



SPRING

If you would like to renew a book, or have any comments/ queries, please don't hesitate to contact us at library@newsteadwood.co.uk

Happy reading! – Miss Mullins, Miss Walker, and Miss Henry

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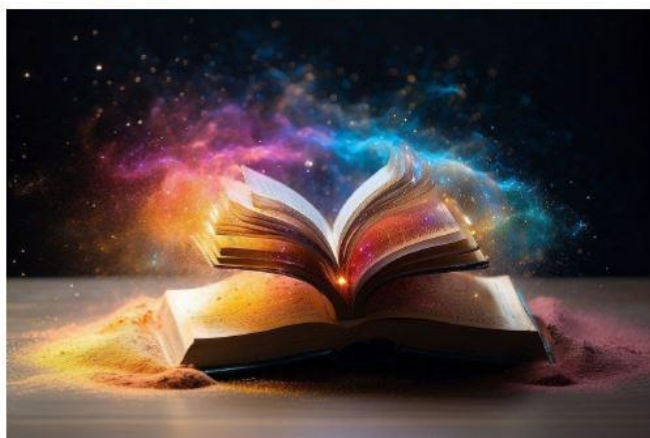
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Orpington Library's Younger Teens Reading Group

Do you enjoy reading?
Enjoy talking about books?



Would you like to join the
Younger Teens Reading
Group at Orpington Library?

If you would like to join, please contact us by
email: orpington.library@gll.org

Meetings are once a month on a Monday from
5:30-6:30pm, during term time, for ages 11-
14 years

We look forward to seeing you!

BETTER

Siobhan McDermott Author Event

On Wednesday, we welcomed middle grade fantasy author Siobhan McDermott for a library-led author event. Period 1, Siobhan gave an inspiring talk to Year 7 and Year 8, giving advice on how to construct a story and build your own fantasy world, as well as sharing her own experiences and inspiration. During Period 2, Siobhan signed copies of her books for students in the library and held an informal Q&A session. Year 9 student librarians were also invited to the event and represented the school admirably. Siobhan's two books are now available to borrow in the library, and we have a whole host of *Paper Dragons* bookmarks available at the desk.



Paper Dragons #1: The Fight for the Hidden Realm by Siobhan McDermott

Twelve-year-old Zhi Ging has always been an outcast. Until she receives an invitation to Hok Woh, an underwater school that offers her the chance to become immortal, and to finally belong. There, she battles in hair-raising boat races, meets aghesifting tutors and competes in thrilling trials. But there are rumours of a growing dark force... and students who fail the trials are disappearing. Can Zhi Ging uncover the truth before it's too late?



Paper Dragons #2: The Rise of the Sand Spirits by Siobhan McDermott

Following the infiltration of Hok Woh and possession of her friends, Zhi Ging sets out on a dangerous mission to find Reishi, the Silhouette Scout, whom she believes has been lured into a dangerous trap. With her adorable now-phoenix Malo by her side, Zhi Ging must fight off dangerous sand spirits, power-hungry enemies and magnificent dragons if she is to save her friends and her new home in the world of the immortals. But as secrets are uncovered and new enemies emerge, can Zhi Ging figure out who to trust? And, more importantly, how to survive?

"A book is a garden, an orchard, a storehouse, a party, a company by the way, a counsellor, a multitude of counsellors." – Charles Baudelaire

NEW

Anisha Accidental Detective #6: Fright Night by Serena Patel

It's Halloween and everyone is excited about the school disco. It's a bit much for me - all that dressing-up and dancing. I'd rather cosy up with a good book, but Milo, Mindy and Manny are all super excited. Or at least, they were excited, until all these strange things started happening - messages appearing on the whiteboard, lights flickering on and off, books flying off the library shelves... Some of the other kids have been whispering that the school is haunted, but Mr Graft says that if the spooky mischief doesn't stop, then the disco will be cancelled. Looks like a mission for me, Anisha, accidental ghost detective!



Bungo Stray Dogs: Volumes 4 & 5 by Kafka Asigiri

The American group of ability users known as the "Guild" appears, led by the wealthy Francis Scott Fitzgerald, who has his sights set on the Armed Detective Agency! Can Agency president Fukuzawa stop him...!? Not if Guild member Lucy Montgomery and can help it!



Crave #4: Court by Tracy Wolff

No one survived the last battle unscathed. Flint is angry at the world, Jaxon is turning into something I don't recognize, and Hudson has put up a wall I'm not sure I'll ever break through. Now war is coming, and we're not ready. We're going to need an army to have any hope of winning. But first, there are questions about my ancestors that need answers. Answers that might just reveal who the real monster is among us. And that's saying something in a world filled with bloodthirsty vampires, immortal gargoyles, and an ancient battle between two gods. There's no guarantee that anyone will be left standing when the dust settles, but if we want to save this world, I have no choice. I'll have to embrace every part of me...even the parts I fear the most.



Crave #5: Charm by Tracy Wolff

He's under my skin... After Katmere, I shouldn't be surprised by anything. Including the existence of a world beyond my world called the Shadow Realm. Yet here I am, stuck in a strange, dangerous place with the worst of the supernatural, the monster that other monsters fear: Hudson Vega. He might be Jaxon's brother and ridiculously hot, but he's a complete bona fide pain in my ass. The question is whether we'll find a way out before I kill him... or run out of time.

She's stealing my heart... It's a truth universally known—at least according to Grace—that everything is my fault. But I have a nasty suspicion that Grace isn't as human as she thinks, and she's the one keeping us trapped. Now we'll have to work together not only to survive, but to save all those we've come to call family who live here. Because there's something connecting us. Something stronger than fear... and way more bloody dangerous.

Crave #6: Cherish by Tracy Wolff

The sensational conclusion to Crave series... It's been over three months since my friends and I took down Cyrus. Three months where my biggest fear was what paper was due next... But I should have known it was too good to last. Now everything is falling apart. The Vampire Court has no king, the Dragon Court has no heart, and the Gargoyle Court has me—a teenager in way over her head. And it's the worst possible timing, because a threat is brewing just as the Circle is collapsing. I have no choice but to return to the Shadow Realm and face the terrifying queen who nearly ended us...and make a deal with her to save Mekhi. But this time, I'm bringing my powerful friends with me—and Hudson. Except something is wrong with him, too. He's keeping a secret—even from me. All I know is that everyone's life hangs in the balance. And it's my fault—because I still owe the Crone a favour... and now she's come to collect.



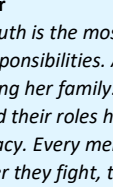
Keeper of the Lost Cities #6: Nightfall by Shannon Messenger

Sophie Foster is struggling. Grieving. Scrambling. But she knows one thing: she will not be defeated. The Neverseen have had their victories—but the battle is far from over. It's time to change tactics. Make sacrifices. Re-examine everything. Maybe even time for Sophie to trust her enemies. All paths lead to Nightfall—an ominous door to an even more ominous place—and Sophie and her friends strike a dangerous bargain to get there. But nothing can prepare them for what they discover. The problems they're facing stretch deep into their history. And with time running out, and mistakes catching up with them, Sophie and her allies must join forces in ways they never have before.



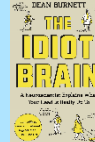
Keeper of the Lost Cities #8: Legacy by Shannon Messenger

Sophie Foster wants answers. But after a lifetime of lies, sometimes the truth is the most dangerous discovery. Even the smallest secret comes with terrifying new responsibilities. And Sophie's not the only one with blank spots in her past, or mysteries surrounding her family. She and her friends are part of something much bigger than they imagined—and their roles have already been chosen for them. Every clue drags them deeper into the conspiracy. Every memory forces them to question everything—especially one another. And the harder they fight, the more the lines blur between friend and enemy.



The Idiot Brain: A Neuroscientist Explains What Your Head is Really Up To by Dean Burnett

Why do you lose arguments with people who know MUCH LESS than you? Why can you recognise that woman, from that thing... but can't remember her name? And why, after your last break-up, did you find yourself in the foetal position on the sofa for days, moving only to wipe the snot and tears haphazardly from your face? Here's why: the idiot brain. For something supposedly so brilliant and evolutionarily advanced, the human brain is pretty messy, fallible and disorganised. For example, did you know that your memory is egotistical? That conspiracy theories and superstitions are the inevitable effects of a healthy brain? Or that alcohol can actually improve your memory? In *The Idiot Brain*, neuroscientist Dean Burnett tours our mysterious and mischievous grey (and white) matter. Along the way he explains the human brain's imperfections in all their glory and how these influence everything we say, do and experience. Expertly researched and entertainingly written, this book is for anyone who has wondered why their brain appears to be sabotaging their life, and what on earth it is really up to. **Editor's note: please read the book before testing this conclusion.



Significant Figures: Lives and Works of Trailblazing Mathematicians by Professor Ian Stewart

Which mathematician elaborated a crucial concept the night before he died in a duel? Who funded his maths and medical career through gambling and chess? Who learned maths from her wallpaper? Ian Stewart presents the extraordinary lives and amazing discoveries of twenty-five of history's greatest mathematicians from Archimedes and Liu Hui to Benoit Mandelbrot and William Thurston. His subjects are the inspiring individuals from all over the world who have made crucial contributions to mathematics. They include the rediscovered geniuses Srinivasa Ramanujan and Emmy Noether, alongside the towering figures of Muhammad al-Khwarizmi (inventor of the algorithm), Pierre de Fermat, Isaac Newton, Carl Friedrich Gauss, Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevsky, Bernhard Reimann (precursor to Einstein), Henri Poincaré, Ada Lovelace (arguably the first computer programmer), Kurt Gödel and Alan Turing. Ian Stewart's vivid accounts are fascinating in themselves and, taken together, cohere into a riveting history of key steps in the development of mathematics.

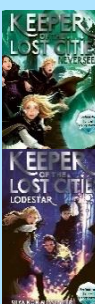


A Business Proposal: Volume 2 by Haehwa

On a romantic evening date with the young, rich, and unbelievably handsome Taemu, Hari is the envy of all women...but little do they know—it's all fake! She has been trapped into playing the part of his girlfriend to appease his meddlesome grandfather, all the while desperately trying to hide the fact that she is actually an employee at his company! How long can she keep up this nerve-wracking double life?

Keeper of the Lost Cities #4: Neverseen by Shannon Messenger

Sophie Foster is on the run—but at least she's not alone. Her closest friends from the Lost Cities have gone with her to join the Black Swan. They still have doubts about the shadowy organization, but the only way to find answers is to start working with them. And as they settle into their new lives, they uncover secrets bigger than anything they'd imagined. But their enemies are far from done, and unleash a terrifying plague that threatens the safety of an entire species. Sophie and her friends fight with everything they have—with new allies joining them—but every choice has consequences. And trusting the wrong person could prove deadly. In this game-changing fourth book in the *Keeper of the Lost Cities* series, Sophie must question everything to find a truth that will either save her world—or shatter it.



Keeper of the Lost Cities #5: Lodestar by Shannon Messenger

Sophie Foster is back in the Lost Cities—but the Lost Cities have changed. The threat of war hangs heavy over her glittering world, and the Neverseen are wreaking havoc. The lines between friend and enemy have blurred, and Sophie is unsure whom to trust. But when she's warned that the people she loves most will be the next victims, she knows she has to act. A mysterious symbol could be the key—if only she knew how to translate it. Every new clue seems to lead deeper into her world's underbelly and the Black Swan aren't the only ones who have plans. The Neverseen have their own initiative, and if Sophie doesn't stop it, they might finally have the ultimate means to control her.

Keeper of the Lost Cities #7: Flashback by Shannon Messenger

Sophie Foster doesn't know what—or whom—to believe. And in a game with this many players, the worst mistake can be focusing on the wrong threat. But when the Neverseen prove that Sophie's far more vulnerable than she ever imagined, she realizes it's time to change the rules. Her powerful abilities can only protect her so far. To face down ruthless enemies, she must learn to fight. Unfortunately, battle training can't help a beloved friend who's facing a whole different danger—where the only solution involves one of the biggest risks Sophie and her friends have ever taken. And the distraction might be exactly what the villains have been waiting for.



Keeper of the Lost Cities #9: Stellarlune by Shannon Messenger

Sophie Foster changed the game. Now she's facing impossible choices: When to act. When to trust. When to let go. Her friends are divided and scattered, and the Black Swan wants Sophie to focus on their projects. But her instincts are leading her somewhere else. Stellarlune—and the mysterious Elysian—might be the key to everything. But finding truth in the Lost Cities always requires sacrifice. And as the Neverseen's plans sharpen into terrifying focus, it appears that everyone has miscalculated. The Lost Cities' greatest lie could destroy everything. And in the battle that follows, only one thing is certain: nothing will ever be the same.



In Memoriam: Alex Wheatle



Author Alex Wheatle, known colloquially as the Brixton Bard, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in February 2023. Tragically, Wheatle sadly lost the battle with the disease on Sunday 16th March 2025. Wheatle is remembered for his powerful voice and activism in the interest of the black community, as well as for the people of the Lambeth borough of London. He has been described by Councillor Donatus Anyanwu as a 'campaigner to the end' notably raising awareness of prostate cancer among black men, who are more prone to the disease, as well as promoting the need for a

prostate cancer screening programme. Critic Colin Grant labelled Wheatle's writing as 'sharp, clear-eyed and generous'. Writer and editor Lucy Popescu stated that Wheatle has '26 years of legacy' that we can sustain by continuing to read his novels. Small Axe TV has released a feature length dramatization of the author's fantastically interesting life, which can be found on BBC iPlayer [here](https://www.bbc.com/iplayer/programmes/b0111111).

East of Acre Lane by Alex Wheatle (Recommended for Older Readers)

East of Acre Lane is the fast-paced and razor sharp story of a young man trying to do the right thing from celebrated author Alex Wheatle, one of the figures who inspired Steve McQueen's *Small Axe*. It is 1981, and Brixton is on the verge of exploding. Biscuit lives with his mother, brother and sister, trapped hustling on the frontline for the South London badman Nunchucks. As the patience of the community breaks and the riots erupt, Biscuit must make a choice that could change his life forever. 'His prose is as sharp as a barber's cutthroat and the hard edged dialogue perfectly captures that London vibe. Thrilling, very funny, and most of all a page turner' Courtia Newland



Cane Warriors by Alex Wheatle

Irresistible, gripping, and unforgettable, *Cane Warriors* follows the true story of Tacky's War in Jamaica in 1760. A powerful young adult tale told through the eyes of Maa, a fourteen-year-old slave, this fictionalized account of the most significant rebellion in history books or taught in schools. The story begins as Maa is awoken in the middle of the night by one of the rebels, who informs him that the revolt will begin on Easter Sunday. Maa's father doesn't like the idea of his son joining the rebellion, but his mother gives Maa her blessing. Together, Maa and his sixteen-year-old best friend Keverton take up arms, learning about brotherhood, courage, faith, and sacrifice along the way. Alex Wheatle's brilliant storytelling and characterization vividly bring to life the issues, pain, and the power structure of the era, along with the hopes and the dreams of the people. In writing this story, Wheatle's meticulous and extensive research evokes the stories and legends passed down by word of mouth over the centuries.

Books of My Life: Anthony Horowitz

Author Anthony Horowitz, best known for his *Alex Rider* series, recently discussed the books that have shaped his life and career with *The Guardian*. He spoke about how LP Hartley's *The Go-Between* made him question his own sense of melancholy as a teenager and prompted him to take more control of his life, and how Mark Haddon's short story collection *The Pier Falls* erased his mistrust of short stories. The book that made him want to be a writer was *The Complete Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, and he came back to the work of Dickens after years of being put off by studying *Hard Times* at school. Horowitz will never read Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* again as he enjoyed it so intensely the first time, he's scared he will realise how jaded he's become. Click [here](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/sep/11/anthony-horowitz-books-of-my-life) to read the original *Guardian* article.



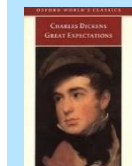
The Book That Made Me Want to be a Writer: The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes is a collection of twelve short stories by Arthur Conan Doyle, first published in 1892. It contains the earliest short stories featuring the consulting detective Sherlock Holmes. The stories are collected in the same sequence, which is not supported by any fictional chronology. The only characters common to all twelve are Holmes and Dr. Watson and all are related in first-person narrative from Watson's point of view.



The Book I Came Back to: Hard Times by Charles Dickens

Hard Times by Charles Dickens is a classic novel set in Victorian England, originally published in 1854. It follows the story of Thomas Gradgrind, a harsh utilitarian school headmaster, and his family and students, who struggle to reconcile their diverse perspectives on life.



The Book I Came Back to: Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens charts the progress of Pip from childhood through often painful experiences to adulthood, as he moves from the Kent marshes to busy, commercial London, encountering a variety of extraordinary characters ranging from Magwitch, the escaped convict, to Miss Havisham, locked up with her unhappy past and living with her ward, the arrogant, beautiful Estella.



The Book I Could Never Read Again: The Fellowship of the Ring by J.R.R. Tolkien

In ancient times the Rings of Power were crafted by the Elven-smiths, and Sauron, the Dark Lord, forged the One Ring, filling it with his own power so that he could rule all others. But the One Ring was taken from him, and though he sought it throughout Middle-earth, it remained lost to him. After many ages it fell into the hands of Bilbo Baggins, as told in *The Hobbit*. In a sleepy village in the Shire, young Frodo Baggins finds himself faced with an immense task, as his elderly cousin Bilbo entrusts the Ring to his care. Frodo must leave his home and make a perilous journey across Middle-earth to the Cracks of Doom, there to destroy the Ring and foil the Dark Lord in his evil purpose.

