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



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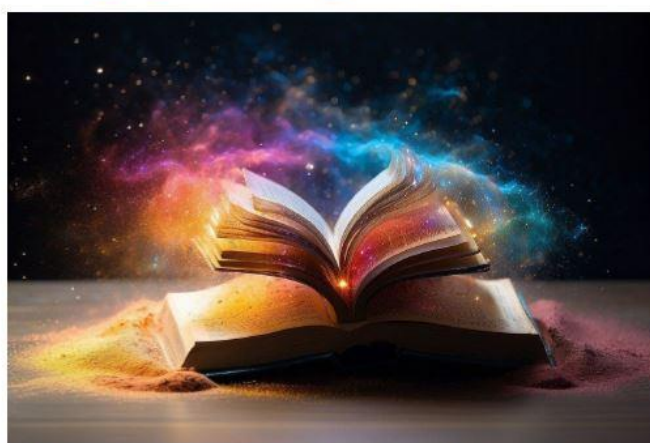
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## Orpington Library's Younger Teens Reading Group

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](mailto:orpington.library@gll.org)

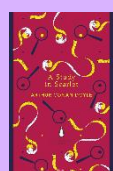
Meetings are once a month on a Monday from  
5:30-6:30pm, during term time, for ages 11-  
14 years

We look forward to seeing you!



## International Sherlock Holmes Day

Sherlock Holmes Day is observed annually on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May, to mark the anniversary of author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's birth in 1859. Doyle penned 56 short stories and 4 novels featuring detective Sherlock Holmes and his assistant Dr John Watson. The first Holmes novel, *A Study in Scarlet*, was written in just three weeks when the author was 27 with Holmes' character partially modelled after one of Doyle's university professors and inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's character C. Auguste Dupin. Doyle's Holmes is known for his proficiency with observation and deduction, as well as his ability for logical reasoning that borders on the fantastic. Doyle's Holmes stories have made a lasting and significant impact on the literary canon and have been adapted for stage, television, and film countless times. The 22<sup>nd</sup> of May is the perfect time to consume some Holmes-based media like the original books featured below.

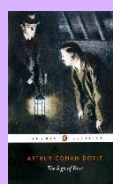


### Sherlock Holmes #1: *A Study in Scarlet* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Our first meeting with Sherlock Holmes. And John Watson's tool They meet at the start of this volume, and the young doctor is astonished by Holmes' many idiosyncrasies, including his talents on the violin. But it's not long before Sherlock Holmes, with Watson in tow, is working with Scotland Yard investigating the murder of two Americans whose deaths have some mysterious connection to sinister groups gathering power in both Britain and America.

### Sherlock Holmes #2: *The Sign of Four* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

A dense yellow mist swirls in the streets of London as Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson accompany a beautiful young woman to a sinister assignation. For Mary Morstan has received several large pearls - one a year for the last six years - and now a mystery letter telling her she is a wronged woman. If she would seek justice she is to meet her unknown benefactor, bringing with her two companions. But unbeknownst to them all, others stalk London's fog-enshrouded streets: a one-legged ruffian with revenge on his mind - and his companion, who places no value on human life...



### Sherlock Holmes #3: *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes is a collection of twelve short stories by Arthur Conan Doyle, first published on 14 October 1892. It contains the earliest short stories featuring the consulting detective Sherlock Holmes, which had been published in twelve monthly issues of *The Strand Magazine* from July 1891 to June 1892. 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.



### Sherlock Holmes #4: *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

'This collection of eleven stories depict Holmes and Watson at their very best and solving some of their most notorious cases, culminating in 'The Final Problem'. In this infamous tale, Holmes comes face-to-face with his greatest opponent, the criminal mastermind Professor Moriarty, at the Reichenbach Falls. Each of the stories was previously published in *The Strand* magazine before being released together in a single volume in 1894.



"If you do not tell the truth about yourself, you cannot tell it about other people." – Virginia Woolf



### *The Faithful and the Fallen #1: Malice* by John Gwynne

Young Corban watches enviously as boys become warriors, learning the art of war. He yearns to wield his sword and spear to protect his king's realm. But that day will come all too soon. The Banished Lands has a violent past where armies of men and giants clashed in battle, the earth running dark with their heartsblood. Although the giant-clans were broken in ages past, their ruined fortresses still scar the land. But now giants stir anew, the very stones weep blood and there are sightings of giant wyrms. Those who can still read the signs see a threat far greater than the ancient wars. Sorrow will darken the world, as angels and demons make it their battlefield. Then there will be a war to end all wars.



### *A Warning from the Golden Toad* by Tim Flannery

Taking us on an extraordinary journey into the past and around the globe, from coral reefs to the North Pole, deserts to rainforests, Tim Flannery's *A Warning from the Golden Toad* tells the story of the earth's climate, and how we have changed it.

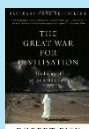


### *Graceling #3: Bitterblue* by Kristin Cashore

Eight years have passed since the young Princess Bitterblue, and her country, were saved from the vicious King Leck. Now Bitterblue is the queen of Monsea, and her land is at peace. But the influence of her father, a violent psychopath with mind-altering abilities, lives on. Her advisers, who have run the country on her behalf since Leck's death, believe in a forward-thinking plan: to pardon all of those who committed terrible acts during Leck's reign; and to forget every dark event that ever happened. Monsea's past has become shrouded in mystery, and it's only when Bitterblue begins sneaking out of her castle - curious, disguised and alone - to walk the streets of her own city, that she begins to realise the truth. Her kingdom has been under the thirty-five-year long spell of a madman, and now their only chance to move forward is to revisit the past. Whatever that past holds.

### *Graceling #4: Winterkeep* by Kristin Cashore

For the past five years, Bitterblue has reigned as Queen of Monsea, heroically rebuilding her nation after her father's horrific rule. After learning about the land of Torla in the east, she sends envoys to the closest nation there: Winterkeep—a place where telepathic foxes bond with humans, and people fly across the sky in wondrous airships. But when the envoys never return, having drowned under suspicious circumstances, Bitterblue sets off for Winterkeep herself, along with her spy Hava and her trusted colleague Giddon. On the way, tragedy strikes again—a tragedy with devastating political and personal ramifications. Meanwhile, in Winterkeep, Lovisa Cavenda waits and watches, a fire inside her that is always hungry. The teenage daughter of two powerful politicians, she is the key to unlocking everything—but only if she's willing to transcend the person she's been all her life.



### *The Great War for Civilisation: The Conquest of the Middle East* by Robert Fisk

A sweeping and dramatic history of the last half century of conflict in the Middle East from an award-winning journalist who has covered the region for over thirty years, *The Great War for Civilisation* unflinchingly chronicles the tragedy of the region from the Algerian Civil War to the Iranian Revolution; from the American hostage crisis in Beirut to the Iran-Iraq War; from the 1991 Gulf War to the American invasion of Iraq in 2003. A book of searing drama as well as lucid, incisive analysis, *The Great War for Civilisation* is a work of major importance for today's world.

## Mrs Dalloway Turns 100

Published May 14<sup>th</sup> 1925, Virginia Woolf's novel *Mrs Dalloway* turns 100 this year. The novel follows the wealthy Mrs Clarissa Dalloway through post-war London as she prepares for a lavish party. The narrative delves into Clarissa's thoughts and memories and explores similarities between herself and Septimus Warren Smith, a war veteran struggling with post-traumatic stress. Clarissa and Septimus' characters never meet in the novel, but they are linked to one another through various secondary characters and through their musings on the human soul. The story examines themes of time, mental health, and the complexity of human relationships. Upon its release, *Mrs Dalloway* was met with mixed reviews: some praised its innovative narrative style and exploration of inner thoughts, while others found it a challenging read due to Woolf's use of stream of consciousness (a literary style in which a character's thoughts, feelings, and reactions are depicted in a continuous flow). Over time, the eponymous Mrs Dalloway has become a symbol of modernist literature, representing the struggles of women in post-war society. Readers of the novel are able to deeply engage with the characters' inner lives while following Clarissa around for a single day, exploring the flow of time and memory. It is commonly believed that *Mrs Dalloway* was Woolf's response to James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) as both novels use the stream of consciousness technique to follow the thoughts of two characters, one older and one younger, over one day in a bustling city. If it is a response, it may well be a scathing one, as upon her reading of *Ulysses* in 1922, Woolf wrote in her diary, "never did I read such tosh". Today, *Mrs Dalloway* is recognised among Woolf's masterpieces. Since its publication, the novel has influenced countless authors and become a staple on the syllabuses of schools and universities across the world.



### *Mrs Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf

Heralded as Virginia Woolf's greatest novel, this is a vivid portrait of a single day in a woman's life. When we meet her, Mrs. Clarissa Dalloway is preoccupied with the last-minute details of party preparation while in her mind she is something much more than a perfect society hostess. As she reads her house, she is flooded with remembrances of faraway times. And, met with the realities of the present, Clarissa reexamines the choices that brought her there, hesitantly looking ahead to the unfamiliar work of growing old.



## 2025 British Book Awards Winners Announced

The British Book Awards, or Nibbies, are annual book awards administered by The Bookseller for the best UK writers and their works. The Nibbies 'Book of the Year' category of awards is broken down into 15 subcategories including, Overall Book of the Year, Fiction, Debut Fiction, and Children's Fiction. The books below were all nominated for the 2025 Children's Fiction award. This year's Nibbies winners were announced on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May, with the overall Book of the Year being awarded to the late Alexei Navalny's *Patriot*, and the Children's Fiction award going to Jeff Kinney's latest instalment in the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series, *Hot Mess*. Click [here](#) to view the full list of 2025 winners.

### *Powerless #2: Reckless* by Lauren Roberts

The kingdom of Ilya is in turmoil... After surviving the Purging Trials, Ordinary-born Paedyn Gray has killed the King, and kickstarted a Resistance throughout the land. Now she's running from the one person she had wanted to run to. Kai Azer is now Ilya's Enforcer, loyal to his brother Kitt, the new King. He has vowed to find Paedyn and bring her to justice. Across the deadly Scorches, and deep into the hostile city of Dor, Kai pursues the one person he wishes he didn't have to. But in a city without Elites, the balance between the hunter and hunted shifts – and the battle between duty and desire is deadly.



### *A Tempest of Tea* by Hafsa Faizal

Why save the world when you can have tea? On the streets of White Roaring, Arthie Casimir is a criminal mastermind and collector of secrets. Her prestigious tearoom transforms into an illegal bloodhouse by dark, catering to the vampires feared by society. But when her establishment is threatened, Arthie is forced to strike an unlikely deal with an alluring adversary to save it—and she can't do the job alone. Calling on some of the city's most skilled outcasts, Arthie hatches a plan to infiltrate the sinister, glittering vampire society known as the Atherum. But not everyone in her ragtag crew is on her side, and as the truth behind the heist unfolds, Arthie finds herself in the midst of a conspiracy that will threaten the world as she knows it.



### *The Reappearance of Rachel Price* by Holly Jackson

Lights. Camera. Lies. 18-year-old Bel has lived her whole life in the shadow of her mom's mysterious disappearance. Sixteen years ago, Rachel Price vanished, and young Bel was the only witness, but she has no memory of it. Rachel is gone, long presumed dead, and Bel wishes everyone would just move on. But the case is dragged up from the past when the Price family agree to a true crime documentary. Bel can't wait for filming to end, for life to go back to normal. And then the impossible happens. Rachel Price reappears, and life will never be normal again. Rachel has an unbelievable story about what happened to her. Unbelievable, because Bel isn't sure it's real. If Rachel is lying, then where has she been all this time? And – could she be dangerous? With the cameras still rolling, Bel must uncover the truth about her mother, and find out why Rachel Price really came back from the dead...

**British Black and Asian Shakespearians: Integrating Shakespeare, 1966–2018** by Jami Rogers  
Shakespeare is at the heart of the British theatrical tradition, but the contribution of Ira Aldridge and the Shakespearean performers of African, African-Caribbean, south Asian and east Asian heritage who came after him is not widely known. Telling the story for the first time of how Shakespearean theatre in Britain was integrated from the 1960s to the 21st century, this is a timely and important account of that contribution. Drawing extensively on empirical evidence from the British Black and Asian Shakespeare Performance Database and featuring interviews with nearly forty performers and directors, the book chronicles important productions that led to ground-breaking castings of Black and Asian actors in substantial Shakespearean roles.



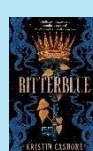
### *I Am a Cat Barista: Volume 1* by Hiro Majima

Take a coffee break in this supernatural spin on a cat café! For some people, the daily grind of city life is exhausting. Yet somewhere between the busy streets there's a mysterious cat café that can only be found by weary souls. What's on the menu? A delicious drink, specially brewed for each customer...by a cat barista!



### *This is My America* by Kim Johnson

Every week, seventeen-year-old Tracy Beaumont writes letters to Innocence X, asking the organization to help her father, an innocent Black man on death row. After seven years, Tracy is running out of time—her dad has only 267 days left. Then the unthinkable happens. The police arrive in the night, and Tracy's older brother, Jamal, goes from being a bright, promising track star to a "thug" on the run, accused of killing a white girl. Determined to save her brother, Tracy investigates what really happened between Jamal and Angela down at the Pike. But will Tracy and her family survive the uncovering of the skeletons of their Texas town's racist history that still haunt the present?



### *Graceling #5: Seasparrow* by Kristin Cashore

In the immediate aftermath of the events of *Winterkeep*, Bitterblue and her entourage begin the journey back to Monsea with the only copies of the formulas for the zilphium weapon. Bitterblue must decide what she will do with her world-shaping power. But before they've even made it halfway home, storms drive their ship off course and then wrecking them in the ice far north of the Royal Continent. The survivors must make a harrowing trek across the ice in order to make it back to Monsea. Seasparrow is told entirely from the point of view of Hava, Bitterblue's personal spy and secret half-sister. And while Bitterblue grapples with how to carry the responsibility of a weapon of mass destruction, Hava must decide what she will do with herself in the new world Bitterblue will make.

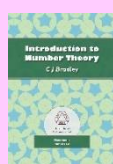


## National Numeracy Day

National Numeracy Day occurs in the UK on the third Wednesday in May each year – falling this year on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May. 2025 marks the first time National Numeracy Day has assigned a theme to the event: Money. Research carried out by YouGov in December 2024 has revealed that almost a third (32%) of UK adults seek to improve their maths and numeracy skills in order to better manage their money. In households where there are children, this number is even higher, with 44% of adults with children aged 4 years and under wishing to improve their maths skills. Sam Sims, CEO of charity National Numeracy said of the findings: "Numeracy is the strongest predictor of financial literacy and low numeracy is one of the greatest barriers to financial inclusion facing the nation. Nearly nine in every ten people (86%) who lack confidence working with numbers rate their knowledge about financial matters as low. But this can change." To promote this change, National Numeracy will be offering helpful, fun and friendly events, resources and activities on and around the 21<sup>st</sup> of May to give number confidence and numeracy skills for managing money a boost. Click [here](#) to find out more.

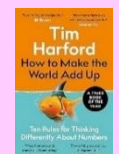
### *Introduction to Number Theory* by CJ Bradley

The aim of this book is to enable talented students to tackle the sort of problems on number theory which are set in mathematics competitions. Topics include primes and divisibility, congruence arithmetic and the representation of real numbers by decimals. A useful summary of techniques and hints is included. This is a fully revised and extended part of the composite volume *Introductions to Number Theory and Inequalities*. The *Handbooks* series aims to help young mathematicians prepare for competitions, such as the British Mathematical Olympiad, at secondary school level.



### *How to Make the World Add Up: Ten Rules for Thinking Differently About Numbers* by Tim Harford

In *How to Make the World Add Up*, Tim Harford draws on his experience as both an economist and presenter of the BBC's radio show 'More or Less'. He takes us deep into the world of disinformation and obfuscation, bad research and misplaced motivation to find those priceless jewels of data and analysis that make communicating with numbers worthwhile. Harford's characters range from the art forger who conned the Nazis to the stripper who fell in love with the most powerful congressman in Washington, to famous data detectives such as John Maynard Keynes, Daniel Kahneman and Florence Nightingale. He reveals how we can evaluate the claims that surround us with confidence, curiosity and a healthy level of scepticism.



### *How Many Socks Make a Pair? Surprisingly Interesting Everyday Maths* by Robert Eastaway

Providing a refreshing view of mathematics, this engaging manual is designed to both educate and stimulate the mind to form a new appreciation of common calculation. Illustrating how math can demonstrate its secret design in even the most mundane of everyday objects, these fascinating curiosities provide the link between limericks and rabbits, show how a simple paper folding tick can lead to a Jurassic Park inhabitant, and reveal an apparently fair coin game where the odds are massively in the player's favour. Using simple and accessible tools—such as playing cards, a newspaper, the back of an envelope, a Sudoku puzzle, some pennies, and, of course, a pair of socks—this remarkable collection of activities and mathematical brain teasers will engage and delight fans of cerebral calculations at all ages and skill levels.



## On This Day in History... The Death of Jean Rhys, 14<sup>th</sup> May 1979

Author Jean Rhys, born August 24<sup>th</sup> 1890, is best known for her innovative and powerful prose. Rhys was born to multicultural household; her father being Welsh and her mother Scottish Dominican – a background that later influenced her writing. Her family moved from Dominica to England when Rhys was 16, and she went on to experience many struggles throughout her young life, including poverty and the tragic death of one of her children. The author is best known for her novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*, which serves as a prequel to Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, exploring the early life of Mr Rochester's first wife, Bertha. Rhys' writing drew from her own experiences, exploring the complexities of womanhood and the impact of colonialism. Her work was rediscovered in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and lauded for its significance to feminist literature. Jean Rhys passed away in 1979 at the age of 88. Her novels influenced a generation of writers and are still studied today due to their rich character development and exploration of marginalised groups. Rhys' work gives a voice to characters who are often silenced in traditional narratives while provoking discussions on race, gender and colonialism.



### *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys

Her grand attempt to tell what she felt was the story of Jane Eyre's 'madwoman in the attic', Bertha Rochester, Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* is edited with an introduction and notes by Angela Smith in Penguin Classics. Born into the oppressive, colonialist society of 1930s Jamaica, white Creole heiress Antoinette Cosway meets a young Englishman who is drawn to her innocent beauty and sensuality. After their marriage, however, disturbing rumours begin to circulate which poison her husband against her. Caught between his demands and her own precarious sense of belonging, Antoinette is inexorably driven towards madness, and her husband into the arms of another novel's heroine. This classic study of betrayal, a seminal work of postcolonial literature, is Jean Rhys's brief, beautiful masterpiece.

