

## The English Department at Alder Community High School

### Reading Challenge: 16 Before 16!

'16 Before 16' is our reading challenge for all students. It runs until the end of Year 11 or until students have read their 16 books.

The increased difficulty and level of challenge in the new English GCSE means that students need to be fully prepared for what is now expected of them. The '16 Before 16' initiative is designed to support and aid this preparation.

Below is a list of books specially selected by our English Department as the 'must read' texts for young individuals. Your child is asked to choose 16 of these and read them before they finish their studies at Alder Community High School.

If you would like to participate in this competition, you need to ask your English teacher to be added to our 16 Before 16 Teams account where you can download our challenge and a reading log which you will use to write a short review of each book. House points will be awarded after each finished book and a prize and certificate will be issued when the competition has been completed and the reading log has been filled.

All of the texts are available to be booked out from the school library. Please find the shortlisted books below:

Please find the BAME authors and texts with BAME protagonists highlighted in pink, the LGBTQ+ authors and texts with LGBTQ+ representation are highlighted in orange and the novels highlighted in green tell a story about life through the lens of a unique perspective.

<b>GOTHIC/HORROR</b>		
<b>What's the title?</b>	<b>Who's the author?</b>	<b>What is it about?</b>
The Lie Tree	Frances Hardinge	The Lie Tree is set in the male-dominated Victorian scientific society, and tells the story of Faith Sunderly, a 14-year-old girl whose father is killed in mysterious circumstances after the family moves to the fictional island of Vane.
Coraline	Neil Gaiman	While exploring her new home, a girl named Coraline discovers a secret door, behind which lies an alternate world that closely mirrors her own but, in many ways, is better. She rejoices in her discovery, until the Other Mother and the rest of her parallel family try to keep her there forever.
Miss Peregrine's Peculiar Children	Ransom Riggs	When his beloved grandfather leaves Jake clues to a mystery that spans different worlds and times, he finds a magical place known as Miss Peregrine's School for Peculiar Children. But the mystery and danger deepen as he gets to know the residents and learns about their special

		powers - and their terrifying enemies.
The Spiderwick Chronicles	Tony Diterlizzi and Holly Black	9-year-old twins Jared and Simon and their 13-year-old sister Mallory move with their mother to a decaying Victorian house after their father leaves them. On their first night, they discover a secret library, and later discover a more house secrets and passages

#### AMBITIOUS GOTHIC/HORROR READS

The Woman in Black	Susan Hill	A young solicitor travels to a remote village where he discovers the vengeful ghost of a scorned woman is terrorizing the locals. Arthur goes to an isolated manor and soon he finds that Eel Marsh House is haunted by the vengeful ghost of a woman dressed in black.
Dracula	Bram Stoker	This novel tells the chilling tales of those that encountered the monster Dracula on his quest to emigrate from Transylvania to England, as he seeks to consume blood and spread his undead curse to the innocent.

#### NON-FICTION

What's the title?	Who's the author?	What is it about?
I am Malala	Malala Yousafzai	I AM MALALA is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons.
The Diary of Anne Frank	Anne Frank	In Nazi-occupied Holland in World War II, shopkeeper Kraler hides two Jewish families in his attic. Young Anne Frank (Millie Perkins) keeps a diary of everyday life for the Franks and the Van Daans, chronicling the Nazi threat as well as family dynamics

#### GROWING UP

What's the title?	Who's the author?	What is it about?
Beyond the Bright Sea	Lauren Wolk	What does it mean to be a family? In this beautifully written and heart-wrenching story, 12-year-old Crow explores questions of her own identity and where she truly belongs.
How High the Moon	Karyn Parsons	How High the Moon is an ambitious novel weaving together family drama with a miscarriage of justice and the horrifying reality of the prejudice and racism faced by black and mixed race people.
Can you see me?	Libby Scott and Rebecca Westcott	Tally's autism means there are things that bother her even though she wishes they didn't. It means that some people misunderstand, her and feel frustrated by her. People think that because Tally's autistic, she doesn't realise what they're thinking, but Tally sees and hears - and notices - all of it. And, honestly? That's not the easiest thing to live with.
To Be Perfectly Honest	Jess Vallance	Gracie makes a vow to try and be completely honest about everything when she uncovers a family secret.
Noughts and Crosses	Malorie Blackman	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. A romance between the two lands them in trouble.
Aristotle and Dante discover the secrets of the universe	Benjamin Alire Sáenz	Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world. When they meet, they seem to have nothing in common. But as they start spending time together, they discover that they share a special kind of friendship - the kind of friendship that changes lives and lasts a lifetime.
A Mango-Shaped Space	Wendy Mass	Mia Winchell seems to be a typical teenager, but she's keeping a huge secret from everyone who knows her: sounds, numbers, and words appear in color for her. Mia has synesthesia, the mingling of perceptions whereby a person can see sounds, smell colors, or taste shapes.
<b>AMBITIOUS GROWING UP READS</b>		

We Have Always Lived in the Castle	Shirley Jackson	Not only does this novel feature the best opening paragraph of all time (or at least one of them; see the entry for We The Animals on this very list), but it also features a very compelling young protagonist coming to terms with what I'll gingerly describe as a . . . unique family situation.
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time	Mark Haddon	Christopher is fifteen and has Asperger's Syndrome. He knows a very great deal about maths and very little about human beings. He loves lists, patterns and the truth. He hates the colours yellow and brown and being touched. When he finds a neighbour's dog murdered he sets out on a terrifying journey which will turn his whole world upside down.
The Black Flamingo	Dean Atta	Big hearted and dizzyingly flamboyant, Atta's verse novel about a black gay teen reclaiming his identity as a drag artist is an outspoken triumph from opening couplet to last. A beautiful book about self-discovery and embracing the real you, The Black Flamingo is suffused with optimism, positivity and love.

HISTORICAL		
What's the title?	Who's the author?	What's it about?
The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas	John Boyne	The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas is a story about childhood innocence, friendship, and the importance of breaking down the fences we put up around ourselves. The novel is told from the perspective of nine-year-old Bruno, the son of a Nazi commandant.
War Horse	Michael Morpurgo	The story recounts the experiences of Joey, a horse purchased by the <b>Army</b> for service in World War I in France and the attempts of young Albert, his previous owner, to bring him safely home.
Goodnight Mr Tom	Michelle Magorian	Set during the second world war, the main character is a young boy named William who is evacuated to the countryside to live with a grieving widower named <b>Tom</b> . Having been abused and beaten by his mother, it takes William a while to adapt to

		a life with more freedom and happiness.
The Silver Sword <i>Miss Simpson recommends!</i>	Ian Serraillier	In the chaos of World War II, Ruth, Edek and Bronia are separated from their parents, and left alone to fend for themselves, hiding from the Nazis in the ruins of their city. They begin a dangerous journey across Europe to the safety of Switzerland where they hope to reunite with their parents.
The Book Thief	Markus Zusak	The Book Thief is a story narrated by a compassionate Death who tells us about Liesel, a girl growing up in Germany during World War II. She steals books, learns to read, and finds comfort in words.
<b>AMBITIOUS HISTORICAL READS</b>		
To Kill a Mockingbird	Harper Lee	A story that examines racism in the Southern states of the USA, told through the eyes of a young girl.
Catch 22 <i>Mrs White recommends!</i>	Joseph Heller	The novel examines the absurdity of war and military life through the experiences of Yossarian and his cohorts, who attempt to maintain their sanity while fulfilling their service requirements so that they may return home.

<b>THE SUPERNATURAL/MAGICAL</b>		
<b>What's the title?</b>	<b>Who's the author?</b>	<b>What's it about?</b>
The Ocean at the End of the Lane	Neil Gaiman	The book follows a nameless narrator who returns, in middle age, to his childhood hometown for a funeral. As he lingers around his childhood haunts, he comes to remember more and more about his past. It turns out that the idyllic veneer of his childhood hides secrets both monstrous and magical.
Harry Potter (7 books) <i>Miss Lang recommends!</i>	J.K. Rowling	Harry Potter is a series of fantasy novels written by British author J. K. Rowling. The novels chronicle the lives of a young wizard, Harry Potter, and his friends Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley, all of whom are students at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.
Northern Lights <i>Miss Ellis recommends!</i>	Phillip Pullman	His Dark Materials is a trilogy of fantasy novels by Philip Pullman consisting of Northern Lights (1995) (published as The

		Golden Compass in North America), The Subtle Knife (1997), and The Amber Spyglass (2000).
Letting Go	Cat Clarke	Agnes tries to sort out her tumultuous feelings when she helps her ex-girlfriend and her new boyfriend scatter her mum's ashes.
<b>AMBITIOUS SUPERNATURAL/MAGICAL READS</b>		
The Rest of Us Just Live Here	Patrick Ness	Award-winning writer Patrick Ness's bold and irreverent novel powerfully asks what if you weren't the Chosen One? The one who's supposed to fight the zombies, or the soul-eating ghosts, or whatever this new thing is, with the blue lights and the death? What if you were like Mikey? Who just wants to graduate and go to prom and maybe finally work up the courage to ask Henna out before someone goes and blows up the high school. Again. Because sometimes there are problems bigger than this week's end of the world and sometimes you just have to find the extraordinary in your ordinary life.
The Hobbit	J. R. R. Tolkein	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.

<b>DETECTIVE/CRIME</b>		
What's the title?	Who's the author?	What's it about?
Pigeon English	Stephen Kelman	The novel begins with the death of a young boy on the fictional Dell Farm estate in an unspecified area of London. Harri Opoku, a recent Ghanaian immigrant living with his mother and sister, becomes an amateur

		detective and tries to solve the murder.
Ruby in the Smoke <i>Mrs Bibby recommends!</i>	Phillip Pullman	Determined to discover the truth about her father's death, Sally is plunged into a terrifying mystery in the dark heart of Victorian London, at the centre of which lies a deadly blood-soaked jewel.
Stormbreaker	Anthony Horowitz	Stormbreaker by Anthony Horowitz is the first novel to feature teenage spy, Alex Rider. In this novel, Alex's uncle dies in what he is told is a car accident. However, after doing some investigating on his own, Alex discovers his uncle was actually murdered.
The Boy in the Tower	Polly Ho-Yen	Ade is a just a ordinary boy with an ordinary life. He loves living at top of a tower block and he loves his life, but one day a building falls randomly near his home, an incredibly stable building. Luckily no one is hurt, but the buildings keep falling with no reason whatsoever.
<b>AMBITIOUS DETECTIVE/CRIME READS</b>		
1984 <i>Mr Halton recommends!</i>	George Orwell	1984 is a dystopian novella by George Orwell published in 1949, which follows the life of Winston Smith, a man living within a controlled society and it's tyrannical ruler 'Big Brother' Big Brother' controls every aspect of people's lives and Winston has had enough!