IGNITING LEADERS CHANGING LIVES

PiXL Reading

SECONDARY NEWSLETTER

We hope that the February break was a restful time for you and your family. In this half-term's newsletter, we have collated a selection of books which cover a range of reading ages and topics of interest which your child may be interested in. We hope that amongst the wide variety of books shared in this newsletter, you and your child may find some to enjoy!

Please note that unless otherwise stated, the texts shared within this newsletter are suitable from Year 7 and up, but please do research the books before selecting them to ensure that they are appropriate for your child, as these are just a publisher's guide.

In addition to exploring the books mentioned in this newsletter, you may like to know about some of the key events coming up this half term which your school might be highlighting – or which you may like to discuss with your child at home and read around too.

6th MARCH:
World Book Day

8th MARCH:
International Women's Day

7th - 16th MARCH:
British Science Week

20th MARCH:
World Storytelling Day

21st MARCH:
World Poetry Day

27th MARCH:
World Theatre Day

There are so many books and types of texts that your child may enjoy exploring. For example, they may like researching some of the topics, such as British Science Week – or discovering more about inspiring women such as Malala Yousafzai. Alternatively, they may like to dip into a poetry anthology – or explore some short plays, like Philip Ridley's *Sparkleshark*!

Whatever your child chooses to read, we hope they enjoy it.

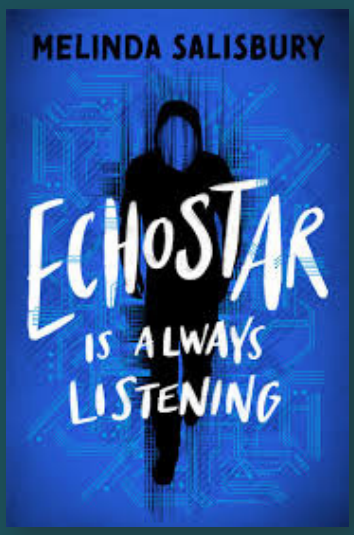
SHORTER-LENGTH READS

The books below are all shorter-length texts, which could be engaging for anyone, but they are published in a dyslexia-friendly font to help make them accessible to all. If your child doesn't have dyslexia, they can still read these books!

Stitched Up

STEVE COLE

When twelve-year-old Hanh is offered a job as a shop assistant in Hanoi, she sees it as a chance to earn money to send back to her family living in poverty in rural Vietnam. But on her arrival in the city, she soon learns that the job offer was a lie and finds herself working in virtual slavery in an illegal garment factory. Life in this sweatshop is a daily hell of long hours, little rest, poor food and regular violence. Hanh is desperate to escape but, when an opportunity arises, will she be able to find the courage to take a dangerous chance?



EchoStar is Always Listening

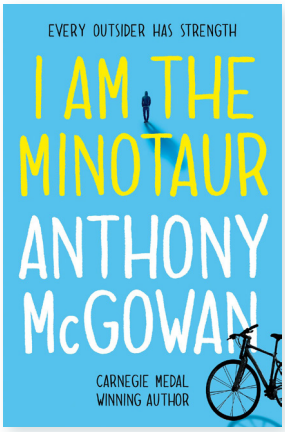
MELINDA SALISBURY

Ruby Brookes and her best friend Deva have won free places at the Ash Tree Foundation Performing Arts Camp over the summer, but only if their school grades seriously improve. So when Deva suddenly starts getting high marks in all their subjects, leaving Ruby behind, she is confused and jealous – until she finds out Deva's success is down to EchoStar, a new app that's helping her get ahead. Ruby is desperate to start using it too, but there is much more to EchoStar than she has imagined...

I am the Minotaur

ANTHONY MCGOWAN

Matthew is 14 and struggling to fit in – something that's extra hard when you're taking care of your mum and being bullied at school. On top of all that, he wants to catch the attention of one of the coolest girls in school, Ari. Ari doesn't walk: she floats, like mist on the water. And she's as sporty as she is cool. When Ari's brand-new bike is stolen, Matthew spots his chance to make a good impression by getting it back for her... But will he just end up in even more trouble or is Matthew about to learn that friendship and heroes can be found in unlikely places?



Lightning Strike

TANYA LANDMAN

When every day is a struggle to survive, when the rich and powerful hold all the cards... do you accept the way things are? Or do you fight to change them?

Eliza is angry. Angry that her family never seems to have enough. Angry that conditions at the factory where she and her sister work are so harsh. Angry that no one seems to care. When Eliza speaks out, her words spark fury among the rest of the workers and the flame of rebellion is lit. But what next? Can one girl really inspire an uprising that will change her world?

Tide Singer

ELOISE WILLIAMS

In the wake of a tempest hitting her town, Morwenna is left to take care of a stranger washed ashore. The storm is just another of many that have plagued the town for years – people blame the tide singers, legendary sea people who are said to charm storms with their singing. Morwenna has never believed the tales, but when she is left alone with the stranger, she realises this is no ordinary girl. Can the stories be true? Can the girl control the tides with nothing more than her voice?

LONGER-LENGTH READS

Girl (in real life)

TAMSIN WINTER

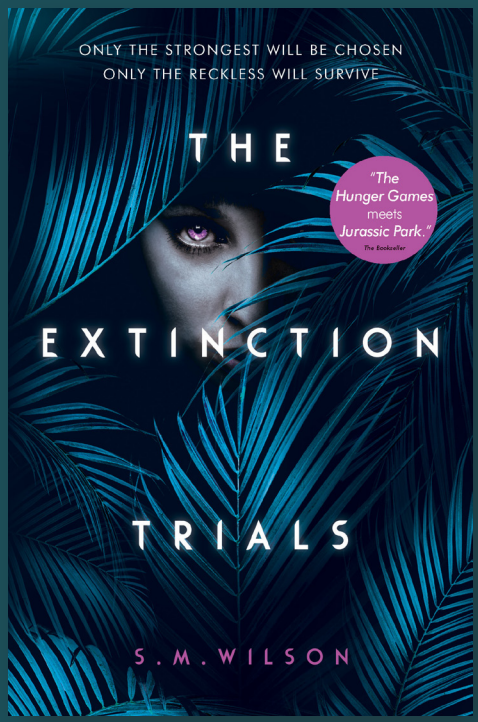
Most parents try to limit their kids' online exposure. But not Eva's. Her parents run a hugely successful YouTube channel and Eva is the star of the show. But she is getting sick of being made to pose in stupid mum-and-daughter matching outfits for sponsored posts. The freebies aren't worth the teasing at school. And when an intensely humiliating *"period party"* goes viral, Eva is outraged. She's going to find a way to stop the channel, even if she has to sabotage it herself...

The Extinction Trials

12+

S. M. WILSON

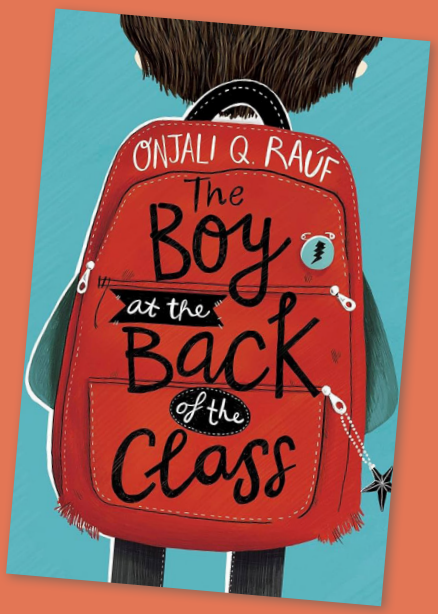
In Stormchaser and Lincoln's ruined world, the only way to survive is to risk everything. To face a contest more dangerous than anyone can imagine. And they will do anything to win. But, in a land full of monsters – human and reptilian – they can't afford to trust anyone. Perhaps not even each other...



Boy at the Back of the Class

ONJALI RAÚF

On a perfectly ordinary school day, something extraordinary happens: a boy with pale skin, lion eyes and a tattered red rucksack walks in. Unable to speak English and seated at the back of the class, Ahmet *'the refugee kid'* becomes the perfect target for bullies and rumours alike. But Ahmet has also captured the attention and empathy of a fellow classmate, who will do anything to help him find his family. Even if that involves a plan – or five, and the Queen herself!



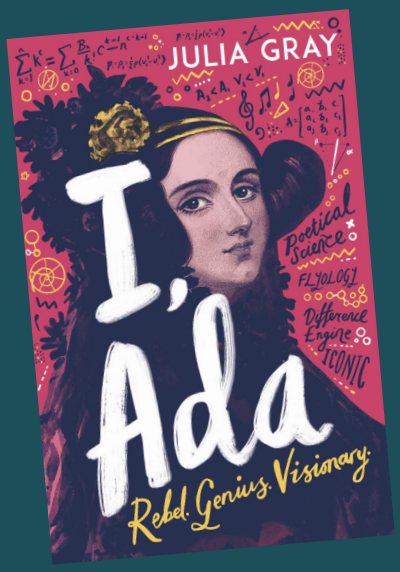
Under a Fire-Red Sky

12+

GERALDINE MCCAUGHREAN

With World War II looming, four young people sit on a train waiting to be evacuated to a safer place... but they don't want to go. They climb out of the carriage window and head back to Greenwich, forming an unlikely friendship. They spend their days trying to be useful. But, as the Blitz unleashes a barrage of bombs on London, turning the sky ragged with flame, can the friends keep each other safe and survive?

Pre-order for release on 19th April



I, Ada: Ada Lovelace – Rebel. Genius. Visionary

12+

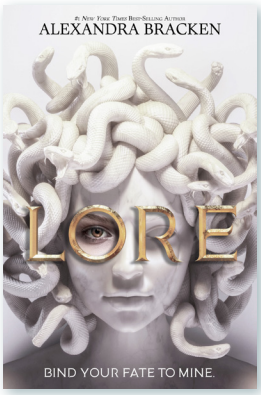
JULIA GRAY

Ada Byron is rich and clever, but she longs to be free. Free to explore all the amazing ideas that come to her imagination, like flying mechanical horses and stories inspired by her travels. Free to find love and passion beyond the watchful gaze of her mother and governesses. And free to learn the full truth about her father, the notorious Lord Byron. Then, Ada meets a man whose invention might just change the world – and he needs her visionary brilliance to bring it to life...

Lore

12+

ALEXANDRA BRACKEN

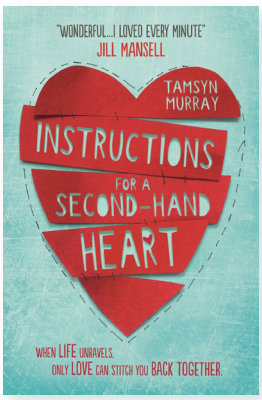


For centuries, Zeus has punished the gods with a game called the Agon, which turns them mortal for one week, and at the mercy of being hunted by those with godly ambitions. Only a handful of the original Greek gods remain, the rest replaced by the mortals who killed them and ascended. After her family's murder by a rival bloodline, Lore escapes and vows to repay her parents' sacrifice by doing one thing – surviving. For seven years she has pushed back thoughts of revenge, except for one week, every seven years – a week that is fast approaching...

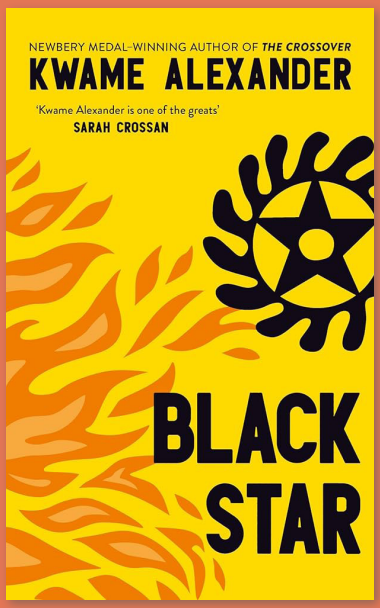
Instructions for a Second-Hand Heart

13+

TAMSYN MURRAY



Jonny has a faulty heart and his time is running out. Niamh has just lost her twin brother in a tragic accident. As their fates collide, soon Jonny is on the mend – but desperate to know more about his donor. When he tracks down Niamh, he only intends to find out about her brother, the first owner of his heart. He doesn't plan on falling in love...



Black Star

KWAME ALEXANDER

13+

Twelve-year-old Charley is set on becoming the first female pitcher to play professional baseball, even if that's a lofty dream for a Black girl in the American South in the 1920s. Even so, her grandfather Kofi's thrilling stories about courageous ancestors and epic journeys make it impossible not to dream big. She knows he has so much more to tell but, according to her parents, she isn't old enough to know about certain things, like what happened to Booker Preston that one night in Great Bridge, and why she can never play on the brand-new baseball field on the other side of town. When Charley challenges a neighbourhood bully to a game at the church picnic, she knows she can win, even with her ragtag team. Then a dispute on the field leads to Charley making a fateful decision, one that will bring consequences she never could have imagined.

Upper World

FEMI FADUGBA

13+

2020: Close to getting expelled and caught up in a deadly feud, the tensions surrounding Esso seem to be leading to a single moment in a Peckham alleyway that could shatter his future.

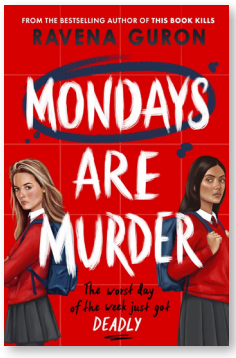
2035: Stripped of everything, football prodigy Rhia has just one thing left on her mind – figuring out how to avert a bullet that was fired 15 years in the past.

Everything changes when Esso gains access to a mysterious world where he can see glimpses of the past and future, and when Rhia starts understanding the physics of it. The two must work together to master the secrets of the Upper World and seize control of their own destinies, before it's too late.

Mondays Are Murder

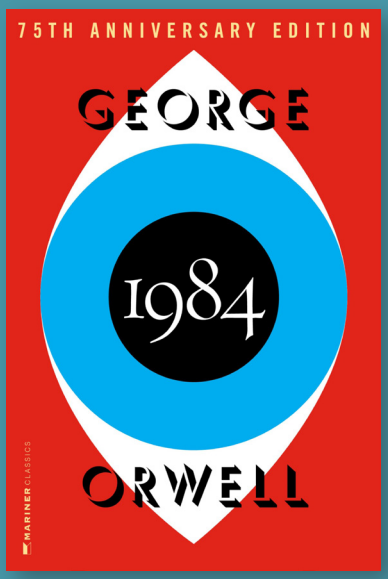
RAVENA GURON

14+



Seventeen-year-old Kay left her sleepy hometown after the devastating death of her friend, Ivy. But when Kay is forced to come back, she receives an anonymous letter that turns her life upside down. The letter tells her that there will be a thrill on Tuesday, a wreckage on Wednesday, treachery on Thursday, a fire on Friday, sabotage on Saturday, a stabbing on Sunday – and her murder on Monday. And if Kay can't figure out who is behind the threats, the worst day of the week is about to get deadly...

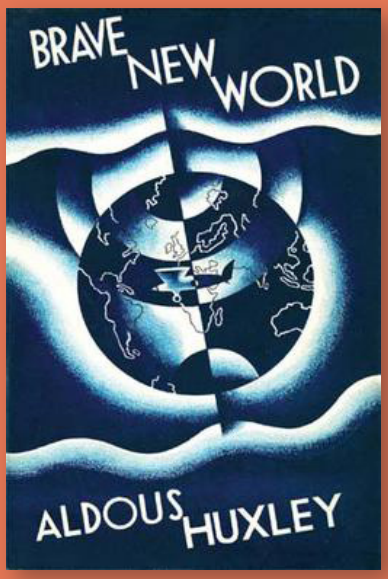
SPOTLIGHT ON A COUPLE OF CLASSICS FOR OLDER READERS (14+):



1984

GEORGE ORWELL

The year is 1984 and war and revolution have left the world unrecognisable. Great Britain, now known as Airstrip One, is ruled by the Party, led by Big Brother. Mass surveillance is everything and The Thought Police are employed to ensure that no individual thinking is allowed. Winston Smith works at The Ministry of Truth, carefully rewriting history, but he dreams of freedom and of rebellion. It is here that he meets and falls in love with Julia. They start a secret, forbidden affair – but nothing can be kept secret, and they are forced to face consequences more terrifying than either of them could have ever imagined...



Brave New World

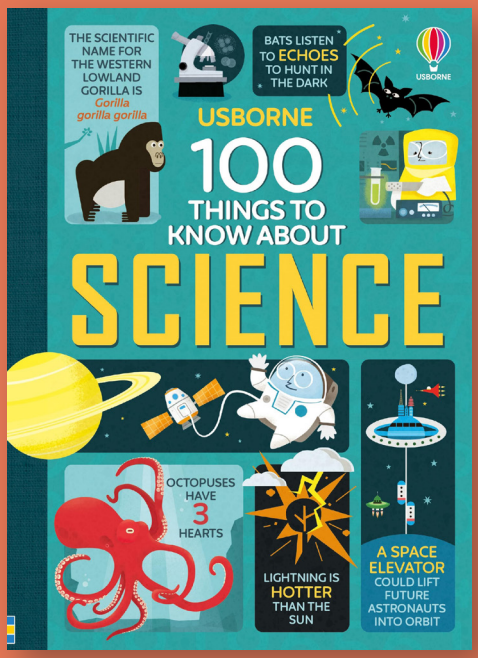
ALDOUS HUXLEY

Largely set in a futuristic World State, inhabited by genetically modified citizens and an intelligence-based social hierarchy, the novel anticipates huge scientific advancements in reproductive technology, sleep-learning, psychological manipulation and classical conditioning that are combined to make a dystopian society which is challenged by only a single individual: the story's protagonist.

NON-FICTION

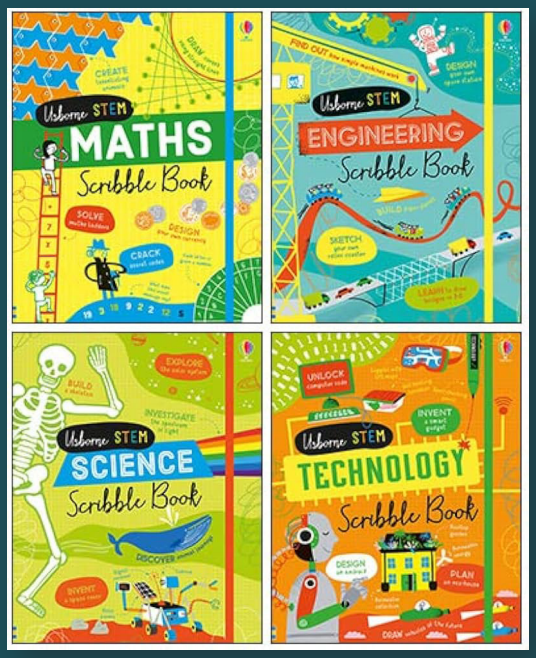
100 Things to Know About Science

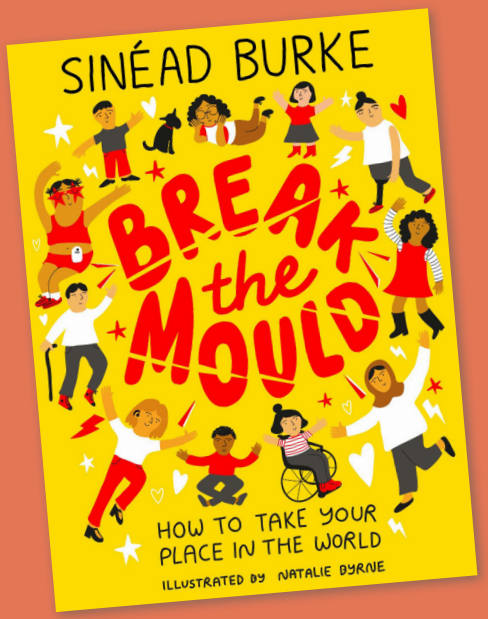
An engaging and accessible introduction with information on 100 science topics that will fascinate readers! This book is packed with facts and colourful infographics on topics ranging from the Earth's magnetic poles to spider venom and black holes. It also includes internet links to specially selected websites where readers can discover even more surprising science facts.



Usborne Scribble books

Usborne has produced a series of *'Scribble books'* which you may be interested in exploring. The books are full of activities to explore, puzzles to solve, things to design and codes to crack! You can also purchase a collection of four which contains the following topics: Science, Engineering, Technology and Maths.





Break the Mould: How to Take Your Place in the World

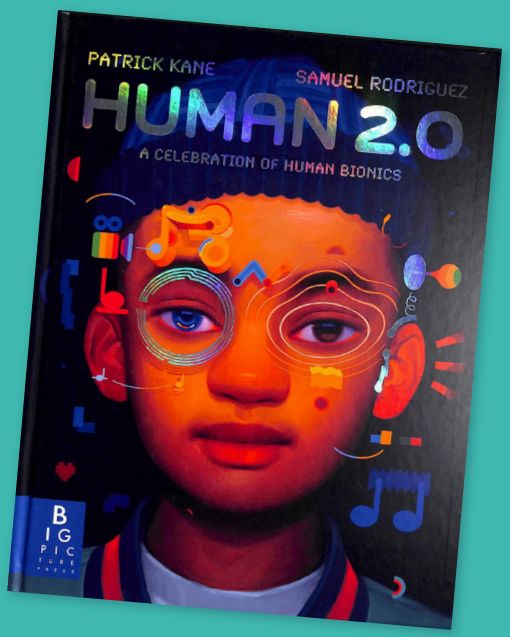
SINÉAD BURKE

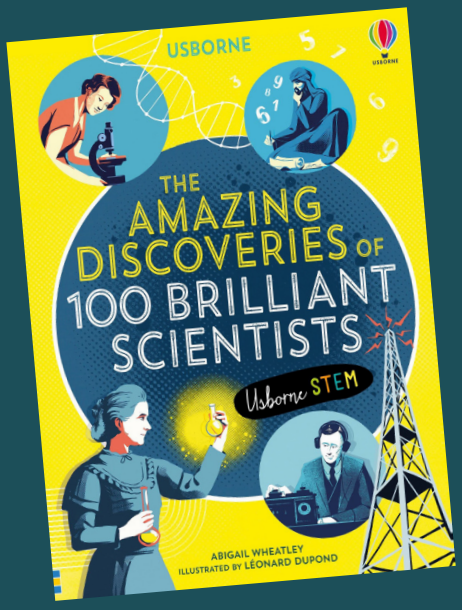
Sometimes it can seem like the world isn't built for you or like you don't belong. But why should you change who you are for the sake of others? Sinéad Burke is many things – an author, an activist, a teacher, a British Vogue cover model...she also happens to be three and a half feet tall. Reflecting on her experiences growing up, she offers a heartfelt and inspiring guide on believing in yourself and finding comfort and pride in your own skin. From the power of being different and discovering things you love about yourself, to using your voice to be an ally and show friendship to others, it's time to discover what makes you you and find your place in the world.

Human 2.0

PATRICK KANE

Pioneering technological breakthroughs have truly changed lives. For some people, particularly those with disabilities, recent advances have crossed the realms of the purely imaginable and reached a place of possibility. People with paraplegia can walk again, those who are hearing impaired can listen to even the faintest sounds, and some people with missing limbs can create beautiful works of art. This book is a celebration of all that has been achieved so far and takes a look at what might be possible in the near future.





The Amazing Discoveries of 100 Brilliant Scientists

From atoms and X-rays to the Big Bang and the Internet, brilliant breakthroughs by successful scientists have changed the world. Dip inside this intriguing book to read the stories of 100 scientists and their amazing discoveries, including Marie Curie and Albert Einstein. The book contains Usborne Quicklinks to specially selected websites where you can meet amazing scientists and try out online activities.

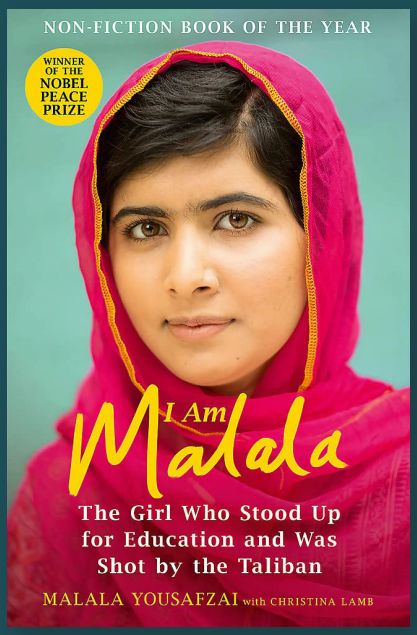
Most Haunted Houses

YVETTE FIELDING

Paranormal investigator, Yvette Fielding, has been uncovering the ghostly pasts of places for over 20 years. Join her as she brings to life the hauntings and chilling histories of some of the most notorious houses in the UK. From the homes of kings and queens, to the *'Most Haunted House in Britain'*, and even Yvette's own home, these spooky stories are not for the fainthearted!

Pre-order for release on 3rd April

FOR OLDER READERS



I am Malala

MALALA YOUSAFZAI

This book tells the remarkable true story of a girl who knew she wanted to change the world – and did. Raised in Swat Valley, in Pakistan, Malala was taught to stand up for her beliefs. When terrorists took control of her region and declared that girls were forbidden from going to school, Malala fought for her right to education. And, on 9th October 2012, she nearly paid the ultimate price for her courage when she was shot on her way home from school. No one expected her to survive. Now, she is an international symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest person ever to win a Nobel Peace Prize.

PiXL Reading

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