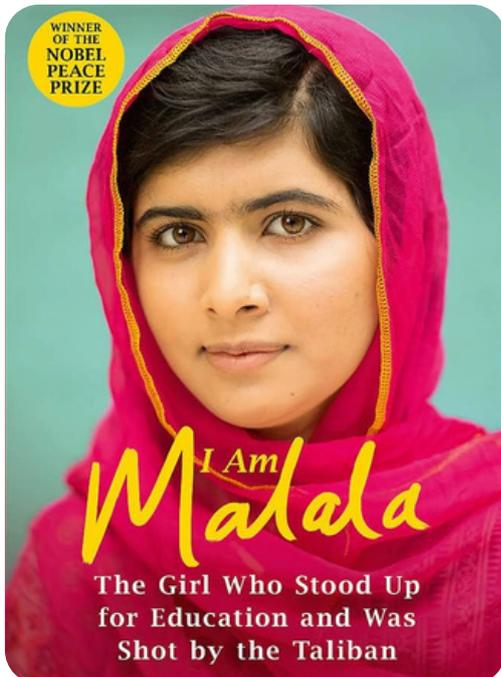
During Tutor Time, a short video will be played to give students the chance to guess who's behind the mask and which book they are reading. On *World Book Day*, there will be a grand finale where the teachers will unmask themselves and reveal their identities and the book they have been reading.

Prizes will be awarded for correctly identifying the teacher and the book.

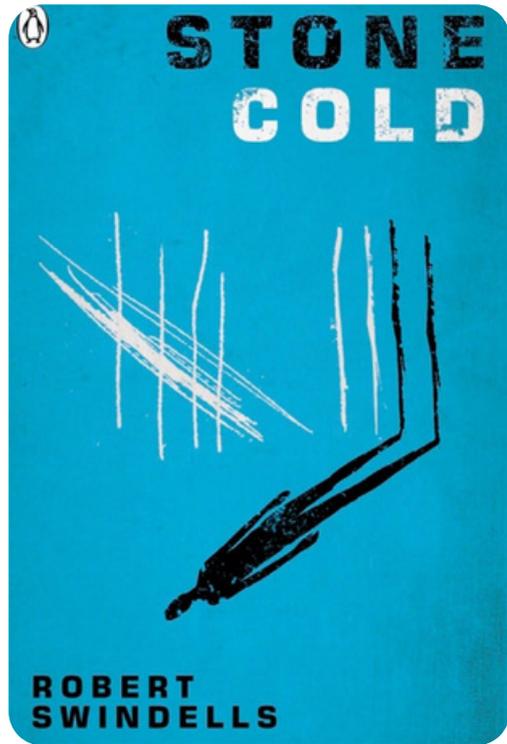
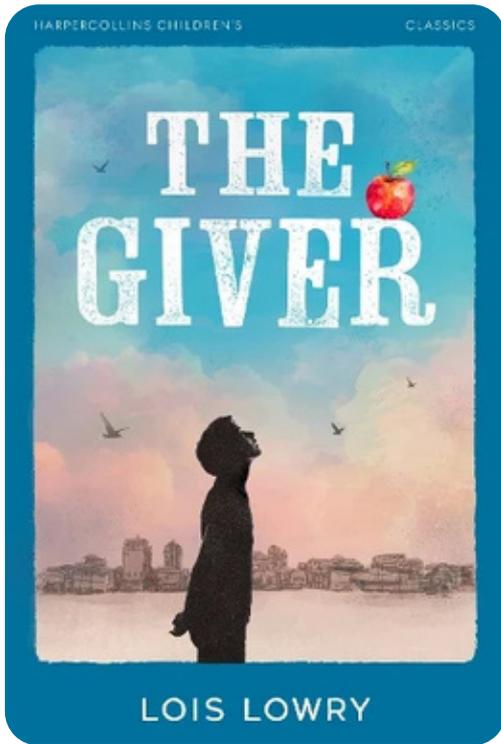




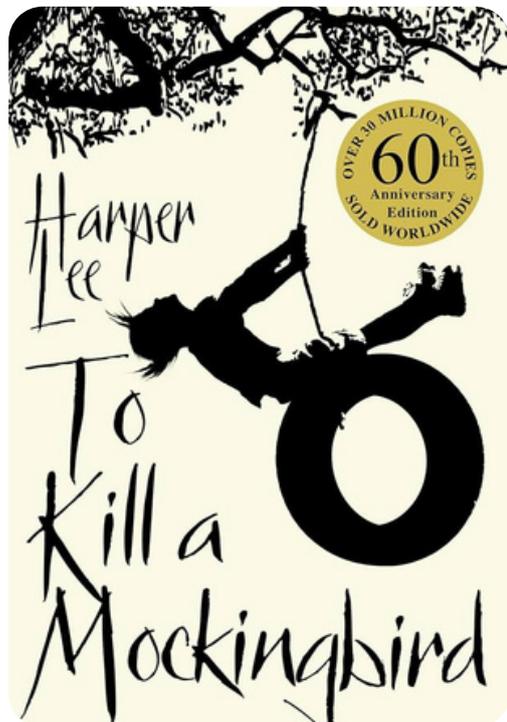
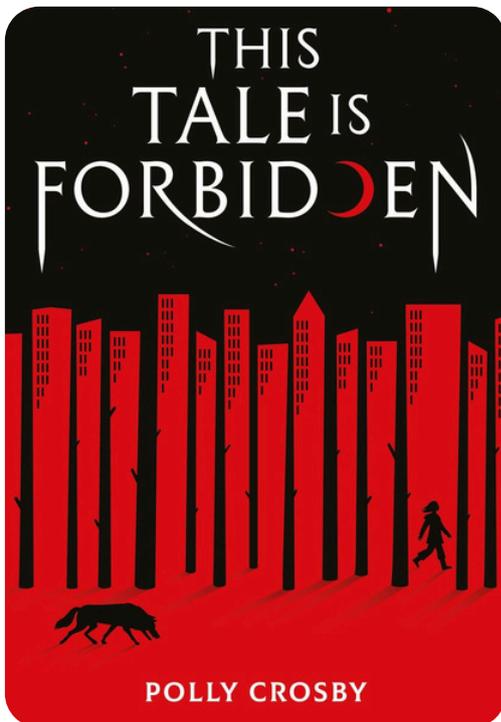
Year 7



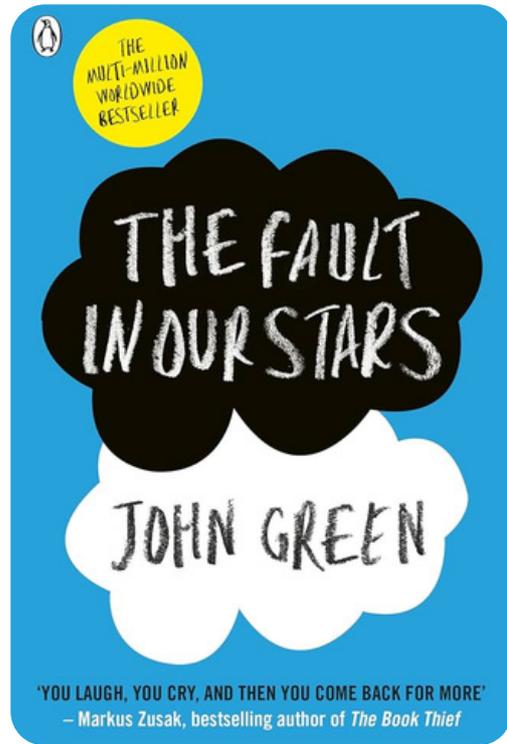
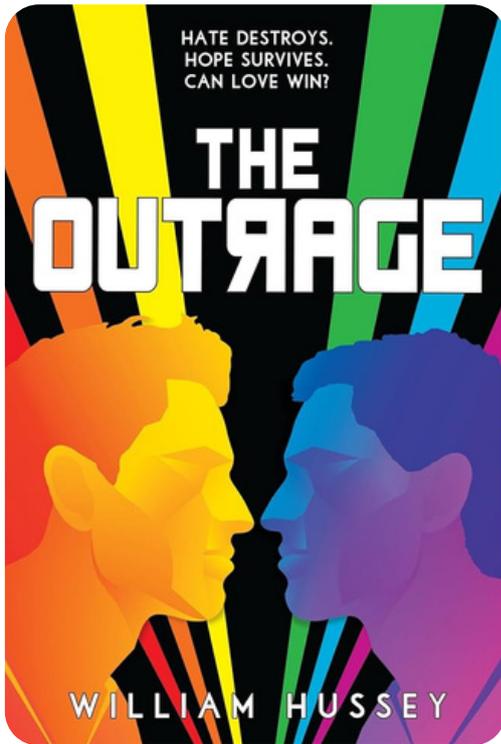
Year 8



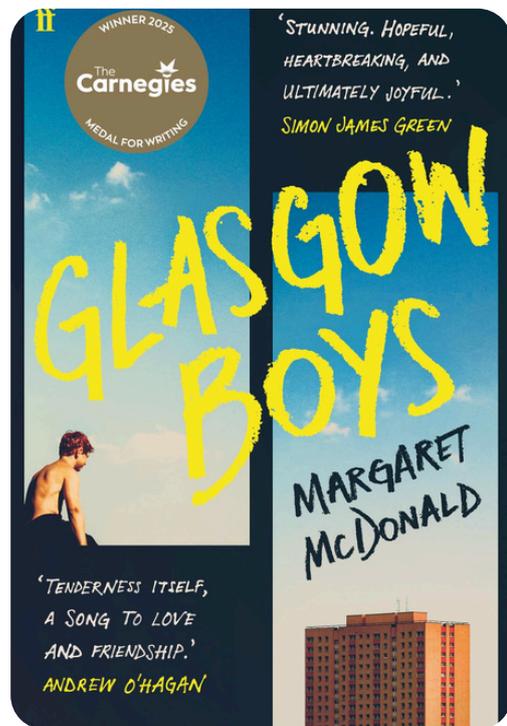
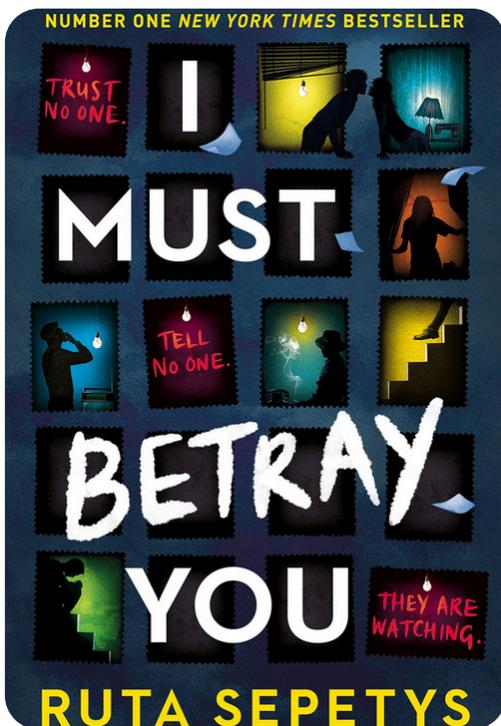
Year 9



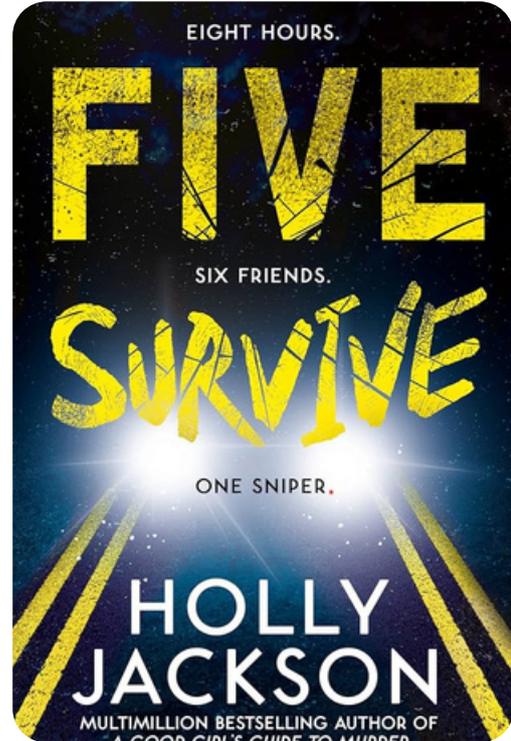
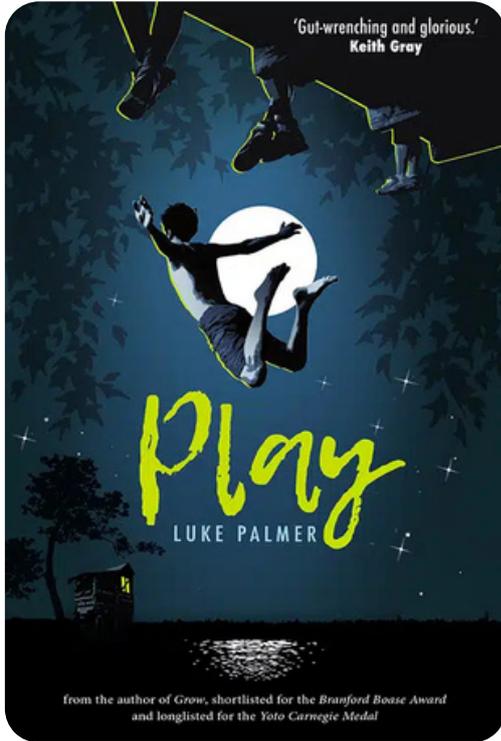
Year 10



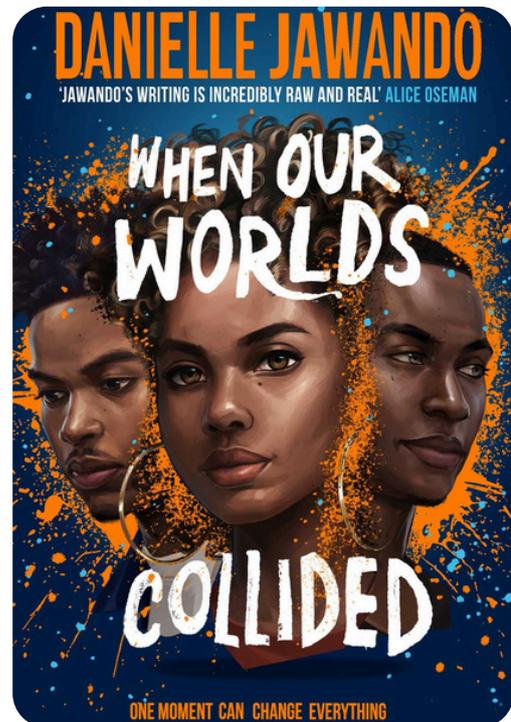
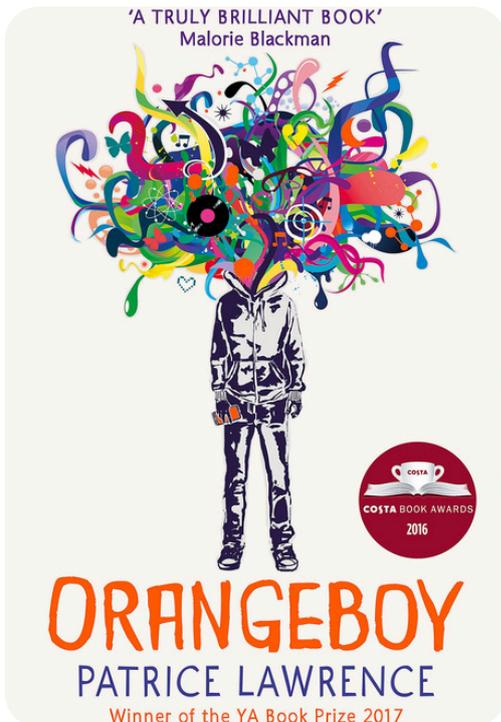
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