

Black Lives Matter

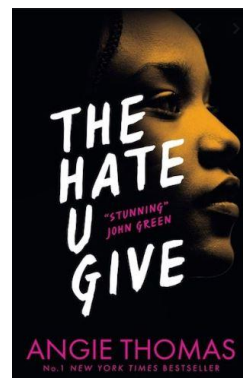
Books to help you understand the current political situation a reading list for Year 8 and 9

Essential Reading

The Hate You Give (THUG) by Angie Thomas

A prize-winning contemporary novel for teenagers which was inspired by the Black Lives Movement. This novel will help you understand the similarities and differences between the lives of black people in the UK and the USA.

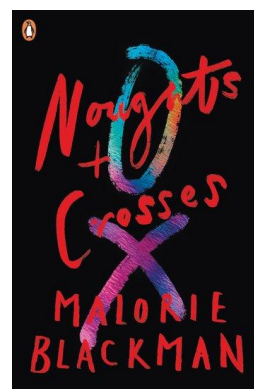
Starr lives in a poor black neighbourhood in Mississippi. Thanks to her hard-working father, she attends a private school in an affluent white suburb. Her life consists of 2 entirely different worlds. When a black childhood friend is shot dead by a white policeman and results in civil unrest, Starr is the only witness. She must decide where her allegiances lie.



Noughts and Crosses (and sequels) by Malorie Blackman

If you have not already read these books, now is the perfect time to do so. The books are dystopian thrillers set in a world where black people have all the power (Crosses) and white people (Noughts) must defer to them. This role reversal enables readers, both black and white, to appreciate life from the perspective of someone with a different skin colour.

Noughts and Crosses was recently serialised on television and is available via BBC iPlayer. However, as always, I would encourage you to read the books first.

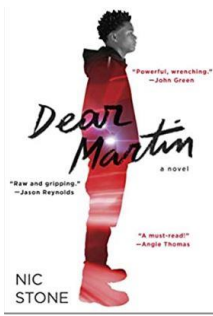


Other Great Reads

I am Thunder and I Won't Keep Quiet by Muhammad Khan

Muzna is a British Muslim. Her family are strict with her but not very religious. When she changes school she is flattered to attract the attentions of the charismatic Arif. Arif is also a Muslim, but he views his faith in a very different way. Very quickly things spin out of control as Muzna finds herself involved in radical Islamic Fundamentalism.





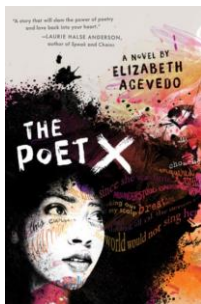
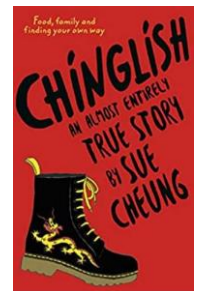
Dear Martin by Nik Stone

This book cover the same themes as THUG (see above) but is shorter and easier to read

Justyce is an A grade student and has won a place at a top university. He is also an African American and is faced with institutional racism in every aspect of his life.

Chinglish by Sue Cheung

The fictional diary of a 14 year old girl of Chinese heritage living in Britain and trying to fit in. Jo has a miserable life. At school she is bullied for being different. When not at school, she is expected to work in the family takeaway. This is a sad story but there are moments of laugh-out-loud humour.

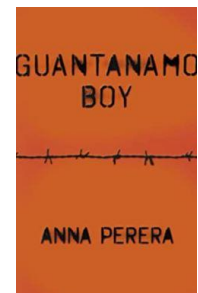


The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo

Prize-winning novel written in blank verse. Xiomara's is a Latino American living in a poor neighbourhood in New York. Streetwise and outspoken, she's an outcast in her conservative immigrant community. But has she got the courage to stand up for what she really wants?

Guantanamo Boy by Anna Perera

Guantanamo Bay is a notorious American military prison where inmates are kept without trial and allegedly tortured. Established by President George W Bush in 2002, the inmates have almost exclusively been Muslim men, including teenage boys. Beware, this fictional account of life in Guantanamo is distressing. Khalid, an innocent 15 year old British boy of Pakistani heritage, is captured whilst on holiday in Pakistan and taken to the prison.

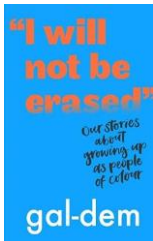
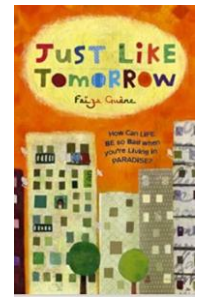


Internment by Samira Ahmed

A chilling dystopia set in America in the near-future. Islamophobia has become so rampant that the president orders all Muslim Americans to be detained in special camps. Despite being model US citizens, 17 year old Layla and her family are some of the first Muslims to be relocated.

Just Like Tomorrow by Faiza Guene and Sarah Ardizzone (translator)

This book was a best-seller in France. 15 year old Doria, the daughter of immigrants from North Africa lives on a grim housing estate on the outskirts of Paris and survives on handouts. Sobering, thoughtful, entertaining.



I Will not be Erased by gal-dem (editors)

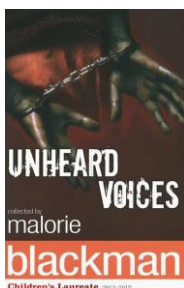
Gal-dem (<https://gal-dem.com>) is an organisation that promotes the viewpoints of Women of Colour. In this anthology, writers (mainly British) look back at their teenage years and reflect on what they have learned between then and now.

Somebody Give This Heart a Pen by Sophia Thakur

A collection of poetry for teenagers about being a young black woman in Britain today. . Sophia Thakur is a renowned performance poet and youth ambassador for black girls.



The Historical Background



Unheard Voices edited by Malorie Blackman

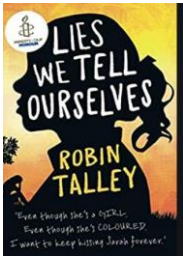
An anthology of stories, poems and autobiographical writing about young people during the slave trade. The book was produced to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade in 2007.

Chains (and sequels) by Laurie Halse Anderson

The American War of Independence (1775-1783)
provided opportunities

for slaves to secure their freedom. This is the fictional account of one such individual, a teenage girl called Isabel



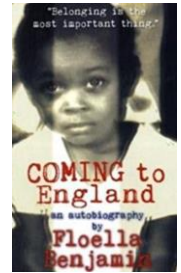


Lies We Tell Ourselves by Robin Talley

1959, the height of the US Civil Rights Movement. Sarah is one of the very first black students at Jefferson High. But their reception is far from welcoming.

Coming to England (and sequel) by Floella Benjamin

An autobiography of childhood and adolescence which is both inspiring and easy to read. Baroness Floella Benjamin is a black woman who has had an illustrious career as an actress, television presenter, business woman and politician. Born in the Caribbean she came to England in 1960, part of the “Windrush Generation”.



*Susan Green
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