Year 8 “Recommended Reading” List 2006/2007

Action and Adventure

Malorie Blackman  **Noughts and Crosses**  (Trilogy)  In an alternative world the issues of racism are tackled in a society which has only two types of people: “noughts” and “crosses”. This novel is about friendship that goes beyond these barriers. The sequel set a generation later is also an absolute knock out.

NM Browne  **Basilisk**  A wonderful blend of myths, history and archaeology are present in this great novel set in the caves of a dark world.

SE Hinton  **Outsiders**  Stunning study of hate, violence, loyalty and friendship set in the violent gang-lands of New York. One of the very best teenage novels ever written.

Robert Muchamore  **CHERUBS**  Big adventures and exciting at the teenage recruits at CRURUB battle the underworld’s of the World. Now 3 books of a very popular series.


Louis Sachar  **Holes**  Very popular novel about a miscarriage of justice that sends Stanley into a juvenile prison and an assignment to dig “holes”. Compulsive reading.

Alex Shearer  **Bootleg**  Great novel about chocolate being made illegal and the underground resistance movement that forms. Highly original.

Family and Relationships

Terence Blacker  **Boy2Girl**  Very funny novel about a cross dressing dare that starts as a joke and goes further and further.

Alyssa Brugman  **Walking Naked**  Highly original novel set in a secondary school where the girls who are ‘cool’ clash with a new girl with startling consequences.

Meg Cabot  **All American Girl**  Entertaining teen rom-com about a girl who accidently saves the life of the President and life is never the same again!

Jenny Davis  **If Only I’d Known**  Beautifully written novel about teenage pregnancy.

Lesley Howarth  **Carwash**  Enjoyable story, set in Cornwall, told over a long, hot and sticky teenage summer.

Mary Hopper  **Megan Trilogy**  Great sequence of books about teenage pregnancy and being a young mum, and single parent.

Elizabeth Laird  **The Garbage King**  Original novels set in the slums and streets of Ethiopia.

Hiliary McKay  **Indigo’s Star**  This loose sequel to Saffy’s Angel features Indigo as the main character as he overcomes a serious illness and dreads going back to school.

Meg Rosoff  **How I Live Now**  Odd and dreamy novel set in the back-drop of a undisclosed war with an American teenage girl getting to know her family in England. Now regarded as a modern classic.

Alex Shearer  **The Crush**  An obsession with a Boy Band drives Ally to do almost anything...
Alex Shearer  
**Great Blue Yonder**  
Funny and hugely thought-provoking novel about dealing with death.

Jerry Spinelli  
**Stargirl**  
Brilliant and brave novel about a teenager daring to be different in an American high school. Highly recommended.

**Classics**

Maya Angelou  
**I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings**  
Classic autobiography of a young black girl struggling against the brutal American race discrimination in the 1930s.

Louisa M Alcott  
**Little Women**  
First in the series of classic novels of 4 sisters growing up in 1860s America written from the point of view of Jo, who would dearly like to be a writer.

Charlotte Bronte  
**Jane Eyre**  
Jane falls in love with her rich employer, only to find out he has a dark secret...Classic stuff that has thrilled generations.

Agatha Christie  
**The Body in the Library**  
Christie in her finest Miss Marple tale or murder and revenge.

Charles Dickens  
**Oliver Twist**  
Classic Dickens tale of the young orphan’s dramatic move through life.

Penelope Farmer  
**Charlotte Sometimes**  
Dream like novel where Charlotte, whilst sleeping, somehow slips back in time to 1919 and becomes Clare... Wonderful.

George Orwell  
**Animal Farm**  
Stunning political parody, set in a farm yard with the animals playing the parts of people.

Nevil Shute  
**A Town like Alice**  
About the heroics of a young English woman during World War 2. A fascinating study.

Dodie Smith  
**I Capture the Castle**  
Great novel of first love, with an eccentric family of sisters living in a dilapidated castle.

R.L. Stevenson  
**Treasure Island**  
Sea adventure and the search for lost treasure. The wonderful characters make this yarn as fun as ever.

J. Vance Marshall  
**Walkabout**  
In the Australian desert, two children, survivors of an air crash, make their journey across the harsh landscape, aided by an Aboriginal boy on “walkabout”.

Jules Verne  
**Journey to the Centre of the Earth**  
Wonderfully inventive story about explorers who climb down an extinct volcano and into the centre of the earth.

HG Wells  
**The Time Machine**  
SF novel about time travel and the possible consequences. The Martians invade Earth. A groundbreaking science fiction novel.

**Fantasy**

Frank Beddor  
**Looking Glass Wars**  
Challenging novel which develops the characters from “Alice in Wonderland” creating a whole new fantasy adventure.

Trudi Canavan  
**Black Magician Trilogy**  
This is a magical tale of conspiracy and magic which is lost and found. A stunning read.

Trudi Canavan  
**Age of the Five Series**  
Stunning new sequence from Canavan, of which the second book has just been published. Every bit as good as the Black Magician Series.

Katherine Langrish  
**Troll Fell**  
Dark and hypnotic fantasy novel as an orphan is enslaved by savage and evil trolls.

Cliff McNish  
**Doomspell** (trilogy)  
Powerful fantasy series about children snatched from our world to satisfy the evil of a witch from a different dimension.

Garth Nix  
**Sabriel**  
Powerful and complex fantasy trilogy. Sabriel sets out...
Lirael on a quest to avenge the death of her father in the land of dark, dark magic. Absolutely superb from book one to three.

Garth Nix Mister Monday Breathtakingly ambitious series of 7 novels (only 2 of which are out) about a dying boy who is saved in a dream by Mr Monday. His adventures are only just beginning, as there are currently 4 books in this series, with 3 more to come.

Chris Paolini Eragon & Eldest Wonderful quest first-novel by a 16 year old author whose main character begins his destiny is to be a Dragon Rider. The first book in a new trilogy.

Michael Paver Wolf Brother & Spirit Walker First in a challenging new series charting the lives and adventures of early man and their lives, fears, adventures and superstitions.

Philip Pullman His Dark Materials One of the most brilliant children’s trilogies of the last 20 years. Has more surprises, scares and twists that you can cope with!

Philip Reeves Mortal Engines (series) Blinding fantasy novel where moving cities trawl the globe. Tom and Hester are thrown from their beloved “London” and try to get back on board. Highly original read now recently concluded with book 4 A Darkling Plan.

Jonathan Stroud Amulet of Samarkend An unforgettable mix of history, fantasy and intrigue in one the shortest 480 pages you’ll ever read! Start of a new trilogy.

Chris Wooding Poison Poison must rescue her kidnapped sister from the land of the “phaeries” in this thoughtful and exhilarating fantasy tale.

**Ghosts and Horror**

Kate Cann Leaving Poppy A new genre for the great Kate Cann in this spooky haunted house, possession novel. Genuinely creepy!

D V Carter The Hand of the Devil This grisly thriller will excite many readers with its edgy prose and great action sequences. Discover the horrific truth for yourself in this great horror read.

Ann Halam Don’t Open Your Eyes Spine chilling horror novel about a boy killed in a joyriding accident. Highly recommended.

Carol Hedges Red Velvet Nasty things begin to happen to Elly when she finds the skeleton of a dead girl wearing a red dress in an old house.

Cliff McNish Breathe: A ghost Story A true ghost story. The kind that says its cold fingers on you grips tight and doesn’t let you go under the last pages have been turned. Wonderfully spine chilling.

Celia Rees Witch Child Sorcoress Interesting read about the daughter of a woman accused of being a witch in 18th century England. Beautifully written and asks many intelligent questions and now followed by a great sequel.

Celia Rees Soul Taker Jardine is so obsessed with the lovely Lisa that he sells his soul for a chance to be with her. Scary stuff.

EE Richardson Devil’s Footsteps Wonderful horror novel from the new Queen of fear. Scary, atmospheric, well plotted and believable....

The Intruders More suspense and fear from Richardson in this terrifying haunted house novel. Taste the fear.....

Marcus Sedgwick My Swordhand is Singing Chilling vampire tale set in 17th Century Europe, inspired by the original Transylvanian Vampire folk takes. Scary stuff!

Chris Wooding Haunting of Alaizabel Cray Great atmospheric crossover fantasy novel about two young “wyct-hunters” seeking for a beast that lurks in the sewers of old London. Very exciting and an exceptional read.
Humour and Comedy

Ros Asquith **I was a Teenage Worrier** Amusing teenage aspirations and hopes, with looks at topics as diverse as sex, war and electrolysis! Also has funny sequels.

Martin Chatterton **Michigan Moorcroft RIP** Funny novel about the exploits of Michigan after he is killed in a car crash and runs into trouble in the after life.

Cathy Hopkins **Mates, Dates...** (series) Now a successful multi-book series. Have a look at the funny world of Izzy and her wacky school chums.

John Kirkbridge **Thank you for your Application** Quite exceptional novel about a would-be writer who works as a typist. Has truly hilarious consequences. Comedy of the highest order and really, really funny.

Louise Rennison **Georgina Parks** (series) The teenage Bridget Jones! Often hilarious diaries of a confused teenager. This popular series is now into its 5th book.

Catherine Robinson **Tin Grin** Mattie’s mum remarries and she has to deal with the nightmare of getting along with her new, computer geek, step-brother.

**Soul Sisters** New book by Robinson featuring some of the same characters. Old friends are reunited only to discover things have moved on.

Meg Rosoff **Just in Case** Quirky and funny follow up to How I Live Now in which 15 year old David is obsessed Fate is out to get him.

Louis Sacher **There’s a Boy in the Girls’ Bathroom Dogs Don’t Tell Jokes** Another highly entertaining (and funny) tale from the writer of Holes. Has much to identify with.

Tui Sutherland **This Must Be Love** Funny and sassy look at Athenwood High School and their Spring Drama Production.

Sue Townsend **Secret Diary of Adrian Mole** Classic series of diaries featuring 13 year old Adrian and his obsession with the lovely Pandora.

Mystery and Thrillers

Terrance Blacker **Angel Factory** Dark and delicious tale of what happens when a curious boy hacks into his father’s computer. A really powerful read.

Tim Bowler **Apocalypse** Haunting and nail-biting adventure tail which sees the life of a young family in danger when they are ship-wrecked on a hostile island.

Kevin Brooks **Martyn Pig** Martyn’s life is turned on its head when he accidently kills someone very close to him in this sublime novel. Brilliant.

Kevin Brooks **Road of the Dead** Pacy and edgy thriller about two teenage boys out to avenge the death of their murdered sister. Kevin Brooks just gets better and better!

Anne Cassidy **Missing Judy** Gripping novel about the mystery surrounding the vanishing of a 6 year old and the guilt of the 16 year old sister who feels responsible.

**Story of my Life** Magnificent thriller set over one London night as Kenny is traveling home he bumps into Mac, his brother’s girlfriend, and his life is about to change. Cassidy has followed Looking for JJ with another A* thriller. Read it today!

F. Cottrell-Boyce **Millions** Imagine the scenario: Britain is about to join the Euro, you find 250K and have 10 days to spend it before it becomes obsolete. Easily one of the best books of 2004.

Julie Hearn **The Merrybegot** Magical English Civil War novel, with a supernatural twang, and a trainee witch.
Valerie Mendes  **Girl in the Attic**  Accessible, spine-chilling ghost/mystery novel set in Cornwall after a family move from the big city.

Nicola Morgan  **FleshMarket**  Startling thriller set in the dark streets of 19th Century Edinburgh where the body-snatchers Burke and Hare stalk the homeless street urchins.

Philip Pullman  **Butterfly Tattoo**  The agony of first love inspires this book, but tragedy and violence are soon to follow. For the mature reader.

Nicola Morgan  **Ruby in the Smoke**  Exceptional mystery yarn, about a girl trying to find out why her father was murdered. Has two sequels with the same characters, which are also excellent.

Ian Samson  **Case of the Missing Library Books**  I know it sounds boring, but it’s not... Tricky Irish thriller about dodgy goings on with the mobile library vans.

Alex Shearer  **The Stolen**  A nail-biting and supernatural tale of old people taking over the bodies of young people. A gripping mystery.

Alex Shearer  **Tins**  Fergal collects metal tins, until life changes completes when he finds a finger in one tin ands the word “help” scrawled in another. Another great thriller from Shearer.

Alex Shearer  **Speed of the Dark**  Power house science fiction thriller about a scientist who disappears into thin air but leaves an intriguing manuscript behind. A riveting thriller about time travel follows.

Nancy Werlin  **Killer’s Cousin**  Ingenious thriller with gothic flair about a 17 year old who was acquitted of murder and forced to move towns to live with distant relatives. An exceptionally well-paced thriller.

Tim Wynne-Jones  **Boy in the Burning House**  Beautifully crafted mystery novel of 2 friends trying to solve a mystery from a previous generation.

Scott Westerfield  **Uglies**  In the future plastic surgery is taken to the extreme. Those who reject the process are known as “Uglies”. A riveting thriller.

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**School Stories**

Robert Cormier  **The Chocolate War**  Stunning and shocking novel about the power of gangs in school and how one small act of defiance starts a chain reaction in the school. Highly recommended for strong readers. Has a very good sequel.

Catherine Forde  **Fat Boy Swim**  Great novel about a misfit who will do anything to fit in at school.

Graham Gardner  **Inventing Elliot**  Gripping and terrifying novel of a gang of school thugs, called The Guardians, who rule and bully at Holminster High with an iron fist

Roger Green  **Cuckoos**  Powerful novel about the power and cruelty of school bullying that starts with the “whisper”. Highly recommended.

Anthony Masters  **The Drop**  Gripping novel about the gang mentality ruling a school in Wandsworth. Recommended.

Louis Sachar  **The Boy who Lost his Face**  Very weird novel about a bully seemingly cursed who then begins to see things from the point of view of the bullied. An interesting and challenging read.

**Small Steps**  Funny loose sequel to Holes with a couple of the minor-characters taking centre stage in an amusing get rich scheme that goes wrong.

Jerry Spinelli  **The Mighty Crashman**  Engaging novels about dares and bullying that go too far at an American high school. By the author of Stargirl.
Science Fiction

Ann Halam  Taylor 5 Fascinating novel about human cloning.
His Majesty’s Starship Follow the journey of Earth’s first interstellar delegation. Very enjoyable.
Nicola Morgan  Sleepwalking Hypnotic and challenging novel about a people dominated by a huge psychic presence which controls their minds.
Michael Lawrence  The Aldous Lexicon Imaginative SF yarn with complex alternative realities which cross over into our own world
William King  Far Seer Highly enjoyable dark SF novel set in the incredible world of Warhammer.

Sport

Theresa Breslin  Divided City Tough Scottish novel which tackles the religious divide in Glasgow through a look at football.
Trevor Colgan  Stretford Enders Fantastically realistic about teenage football fanatics, their lives, loves and dreams of making it big. Start of a great series.
Peter Hayden  And Smith Must Score! A humorous tale of football obsession, dating dilemmas, family separation and petty crime.
Kelvin MacGregor  Here we Go Not just about football; but about friendship, girls and how to have fun. Follows the trials and tribulations of a boy who wants to turn professional when he is 16.
David McRoberts  Fergus MacPhail: the Boy, the Legend Wildly entertaining football story of a teenage tear-away and his life at school, and with the girls! Funny stuff.
Mal Peet  Keeper Mesmerizing football novel about a Brazilian goal-keeper. It’s so real you can almost hear the crowd cheering.
Martin Waddell  Shooting Star Interesting novel written by the man who talent spotted a future soccer star.

War

John Boyne  The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas One of the saddest books I’ve ever read. Set around the time of the Holocaust. Saying anything else will give it away. Read it!
E. Buchignani  Tell No One Who You Are Harrowing look at the lost children of Nazi Germany.
Michael Cronin  Against the Day Through the Night Uncannily believable accounts of what might have happened if Germany had successfully invaded the UK during World War 2. Highly recommended.
Els De Groen  No Roof in Bosnia Child’s account of the war in Bosnia. An interesting read.
Peter Dickinson  AK Boy soldier Paul fighting for freedom in the Nagala Bush, is the premise for this novel about growing up and trust.
Michael Morpurgo  Private Peaceful Brilliant World War 1 trench novel.
Andy McNab  Boy Soldier McNab draws on his own vast SAS experience to write this exciting, part-biographical, account of his younger days in the SAS.