

THE LONDON ORATORY SCHOOL

Recommended Reading List

1st and 2nd Form

Action & Adventure

Joan Aiken, **The Wolves of Willoughby Chase**: Set in an alternate history of England, it tells of the adventures of cousins Bonnie and Sylvia and their friend Simon the goose-boy as they thwart the evil schemes of their governess Miss Slighcarp. The novel is the first in the **Wolves Chronicles**, a series of books set during the fictional 19th century reign of King James III.

Malorie Blackman, **Hacker**: One of Blackman's most popular books. Two computer whizzkids try to prove their father is innocent of bank theft. A gripping read.

Anne Cassidy, **Innocent**: Great junior novel from Cassidy, as Charlie tries to prove the innocence of her older brother Brad.

Charlie Higson, **Silverfin**: The first in a popular new series about James Bond when he was still at school.

Geraldine McCaughrean, **Where the World Ends**: A novel set around a true survival story from 18th century St Kilda.

William Nicholson, **Wind on Fire Trilogy**: Breathtaking trilogy about a society governed by exams. But what happens when you rebel? Read to find out. A truly excellent trilogy.

Gary Paulsen, **Hatchet**: Thrilling adventure about the survival of a 12 year old boy after a plane crash. Also has great sequels.

Michelle Paver, **Wolf Brother** (Chronicles of Ancient Darkness series): A great series. This book takes place 6000 years ago during the **New Stone Age**, and tells the story of twelve-year-old Torak, a boy of the Wolf Clan.

Mary Renault, **The Lion in the Gateway**: An enthralling story, it tells of the crossing of the Hellespont by Xerxes' army and the battles fought against the invaders by the courageous Greeks, Pheidippides' marathon run from Athens to Sparta, and the heroic stand at Thermopylae by a handful of Spartans.

Katherine Rundell, **Rooftoppers**: Sophie may have survived a shipwreck as a baby, but her life began when an eccentric but loving bachelor brought her home. When a child services organisation threatens to remove Sophie, she and Charles flee to Paris in search of her long-lost mother.

Chris Ryan, **Survival**: The ultra tough and realistic novels of Chris Ryan are a must for youngsters seeking excitement and thrills. This “Alpha Force” novel is the start of a gripping new series. **Flash Flood**: London is in chaos and anarchy after the collapse of the Thames Barrier! A great page turner.

Alex Shearer, **Bootleg**: Great novel about chocolate being made illegal and the underground resistance movement that forms. Highly original.

Chris Wooding, **Storm Thief**: One of the best action fantasies I read this year. Fast paced, exciting and in a fantasy world so well crafted this has to be the first book in a fabulous series!

Relationships & Conflicts

Alyssa Brugman, **Walking Naked**: Highly original novel set in a secondary school where the girls who are ‘cool’ clash with a new girl with startling consequences.

Rachel Campbell-Johnston, **The Child’s Elephant**: Bat adopts a baby elephant after witnessing her mother’s death. The bond they form lasts a lifetime, even when Bat’s world is turned upside down.

Anita Desai, **The Village by the Sea**: When their family falls on hard times, thirteen-year-old Lila and her twelve-year-old brother, Hari, try desperately to keep their home intact--an almost impossible task until Hari gets a chance to go to Bombay.

Zana Fraillon, **The Bone Sparrow**: A story of unexpected friendship in the tough world of an internment camp in Australia.

Paul Gallico, **The Snow Goose**: The story of Philip, a lonely painter who lives in an old lighthouse, and Fritha, a young girl who brings him a large white bird, the snow goose

Rosa Guy, **The Friends**: Phyllisia eventually recognizes that her own selfish pride rather than her mother's death and her father's tyrannical behaviour created the gulf between her and her best friend.

Nigel Hinton, **Buddy**: Buddy has a hopeless father who is an aging rocker, interested only in Elvis and bikes, and living on the fringes of the under-world.

Lesley Howarth, **Carwash**: Enjoyable story, set in Cornwall, told over a long, hot and sticky teenage summer.

Eva Ibbotson, **Journey to the River Sea**: An orphaned school girl's journey to South America with her tough-as-old-boots nanny. Already very popular and destined to become a modern classic.

Beverley Naidoo, **Chain of Fire**: Set in South Africa at the height of the apartheid regime, when the government started a policy of ethnic cleansing, forcibly removing people from their homes and moving them to so-called 'homelands'.

Patrick Ness and Siobhan Dowd, **A Monster Calls**: The story of a young boy who is coping with the diagnosis of his mother's cancer. And yes, a monster does call.

Meg Rosoff, **How I Live Now**: Odd and dreamy novel set in the back-drop of a undisclosed war with an American teenage girl getting to know her family in England. Now regarded as a modern classic.

Alex Shearer, **The Crush**: An obsession with a Boy Band drives Ally to do almost anything to meet the love of her life.....

Jerry Spinelli, **Stargirl**: Brilliant and brave novel about a teenager daring to be different in an American high school. Highly recommended.

William Sutcliffe, **The Wall**: A boy loses his football in a plot of land that no one must enter, and no one ever leaves. He climbs over the boundary wall to search for it and finds a flattened house that was once "the home of people from the other side" and, beside it, the entrance to a dark tunnel. Crawling through the tunnel, he emerges into a wholly unfamiliar world.

Benjamin Zephaniah, **Face**: Realistic story of how a boy is disfigured in a car accident and has to start living a new life with his disfigurement.

Classics

Charles Dickens, **A Christmas Carol**: Read about Scrooge yourself; much better than any film you may have seen of it. **Oliver Twist**: About an orphan boy who runs away from a workhouse and meets a pickpocket on the streets of London

Penelope Farmer, **Charlotte Sometimes**: Dream-like novel where Charlotte, whilst sleeping, somehow slips back in time to 1919 and becomes Clare...

Elizabeth Goudge, **Little White Horse**: Haunting story of a unicorn appearing at Moonacre Valley.

Dodie Smith, **I Capture the Castle**: Great novel of first love, with an eccentric family of sisters living in a dilapidated castle.

Mark Twain, **Adventures of Tom Sawyer & Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**: Adventure, freedom and excitement are in abundance in these two novels set in the American Deep South during the great depression. Highly recommended.

J. Vance Marshall, **Walkabout**: In the Australian desert, two children, survivors of an air crash, make their journey across the harsh landscape, aided by an Aboriginal boy on “walkabout”.

HG Wells, **The Time Machine**: SF novel about time travel and the possible consequences. **War of the Worlds**: The Martians invade Earth. A groundbreaking science fiction novel.

Fantasy

Lloyd Alexander, **The Book of Three**: Fantasy adventure that has become a modern classic. Follow the adventures of Taran who embarks on a death-defying quest to defeat the evil Horned King.

Lynne Reid –Banks, **The Indian Trilogy**: When Omri's plastic Indian, put in an unusual cupboard overnight, comes to life, Omri has a new friend who can teach him about another culture and another time.

JM Barrie, **Peter Pan**: The adventures of the three Darling children in Neverland with Peter Pan, the boy who would not grow up.

Frank Beddor, **Looking Glass Wars**: Challenging novel which develops the characters from “Alice in Wonderland” creating a whole new fantasy adventure.

Eoin Colfer, **The Wish List**: Funny novel in which Lowrie has to complete four idiotic tasks to get into heaven. By the writer of the Artemis Fowl series.

Catherine Fisher, **Corbenic**: Arthurian myths and legends are skilfully woven into this moving story of a teenager struggling with family life.

Nancy Farmer, **Sea of Trolls**: A sweeping Viking novel with two young children being held captive by the evil half-troll king Ivar the Boneless.

CS Lewis, **Narnia** series: Perhaps the ultimate battle between Good and Evil? Classic tale of children trying to awaken an animal world from eternal winter.

Lewis Carroll, **Alice in Wonderland**; the classic tale of Alice when she fell down the rabbit hole.

Alan Gibbons, **Shadow of the Minotaur**: Computer game virtual reality becomes reality in this compulsive read. Highly recommended.

Brian Jacques, **Redwall**: Redwall Abbey is threatened by Cluny, the Scourge. Cluny is certain that Redwall will fall easily to his fearsome army, but he hasn't bargained for the courage and strength of the combined forces of the Redwall mice and their loyal woodland friends. Exciting fantasy adventure with a cast of lovable characters.

Chris Paolini, **Eragon & Eldest**: Wonderful quest first-novel by a 16 year old author whose main character begins his destiny is to be a Dragon Rider.

Philip Reeves, **Mortal Engines**: Superb fantasy novel where moving cities trawl the globe. Tom and Hester are thrown from their beloved “London” and try to get back on board. A highly original read.

Jonathan Stroud, **Amulet of Samarkend**: An unforgettable mix of history, fantasy and intrigue in one, the shortest 480 pages you'll ever read! Start of a new trilogy.

JRR Tolkien, **The Lord of the Rings Trilogy**: The story of Frodo Baggins, a hobbit who battles against the Dark Lord Sauron to save his world, Middle-earth, from the grip of evil.

Ghosts & Horror

Malorie Blackman, **Dead Gorgeous**: After moving to the countryside, Nova befriends a dead boy with too many problems of his own. The only problem for Nova is that the ghost is also very, very cute!

Neil Gaiman, **Coraline**: Stunning novel about a warped alternative universe hidden behind a door. Very weird and altogether creepy.

Susan Gates, **Dusk**: Fast paced SF horror novel about the dangers of genetic engineering and mutations.

Carol Hedges, **Red Velvet**: Nasty things begin to happen to Elly when she finds the skeleton of a dead girl wearing a red dress in an old house.

Cliff McNish, **Breathe: A ghost Story**: A true ghost story. The kind that says its cold fingers on you grips tight and doesn't let you go under the last pages have been turned. Wonderfully spine chilling.

Celia Rees, **Witch Child Sorceress**: Interesting read about the daughter of a woman accused of being a witch in 18th century England. Beautifully written and asks many intelligent questions and now followed by a great sequel.

Marcus Sedgwick, **My Swordhand is Singing**: Chilling vampire tale set in 17th Century Europe, inspired by the original Transylvanian Vampire folk tales. Scary stuff!

Catherine Storr, **The Mirror Image Ghost**: Now classic suspense horror novel. Wonderfully written with a timeless appeal.

Chris Wooding, **Haunting of Alaizabel Cray**: Great atmospheric crossover fantasy novel about two young wych-hunters seeking for a beast that lurks in the sewers of old London. Very exciting and an exceptional read.

Humour

Narinder Dhami, **Bindi Babes /Bollywood Babes**: Hilarious novel about 3 Anglo-Asian sisters who have great fun bossing their dad around until their tough, traditional aunty from India comes to stay.

Eva Ibbotson, **Dial A Ghost**: Funny story of hiring ghosts to scare people you don't like!

Pete Johnson, **Faking It**: Funny novel about a 15 year old who cons everyone into thinking he has a girlfriend and as a result his popularity soars. Written in an amusing diary format.

John Kirkbridge, **Thank you for your Application**: Quite exceptional novel about a would-be writer who works as a typist. Has truly hilarious consequences. Comedy of the highest order and really, really funny.

Terry Pratchett, **Johnny Maxwell** (Trilogy): A brilliant trilogy. Johnny has special powers which help him see the world in a slightly different way from other boys.

Catherine Robinson, **Tin Grin**: Mattie's mum remarries and she has to deal with the nightmare of getting along with her new, computer geek, step-brother.

Louis Sacher, **There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom**: Another highly entertaining (and funny) tale from the writer of Holes. Has much to identify with. **Dogs Don't Tell Jokes**: Funny novel about a boy who thinks he will be more popular if he enters the school talent show.

Mystery & Thrillers

Sherry Ashworth, **Dream Travellers**: Children are stalked in their dreams by a mysterious stranger who arrives in their sleepy town.

Terence Blacker, **Angel Factory**: Dark and delicious tale of what happens when a curious boy hacks into his father's computer. A really powerful read.

Agatha Christie, **Murder on the Orient Express**: Hercule Poirot solves a mysterious murder on the famous train, now stopped on the tracks by a giant snowdrift.

Eion Colfer, **Half Moon Investigations**: After completing a dodgy online course ten-year-old Fletch reckons he's a fully-fledged detective! Chaos follows in this great thriller.

F. Cottrell-Boyce, **Millions**: Imagine the scenario: Britain is about to join the Euro, you find 250K and have 10 days to spend it before it becomes obsolete.

Stephen Davies, **The Yellowcake Conspiracy**: When the Director of the Saharan uranium mine where he works is mysteriously murdered, fourteen year-old Haroun embarks on a dangerous new role as a spy in the service of the

French Government. A shocking conspiracy is unearthed - somebody is trafficking 'yellowcake', a key ingredient in the production of nuclear bombs.

Chris D'Lacey, **Horace**: Funny thriller in which a teenage finds a valuable teddy-bear in a skip. Suddenly, when rich, life becomes much more complicated.

Catherine Fisher, **Dark Henge**: Mystery. myth and magic! This intriguing novel combines sibling rivalry and Celtic mythology. Highly entertaining.

Mark Haddon, **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night**: A murder mystery novel like no other. The detective, and narrator, is Christopher Boone. Christopher is fifteen and has Asperger's Syndrome. He knows a very great deal about maths and very little about human beings.

Caroline Lawrence, **Roman Mysteries**: Multi book series about four amateur child detectives in Ancient Rome. Engaging and historically accurate.

Margaret Mahy, **The Haunting**: After a shy and rather withdrawn eight-year-old begins receiving frightening supernatural images and messages, he learns about a family legacy which could be considered a curse or a rare gift.

Valerie Mendes, **Girl in the Attic**: Accessible, spine-chilling ghost/mystery novel set in Cornwall after a family move from the big city.

Nicola Morgan, **FleshMarket**: Startling thriller set in the dark streets of 19th Century Edinburgh where the body-snatchers Burke and Hare Stalk the homeless street urchins.

Philip Pullman, **Butterfly Tattoo**: The agony of first love inspires this book, but tragedy and violence are soon to follow. For the mature reader. **Ruby in the Smoke**: Exceptional mystery yarn, about a girl trying to find out why her father was murdered. Has two sequels with the same characters, which are also excellent.

Alex Shearer, **The Stolen**: A nail-biting and supernatural tale of old people taking over the bodies of young people. A gripping mystery. **The Lost**: Tremendous thriller about the search for a boy who disappeared 2 years previously whilst cycling. As the book develops great clues are thrown in. But beware the many red-herrings!

G P Taylor, **Tersias**: Bewitching and exciting yarn of the hunt for a boy who has the power to see into the future in 19th Century England.

School Stories

Bernard Ashley, **A Kind of Wild Justice**: Ronnie Webster lives in the East End, in an area under the control of the notorious Bradshaw brothers. When his father is framed by the Bradshaws and sent to jail, and his mother goes off to live with one of the brothers, Ronnie finds himself on his own, struggling to keep out of trouble and looking for a way to clear his father's name.

Robert Cormier, **The Chocolate War**: Stunning and shocking novel about the power of gangs in school and how one small act of defiance starts a chain reaction in the school. Highly recommended for strong readers.

Gillian Cross, **Demon Headmaster**: Something is wrong at Dinah's new school. All the pupils act in exactly the same way. Wonderful blend of horror and suspense. Has excellent sequels.

Alan Gibbons, **Chicken**: Tough school story, focusing on bullying.

Roger Green, **Cuckoos**: Powerful novel about the power and cruelty of school bullying that starts with the “whisper”. Highly recommended.

Pete Johnson, **Runaway Teacher**: What happens when your teacher becomes a friend and not a teacher? Read this short novel to find out.

Gene Kemp, **Turbulent Term of Tyke Tyler**: Follow the adventures of Tyke Tyler at school and the chaos he causes at home!

Anthony McGowan, **The Knife That Killed Me**: There are friends, there are enemies, there are gangs you do belong to, gangs you don't, and as a late arrival at the school there is pressure on Paul to make a choice, and of course, there is the girl of his dreams.

R J Palacio, **Wonder**: August (Auggie) Pullman was born with a severe facial difference that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Wonder follows Auggie as he experiences more than the usual ups-and-downs of friendships, family and school.

Louis Sachar, **The Boy who Lost his Face**: Very weird novel about a bully seemingly cursed who then begins to see things from the point of view of the bullied. An interesting and challenging read. **Small Steps**: Funny loose sequel to Holes with a couple of the minor characters taking centre stage in an amusing get rich scheme that goes wrong.

Science Fiction & Unexplained

Malorie Blackman, **Pig Heart Boy**: Your heart transplant is with a pig! Find out what difference it makes in this gripping read. **Dangerous Dare** Yet another stunning novel from Blackman. Suspense, thrills and scares abound in this entertaining read.

John Christopher, **Tripods** (series): Classic series in which giant robots take over the Earth.

Sally Gardner, **Maggot Moon**: The story of a dyslexic schoolboy, Standish Treadwell, who lives in an alternative 1950s Britain ruled by a ruthless regime. As his family and friends disappear around him, Standish finds himself involved in a plot to win the race to the moon.

Rhiannon Lassiter, **Hex Trilogy**: Totally believable SF set in the far future about mutant genes that can be passed through computers into people.

Michael Lawrence, **The Aldous Lexicon**: Imaginative SF yarn with complex alternative realities which cross over into our own world

Nicola Morgan, **Sleepwalking**: Hypnotic and challenging novel about a people dominated by by a huge psychic presence which controls their minds.

Marcus Sedgwick, **Floodland**: Gripping story of global warming and the pockets of survivors who live in the “High Lands” near Norwich.

Robert Swindells, **Time Snatch**: Superb time travel novel by Swindells. Very exciting.

John Wyndham, **The Day of the Triffids**: A classic science-fiction tale, in which humanity is threatened by giant plants.

Sport

Kwame Alexander, **The Crossover**: Josh and Jordan are twins, champion basketball players, and best friends. But when Jordan meets a girl, their bond is tested. **Booked**: Twelve-year-old Nick is a star on the football pitch, but at home he's stuck with his linguistic professor father's "dictionary" that he has to read every day, and he hates it... until his prowess with words starts to win over the girl of his dreams.

Neil Arksey, **Playing on the Edge**: Great futuristic thriller where football has achieved global domination. A wonderful idea! **MacB** The captain of the football team has an accident. Or is it? Entertainingly dark sporting mystery with a hint of Macbeth!

Theresa Breslin, **Divided City**: Tough Scottish novel which tackles the religious divide in Glasgow through a look at football.

Martin Waddell, **Shooting Star**: Interesting novel written by the man who spotted a future soccer star.

War

Michael Cronin, **Against the Day Through the Night**: Uncannily believable accounts of what might have happened if Germany had successfully invaded the UK during World War 2. Highly recommended.

Anne Frank, **The Diary of Anne Frank**: Stunning story of bravery during the Second World War. Essential reading.

Anne Holm, **I am David**: A 12-year-old, escapes from a Communist concentration camp with little more than a compass...

Judith Kerr, **When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit**: Partly autobiographical, this is first of the internationally acclaimed trilogy by Judith Kerr telling the unforgettable story of a Jewish family fleeing from Germany at the start of the Second World War.

Lois Lowry, **Number the Stars**: In Nazi-occupied Denmark, ten-year-old Annemarie Johansen is called upon for a selfless act of bravery to help save her best friend from a terrible fate. A beautifully written and poignant WWII adventure.

Michael Morpurgo, **War Horse**: Thought provoking novel of the life of a horse and his thoughts during his numerous battles under different masters. **Private Peaceful**: Set in the fields of Devon and the WW1 battlefields of Flanders, two brothers fall for the same girl while contending with the pressures of their feudal family life, the war, and the price of courage and cowardice. **When the Whales Came**: This WW1 story follows the unlikely friendship of a pair of children and an eccentric, lonely old man living on the far shore of their island. He tells them terrible secrets about the island's narwhales then all three strive to save the creatures.

Tom Palmer, **Armistice Runner**: A girl finds her great-great-grandfather's diaries about his experiences during World War I.

Mal Peet, **Tamar**: Winner of the 2006 Carnegie Medal. Complex mix of timetravel, World War 2 and love across time

Ian Serraillier, **The Silver Sword**: It's difficult to imagine the whole of Europe as a heaving mass of people on the move, some with urgent, fixed purpose, some with no idea at all of what to do next...A classic