



SPRING

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

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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

On This Day... Charles Dickens was born 7th February 1812

Charles John Huffam Dickens was a famous English novelist whose stories became well known around the world for their memorable characters and strong messages about society. He was born on February 7, 1812, in Portsmouth, England, and grew up as the second of eight children in a family that moved frequently because of his father's job with the Navy Pay Office. Dickens loved reading from a young age, especially imaginative stories like *The Arabian Nights*, which helped shape his creativity. Despite facing many hardships, including family financial struggles, he began his writing career in the early 1830s, first working at the House of Commons and later publishing his first short story in 1833. His success grew quickly, and by the late 1830s he had published *Oliver Twist*, a groundbreaking Victorian novel featuring a child protagonist. Over the years, Dickens wrote many famous works, including *A Christmas Carol*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Great Expectations*, which explored themes such as poverty, injustice, and kindness. He married Catherine Hogarth and had ten children, though their marriage ended in separation, and he later had a relationship with Ellen Ternan. Dickens continued writing until his death in 1870 after suffering a stroke, leaving his final novel unfinished, but his powerful storytelling and influence on literature continue to be celebrated today.



A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

Ebenezer Scrooge is a miserly and mean-spirited old man. He treats family, coworkers, and strangers alike with distaste. On Christmas Eve he receives a visit from the ghost of his dead business partner, Jacob Marley. Marley warns Scrooge that unless he learns to be less greedy and self-serving that Scrooge will be condemned to wander Earth weighed down with heavy chains, as Marley has been



Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

Pip doesn't expect much from life...His sister makes it clear that her orphaned little brother is nothing but a burden on her. But suddenly things begin to change. Pip's narrow existence is blown apart when he finds an escaped criminal, is summoned to visit a mysterious old woman and meets the icy beauty Estella. Most astoundingly of all, an anonymous person gives him money to begin a new life in London.



Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens

The story of Oliver Twist - orphaned and set upon by evil and adversity from his first breath - shocked readers when it was published. After running away from the workhouse and pompous beadle Mr Bumble, Oliver finds himself lured into a den of thieves peopled by vivid and memorable characters - the Artful Dodger, vicious burglar Bill Sikes, his dog Bull's Eye, and prostitute Nancy, all watched over by cunning master-thief Fagin.



"We were just two teenagers, looking up at the sky on a cold, February night...." - Jenny Han

NEW

Undercover Gamer: Marie Curious #3 by Chris Edison

Marie's apprenticeship with tech giant Sterling Vance has already been a crazy adventure, from saving the world from a deadly computer virus to rescuing a global pop star, Marie thought she'd seen it all. But now Marie must face her most difficult challenge yet - going undercover! When Vance invests in a multi-million-dollar eSports tournament, Marie and her three best friends are sucked into the world of professional gaming. Glitzy parties, infinity pools and the latest tech are all at their fingertips, but when Vance discovers that someone in the tournament is cheating, it's left to Marie to infiltrate the GAME House where all the top gamers live, and find the culprit.



The Last Firefox #1 by Lee Newbury

You need to be brave for yourself before you can be brave for other people... Between bullies at school and changes at home, Charlie Challinor finds life a bit scary. And when he's made guardian of a furry fox cub called Cadno, things get a whole lot scarier. Because Cadno isn't just any fox: he's a Firefox - the only one of his kind - and a sinister hunter from another world is hot on his trail.



The Last Life of Lori Mills by Max Bouché

Eleven-year-old Lori is home alone for the first time in her life, and she's immediately done all the things she's totally not allowed to do: 1. Turned the heating up to the max. 2. Built a giant blanket fort in the living room. 3. Switched on Voxminer, aka the greatest game in the history of the universe. But quickly, Lori realises something is wrong. She can hear strange whispers coming from the screen - and soon, they're in the house with her. Could it be Voxminer's most terrifying legend: Shade Girl? Trapped in her home as the doors and windows start to vanish and her phone goes dead, Lori must use all her bravery, wits, gaming skills - and the love and deep bond she shares with her BFF, Shoelace - to survive until Mum gets home...



Alex Neptune: Dragon Thief #1 by David Owen

For as long as Alex Neptune can remember, the ocean has been trying to kill him. So he's not too happy when a bunch of sea creatures drag him to the abandoned aquarium on the hill, where an imprisoned water dragon needs his help. But how can he say no to a magical myth? Recruiting his tech-genius best friend Zoey, legend-lover Anil, a sharp-shooting octopus, four acrobatic otters and a thieving seagull, Alex plots a heist to break the dragon out. And suddenly discovers the power of the ocean at his fingertips.



Mister Pip by Lloyd Jones

Bougainville, 1991. A small village on a lush tropical island in the South Pacific. Eighty-six days have passed since Matilda's last day of school as, quietly, war is encroaching from the other end of the island. When the villagers' safe, predictable lives come to a halt, Bougainville's children are surprised to find the island's only white man, a recluse, re-opening the school. Pop Eye, aka Mr Watts, explains he will introduce the children to Mr Dickens. Matilda and the others think a foreigner is coming to the island and prepare a list of much needed items. They are shocked to discover their acquaintance with Mr Dickens will be through Mr Watts' inspiring reading of Great Expectations.

Good Idea, Amelia Jane! By Enid Blythton

Amelia Jane is full of mischievous ideas. This time, she hides things inside poor old bear's tummy, pours water down everyone's clothes and swaps the toys' wind-up keys so that clockwork robot is jumping like a rabbit. But the other toys are not letting her get away with. One day, when Amelia is fast asleep, they paint spots on her to make her think she's got measles.

Down the Rabbit Hole by Peter Abrahams

When Ingrid accidentally leaves her favourite football sneakers at a murder scene, she is sucked into a mysterious case. It's all her fault that the police are on the wrong track, so Ingrid swears to hunt down Cracked-up Katie's killer herself. But Ingrid's life is full of distractions: Joey, the son of the local police chief; portraying Alice in the Prescott Players' new production; not failing maths... When the clues lead her to the new member of the theatre group, Vincent, she doesn't realize the danger until it's too late - and suddenly she's battling for her life, about to be pushed over the edge of Echo Falls...

The Pearl in the Ice by Cathryn Constable

Twelve-year-old Marina feels an irresistible pull to the sea despite the strict wishes of her father, a naval commander, who's kept her away from water all her life. When she's sent to boarding school, Marina instead stows away on her father's ship. Unbeknown to her, it's the eve of war and she's embarked on a stormy voyage through icy seas to where a great secret lies in wait ...

Star Borrowers of January 2026

Year 7

Jessica 7G
Anaisha 7G
Aarna 7N
Khadijah 7W
Jasveen 7W
Eva 7W
Yasmin 7W

Year 8

Rosie 8G
Phoebe 8N
Nyra 8P
Rowan 8P
Bade 8S
Elana 8S
Aanya 8S
Deetya 8W

Year 9

Anvi 9F
Mehr 9G
Neev 9N
Florence 9N
Abipreta 9N
Amélie 9N
Rebecca 9P
Amy 9S
Janesha 9S
Charis 9S
Ananya 9W
Aaradhna 9W
Simran 9W

Year 10

Avni 10F
Anushka 10F
Dhiviyaa 10G
Maya 10N
Valerie 10P
Saanvi 10P
Senumi 10S
Akshara 10W
Anwitha 10W
Madeleine 10W

Year 12

Lucy 12F
Oluwatoni 12H
Kitty 12H
Polina 12P
Valen 12P
Anthiya 12S
Jasreet 12Q

Year 13

Archaga 13P
Melody 13Q
Paula 13S
Preksha 13W

Top 10 Books of January



4th February is... National Girls and Women in Sports Day

National Girls and Women in Sports Day (N.G.W.S.D.), observed on February 4, is a day dedicated to challenging gender stereotypes in sports and reminding everyone that girls and women belong in every part of the sports world. It encourages girls who may have felt excluded or underestimated to be confident, fearless, and proud to "play like a girl", celebrating strength and skill rather than limiting labels. The day was first observed in 1987 in honour of Olympic volleyball player Flo Hyman, who was a powerful advocate for equal opportunities for women in sports and whose legacy continues after her death from Marfan syndrome. Over time, N.G.W.S.D. has grown to celebrate the achievements of all women athletes, highlight the benefits of inclusion, and address ongoing challenges to equal participation. It also recognizes the importance of Title IX, a 1972 civil rights law that required equal opportunities

in federally funded programs, including school sports, which dramatically increased the number of girls able to participate in athletics. In the United Kingdom, National Girls and Women in Sports Day strongly connects to the country's ongoing efforts to increase female participation and visibility in sports at all levels. Historically, girls in the UK faced limited opportunities and social expectations that discouraged them from being physically active, but this has gradually changed through advocacy, education, and role models. By celebrating female athletes, supporting grassroots programs, and encouraging girls to stay active and confident, the UK continues to move toward a sports culture where girls and women are equally valued, supported, and inspired to participate without fear or limitation. To find out more, click [here](https://www.ngwsd.co.uk).

Sporting Females: Critical Issues in the History of Women's Sports by Jennifer Hargreaves

An outstanding contribution to feminist analysis of sport from the nineteenth century to the present day. Jennifer Hargreaves views sport as a battle for control of the physical body and an important area for feminist intervention. Placing women at the centre of discussion, no other book is as comprehensive.

Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson

Twelve-year-old Astrid has always done everything with her best friend Nicole. So, when Astrid signs up for roller derby camp, she assumes Nicole will too. But Nicole signs up for dance camp with a new friend instead and so begins the toughest summer of Astrid's life. There are bumps and bruises as Astrid learns who she is without Nicole...and what it takes to be a strong, tough roller girl.

Rowing it Alone: One Women's Extraordinary Transatlantic Adventure by Debra Veal

This is Debra's account of over three months alone at sea - the gruelling work, loneliness, tranquility, beauty of nature, and support from hundreds of well-wishers. Debra also shares her reflections and the insights into her relationship with her husband, as well as describing how she discovered unknown strengths and aspects of herself. A fascinating account of an inner and outer journey.



International Week of Black Women in the Arts

International Week of Black Women in the Arts is observed every year in the United States from February 7 to February 15 and is dedicated to celebrating the creativity, achievements, and influence of Black female artists across many fields, including music, visual arts, literature, dance, film, and theatre. The week also raises awareness about the serious inequalities these artists continue to face, such as being underpaid, underrepresented, and overlooked despite their talent and contributions. Although women make up about half of all visual artists, their work appears in only a small percentage of museum collections and exhibitions, and the situation is even more unfair for Black women, who experience both gender and racial discrimination. Black women are also less likely to



hold leadership roles in the arts, such as directors, producers, composers, or record label executives, and Black female authors often receive fewer reviews, awards, and publishing opportunities, sometimes even feeling pressured to hide their identity by using initials or pseudonyms. International Week of Black Women in the Arts highlights this long history of struggle and success, from pioneers like sculptor Mary Edmonia Lewis in the 19th century, to the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, to Hattie McDaniel becoming the first Black person to win an Academy Award in 1939. By encouraging people to discover new artists, support their work, and promote equal access to education and scholarships, the week aims to create a more inclusive arts world where Black women receive the recognition, respect, and opportunities they deserve.

African Art and Culture by Jane Bingham

Written for students working at Key Stage 3, the titles that make up the 'World Art and Culture' series explore the fine arts, the decorative arts and design through the ages and in different cultures throughout the world. This volume considers African culture.



Art and Craft in Africa by Laure Meyer

Chosen from more than 100 ethnic groups and presented by theme, these magnificent objects express a wealth of aesthetic and technical solutions.



Black Art: A Cultural History by Richard J. Powell

Placing its emphasis on black cultural themes rather than on black racial identity, this groundbreaking book is an important exploration of the visual representations of black culture throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.

