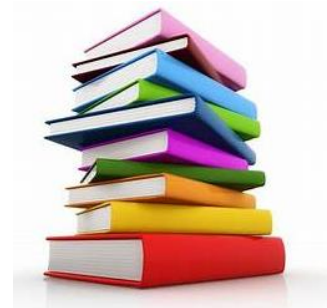




# Reading Matters

*"I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a good book" – JK Rowling*



Welcome to our Easter edition of Reading Matters.

Easter is a time for hope, renewal of spirit, rekindling of faith and rejoicing in the triumph of the Lord. It is also the time to reach out to our loved ones and come together in prayer and celebrations and glorying in the miracle of Easter.

In Pope Francis' message for Lent 2021, Pope Francis calls on the faithful to ***"renew our faith, draw from the living waters of hope, and receive with open hearts the love of God."*** Following in the footsteps of Christ, in concern and compassion for all, is the highest expression of our faith and hope. Pope Francis says, in this time of Lent and especially during the pandemic, the faithful are encouraged to speak words of reassurance to those feeling abandoned and isolated and to help others to realise that God loves them as sons and daughters.



During this Easter Break, we encourage you to take time to rest, contact friends and family and rejoice in the glory of the Lord's Resurrection.

When children have a home library, as little as **20 books** of their own, they achieve **3 more years** of schooling than children who don't have any books at home.

## Reading is a gift from God

God has given us minds – minds which need constant renewal and growth in line with gospel. Kate DiCamillo said, ***'Reading should not be presented to children as a chore, a duty. It should be offered as a gift.'*** Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy understand the positive life-changing impact literacy can have on the lives of our young people and are therefore committed to improving literacy levels of all pupils in our care.

Our regular Reading Matters newsletter aims to show you **WHY** reading is important, and it will help you decide on which books you might enjoy reading. If you are a parent, the newsletter will help you encourage your child to read and help start discussions around reading.

**Read 20 minutes a day and you'll read 1,800,000 words per year.**

# Exciting Changes: School Library Improvements

We want our school library to be at the heart of the school, therefore we are investing money into improving the facilities for our young people. The English corridors are going to be decorated with huge murals on the wall, designed to encourage reading, the library has been painted bright colours and there has been new furniture and comfy seating ordered. We look forward to showing you our completed project as soon as it is finished!



## What are we doing in school to promote Literacy?

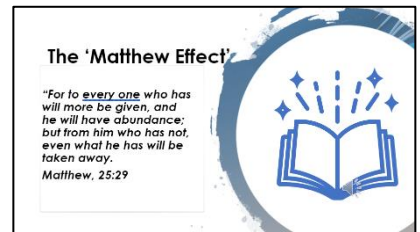
### FAMILY READING NEWSLETTER

We have this regular monthly 'Reading Matters' newsletter to recommend books and encourage pupils to read.

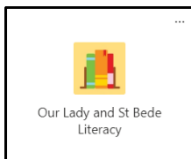


### STAFF TRAINING ON LITERACY

Teaching staff are having regular training on Literacy, with a focus on vocabulary.

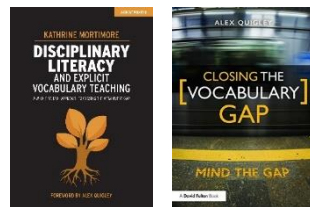


### TEAMS LITERACY AREA FOR RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

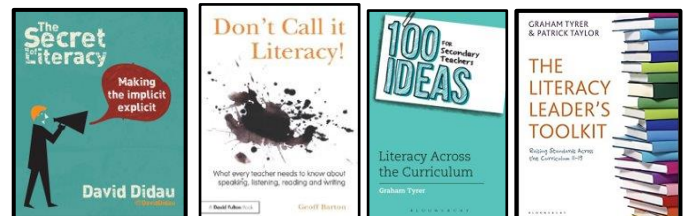


We have invested in Literacy resources, academic reading books and staff training materials. We have a new, up-dated Literacy Policy and Literacy Handbook for staff. Year 7 pupils have all completed Reading and Spelling Assessments, which provides detailed, individualised information about reading ages and how to support pupils in the classroom. We celebrate World Book Day and other literacy key dates on the calendar. On pupils' Teams we have Recommended Reading Lists and teachers have shared their favourite books. Planning, training and implementation is all based on current academic research and evidence.

### ACADEMIC READING



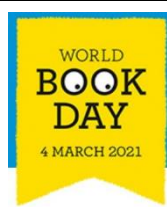
All Departments have read relevant research and writing from 'Disciplinary Literacy' by Kathrine Mortimore and CPD was based on Alex Quigley's 'Closing the Vocabulary Gap'. Literacy books have been purchased by school for further reading and research.





### NATIONAL LITERACY TRUST

The school is now a member of the National Literacy Trust to enable all teachers to access engaging and inspiring teaching resources and tools for outstanding literacy provision in school.



### WORLD BOOK DAY CELEBRATIONS

Teachers and pupils shared their favourite books. Traditionally, the day involves dressing up, competitions, visits to book shops, a lunch time film club of famous and popular books.



### LITERACY LEADERS

All Departments have nominated a Literacy Leader, to attend training, promote reading, act as a conduit for information and training, and ensure literacy is on every Department meeting agenda.



### MOBILE LIBRARY

Due to Covid restrictions the library can currently not function as we would like. Mrs Franks will be providing a mobile library service to all pupils, where they will be able to order books from the library and they will be delivered to their form class.



### VIRTUAL LIBRARY

To promote reading during lockdown, a virtual library was launched. Pupils could listen to an audio of the book, read by professional actors and/or their teachers, and follow along on the screen. Books have been recorded chapter by chapter.



### READING BOOK AS PART OF EQUIPMENT

It is now compulsory for ALL pupils to have a reading book as part of their essential school equipment. We have also timetabled reading sessions throughout the week in a range of subjects.



### LITERACY AND NUMERACY INTERVENTION

Small intervention groups in Year 7-9 have been organised for pupils who find literacy and numeracy difficult. Pupils attend intervention one lesson a week for literacy and one for numeracy. Form time is also used to enable pupils to access programmes to help with spelling. There is a timetable for intervention.



### RECOMMENDED READING LISTS

Through Teams, all pupils have been provided with a recommended reading list covering a range of genres e.g. animal books, dystopian, isolation themed, complex issues, BAME authors, science fiction, verse, stretch and challenge, and audio books.



### EXTRA CURRICULAR

There will be a book club running for Year 8 pupils initially until the year bubbles are stopped. The library will also hold a book club for all year groups and a library leaders scheme, where pupils can qualify to be a librarian. Prior to lockdown, Mrs Baxter (English teacher) had arranged a school trip to Barter Books in Alnwick. We are hoping to rearrange this trip as soon as possible. The school have developed close links with local book shop, Drakes, and will be regularly attending author visits.

### WORD OF THE WEEK

**AMBIGUOUS**

equivocal, ambivalent, arguable, debatable

Latin: ambi (both ways) | Latin: agere (to drive)

ENGLISH: The poet's meaning was ambiguous.

GEOGRAPHY: These are separated by a very ambiguous frontier, and have their geographical and political links to the south and north respectively.

DESIGN: By making the imagery ambiguous, I want to allow space for individual interpretation.

Who would use this word?

Poet  
Architect  
Artist

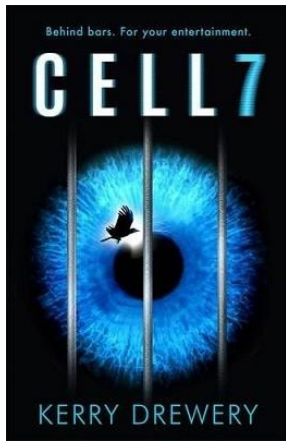
adjective Open to more than one interpretation; not clear

Early 16th Century; indistinct; obscure

As part of the form resources, there is a word of the week for form teachers to discuss with pupils. Pupils explore the etymology of the words and how they are relevant to different subjects.

**'Literacy is one of the greatest gifts a person could receive.'** Jen Selinsky

## Reading Recommendations



### 'Cell 7' by Kerry Drewery

A heart-stopping thriller. Shortlisted for the Lancashire Libraries Book of the Year 2018.

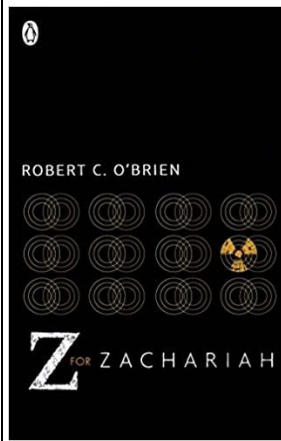
An adored celebrity has been killed. Sixteen-year-old Martha Honeydew was found holding a gun, standing over the body.

NOW JUSTICE MUST PREVAIL.

The general public will decide whether Martha is innocent or guilty by viewing daily episodes of the hugely popular TV show *Death is Justice*, the only TV show that gives the power of life and death decisions - all for the price of a premium rate phone call.

Martha has admitted to the crime. But is she guilty? Or is reality more complicated than the images we are shown on TV?

**Suitable for Year 7 and above**

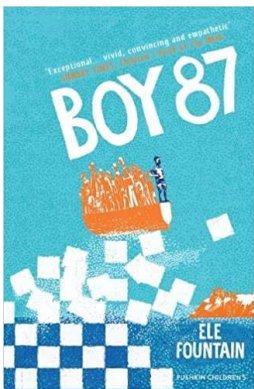


### 'Z for Zachariah' by Robert C O'Brien

A powerful post-apocalyptic novel in which nuclear war has devastated America. Z FOR ZACHARIAH by Robert C. O'Brien is one of The Originals from Penguin - iconic, outspoken, first.

Ann Burden has been living alone in a valley for over a year - until Loomis, a scientist in a radiation-proof suit, arrives. She hopes they will be companions but his behaviour towards her becomes increasingly threatening as he attacks her and then cuts off her food supply and tries to bring her under his control. Although there may be no one else alive, Ann steals his suit and leaves the valley in search of humanity.

**Suitable for Year 7 and above**



### 'Boy 87' by Ele Fountain

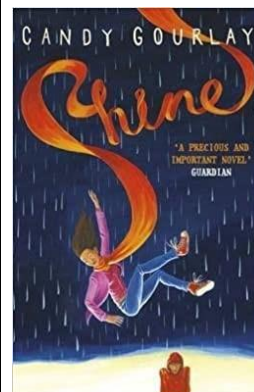
Shif is just an ordinary boy who likes chess, maths and racing his best friend home from school. But one day, soldiers with guns come to his door - and he knows that he is no longer safe.

Shif is forced to leave his mother and little sister, and embark on a dangerous journey; a journey through imprisonment and escape, new lands and strange voices, and a perilous crossing by land and sea. He will encounter cruelty and kindness; he will become separated from the people he loves.

Boy 87 is a gripping, uplifting tale of one boy's struggle for survival; it echoes the story of young people all over the world today.

**'Boy 87 is an original and beautifully written page-turner of a novel about love, survival and the strength that can be found in a hopeful human spirit' -- Sarah Crossan, Carnegie Medal Winner**

**Suitable Year 7 and above**



### 'Shine' by Candy Gourlay

Rosa suffers from a rare condition that renders her mute. She lives on the strange island of Mirasol where the rain never seems to stop.

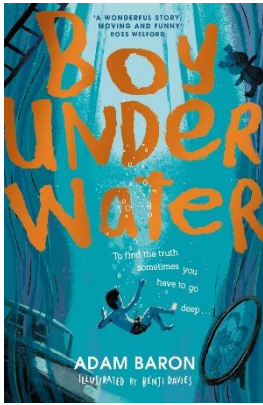
In the gloom of the island, its superstitious population are haunted by all sorts of fears . . . they shun people who suffer from Rosa's condition, believing them to be monsters. So Rosa must live hidden away in an isolated house with its back to the rest of the world, with only the internet for a social life.

But Rosa has no desire to leave Mirasol. This is where her mother died and every night she lights a candle on the windowsill. The islanders believe this is the way to summon ghosts, and Rosa wants her mother back.

One day she is befriended by a boy online who calls himself Ansel95 - and she quickly realizes that this is one friendship that can take place in the real world. Can she really trust him? What does he want from her?

**Suitable for Year 7 and above**

## 'Boy Underwater' by Adam Baron



A heart-breaking, heart-warming novel for everyone of 11 and older – this book will probably make you cry, and will definitely make you laugh.

Cymbeline Igloo (yes, really!) has NEVER been swimming

Not ever. Not once.

But how hard can it be? He's Googled front crawl and he's found his dad's old pair of trunks. He's totally ready.

What he's not ready for is the accident at the pool – or how it leads his mum to a sudden breakdown.

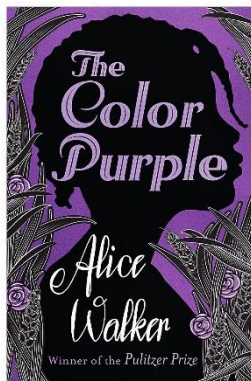
Now, with the help of friends old and new, Cymbeline must solve the mystery of why his mum never took him near water – and it will turn his whole life upside down...

'A wonderful story, moving and funny' – Ross Welford

SELECTED AS WATERSTONES BOOK OF THE MONTH  
SHORTLISTED FOR THE CARNEGIE AWARD

**Suitable Year 7 and above**

## 'The Colour Purple' by Alice Walker



The classic, PULITZER PRIZE-winning novel that made Alice Walker a household name.

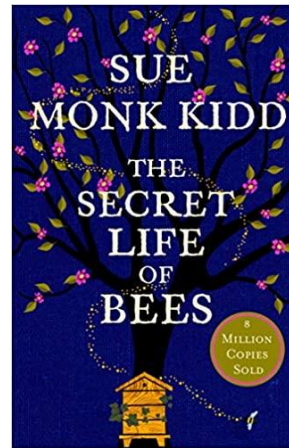
Set in the deep American South between the wars, THE COLOR PURPLE is the classic tale of Celie, a young black girl born into poverty and segregation. Raped

repeatedly by the man she calls 'father', she has two children taken away from her, is separated from her beloved sister Nettie and is trapped into an ugly marriage. But then she meets the glamorous Shug Avery, singer and magic-maker - a woman who has taken charge of her own destiny. Gradually Celie discovers the power and joy of her own spirit, freeing her from her past and reuniting her with those she loves.

'One of the most haunting books you could ever wish to read ... it is stunning - moving, exciting, and wonderful' Lenny Henry.

**Suitable for Key Stage 4 pupils**

## 'The Secret Life of Bees' by Sue Monk Kidd



*The Secret Life of Bees:* The multi-million-copy bestselling novel about a young girl's journey towards healing and the transforming power of love, from the award-winning author of *The Invention of Wings*.

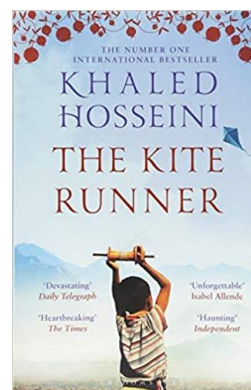
Lily has grown up believing she accidentally killed her

mother when she was four years old. Now, at fourteen, she yearns for forgiveness and a mother's love. Living on a peach farm in South Carolina with her harsh and unforgiving father, she has only one friend, Rosaleen, a black servant.

When racial tension explodes one summer afternoon, and Rosaleen is arrested and beaten, Lily chooses to flee with her. Fugitives from justice, the pair follow a trail left by the woman who died ten years before. Finding sanctuary in the home of three beekeeping sisters, Lily starts a journey as much about her understanding of the world as about the mystery surrounding her mother.

**Suitable for Year 9 and above**

## 'The Kite Runner' by Ruta Sepetys



'Devastating' *Daily Telegraph*

'Heartbreaking' *The Times*

'Unforgettable' Isabel Allende

'Haunting' *Independent*

Afghanistan, 1975: Twelve-year-old Amir is desperate to win the local kite-fighting tournament and his loyal friend Hassan promises to help him. But neither of the boys can foresee what will happen to Hassan that afternoon, an event that is to shatter their lives. After the Russians invade and the family is forced to flee to America, Amir realises that one day he must return to Afghanistan under Taliban rule to find the one thing that his new world cannot grant him: redemption.

**Suitable for Key Stage 4 pupils**

## Have you been to...

### DRAKE The Bookshop

27 Silver Street, Stockton, TS18 1SX

Tel: 01642 909970

Email: [books@drakethebookshop.co.uk](mailto:books@drakethebookshop.co.uk)

Website: [www.drakethebookshop.co.uk](http://www.drakethebookshop.co.uk)



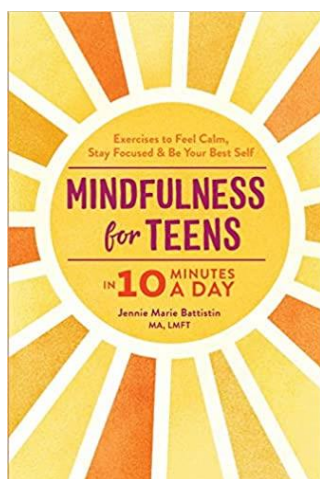
"Lovely bookshop, and warm, friendly staff. Lovely cosy area to sit and read with a coffee, and such a wide range of books."

Google Review, January 2020



## Non-Fiction Reading

### 'Mindfulness for Teens: Exercises to feel calm, stay focused and by your best self' by Jennie Marie Battistin



Learn how to use mindfulness, or the ability to be fully aware in the present moment, to reduce everyday stress. *Mindfulness for Teens in 10 Minutes a Day* shows you how to take control of your feelings and focus your attention with short, simple mindfulness activities.

Discover a wide variety of mindfulness techniques that will fit easily into your routine and help you thrive in every area of life. These engaging exercises show you how to find peace in the face of stress, improve relationships with friends and family, boost your self-esteem, and increase your focus to help you succeed at school and work.

This book about mindfulness for teens includes:

- **Short practice, big benefits**—Take just a few minutes each day to find calm, focus, reconnect with your emotions, and respond to challenging situations.
- **Exercises for going deeper**—Find suggestions for connecting more deeply with each activity, including journal prompts and meditations for further reflection.
- **Breathing techniques**—Learn three key breathwork techniques to help you relax, reduce anxiety, and energize your body.

Improve focus, reduce stress, and be fully present with help from *Mindfulness for Teens in 10 Minutes a Day*.

## Maintaining Your Well-Being

**Tips for parents & carers:** There are many ways that you can maintain your well-being for yourself and others that you are living with. Try these links for some ideas:

Wellbeing activity ideas for families <https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/coronavirus-wellbeing-activity-ideas-for-families/>

How to help your teenager with staying home during isolation:

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/blog/how-help-your-teenager-staying-home-during-lockdown/>

21 Things To Do During Isolation or Easter for older children & adults

<https://www.readersdigest.co.in/better-living/story-21-things-to-do-during-the-21-day-lockdown-125352>

'Reading is a way for me to expand my mind, open my eyes and fill up my heart' Oprah Winfrey