

## Everybody's Reading Books

### YEAR 7

#### Book 1: *Once* by Morris Gleitzman published in 2005 set in 1942



It is a work of fiction but inspired by historic events, such as *the Holocaust*. The main character is a young Jewish boy called Felix. He has been living in a Polish orphanage for over three years when men in armbands arrive and start burning books. Felix goes on the run in search of his parents, but soon learns that Poland in 1942 is unsafe for a young Jewish boy.

The book covers the theme of hope. Throughout the novel, hope is shown to be important to survival – being able to keep going through horrific experiences. Friendship is also at the heart of the book, from trying to get Dodie the first turn in the bath at the orphanage, to protecting Zelda at the risk of his own life, Felix is shown to be a good friend. Friendship and caring for others is shown to be part of what makes a good person. Furthermore, storytelling has power in the novel. Felix's stories help him to survive, protect others and provide hope for the future. His stories create strong bonds between the characters and even inspire the children to tell their own traumatic stories.

#### Book 2: *Wild Boy* by Rob Lloyd Jones published in 2015 set in 1841

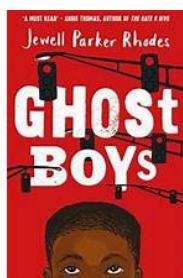


*Wild Boy* leads a miserable life as a spectacle in a travelling freak show. Covered in hair since birth, he's used to being treated as a monster or a savage, excluded from society and abused by his cruel master. Taking refuge in watching the world around him and all the comings and goings of the fair, he develops a Sherlock Holmes-style talent for observation. But when he witnesses the murder of Professor Wollestonecraft, even his detective skills can't help him when the folk of the fair decide that he must be the guilty party.

The book explores themes of friendship, acceptance and dealing with differences.

### Year 8

#### Book 1: *Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes published in 2018



It tells the story of Jerome, a young, unarmed Black boy who is shot dead by a white police officer. The plot then unravels as Jerome tries to understand what happened to him and the impact on his family, friends and community. Rhodes was inspired by historical events when she wrote this book. Specifically, the murder of Emmett Till in 1955 and Tamir Rice in 2014. Both were young Black boys.

In *Ghost Boys*, Rhodes examines racism from different perspectives, injustice and bearing witness.

## Book2: Kick by Mitch Johnson published in



Budi works in a footwear factory in Indonesia, making the football boots he longs to wear but is unlikely to ever afford. His ambition is to be a famous football player for a team like Real Madrid, but Budi's reality is rather different. The conditions in the sweatshop are appalling, and instead of the luxurious life enjoyed by his idols, Budi has to go without food to manage on his tiny salary and live under constant threat of abuse and intimidation from the factory foreman. And when Budi attracts the notice of the dangerous Dragon, it seems less and less likely that he will ever achieve his dream

A story about dreaming big, about hope and heroes, and never letting anything stand in your way.

## Year 9

### Book 1: The Rain by Virginia Bergin

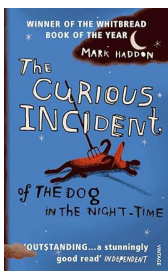


Bergin presents Ruby's story as a firsthand document of life after widespread disaster. The diary-style narration emphasizes Ruby's distinctly teenage response to society's end. She rescues abandoned pets, loots her favourite boutiques without shame, and holds tightly to the unlikely hope that her father is still alive and her strong, spontaneous voice lends a touch of dark comedy to the post-apocalyptic doom and gloom.

A dystopian novel that explores the themes of survival, love and hope.

## Year 10

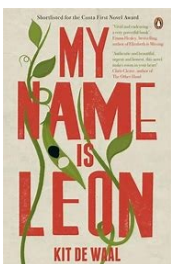
### Book 1: The Curious Incident of the dog in the Night-Time



The book is told from the perspective of Christopher Boone. Christopher is 15 years old and is *neurodivergent*. At the start of the book, Christopher finds his neighbour's dog, Wellington, has been murdered. Christopher *person* narrative. The *protagonist*, Christopher, tells the story. This allows the reader to see how Christopher thinks and how he interprets different events. Christopher reacts with logic rather than emotion. This gives the writing a matter-of-fact quality.

The book explores themes of truth, logic and independence.

### Book 2: My Name is Leon



Kit de Waal's heartrending story of neglect is told from the perspective of Carol's eldest, nine-year-old Leon. Having survived nearly a decade in their London council flat, Leon has not only learned to fend for himself but also how to care for his mother. Even at his young age, their roles are reversed, a situation that intensifies with the birth of his brother Jake.

*My Name Is Leon* is a moving story of a child's desperate desire to keep his fractured family together in early 1980s Britain. It covers themes of family and belonging, social injustice, resilience and loss.