

50(ish) Brilliant Books to Read during Years 8 and 9



Library
Camden School for Girls
London NW5 2DB

- This list contains some of the best contemporary literature written for teenagers.
- All the books on this list may be borrowed from the school library
- This list contains just 1 title per author. Most of the authors have written other equally good books.
- Titles in italics are the first in a series

Almond, David	A Song for Ella Grey	From the author of <i>Skellig</i> , a retelling of the classical myth Orpheus and Eurydice. as a contemporary love story set in Tyneside.
Avery, Lara	The Memory Book	Sammie has a rare form of dementia that affects young people. She vows to make the most of every day she has left.
Badoe, Yaba	Wolf Light	Zula from Mongolia, Linet from England and Adoma from Ghana were born on the same day and bound together by magic. They must protect the world from environmental destruction.
Bates, Laura	The Burning	Laura Bates is a feminist writer who founded the Everyday Sexism Project. This, her first novel, is about a teenage girl who is stigmatised for something she has posted online.
Bayron, Kalynn	This Poison Heart	A fantasy/thriller story with links to Greek mythology. Briseis has always known she has a magical connection with plants. When she inherits a house with large secluded grounds, she is able to explore her powers to the full.
Berry, Julie	All the Truth That's in Me	Judith is abducted from her village. Two years later she returns without her tongue. Unable to speak and illiterate, how can she tell her story?

Bell, Alex	Frozen Charlotte	A gothic horror story. Not too demanding to read but definitely not at bedtime!
Blackman, Malorie	Noughts and Crosses	A dystopia set in a racially divided society not unlike South Africa under apartheid, but with an important twist. A must for every teenager.
Bourne, Holly	You Could be So Pretty	A dystopia which exaggerates the way in which women are judged by their appearance and vilified for not conforming to beauty norms. Women who prioritise education over appearance are shunned by the rest of society.
Brooks, Kevin	The Bunker Diary	A gruesome thriller. Six people, including 16 year old Linus, the narrator, are kidnapped and imprisoned in an underground bunker.
Cassidy, Anne	Looking for JJ	Jennifer Jones was just 10 years old when she murdered another child. Six years later she's out of prison with a new identity. But there are those who want revenge.
Cheung, Sue	Chinglish	The bittersweet, fictional diary of a 14 year old British Chinese girl trying to fit in.
Collins, Suzanne	The Hunger Games	A dystopian thriller. The ultimate reality TV show where unsuccessful contestants die.
Critchley, Emma	Notes on My Family	Emma's family are so absorbed by their individual problems, that they fail to notice that she is becoming increasingly isolated and bullied.
Crossan, Sarah	One	Teenagers Grace and Tippi are conjoined twins. Despite sharing the lower half of their bodies, they retain their individuality. But ultimately a decision has to be made. Written in blank verse.
Divin, Sue	Guard Your Heart	Northern Ireland, 2017. 18 years after the peace agreement Aidan (Roman Catholic) and Iona (Protestant) fall in love and it appears that sectarian attitudes have not changed much.

Donnelly, Jennifer	A Gathering Light	Set in the USA at the start of the 20th century, this complex novel is both a murder mystery and a sensitive portrayal of a teenage girl forced to choose between marriage and a career.
Dowd, Siobhan	A Swift Pure Cry	15 year old Shell's life in rural Ireland in the 1980s is difficult enough, without falling pregnant.
Flood, C J	The Infinite Sky	A contemporary Romeo and Juliet. When a travelling family moves onto land owned by her family, Iris and Patrick fall in love. But the relationship is doomed.
Frank, Anne	The Diary of a Young Girl	The diary of the Jewish girl who hid from the Nazis in an attic is a must read book for every teenager.
Gaarder, Jostein	Sophie's World	A mystery story which is also an excellent introduction to philosophical analysis for teens.
Gaiman, Neil	The Graveyard Book	Gothic fantasy about an orphan raised in a graveyard by ghosts. Funny, surreal.
Gardner, Sally	Tinder	A retelling of the fairy tale The Tinderbox by Hans Anderson. Dark, scary, bloody.
Green, John	The Fault in Our Stars	A bittersweet love story where both teenage protagonists have terminal cancer.
Hardinge, Frances	A Skinful of Shadows	A historical story set during the Civil War. Also a gothic fantasy/adventure story. As challenging as teenage novels get.
Khan, Muhammad	I am Thunder	Muzna is a Muslim, but her family is not very religious. When she changes schools, she falls for Arif, a Muslim who views his faith in a very different way.
Lake, Nick	Hostage Three	A thriller which gives an insight into the history and politics of Somalia. Somali pirates capture a British teenager and her family who are sailing round the world.
Landman, Tanya	Buffalo Soldier	Charlotte is a slave who has been given her freedom at the end of the American Civil War. But how can she survive?

Lawrence, Patrice	Indigo Donut	A love story. And a mystery. Indigo is in care. She has a tragic past and a terrible secret. Bailey is instantly attracted to her. But is he taking on more than he can cope with?
Lockhart, E	We Were Liars	A psychological thriller with a shocking ending. Cadence spends every summer with her extended family on their private island. But this year all is not as it appears.
Lewis, Kayvion	Thieves Gambit	A thriller about a girl who takes part in a competition for the world's best thieves to try and save her mother. Unputdownable.
Mann, Manjeet	The Crossing	A novel written in blank verse about 2 very different teenagers whose lives intersect. Natalie plans to swim the English Channel as a tribute to her recently deceased mother. Sammy, plans to cross the Channel and claim asylum.
Matthias, Sarah	A Berlin Love Song	An historical romance set in Nazi Germany. Lili is a Romany, an ethnic group reviled by Hitler. Max is a middle class German schoolboy and Hitler Youth member. They are passionately in love, but can their love survive in such terrible times.
Mikhail, Nadia	The Cats We Meet Along the Way	What would you do if the world was going to end in a year? Aisha chooses to make a trip around her native Malaysia to find her estranged sister.
Ness, Patrick	The Knife of Never Letting Go	Dystopia or allegory of the colonisation of America? Gratuitous scenes of violence and torture? Misogynistic? You decide.
Nicholls, Sally	Things a Bright Girl Can Do	Evelyn, May and Nell are teenagers living in London during World War One. They are all committed to the Women's Suffrage Movement, but their reasons for participating couldn't be more different. A must for 21st century feminists.

Pratchett, Terry	The Amazing Maurice and his Educated Rodents	A humorous retelling of The Pied Piper. The action takes place in Pratchett's fantasy "Discworld" and this book may serve as an introduction to the series.
Rees, Celia	Witch Child	An historical novel set in the mid-1600s. When her grandmother is accused of witchcraft, Mary escapes on a Puritan ship bound for America.
Rosoff, Meg	How I Live Now	When Daisy goes to live with her cousins in England, at first life is idyllic. But with the outbreak of a war, the young people are left to survive on their own.
Ros, Manon Steffan	The Blue Book of Nebo	Winner of the prestigious Carnegie Award for the best book for young people 2023. Short but powerful novel about life in an isolated Welsh community after a nuclear holocaust.
Rowell, Rainbow	Eleanor and Park	The school year 1986-1987 was a magical one for two teenage misfits from Nebraska, USA. It was the year they met and fell in love.
Sedgwick, Marcus	Snowflake AZ	Snowflake is a haven for people whose lives have been ruined by an illness which they claim was caused by Multiple Chemical Sensitivities. A community of freaks or a chilling portent?
Smith, Dodie	I Capture the Castle	The fictional journal of a 17 year old girl from an eccentric and penniless family who lives in a dilapidated castle.
Sepetys, Ruta	I Must Betray You	A thriller set in Romania under the dictatorship of Nicolau CeauCesceau during the 1980s.
Sutcliffe, William	The Gifted, The Talented and Me	Sam's parents suddenly become rich, move to Hampstead and send their children to a pretentious school for gifted children. But Sam is an ordinary 15 year old boy. Guaranteed to make you laugh out loud!
Talley, Robin	Lies We Tell Ourselves	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.
Thomas, Angie	The Lies We Tell (THUG)	Real life in the United States today as seen through the eyes of a 16 year old black girl living in a poor neighbourhood.
Tolkien, J R	The Hobbit	Bilbo Baggins was a home-loving hobbit. He never wanted to go on a dangerous quest. But sometimes we just have to do things. Read this book first before tackling The Lord of the Rings.
Westerfeld, Scott	Uglies	Tally is an Ugly. She can't wait to turn 16 when a simple operation will transform her into a Pretty. But is the operation more than it purports to be?
Williamson, Lisa	The Art of Being Normal	David is a 14 year old boy who is sure that he is a female. He is determined to do whatever it takes to transition.
Wood, Laura	The Agency for Scandal	A tantalising blend of mystery and romance and with a feminist twist. In late Victorian times, Isabel joins an all female spy agency set up to protect women from unscrupulous men.
Yoon, Nicola	Everything, Everything	A love story. Maddie is so deeply in love with Olly that she will do anything to be with him, even if that means she will die.
Zusak, Markus	The Book Thief	Life in Nazi Germany as experienced by a young girl living with foster parents in a poor part of Munich. Long, sad and narrated by death, this is a demanding read.

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