

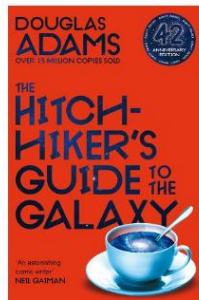
# Year 8 Recommended Reading List

Schoolreadinglist.co.uk

Compiled by Tom Tolkien

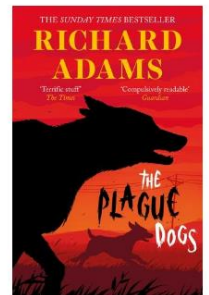
## The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams

Arthur's Friday doesn't start well when his house is demolished. The Earth is obliterated soon after, to make way for a bypass, and then he finds out his best friend is an alien. Can things get any worse?



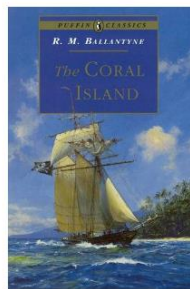
## The Plague Dogs by Richard Adams

Two dogs, Snitter and Rowf, escape from the horrors of an animal research centre and try to survive in the outside world.



## The Coral Island by R.M. Ballantyne

A boy's own story of Ralph, Jack and Peterkin who are shipwrecked on a coral island. As they work together and discover how to live and survive on the island their world is suddenly threatened by pirates. A good counterpoint to read with Lord of the Flies.



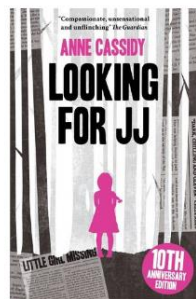
## The Dam Busters by Paul Brickhill

The true story of the 617 squadron's historic bombing raid on the Ruhr dam using 'bouncing bombs' devised by Barnes Wallace.



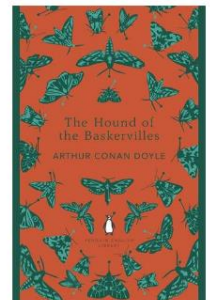
## Looking for JJ by Anne Cassidy

A child killer is living a new life under a new identity after being released. How long can she keep her former life secret, and is she as evil as people believe?



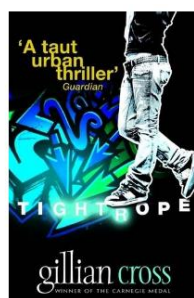
## The Hound of the Baskervilles by Arthur Conan Doyle

The Baskerville family is cursed by a ravenous supernatural dog intent on savaging them. Can Sherlock Holmes and Watson solve the mystery and save the family?



## Tightrope by Gillian Cross

Ashley has no idea that her late-night graffiti will change her life. First, she feels uncomfortable, then she receives notes and finally she realises there's a stalker.



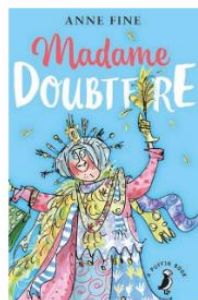
## Goggle Eyes by Anne Fine

Katy Killin is a world expert on her mother's disastrous boyfriends, and how to try and stop them from developing into unwanted stepfathers.



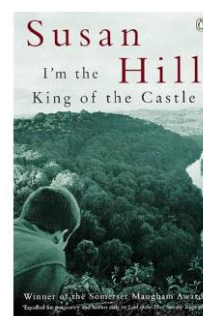
### Madame Doubtfire by Anne Fine

Lydia, Christopher and Natalie's parents have divorced. When their mum looks to hire a nanny, their Dad, Daniel gets the job – using a cunning disguise. An easier read for Year 8 pupils.



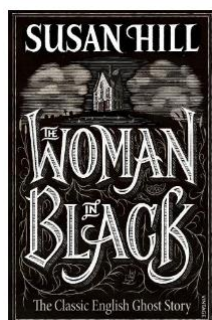
### I'm the King of the Castle by Susan Hill

Edmund doesn't want a new brother, and immediately dislikes his stepbrother Charles, who he sees as an intruder in his own home. At home, Edmund terrorises Charles, but in Hang Wood the roles there's a role reversal. A good book for Year 8 pupils to compare to Lord of the Flies.



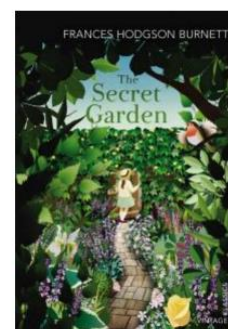
### The Woman in Black by Susan Hill

A chilling mystery about a woman in black who the villagers only talk about in terrifying true ghost stories.



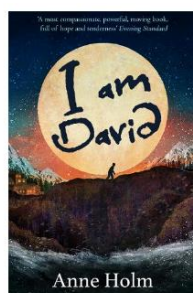
### The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

A spellbinding story about Misselthwaite Manor and an unwanted lonely child who discovers a hidden and magical garden.



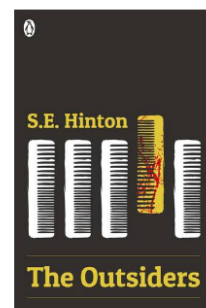
### I am David by Anne Holm

The story of 15-year-old David's quest – escaping from the concentration camp where he has lived his life and travelling across a Europe unknown to him to try and find his home.



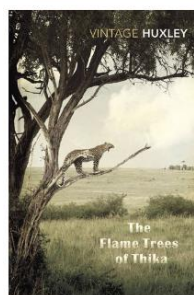
### The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

A story of struggle, growing up, gangs and peer pressure. A classic of modern teenage fiction.



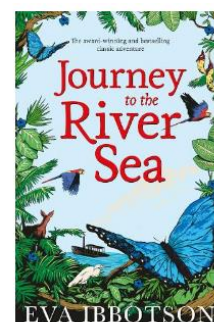
### The Flame Trees of Thika by Elspeth Huxley

Elspeth Huxley's autobiographical story of her life in Africa with her parent settlers – living among the Kikuyu in Kenya in a traditional grass house and working the land. A great book for Year 8s to study and review.



### Journey to the River Sea by Eva Ibbotson

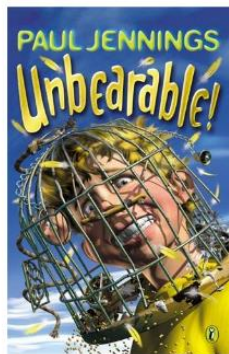
An orphaned young girl and her governess travel thousands of miles from boarding school to South America with distant relatives. An exotic and wonderfully described adventure. An easier book to read for Year 8 children.





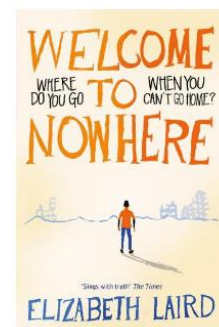
## Unbearable by Paul Jennings

A collection of eight weird, wonderful, strange and occasionally revolting short stories including 'Licked' and 'Smelly Feet'. A funny book for year 8 reluctant readers.



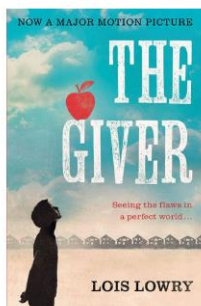
## Welcome to Nowhere by Elizabeth Laird

Omar dreams of being a successful businessman and ruling the world. But living in Syria, this 12-year-old's dreams are set in a time and place where things can change rapidly – especially when his older brother finds himself in a dangerous situation and the whole family has to flee to safety.



## The Giver by Lois Lowry

12 year old Jonas lives in a world with no poverty, no crime, and where everyone is the same. But when he takes the role of 'receiver of memory' he becomes one of the only people to understand how the world he lives in came about. A poignant read for Year 8 children – ideal for book clubs.



## The Haunting by Margaret Mahy

A story of haunting, and a boy with a very special gift. A compelling and scary novel.



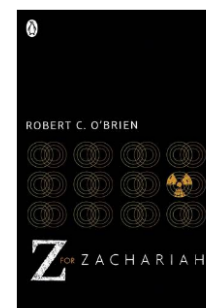
## Be Resilient by Nicola Morgan

Ideal for teens in KS3 and KS4, this book provides clear and practical advice on how to develop strategies, mental toughness and life-long skills to deal with what school and life throws at them. Situations such as COVID 19, who to trust, and keeping healthy are explored, and practical activities such as breathing techniques, visualising success and rationalising worries are detailed. Highly recommended for secondary school libraries.



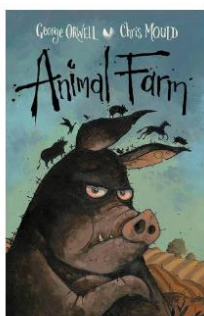
## Z for Zachariah by Robert O'Brien

Ann Burden has survived a nuclear war by living in a valley free of radiation. But when the only other person she knows becomes threatening, she decides to leave the valley to see if anyone else has survived. A more challenging book to read for Year 8 pupils.



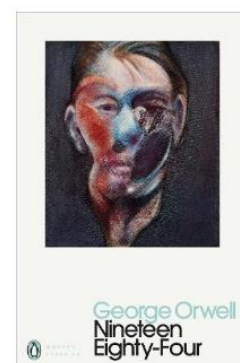
## Animal Farm by George Orwell and Chris Mould

George Orwell's unabridged text is set to new and vibrant cartoon-style illustrations by award-winning illustrator Chris Mould. The images help to lift a classic novel that is too often presented with typesetting from another era that 21st-century teens can find off-putting. Adding fun and pertinent satire, the narrative pictures add a layer of accessibility to a text often studied for 13+ entrance exams or GCSE. These modern touches will prove useful in helping reluctant and less able readers in KS3 and KS4. It's well worth considering a set of these books if you find yourself teaching Animal Farm to teenagers on a Friday afternoon.



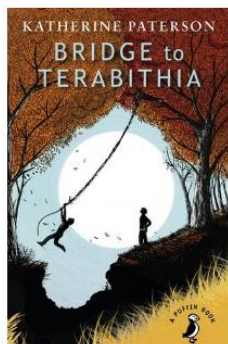
## Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell

The dystopian novel in which the terms 'big brother' and 'room 101' first appeared. Winston Smith works for the Ministry of Truth where his job is to rewrite history. He rebels and longs for freedom. A more challenging novel for students in Year 8.



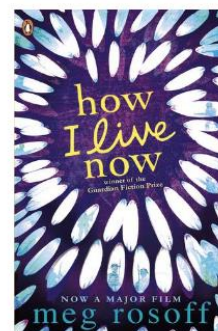
## Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson

Jess creates the world of Terabithia to escape from his annoying family. Reached only by a rope swing, he and his friend Leslie live out their adventures, until an earth-shattering tragedy strikes.



## How I Live Now by Meg Rosoff

Daisy, a streetwise American 15 year old and Edmond, her cousin from England are evacuated to the countryside. After briefly falling in love, her world is shattered by an unimaginable event. How will she live now?



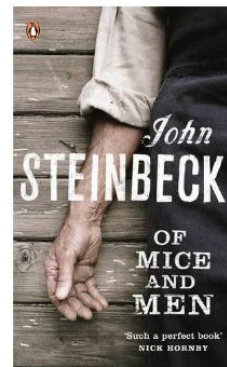
### Small Steps by Louis Sachar

The sequel to 'Holes'. Armpit is now a gardener living in Texas and trying to stay out of trouble by making the right choices. But things never seem to go his way. Ideal for discussion in Year 8 book clubs or English lessons.



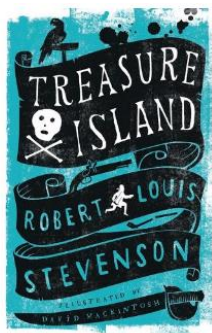
### Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck

George and Lennie follow the American Dream and head to California. However, Lennie gets into trouble with his boss's daughter in law – trouble which George might not be able to help him with.



### Treasure Island by R.L. Stevenson

The classic tale of Jim Hawkins and his adventure on the ship Hispaniola sailing to find hidden treasure. Intrigue, treachery, mutiny, castaways, crime and the menacing Long John Silver dominate this roller coaster of cliffhangers and surprises.



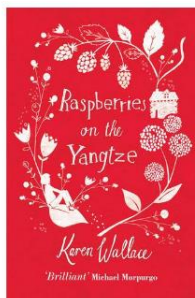
### Shadowmancer by G.P. Taylor

Obadiah Demurral wants to rule the universe with magic. Can he be stopped? A dark, atmospheric and gripping novel.



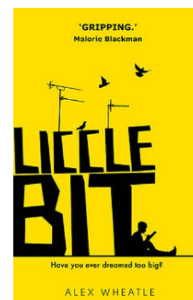
### Raspberries on the Yangtze by Karen Wallace

It began, said Nancy, 'the day my brother and I decided to poison our mother.' A memorable story about friendships and growing up from a child's point of view. An easier, yet poignant and thought-provoking, read for year 8 pupils.



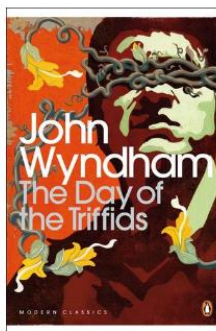
### Little Bit by Alex Wheatle

Lemar is desperate to catch the eye of Venetia. But he thinks that being short is holding him back and he believes his so-called friends when they dismiss his chances and call him 'Little Bit'. Suddenly someone is interested in him – a local crime lord – and Lemar is forced down a path that he might not be able to control. The first of a series, this is an urban thriller with bite for more mature pupils in year 8.



### The Day of the Triffids by John Wyndham

Bill wakes up to find he's the only person left on Earth who can see. Everyone else has been blinded by a mysterious meteor event. Can he save the world from extraterrestrial carnivorous plants?



### Chinese Cinderella by Adeline Yen Mah

The unforgettable story of a young Chinese girl's struggle to find acceptance within her own family and her survival amongst siblings and parents who think she represents bad luck. She finds writing a form of release. Based on the author's own life. A great book to read aloud and discuss as a class in Year 8.



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