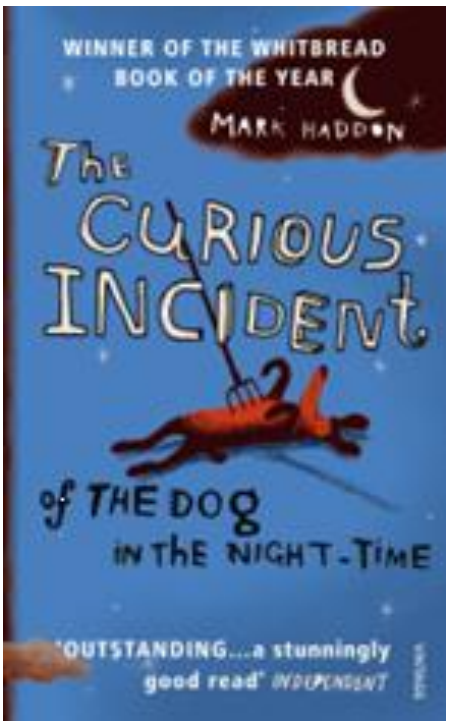
The Ultimate School Reading List:

Must-Read Books Across the Curriculum

Maths recommend …



Year 7-9 The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time is a murder mystery novel like no other.

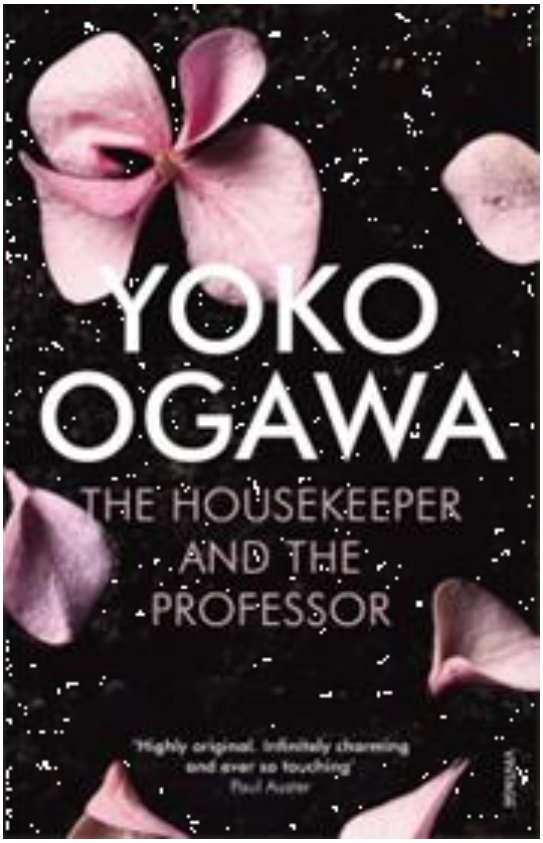
The detective, and narrator, is Christopher Boone. Christopher is fifteen and has Autism. He knows a very great deal about maths and very little about human beings. He has never gone further than the end of the road on his own, but when he finds a neighbour's dog murdered he sets out on a terrifying journey which will turn his whole world upside down.

Years 10-11 The Housekeeper and the Professor: he is a brilliant Maths Professor with a peculiar problem - ever since a traumatic head injury, he has lived with only eighty minutes of short-term memory.

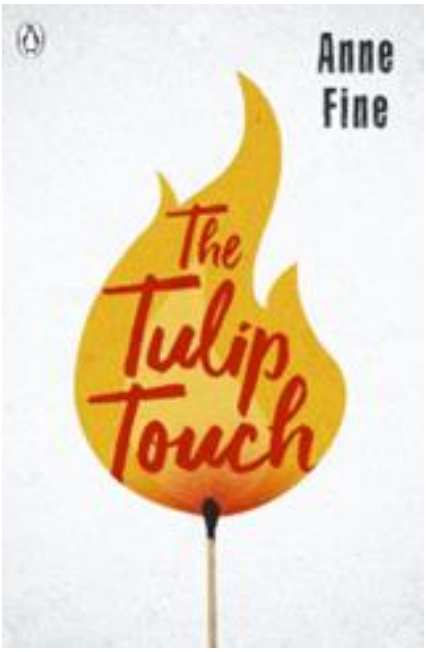
She is an astute young Housekeeper, with a ten-year-old son, who is hired to care for him.

The Professor may not remember what he had for breakfast, but his mind is still alive with elegant mathematical equations from the past.

With each new equation, the three from a bond that runs deeper than memory.



English recommend …



Year 7-9 The Tulip Touch

Nobody wants Tulip in their gang.

She skives off school, cheeks the teachers and makes herself unpopular with her classmates by telling awful lies.

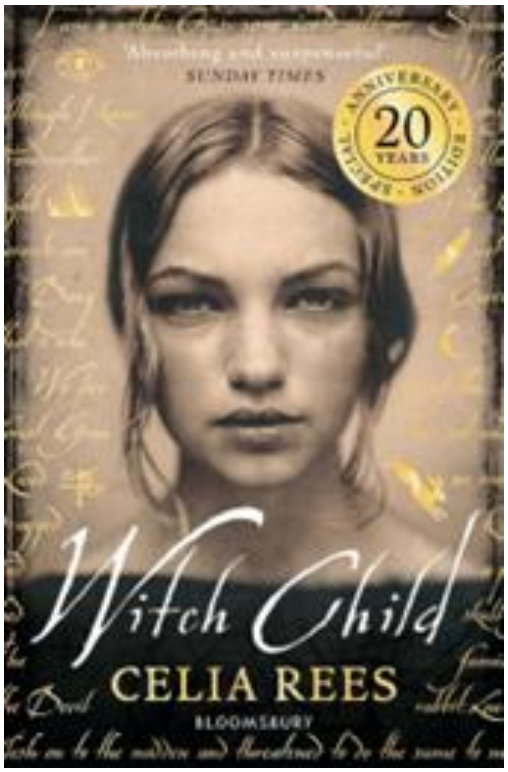
None of this matters to Natalie who finds Tulip exciting.

At first she doesn't care that other people are upset and unnerved by Tulip's bizarre games, but as the games become increasingly sinister and dangerous, Natalie realises that Tulip is going too far.

Years 10-11 The Book Thief

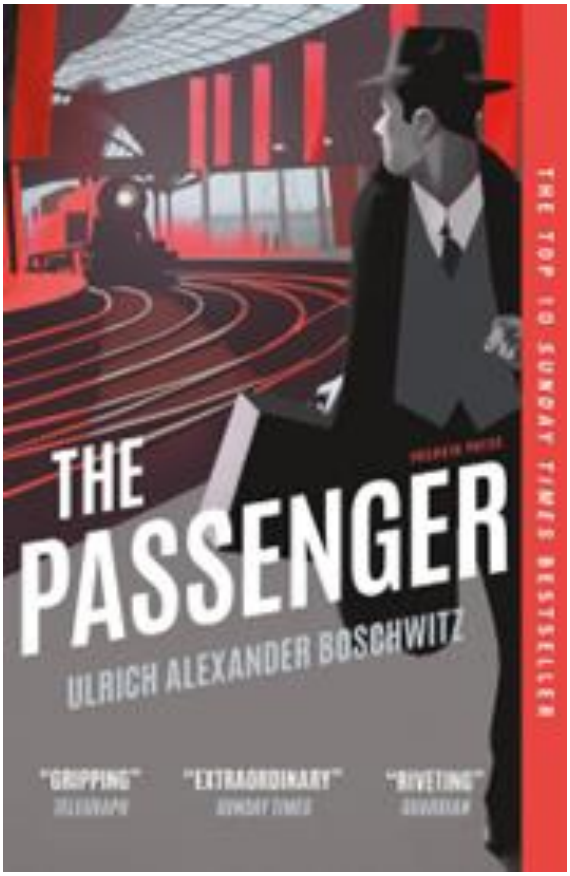
It is 1939. In Nazi Germany, the country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier - and will become busier still.
By her brother's graveside, Liesel's life is changed forever when she picks up a single object, abandoned in the snow. It is The Gravedigger's Handbook, and this is her first act of book thievery. So begins Liesel's love affair with books and words, and soon she is stealing from Nazi book-burnings, the mayor's wife's library . . . wherever there are books to be found.
But these are dangerous times, and when Liesel's foster family hides a Jew in their basement, nothing will ever be the same again.

History recommend …



Year 7-9 Witch Child When Mary sees her grandmother accused of witchcraft and hanged for the crime, she is silently hurried to safety by an unknown woman. The woman gives her tools to keep the record of her days - paper and ink. Mary is taken to a boat in Plymouth and from there sails to the New World where she hopes to make a new life among the pilgrims. But old superstitions die hard and soon Mary finds that she, like her grandmother, is the victim of ignorance and stupidity

Years 10-11 The Passenger BERLIN, NOVEMBER 1938. With storm troopers battering against his door, Otto Silbermann must flee out the back of his own home. He emerges onto streets thrumming with violence: it is KristalInacht, and synagogues are being burnt, Jews rounded up and their businesses destroyed. Turned away from establishments he had long patronised, betrayed by friends and colleagues, Otto finds his life as a respected businessman has dissolved overnight. Desperately trying to conceal his Jewish identity, he takes train after train across Germany in a race to escape this homeland that is no longer home.



Geography recommend …

Year 7-9 The Breadwinner Parvana's father is arrested and taken away by Taliban soldiers. Under Taliban law, women and girls are not allowed to leave the house on their own.

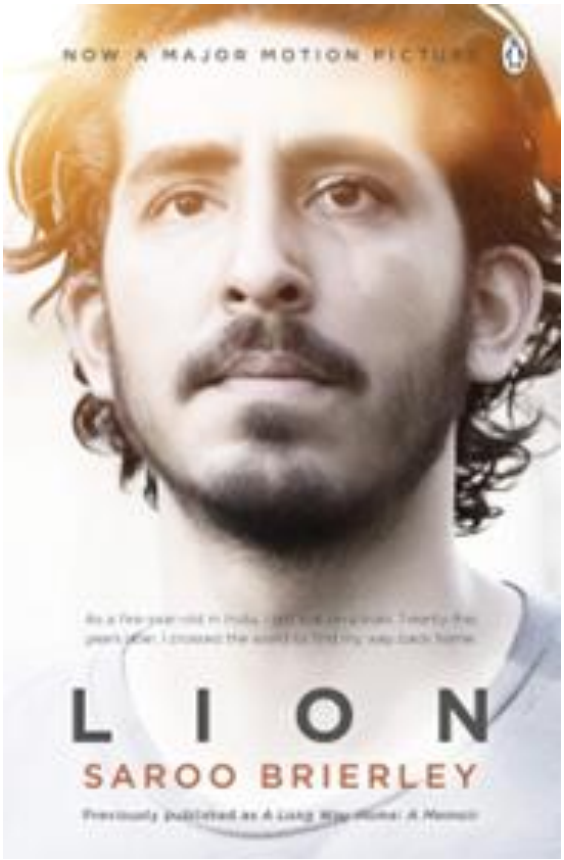
Parvana, her mother, and sisters are prisoners in their own home. With no man to go out to buy food, they face starvation.

Forbidden to earn money as a girl, Parvana must transform herself into a boy, and become the breadwinner to save her family.

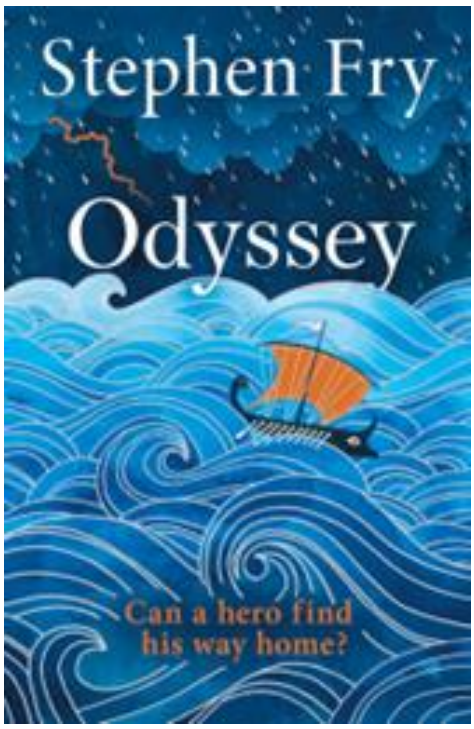
Years 10-11 Lion As a five-year old in India, I got lost on a train. Twenty-five years later, I crossed the world to find my way back home.

Five-year-old Saroo lived in a poor village in India, in a one-room hut with his mother and three siblings... until the day he boarded a train alone and got lost. For twenty-five years.

This is the story of what happened to Saroo in those twenty-five years. How he ended up on the streets of Calcutta. And survived.



Philosophy recommend …



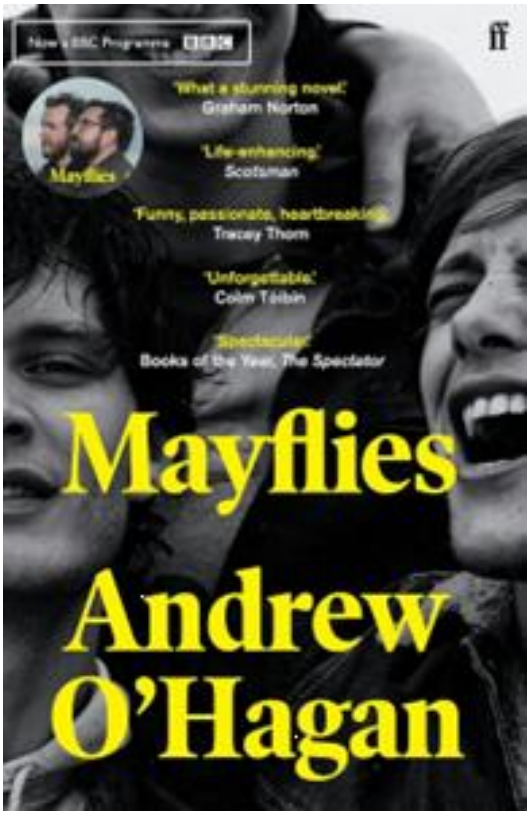
Year 7-9 The Odyssey, CAN A HERO FIND HIS WAY HOME?

The most famous heroic story of all time, Odyssey is chock full of monsters, murder, maelstroms, gods, giants, wit, wisdom – and the most cunning hero of them all: Odysseus. A tale of love and longing, return and redemption, home and hope, It is a story for the ages – and all ages.

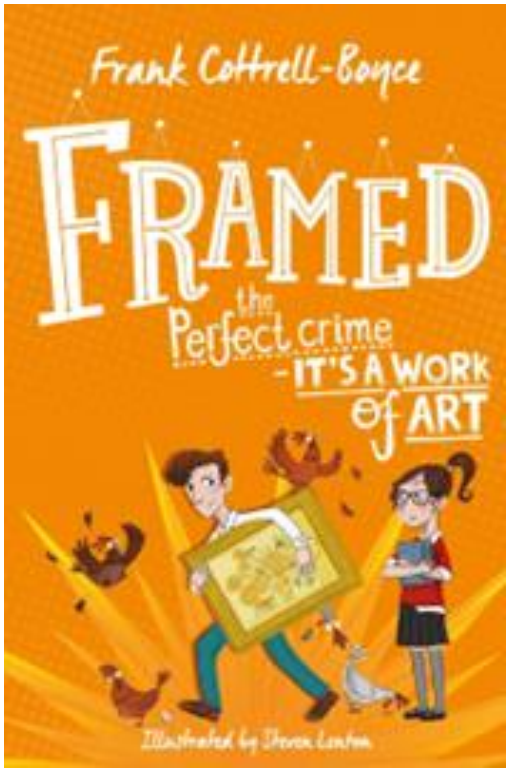
Years 10-11 Mayflies Everyone has a Tully Dawson: the friend who defines your life.

In the summer of 1986, James and Tully ignite a friendship based on music, films and the rebel spirit. With school over, they rush towards a magical weekend of youthful excess in Manchester played out against the greatest soundtrack ever recorded. And there a vow is made: to go at life differently.

Thirty years on, the phone rings. Tully has news.



Art recommend …

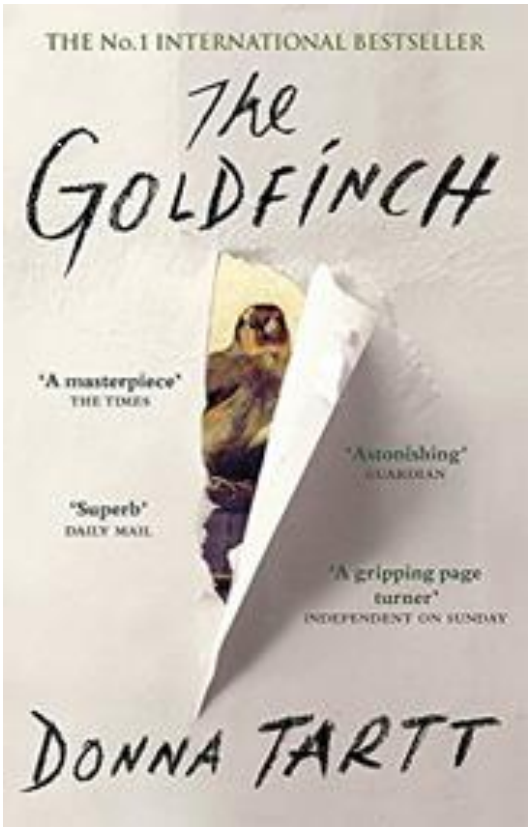


Year 7-9 Framed

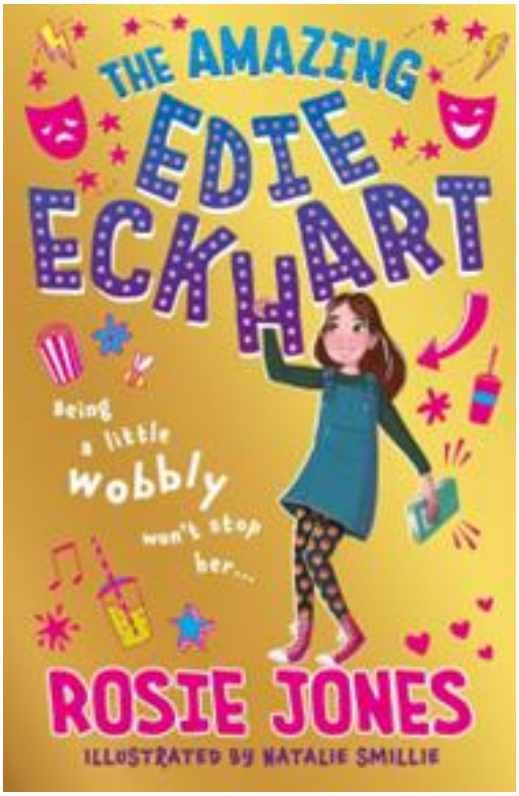
Dylan is the only boy living in the tiny Welsh town of Manod. His parents run the Snowdonia Oasis Auto Marvel garage – and when he's not trying to persuade his sisters to play football, Dylan is in charge of the petrol log. And that means he gets to keep track of everyone coming in and out of Manod – what car they drive, what they're called, even their favourite flavour of crisps. But when a mysterious convoy of lorries trundles up the misty mountainside towards an old, disused mine, even Dylan is confounded. Who are these people – and what have they got to hide?

Years 10-11 The Goldfinch

Aged 13, Theo Decker, son of a devoted mother and a reckless, largely absent father, survives an accident that otherwise tears his life apart. Alone in New York, he is taken in by the family of a wealthy friend. He is tormented by an unbearable longing for his mother, and down the years clings to one thing that reminds him of her: a small, strangely captivating painting that ultimately draws him into the criminal underworld.



Drama recommend …



Year 7-9 The Amazing Edie Eckhart

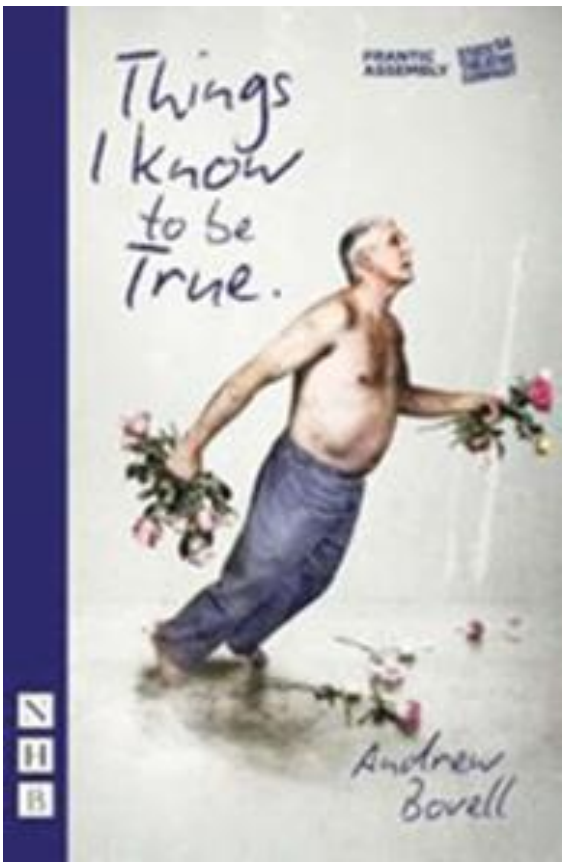
Edie Eckhart is Excited with a capital E to start secondary school with her best friend Oscar. But when she and Oscar are put into different tutor groups on their first day,

Edie is devastated. While she's plotting her reunion with Oscar, she accidentally gets cast as the lead in the school play. As Edie discovers a passion for performance, she also finds new friendships, talents, and dreams.

Years 10-11 Things I Know To Be True

Bob and Fran have worked hard to give their four children the opportunities they never had. Now, with the kids ready to make lives of their own, it's time to sit back and smell the roses. But the change of the seasons reveals some shattering truths, leaving us asking whether it's possible to love too much

Things I Know To Be True is Andrew Bovell's complex and intense portrait of the mechanics of a family - and a marriage - through the eyes of four siblings .



Music recommend …

Year 7-9 Rock War

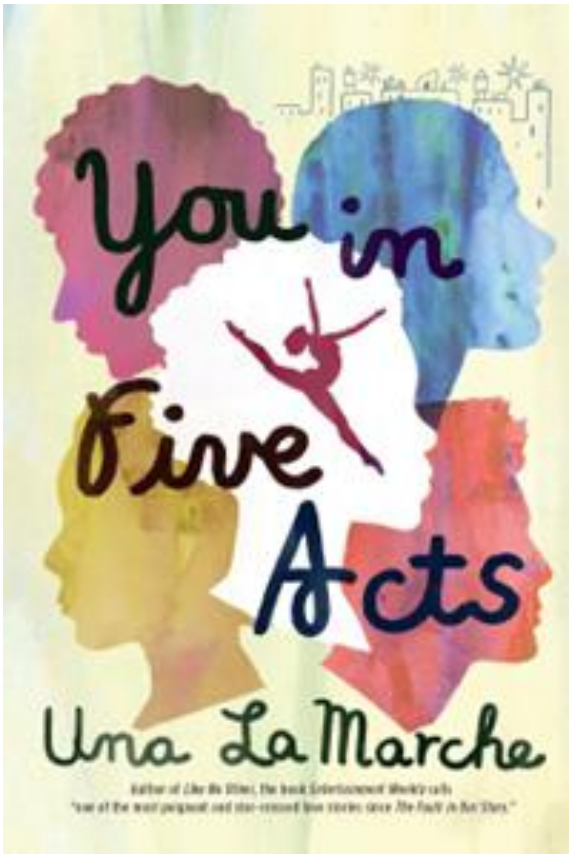
Meet Jay. Summer. And Dylan. Jay plays guitar, writes songs and dreams of being a rock star. But his ambitions are stifled by seven siblings and a terrible drummer. Summer works hard at school, looks after her nan and has a one-in-a-million singing voice. But can her talent triumph over her nerves?

Dylan is happiest lying on his bunk smoking, but his school rugby coach has other ideas, and Dylan reluctantly joins a band to avoid crunching tackles and icy mud.

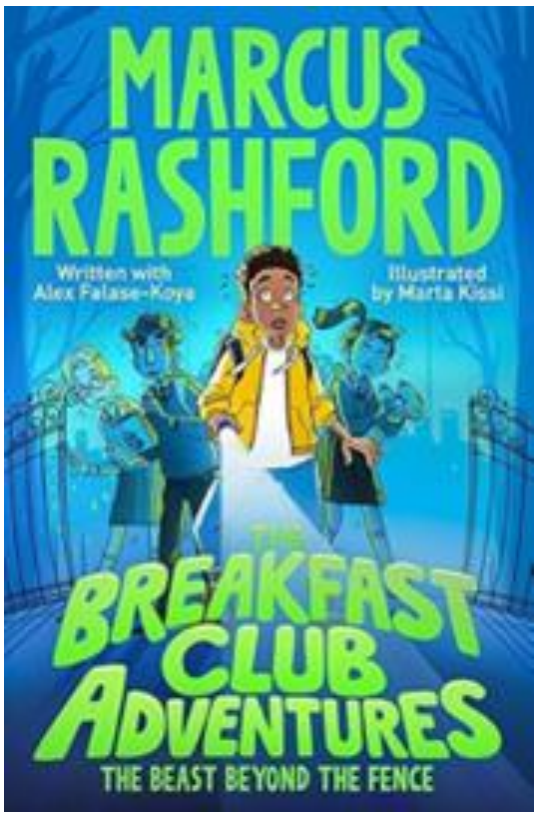
They're about to enter the biggest battle of their lives.

Years 10-11 You in Five Acts

At a prestigious New York City performing arts school, five friends connect over one dream of stardom. But for Joy, Diego, Liv, Ethan, and Dave, that dream falters under the pressure senior year. Their time together is running out. Diego hopes to get out of the friend zone. Liv wants to escape, losing herself in fantasies of the new guy. Ethan conspires to turn his muse into his girlfriend. Dave pines for the drama queen. And if Joy doesn't open her eyes, she could lose the love that's been in front of her all along.



PE recommend …



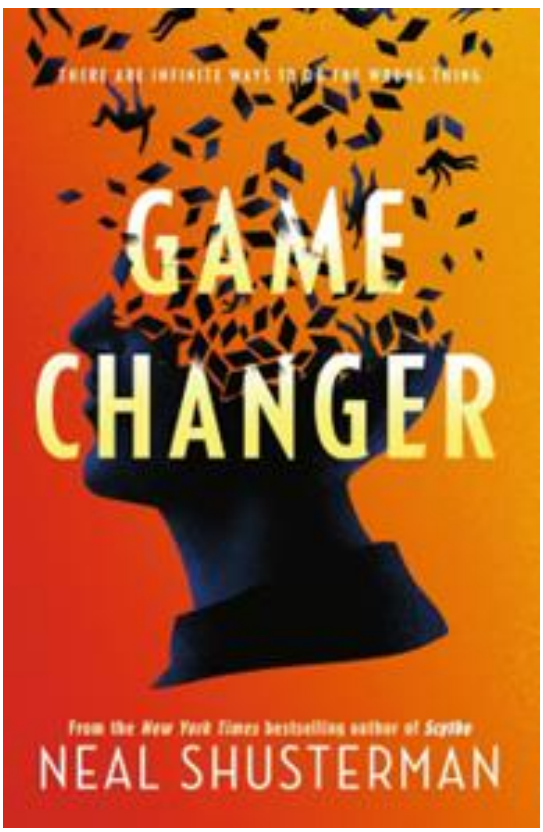
Year 7-9 The Beast Beyond the Fence

Dive into an exciting and mysterious adventure full of fun-filled friendships, fantastical creatures and incredible investigations by the #1 bestselling author Marcus Rashford!

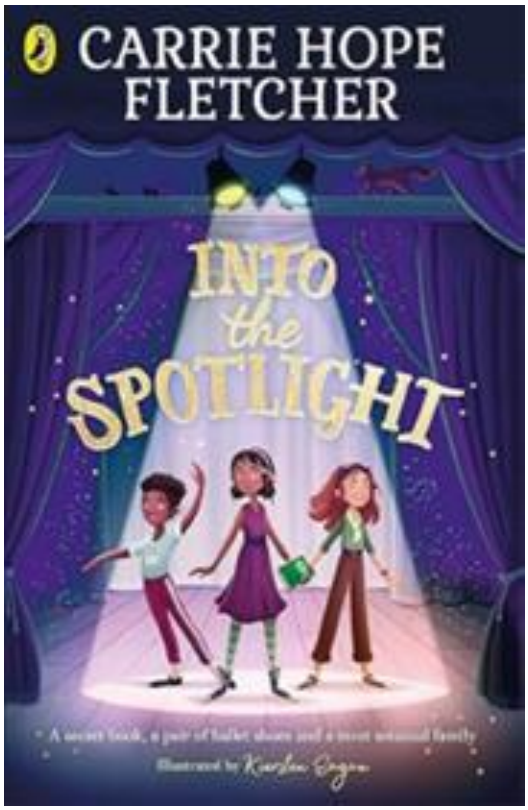
Inspired by Marcus's own experiences growing up, The Breakfast Club Adventures: The Beast Beyond the Fence is the first fiction book by the England International footballer and child-poverty campaigner.

Years 10-11 Game Changer : It is about a teenage American football player forced into a series of parallel lives. As a star player on his high school American football team, Ash is used to taking some hard hits. But that one run in his last game must have knocked him a little loose, because suddenly his life doesn't look quite the way he remembers it.

As Ash bounces into worlds that are almost-but-not-really his own, he starts to question everything, including his own perceptions and place in his own reality. But can he even work out how to get back there?



Dance recommend ...



Year 7-9 Into the Spotlight

One by one, and by strange and unusual ways, Mabel, Marigold and Morris arrive at the stage door of Brilliant Aunt Maude's theatre in the heart of London, home to an extraordinary cast of performers. But ticket sales are dwindling and the curtains might have to close - for the final time.

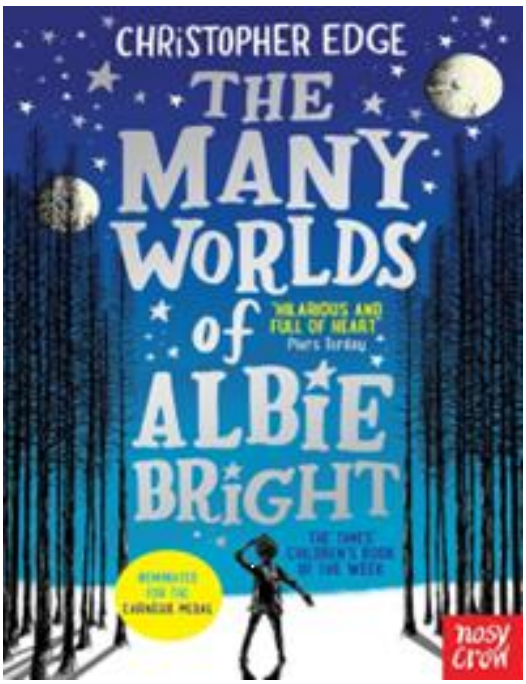
Until one day, as the Pebbles are exploring the many nooks and crannies of the theatre, they stumble upon something they were never meant to find . . . something that just might save the theatre after all . . .

Years 10-11 Keep Dancing Lizzie Chu

Lizzie Chu lives in Glasgow with her grandad Wai Gong. Lizzie is worried about him, but doesn't really know what to do to help him!

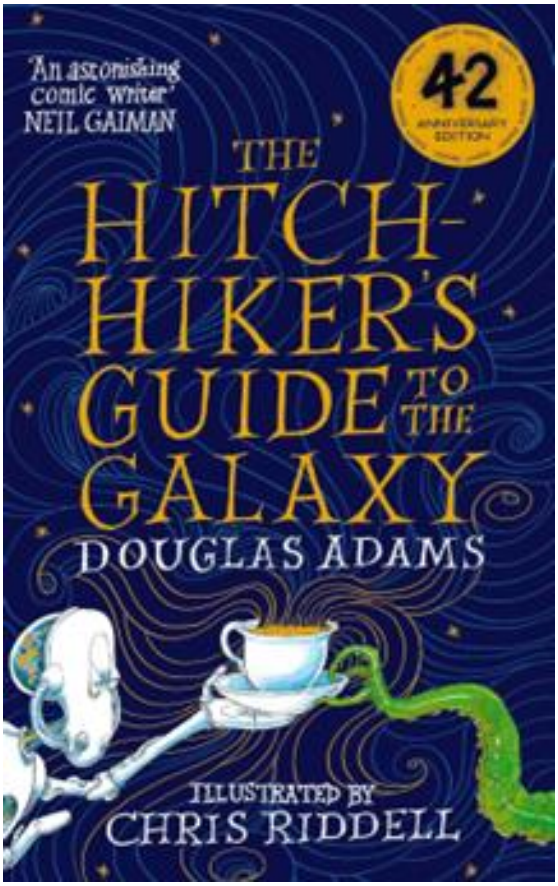
Then Lizzie comes up with a madcap plan. She's going to take Wai Gong on the trip of a lifetime, to Blackpool - to the Tower Ballroom, where he always longed to go, to dance with his late wife Grandma Kam. To rekindle that love for dancing and to see if Wai Gong can find his mojo again. The only problem is - just how on earth is she going to get him there?

Science recommend ...



Year 7-9 The Many Worlds of Albie Bright

When Albie's mum dies, it's natural he should wonder where she's gone. His parents are both scientists and they usually have all the answers. Dad mutters something about Albie's mum being alive and with them in a parallel universe. So Albie finds a box, his mum's computer and a rotting banana, and sends himself through time and space to find her...



Years 10-11 The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy

It's an ordinary Thursday lunchtime for Arthur Dent until his house gets demolished. The Earth follows shortly afterwards to make way for a new hyperspace express route, and Arthur's best friend has just announced that he's an alien. At this moment, they're hurtling through space with nothing but their towels and a book inscribed in large, friendly letters: DON'T PANIC.

Spanish recommend …

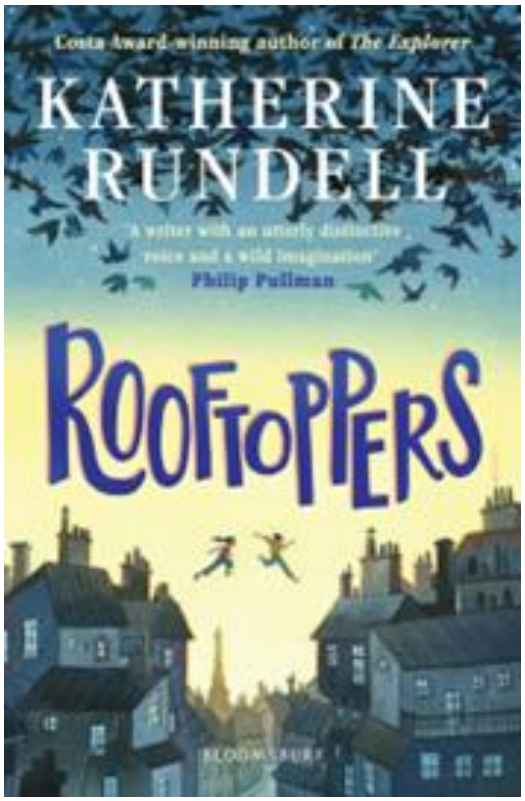
Year 7-9 Clap When You Land Camino Rios lives for the summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But this time, on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people...

In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash.
The two girls are forced to face their father is dead. And then, when it seems like they've lost everything of their father, they learn of each other.

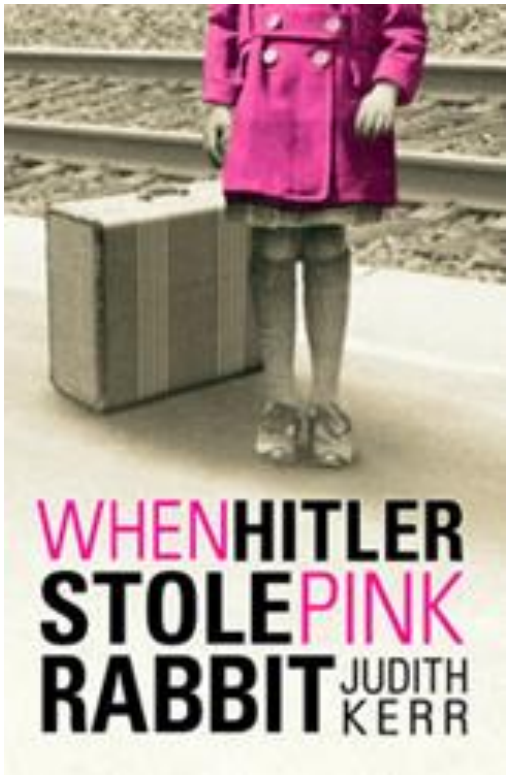
Years 7-9 The Rooftoppers

Everyone tells Sophie that she was orphaned in a shipwreck - found floating in a cello case on the English Channel on her first birthday. But Sophie is convinced her mother also survived.

When the Welfare Agency threatens to separate her from her guardian and send her to an orphanage, Sophie takes matters into her own hands, starting with the only clue she has - the address of a cello-maker in Paris.



German recommend …



Year 7-9 When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit,

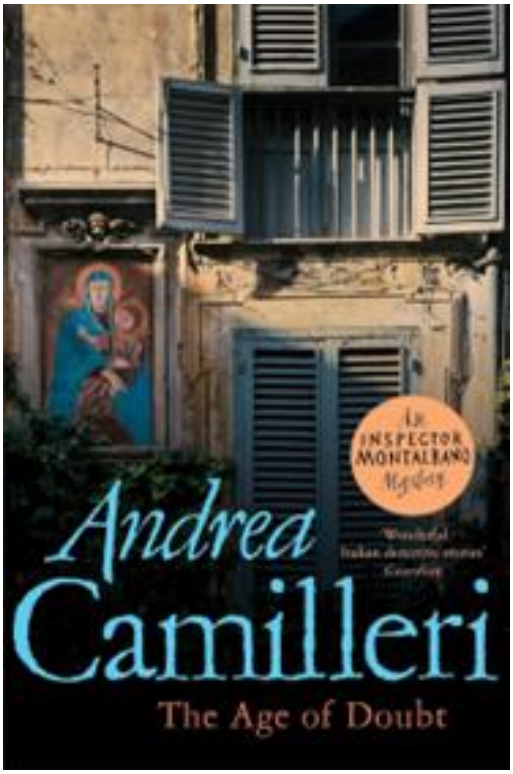
Suppose your country began to change. Suppose that without your noticing, it became dangerous for some people to live in it any longer, and you found, to your surprise, that your own father was one of those people. This is what happened to Anna in 1933.

Anna is too busy with her schoolwork to listen to the talk of Hitler. But one day she and her brother Max are rushed out of Germany in alarming secrecy, away from everything they know.

Italian recommend …

Years 10-11 The Age Of Doubt

A chance encounter with a strange young woman leads Inspector Montalbano to Vigàta harbour – and into a puzzling new mystery. The crew of a mysterious yacht – the Vanna – due to dock in the area has discovered a corpse floating in the water, the dead man's face badly disfigured. It isn't long before Montalbano becomes suspicious of the Vanna's inhabitants. Who is the yacht's owner, the glamorous and short-tempered Livia Giovannini? How has she accrued her riches? And why does she spend so much time at sea?



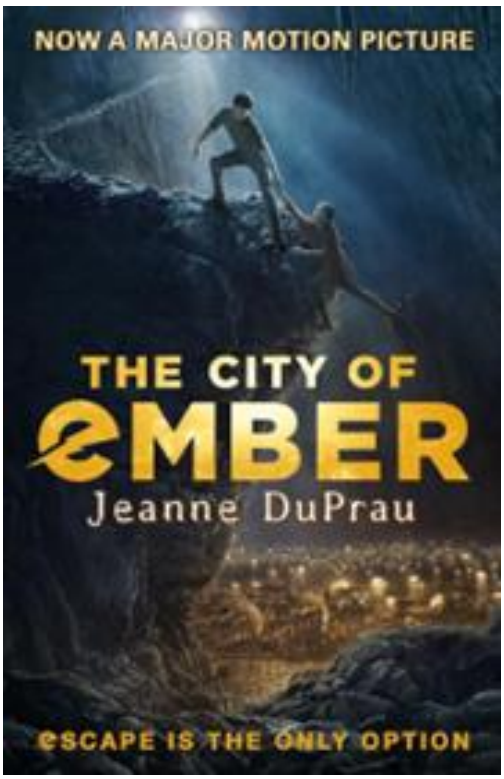
Computing recommend …

Year 7-9 Ready Player One Like most of humanity, Wade Watts escapes his grim surroundings by spending his waking hours jacked into the OASIS, a sprawling virtual utopia that lets you be anything you want to be, a place where you can live and play and fall in love on any of ten thousand planets. And like most of humanity, Wade dreams of being the one to discover the ultimate lottery ticket that lies concealed within this virtual world. For somewhere inside this giant networked playground, OASIS creator James Halliday has hidden a series of fiendish puzzles that will yield massive fortune and power to whoever can unlock them.

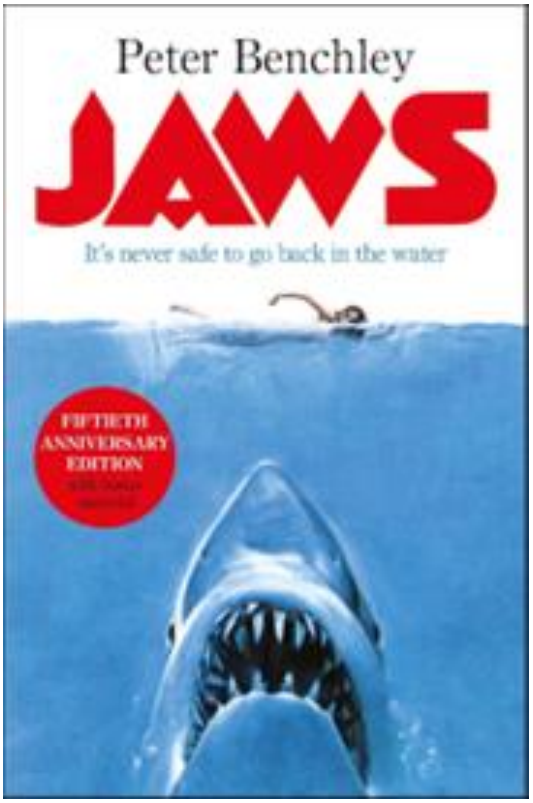
Technology recommend …

Years 7-9 The City of Ember

Many hundreds of years ago, the city of Ember was created by the Builders to contain everything needed for human survival. It worked - but now the storerooms are almost out of food, crops are blighted, corruption is spreading through the city and worst of all - the lights are failing. Soon Ember could be engulfed by darkness-But when two children, Lina and Doon, discover fragments of an ancient parchment, they begin to wonder if there could be a way out of Ember.



Film Studies recommend …



Year 10-11 Jaws

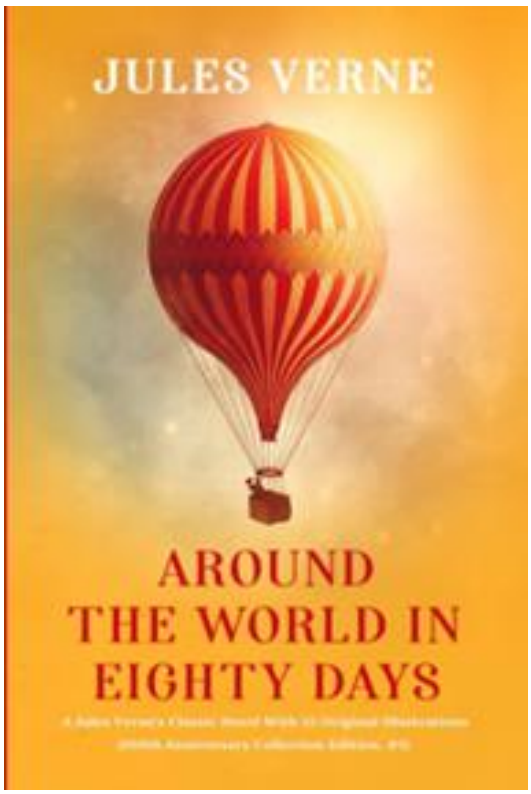
It was just another day in the life of a small Atlantic resort until the terror from the deep came to prey on unwary holidaymakers. The first sign of trouble, a warning of what was to come, took the form of a young woman's body – or what was left of it – washed up on the long, white stretch of beach.

A summer of terror has begun . . .

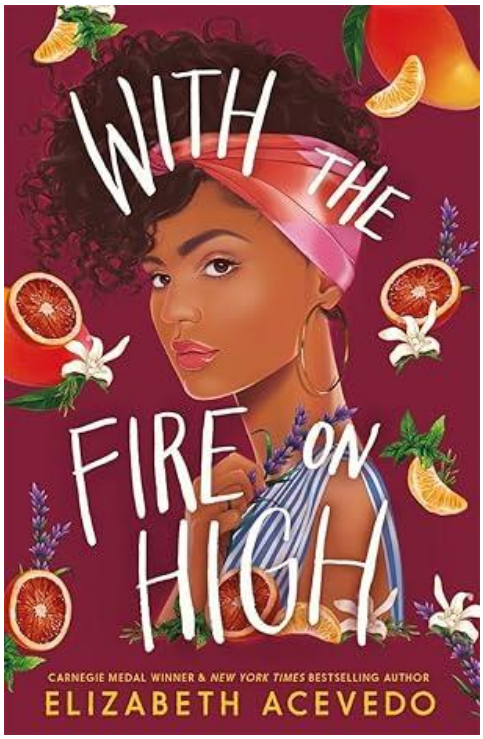
Travel and Tourism recommend …

Years 10-11 Around the World in Eighty Days

Fogg is a rich English gentleman living in solitude. Despite his wealth, Fogg lives a modest life with habits carried out with mathematical precision. At his Club, Fogg gets involved in an argument over an article in The Daily Telegraph stating that with the opening of a new railway section in India, it is now possible to travel around the world in 80 days. He accepts a bet for £20,000 (equal to about £1.6 million today) which he will receive if he makes it around the world in 80 days.



Food recommend …

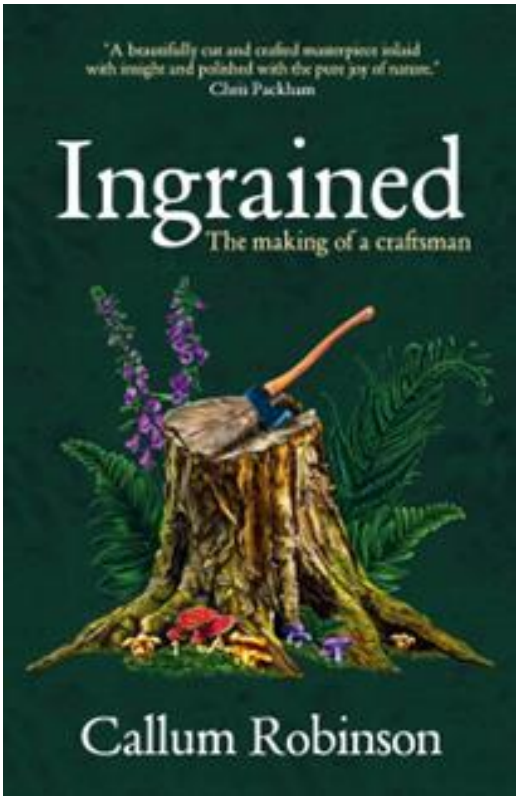


Year 10-11 With the Fire on High Ever since she got pregnant, seventeen-year-old Emoni's life has been about making the tough decisions - doing what has to be done for her young daughter and her grandmother. Keeping her head down at school, trying not to get caught up with new boy Malachi. The one place she can let everything go is in the kitchen, where she has magical hands - whipping up extraordinary food beloved by everyone.

Emoni wants to be a chef more than anything, but she knows it's pointless to pursue the impossible. There are rules she has to play by. And yet, once she starts cooking, and gets that fire on high, she sees that her drive to feed will feed her soul and dreams too. And anything is possible.

Design recommend …

Years 10-11 Ingrained The eldest son of a Master Woodworker, Callum spent his childhood surrounded by wood and trees, absorbing craft lessons in his father's workshop. In time he became his father's apprentice, helping to create exquisite bespoke objects. But eventually the need to find his own path led him to establish his own workshop; to chase ever bigger and more commercial projects. Until the devastating loss of one major job threatened to bring it all crashing down. Faced with the end of his business he was forced to question what mattered most.



Business recommend …

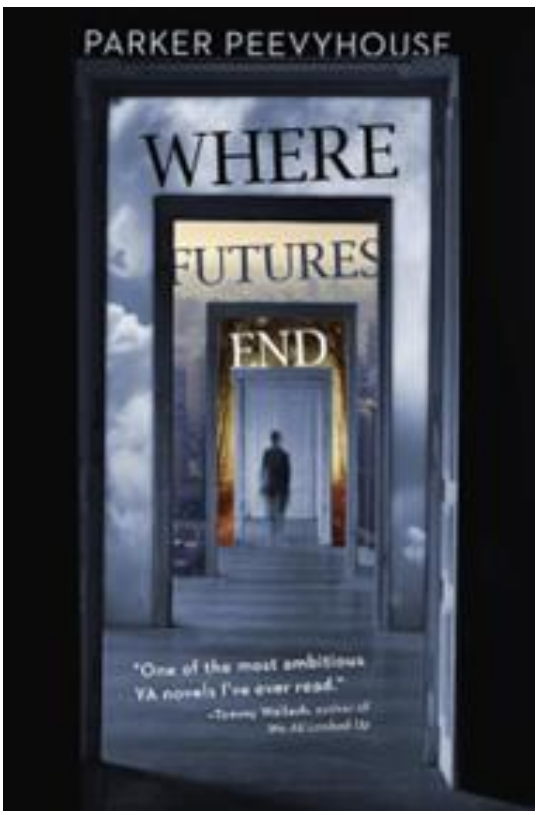
Year 10-11 No Filter,

Drawing on interviews with all the key figures at Instagram, No Filter vividly recreates the rise of the most successful photo app in history: from its origins in a Silicon Valley coffee shop, to its unprecedented billion-dollar acquisition by Facebook, to its founders' dramatic clashes with their new boss, Mark Zuckerberg. Along the way, it explores how Instagram has changed society - encouraging businesses to prioritise their aesthetic above all else.

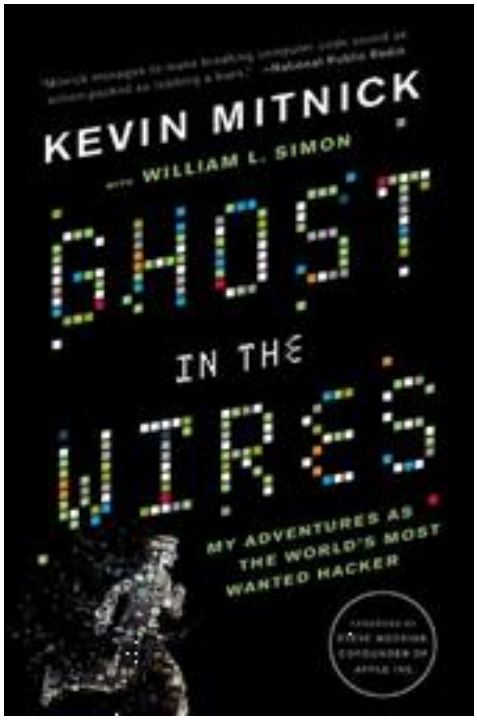
ICT recommend …

Years 10-11 Where Futures End

Five teens, five futures. Dylan develops a sixth sense that allows him to glimpse another world. Brixney must escape a debtor colony by finding a way to increase the number of hits on her social media feed so she'll attract corporate sponsorship. Epony goes "High Concept" and poses as an otherworldly being to recapture her boyfriend's attention. Reef struggles to survive in a city turned virtual gameboard. And Quinn uncovers the alarming secret that links them all.



Computer Science recommend …



Year 10-11 Ghost in the Wires

Kevin Mitnick was the most elusive computer break-in artist in history. He accessed computers and networks at the world's biggest companies -- and no matter how fast the authorities were, Mitnick was faster, sprinting through phone switches, computer systems, and cellular networks. As the FBI's net finally began to tighten, Mitnick went on the run, engaging in an increasingly sophisticated game of hide-and-seek that escalated through false identities, a host of cities, and plenty of close shaves, to an ultimate showdown with the Feds, who would stop at nothing to bring him down.