



AUTUMN

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



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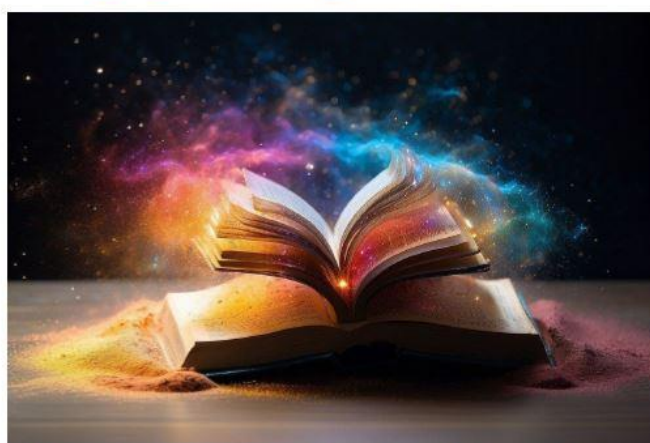
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## Orpington Library's Younger Teens Reading Group

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

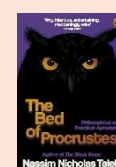
We look forward to seeing you!



NEW

### Africa's Tarnished Name by Chinua Achebe

He needed to hear Africa speak for itself after a lifetime of hearing Africa spoken about by others. Electrifying essays on the history, complexity, diversity of a continent, from the father of modern African literature.



### The Bed of Procrustes by Nassim Nicholas Taleb

The Bed of Procrustes takes its title from Greek mythology: the story of a man who made his visitors fit his bed to perfection by either stretching them or cutting their limbs. It represents Taleb's view of modern civilization's hubristic side effects—modifying humans to satisfy technology, blaming reality for not fitting economic models, inventing diseases to sell drugs, defining intelligence as what can be tested in a classroom, and convincing people that employment is not slavery. Playful and irreverent, these aphorisms will surprise you by exposing self-delusions you have been living with but never recognized.

### The Merciless Ones #2 by Namina Forna

It's been six months since Deka freed the goddesses in the ancient kingdom of Otera, and discovered who she really is... But war is waging across the kingdom, and the real battle has only just begun. For there is a dark force growing in Otera - a merciless power that Deka and her army must stop. Yet hidden secrets threaten to destroy everything Deka has known. And with her own gifts changing, Deka must discover if she holds the key to saving Otera... or if she might be its greatest threat.



### Gaslight by Eloise Williams

Set in Victorian Cardiff, this is the story of Nansi, a strong-willed heroine who is fished out of the Cardiff docks on the day her mother disappeared. She can't remember anything else and now, with no other family to turn to, she works for villainous Sid at the Empire Theatre, sometimes thieving to order, trying to earn enough money to hire a detective to find her mother. Nansi is forced to be part of a bogus psychic act, until she is recognised by someone who realises who her mother must be. She is soon on the run for her life.

### Warrior of the Wild by Tricia Levenseller

Eighteen-year-old Rasmira has always been both praised and scorned for her talents. As her father's chosen heir, she has trained her whole life to become a warrior and lead her village. Fortunately, her long wait is almost over and after she passes her coming-of-age trial, she'll finally be able to live on her own and not have to deal with her mother's constant rejection or the jealousy of her peers. Perhaps then she will be able to be both a warrior and a woman. But when trial day arrives, everything goes terribly wrong. Her test is sabotaged, and by law all those who fail are banished and given an impossible quest to reclaim their honour in death. And Rasmira is given the most difficult quest of them all: She must kill the oppressive deity who claims tribute from her village every year or die in the attempt.



### Sky Song by Abi Elpinstone

In the snowy kingdom of Erkenwald, whales glide between icebergs, wolves hunt on the tundra and polar bears roam the glaciers. But the people of this land aren't so easy to find. Because Erkenwald is ruled by a cruel Ice Queen and you must stay hidden or risk becoming another of her prisoners. Join Eska, a girl who breaks free from a cursed music box, and Flint, a boy whose inventions could change the fate of Erkenwald forever, as they journey together in search of an ancient, almost forgotten, song with the power to force the Ice Queen back. This is a story about an eagle huntress, an inventor and an organ made of icicles. But it is also a story about belonging, even at the very edges of our world...



### Anne of the Green Gables #1 by L.M. Montgomery

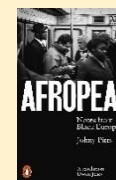
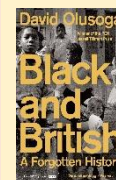
Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert are in for a big surprise. They are waiting for an orphan boy to help with the work at Green Gables – but a skinny, red-haired girl turns up instead. Feisty and full of spirit, Anne Shirley charms her way into the Cuthberts' affection with her vivid imagination and constant chatter. It's not long before Anne finds herself in trouble, but soon it becomes impossible for the Cuthberts to imagine life without 'their' Anne – and for the people of Avonlea to recall what it was like before this wildly creative little girl whirled into town.

## Black History Month 2025

Black History Month in the UK is celebrated every October. It's a time to learn about, share, and celebrate the history, culture, and contributions of Black people, especially those from African and Caribbean backgrounds, whose impact on British society has often been ignored or forgotten. The idea started in the USA in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson, who wanted schools to teach more about Black history. The UK first marked Black History Month in 1987, thanks to Akyaaba Addai-Sebo, who wanted to tackle racism and highlight Black British achievements. Over time, the UK's focus has shifted from mainly Black American figures to important Black British individuals like footballer Walter Tull, author Malorie Blackman, conductor Shirley J Thompson, and racing driver Lewis Hamilton. Each October, schools, museums and community groups host events like poetry competitions, film festivals and educational tours to celebrate Black achievements and explore topics like migration, music, and Britain's colonial past. Check around the school for how you can celebrate Black History Month here at Newstead!

### Black and British: A Forgotten History by David Olusoga

Drawing on new genetic and genealogical research, original records, expert testimony and contemporary interviews, A Black History of Britain reaches back to Roman Britain, the medieval imagination and Shakespeare's Othello. Unflinching, confronting taboos and revealing hitherto unknown scandals, Olusoga describes how black and white Britons have been intimately entwined for centuries.



### Afropean: notes from Black Europe by Johnny Pitts

Afropean is an on-the-ground documentary of areas where Europeans of African descent are juggling their multiple allegiances and forging new identities. Here is an alternative map of the continent, taking the reader to places like Cova Da Moura, the Cape Verdean shantytown on the outskirts of Lisbon with its own underground economy, and Rinkeby, the area of Stockholm that is eighty per cent Muslim. Johnny Pitts visits the former Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow, where West African students are still making the most of Cold War ties with the USSR, and Clichy Sous Bois in Paris, which gave birth to the 2005 riots, all the while presenting Afropeans as lead actors in their own story.

### British Black and Asian Shakespeares: Integrating Shakespeare, 1966-2018

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.



### Black British Lives Matter by Lenny Henry and Marcus Ryder

In response to the international outcry at George Floyd's death, Lenny Henry and Marcus Ryder have commissioned this collection of essays to discuss how and why we need to fight for Black lives to matter - not just for Black people but for society. Recognising Black British experience within the Black Lives Matter movement, seventeen prominent Black figures explain why Black lives should be celebrated when too often they are undervalued. Drawing from personal experience, they stress how Black British people have unique perspectives and experiences that enrich British society and the world; how Black lives are far more interesting and important than the forces that try to limit it.

## National Poetry Day 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025

National Poetry Day is a special day that celebrates poetry as a unique and powerful form of literature that uses words creatively to express emotions, imagination, and experiences. Started in the UK in 1994 by William Sieghart and organised by the Forward Arts Foundation, the day encourages people of all ages to enjoy and share poetry through reading, writing, and participating in poetry-related events. Whether it's reading a favourite poem, attending a poetry reading, learning fun facts about famous poets, or trying to write a haiku or sonnet, there are many ways to get involved. The day highlights how anyone can be a poet, even if they've never written before, and reminds us that poetry is for everyone—not just professional writers. National Poetry Day is also known for its yearly themes, like "The Environment" or "Heroes and Heroines," which give people inspiration for creating their own poems. While the main celebration happens once a year, poetry can be enjoyed and explored all year long through other events like World Poetry Day in March and National Poetry Month in April.

Here are a few poems from some famous poets. To find out more about your favourite poets or to discover more poems, [click here](#).

You were  
water to me  
deep and bold and fathoming

You were  
moon's eye to me  
pull and grained and mantling

You were  
sunrise to me  
rise and warm and streaming

You were  
the fish's red gill to me  
the flame tree's spread to me  
the crab's leg/ the fried plantain smell  
replenishing replenishing

Go to your wide futures, you said

"Praise Song for my Mother" by  
Grace Nichols

Some say the world will end in fire,  
Some say in ice.

From what I've tasted of desire  
I hold with those who favour fire.  
But if it had to perish twice,  
I think I know enough of hate  
To say that for destruction ice  
Is also great

And would suffice.

"Fire and Ice" by Robert Frost

To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour.

Extract from "Auguries of Innocence" by William Blake

Hold fast to dreams

For if dreams die

Life is a broken-winged bird

That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams

For when dreams go

Life is a barren field

Frozen with snow.

"Dreams" by Langston Hughes

My life has been the poem I would  
have writ

But I could not both live and utter it.

"My life has been the poem I would  
have writ" by Henry David Thoreau

'Hope' is the thing with feathers —

That perches in the soul —

And sings the tune without the words —

And never stops — at all —

And sweetest — in the Gale — is heard —

And sore must be the storm —

That could abash the little Bird

That kept so many warm —

I've heard it in the chilliest land —

And on the strangest Sea —

Yet, never, in Extremity,

It asked a crumb — of Me.

"Hope is The Thing with Feathers" by  
Emily Dickinson

## On This Day ... Anne Rice Was Born 4<sup>th</sup> October 1941



Anne Rice, born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October, was a famous American author best known for writing about vampires, witches, and other supernatural beings. Her most popular book, *Interview with the Vampire* (1976), became a movie in 1994 and later a TV series, and launched her bestselling series *The Vampire Chronicles*, which focused on the vampire, Lestat, and explored themes of love, loss, immortality, and being and outcast. Born in New Orleans, Rice was originally named Howard Allen O'Brien but changed her name to Anne as a child. Rice eventually moved to Texas and California, earned college degrees, and married poet, Stan Rice. The death of their young daughter, Michelle, deeply affected her and inspired her to start writing. Her debut novel, *Interview with the Vampire*, written in just five weeks, introduced emotional and conflicted vampires, unlike the traditional monsters seen before. The story follows Louis, a vampire who struggles with guilt and morality, and other characters like the charismatic but cruel Lestat and the eternally young Claudia. Rice's vampires were unique because they

were sensitive, thoughtful, and often suffered from deep emotional and moral dilemmas. Later in life, she returned to Christianity and wrote religious novels about Jesus, although she later distanced herself from organised religion while keeping her belief in Christ. Throughout her career, Rice remained a bold and influential voice in Gothic fiction, and her work redefined how supernatural beings were portrayed in modern literature. She continued writing and engaging with fans until her death in 2021, leaving behind a legacy of dark, emotional, and thought-provoking stories.



### Interview with a Vampire #1 by Anne Rice

In a darkened room a young man sits telling the macabre and eerie story of his life - the story of a vampire, gifted with eternal life, cursed with an exquisite craving for human blood. Anne Rice's compulsively readable novel is arguably the most celebrated work of vampire fiction since Bram Stoker's *Dracula* was published in 1897.

### Vampires: Encounters with the Undead by David J. Skal

Everyone knows that vampires live forever—and our fascination with vampires seems equally durable. This big, beautiful compilation of vampire tales features two centuries of spine-tingling writing, ranging from John Polidori to Robert Bloch. Put on your cape, light your candelabra and experience works by Alexis Tolstoy, Bram Stoker, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Rosemary Ann Guiley, Henry Kuttner, Cornell Woolrich and dozens more. There's even an interview with a contemporary, self-confessed blood-drinker. Every page of "Vampires" features a column of running commentary by the editor, expanding upon the stories and exploring the evolution of the vampire mystique in folklore, literature and popular culture.

