

# HFCHS

## Reading for success at GCSE



To all parents,

Reading is an integral factor in a child's pursuit of academic excellence. Through reading for pleasure children are able to gain knowledge and develop their vocabulary resulting in positive impacts to your child's educational performance.

Reading also supports many pupils in non-academic ways. Research has shown that reading can increase a child's attention span and ability to focus on specific tasks, it can reduce stress levels and ultimately provides an escape to imaginary worlds where anything is possible!

Your child should spend time reading each day and Holy Family encourages pupils to read widely in both fiction and non-fiction, non-fiction literary text like magazines and newspapers as well as classic English Literature.

We ask parents to support us and encourage your children to read as much as possible. With this in mind, we at Holy Family have created a list of reading recommendations to help guide pupils to read quality texts.

It is essential to find books which are challenging and engaging, as well as suitable for your child's age and their ability. Along with our Holy Family reading recommendations, please also visit the websites listed below. Here you will find useful tips and advice on how to read as a family, how to set up a great routines, and how to encourage reading in your home. Get recommendations about great new books, classic books, themed booklists and other suggestions from a team of book experts who can give guidance for specific reading ages and abilities.

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/>

<https://www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk/>



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# GCSE

## John Greene. *Looking for Alaska*.

In the dark beside me, she smelled of sweat and sunshine and vanilla and on that thin-mooned night I could see little more than her silhouette, but even in the dark, I could see her eyes - fierce emeralds. And not just beautiful, but hot too. BEFORE. Miles Halter's whole life has been one big non-event until he starts at anything-but-boring Culver Creek Boarding School and meets Alaska Young. Gorgeous, clever, funny, sexy, screwed up and utterly fascinating she pulls Miles into her world, launches him into a new life, and steals his heart. But when tragedy strikes, and Miles comes face-to-face with death he discovers the value of living and loving unconditionally. AFTER: Nothing will ever be the same. Poignant, funny, heart-breaking and compelling, this novel will stay with you forever.



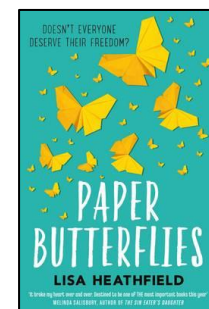
## Gordon Jack. *The Boomerang Effect*.

It all started with a harmless prank. But now high school junior Lawrence Barry is one step away from reform school unless he participates in a mentorship program. His mentee? Spencer Knudsen, a Norwegian exchange student with Spock-like intelligence but the social skills of the periodic table. Then disaster strikes. Homecoming Week. When someone dressed as the school Viking mascot starts destroying the fairytale-inspired floats, all suspicion falls on Lawrence. Add to the mix a demon Goth girl, a Renaissance LARPing group, an overzealous yearbook editor, and three vindictive chickens, and Lawrence soon realizes that his situation may be a little out of control. But Spencer seems to have some answers. In fact, Spencer may be the one friend Lawrence never knew he needed.



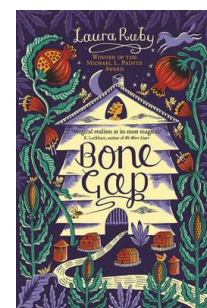
## Lisa Heathfield. *Paper Butterflies*.

June's life at home with her stepmother and stepsister is a dark one - and a secret one. Not even her father knows about it. She's trapped like a butterfly in a jar. But then she meets Blister, a boy in the woods. And in him, June recognises the tiniest glimmer of hope that perhaps she can find a way to fly far, far away. But freedom comes at a price...



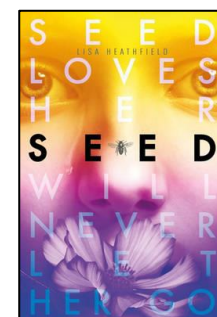
## Laura Ruby. *Bone Gap*.

An entrancingly unique novel about a boy's search for a young woman who's disappeared from their eccentric small town. "Bone Gap had gaps just wide enough for people to slip through, or slip away, leaving only their stories behind". That's what the townsfolk of Bone Gap believe, and so none of them are shocked when beautiful Roza vanishes, as mysteriously as she arrived.



## Lisa Heathfield. *Seed*.

Seed loves you. Seed will never let you go. Fifteen-year-old Pearl has lived her whole life protected within the small community at Seed, where they worship Nature and idolise their leader, Papa S. When some outsiders arrive, everything changes. Pearl experiences feelings that she never knew existed and begins to realise that there is darkness at the heart of Seed. A darkness from which she must escape, before it's too late.

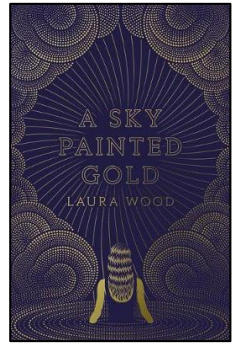


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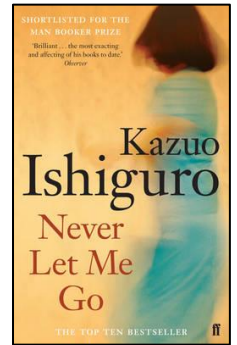
**Laura Wood. *A Sky Painted Gold.***

Growing up in her sleepy Cornish village dreaming of being a writer, sixteen-year-old Lou has always wondered about the grand Cardew house which has stood empty for years. And when the owners arrive for the summer - a handsome, dashing brother and sister - Lou is quite swept off her feet and into a world of moonlit cocktail parties and glamour beyond her wildest dreams. But, as she grows closer to the Cardews, is she abandoning her own ambitions... and is there something darker lurking at the heart of the Cardew family?



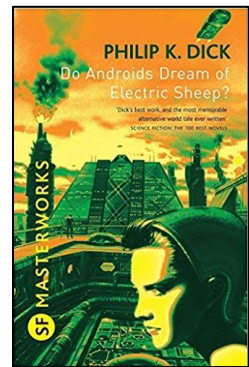
**Kazuo Ishiguro. *Never Let Me Go.***

In one of the most acclaimed and strange novels of recent years, Kazuo Ishiguro imagines the lives of a group of students growing up in a darkly skewed version of contemporary England. Narrated by Kathy, now 31, *Never Let Me Go* hauntingly dramatises her attempts to come to terms with her childhood at the seemingly idyllic Hailsham School, and with the fate that has always awaited her and her closest friends in the wider world. A story of love, friendship and memory, *Never Let Me Go* is charged throughout with a sense of the fragility of life.



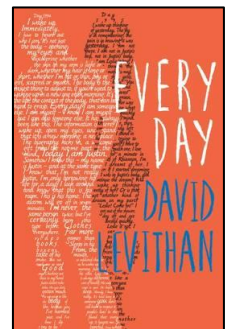
**Phillip K. Dick. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?***

World War Terminus had left the Earth devastated. Through its ruins, bounty hunter Rick Deckard stalked, in search of the renegade replicants who were his prey. When he wasn't 'retiring' them with his laser weapon, he dreamed of owning a live animal - the ultimate status symbol in a world all but bereft of animal life. Then Rick got his chance: the assignment to kill six Nexus-6 targets, for a huge reward. But in Deckard's world things were never that simple, and his assignment quickly turned into a nightmare kaleidoscope of subterfuge and deceit - and the threat of death for the hunter rather than the hunted ...



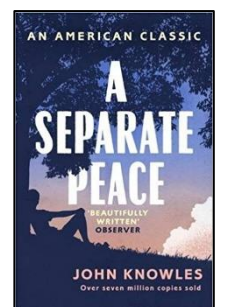
**David Levithan. *Every Day.***

Every day I am someone else. I am myself - I know I am myself - but I am also someone else. It has always been like this. Each morning, A wakes up in a different body. There's never any warning about who it will be, but A is used to that. Never get too attached. Avoid being noticed. Do not interfere. And that's fine - until A wakes up in the body of Justin and meets Justin's girlfriend, Rhiannon. From that moment, the rules by which A has been living no longer apply. Because finally A has found someone he wants to be with - every day.



**John Knowles. *A Separate Peace.***

An American coming-of-age tale during a period when the entire country was losing its innocence to the second world war. Set at a boys' boarding school in New England during the early years of World War II, *A Separate Peace* is a harrowing and luminous parable of the dark side of adolescence. Gene is a lonely, introverted intellectual. Phineas is a handsome, taunting, daredevil athlete. What happens between the two friends one summer, like the war itself, banishes the innocence of these boys and their world.



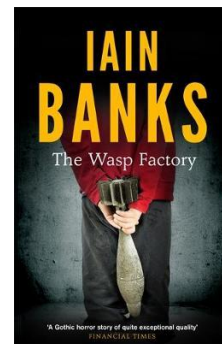
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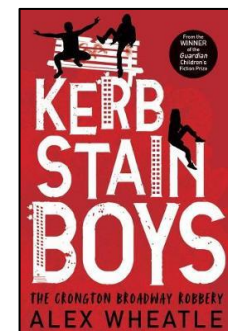
**Iain Banks. *The Wasp Factory*.**

Two years after I killed Blyth I murdered my young brother Paul, for quite different reasons than I'd disposed of Blyth, and then a year after that I did for my young cousin Esmerelda, more or less on a whim. That's my score to date. Three. I haven't killed anybody for years, and don't intend to ever again. It was just a stage I was going through. *The Wasp Factory* is a bizarre, imaginative, disturbing, and darkly comic look into the mind of a child psychopath - one of the most infamous of contemporary Scottish novels.



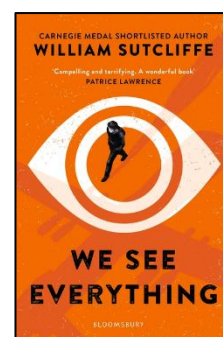
**Alex Wheatle. *Kerb-Stain Boys the Crongton Broadway Robbery*.**

Life on the Crongton estate can be rough for Briggy. Dad's lost his job, Mum's working so hard to make ends meet, and big brother Kingsley just wants out. With all the shouting and arguing it's difficult not to get lost in the mix. So, when his best mate Terror and coolest chick in the year Caldonia, cook up a plan to make a quick buck, Briggy hopes this time it might be his chance to shine. Robbing the Post Office ... what could go wrong? A brilliantly real and funny novella of life on one of London's toughest (fictional) estates.



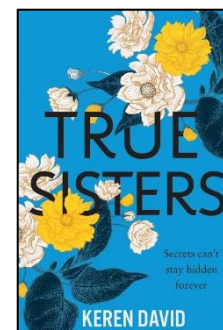
**William Sutcliffe. *We See Everything*.**

A gripping and powerfully relevant thriller set in a reimagined London where constant surveillance is the norm, *We See Everything* simmers with tension and emotion. From internationally bestselling author William Sutcliffe, this is perfect for fans of Patrick Ness and Malorie Blackman. Lex lives on The Strip - the overcrowded, closed-off, bombed-out shell of London. He's used to the watchful enemy drones that buzz in the air above him. Alan's talent as a gamer has landed him the job of his dreams. At a military base in a secret location, he is about to start work as a drone pilot. These two young men will never meet, but their lives are destined to collide. Because Alan has just been assigned a high-profile target. Alan knows him only as #K622. But Lex calls him Dad.



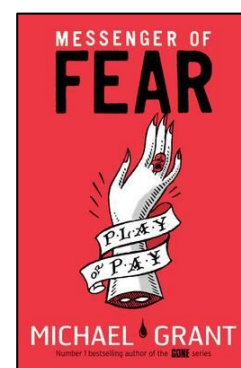
***True Sisters*.**

A heartfelt and beautifully written tale of two girls struggling to come to terms with their identities and understanding the complexities of family loyalty. Ruby has had a lot of foster siblings over the years, but none of them have been anything like Clara. After growing up in almost complete isolation, Clara is distraught at being separated from her mother and overwhelmed by life in a world she doesn't understand. But the more Ruby tries to help Clara fit in, the more she realises she must face up to some struggles of her own.



**Michael Grant. *Messenger of Fear*.**

I remembered my name - Mara. But, standing in that ghostly place, faced with the solemn young man in the black coat with silver skulls for buttons, I could recall nothing else about myself. And then the games began. Think you know the meaning of suspense? Think again...The Messenger sees the darkness in young hearts, and the damage it inflicts upon the world. If they go unpunished, he offers the wicked a game. Win, and they can go free. Lose, and they will live out their greatest fear. But what does any of this have to do with Mara? She is about to find out...



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