

Year 9 Recommended Reading List

Schoolreadinglist.co.uk

Compiled by Tom Tolkien

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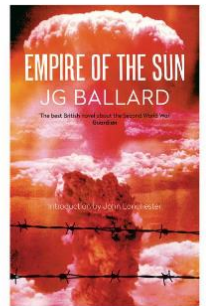
Lionheart Girl by Yaba Badoe

Mysticism, fear and West African witchcraft are blended into this heady and lyrical potion of a modern fable that explores friendship and loyalty. When Sheba discovers her magic abilities, she uses them to uncover dark family secrets that threaten to untie all that binds her life together. Memorable and atmospheric, this novel would be a powerful and provocative read for KS3 book clubs.



Empire of the Sun by J.G. Ballard

Jim's idyllic life in 1930s Shanghai takes an abrupt and horrifying turn with the Japanese invasion during WW2. The prep school choirboy finds himself interred in prisons camps for four years. Gripping, moving and based on the author's own life. A more advanced book for 13-year-olds.



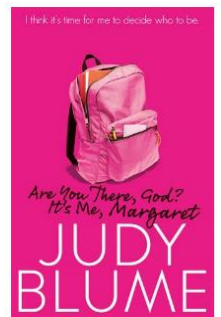
Thief by Malorie Blackman

A captivating and fast-paced story about Lydia, who is desperate to fit in at a new school. When she's accused of stealing, her life begins to spiral out of control until an unexpected and mind-bending opportunity arises to set things right. A real page-turner, with a savage twist ending, this is a great book for class reading or book clubs.



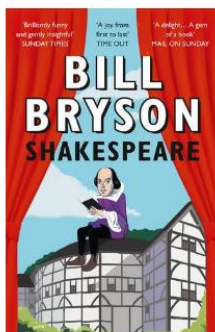
Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret by Judy Blume

Margaret is convinced she isn't normal. Her friends are more grown-up than her, she's starting a new school and she's unsure whether to follow her mother's or her father's religion. So she talks to God, with surprising results.



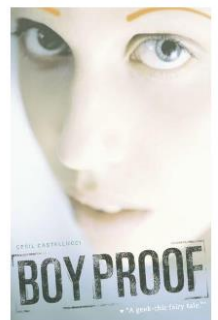
Shakespeare: The World as a Stage by Bill Bryson

This book is ideal for adding humour to turgid GCSE Shakespeare exam schemes. It explores the myths, lies and reality of Shakespeare's plays and brings to life the sixteenth century acting world.



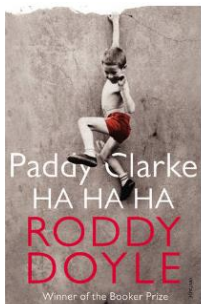
Boy Proof by Cecil Castellucci

Victoria, who changes her name to Egg, is a rebel. She shaves her head and colours her eyebrows, avoids people, and has no time at all for boys. But then she meets Max. An interesting book to discuss in Year 9.



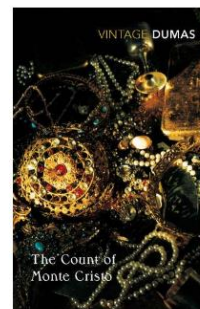
Paddy Clarke Ha, Ha, Ha by Roddy Doyle

10 year old Paddy Clarke is left to his own devices in an adult world – a world which, despite his best efforts, he finds impossible to understand. Cleverly written from a child's perspective. A thought-provoking class reader book for Year 9.



The Count of Monte Cristo by Alexandre Dumas

An epic page-turner written in episodes. This is the classic fiction equivalent of a binge box-set – a nineteenth century 'Breaking Bad'. Fuelled by revenge, Edmund Dantes seeks to get back everything he lost, and stake claim to a lot more. Ideal for more advanced readers in Year 9.



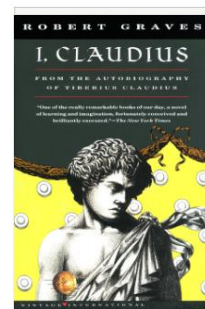
Every Line of You by Naomi Gibson

When Lydia builds an AI friend to fill a void in her life, nothing can prepare her for what happens when Henry turns from a computer into an overprotective defender. This modern cyber-thriller catapults teens into a world of tech, AI and fear of the unknown. With a breakneck plot, it thrusts the reader into themes that are prescient but firmly rooted in today's reality. A great book to discuss in year 9 book clubs.



I, Claudius by Robert Graves

The scheming, brutal and dangerous world of Roman nobility is brought to life in this historical thriller. An intense and gripping novel.



Noah Can't Even by Simon James Green

Noah desperately wants to be like everyone else. But with a mother who works as an unconvincing Beyonce lookalike and a father who isn't around, Noah is struggling with life. Laugh out loud moments of teenage angst with a twist. A worthwhile LGBT literature addition to the school library.



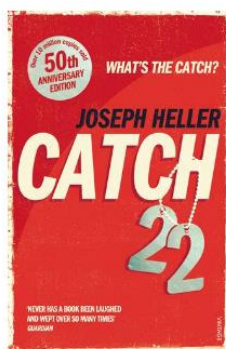
Brighton Rock by Graham Greene

Pinkie is caught in the middle of a Brighton gang war. Living on the edge, he kills a man and believes he can carry on as if nothing happened. A gripping novel for year 9 pupils.



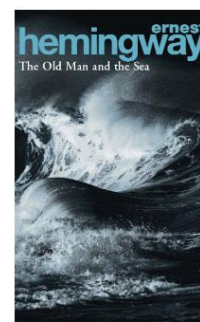
Catch-22 by Joseph Heller

At the end of WW2, Yossarian thinks his life is in danger – not from the enemy, but from his own side. He tries to find any excuse to avoid an increasing number of dangerous missions.



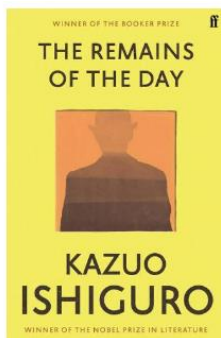
The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway

A classic, and brilliantly written, fable about an old fisherman, an ambitious boy and an epic battle to catch an enormous fish.



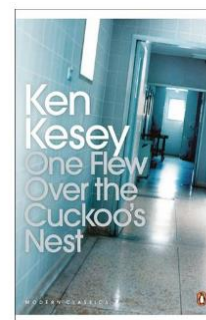
Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro

The story of a butler who tries to devote himself to his profession despite the fact his master is a Nazi sympathiser. Deeply moving, this book explores class, love and longing. A more challenging book for pupils in year 9 – and ideal for discussion.



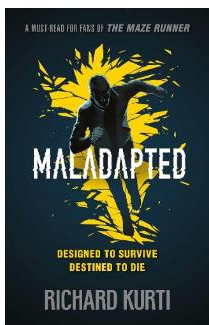
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey

McMurphy thinks he has escaped prison by being moved to a mental institution. Slowly he realises he is even more confined than before. A startling exploration of sanity and madness; and freedom vs control. Warning, some adult themes and a challenging read for 13 & 14-year-olds.



Maladapted by Richard Kurti

A rocket-paced thriller set in a dystopian near future. The only survivor of a terrorist attack on a packed train, Cillian starts to wonder if and why he was spared. Soon he finds himself drawn into a web of deceit and mind-bending revelations. Ideal for reluctant teen readers in Year 9.



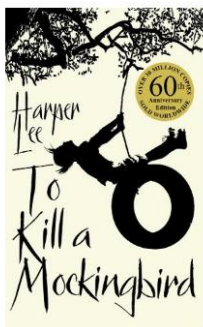
Philip Larkin – Collected Poems

Probably the most accessible verse collection by a modern poet. More likely than not to hook your teenager on poetry. A great poetry book for year 9 pupils.



To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

In this classic 1930s story, a black man is charged with raping a white girl and has to fight class, racial hatred and depression-era prejudice – as well as the courtroom. Atticus Finch, a white father, has the task of defending him. A great book for Year 9.



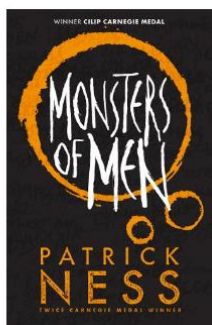
The Twilight Saga by Stephenie Meyer

A page-turning collection of five books will appeal to young adults. Teen Isabella Swan starts at a new school and quickly has to tread a fine line between romance and dangerous vampires.



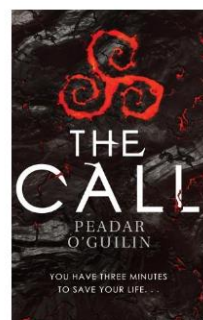
Monsters of Men by Patrick Ness

Part three of the Chaos Walking trilogy, Monsters of Men explores the effects of war. A fast-moving dystopian thriller set in a fantasy world war to end all wars. Todd and Viola have to fight, but what are they fighting for, and is it worth it? A modern classic and a great book for 13-year-olds.



The Call by Peadar O'Guilin

Set in a similar but realistic world that features myths and faeries, each teen needs to prepare for The Call – 3 minutes where they disappear with only a one in ten chance of returning alive. A dystopian, dark and addictive read that will resonate and linger in the subconscious. Could become a teen cult classic and will be a popular loan from your KS3/4 library.



Hatchet by Gary Paulsen

Brian, a streetwise teen who lives in the city, is left stranded in the wilderness after a plane crash – with only a hatchet to survive. Will he make it? This book will be popular with reluctant readers in Year 9. Some interesting teaching ideas can be found [here](#).



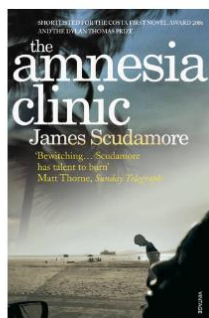
The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger

Holden Caulfield is a teen who has just been kicked out of his fourth school. He has to grow up quickly in an adult world and work out who he can trust, and who is a 'phony'. A more challenging book for year 9 pupils.



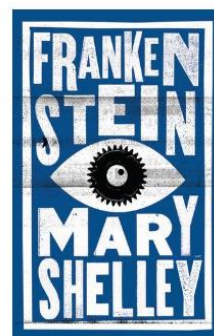
The Amnesia Clinic by James Scudamore

Anti is best friends with his polar opposite – Fabian. Athletic and popular, Fabian wishes his mother was still alive. The two set off to find a strange clinic in search of Fabian's mother – a clinic which no one is sure even exists.



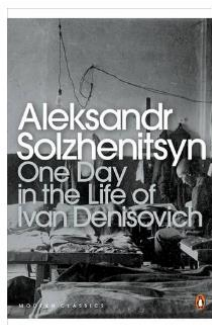
Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Mary Shelley's gothic horror about a deranged scientist who wants to imagine his own living creation from dead bodies, still has bite, shock value and complex themes. A good, and well written, counterpoint to the myriad of recent zombie TV shows and computer games.



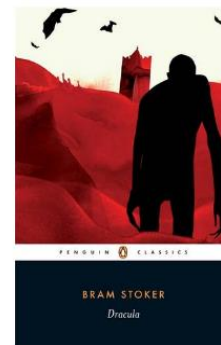
One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich by Alexander Solzhenitsyn

A horrifying and gripping account of life at a Soviet Gulag – isolated and stark. A tale of mental and physical survival. This would make an interesting choice for detention class reading. A more challenging book for year 9 students.



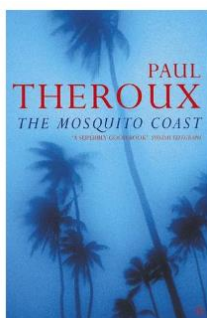
Dracula by Bram Stoker

A classic vampire tale following Dracula's move from Transylvania to England, pursued by Abraham Van Helsing who is intent on exterminating him. Warning, this book may inspire your teen to wear black and visit Whitby. Ideal for discussion in Year 9.



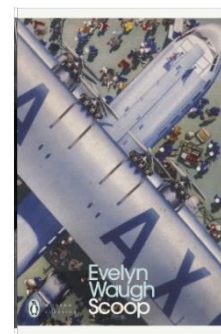
The Mosquito Coast by Paul Theroux

Allie Fox is a father who wants to change this world. He is on an unstoppable mission to bring ice and other inventions to the jungle, and a relentless pursuit of his dreams drives his wife and children to despair. After reading this, family holidays will never be the same. An interesting choice for a Year 9 book club.



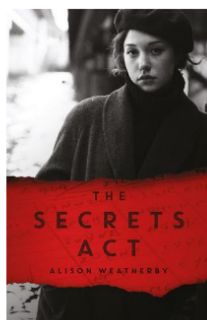
Scoop by Evelyn Waugh

The ambitious owner of The Daily Beast thinks he's spotted the perfect hotshot journalist to cover a juicy African conflict. Things don't go entirely to plan. Very funny, yet true to life.



The Secrets Act by Alison Weatherby

This mesmerizing novel follows Pearl and Ellen, two teenagers who are working at the super-secret Bletchley Park during WW2. Ellen cracks codes and Pearl delivers messages, but both find themselves drawn together and thrust headlong into a world of intrigue, treachery and spies – a dangerous puzzle that they might not be able to solve in time. A fascinating and original historical novel for young adults, The Secrets Act is highly recommended for year 9 pupils.



Burning Secret by Stefan Zweig

12 year old Edgar grows wary of a Baron he meets on holiday in this period story from Hapsburg Germany. He begins to think something is amiss, and when he finds out what it is, he takes revenge in a shocking manner. Short, and tense.



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