

School Library Service

Group Readers – KS3/4

ALMOND David

Clay

A compelling spiritual experience for mature teen readers. Davie gets into moral and spiritual trouble when the new boy in town starts bringing clay figures to life. This book was shortlisted for the Carnegie medal and deals with bullying and religion.

ALMOND, David

Kit's wilderness

Kit moves back to his family home in an old mining town. Though the coal mine has long been closed, it holds an understandable fascination for the town's children. Every so often, a small bunch of adolescents, led by misfit Alex, troop down into the pit. There in candlelight, with knives and illicit cigarettes, they play the game of Death. Evocative and haunting writing.

ALMOND David

Heaven eyes

Erin and her friends January and Mouse run away from the children's home and travel down the river where they are found by Heaven eyes, an almost mystical figure, and her grandfather. A novel where the storytelling takes precedence over the plot.

ANDERSON Laurie Halse

Chains

Isabel and her sister, Ruth, are slaves. Sold from one owner to the next, they arrive in New York as the Americans are fighting for their independence. Shortlisted for the Carnegie medal.

ASHLEY Bernard

Tiger without teeth

The local bully is after Davey's new bike. When Davey's much loved grandfather dies, he discovers that he was a "frightener" for a South London gang. Angry and confused, Davey gets in a fight at the end of the book and finally beats the local bully.

BLACKMAN Malorie

Tell me no lies

Gemma and Mike have both been badly damaged by their pasts. Gemma collects pictures of mothers, like the one she will never see again.. When they first meet Gemma is sure she has seen Mike's face somewhere before and she sets out to discover more, with dramatic consequences.

BOOTH Martin

POW

Ted Foley, the ship's boy, is captured by the Germans after his destroyer HMS Nomad is sunk in the great naval Battle of Jutland in WWI. As Ted watches men die in the POW camp during the freezing winter, he starts planning his escape. What follows is a daring adventure story.

BOWLER Tim

River boy

Emotional, slightly mystical story that really draws the reader in. The book won the Carnegie medal and deals with death, families and grandparents. A good thought- provoking read.

BRACHMACHARI Sita Artichoke hearts

Mira's creative writing class becomes her diary and invites the reader into her private world of friends and family. Her beloved Nana dies but her grief is background to her growing love for Jide. Family life and loves is explored through the focus of bereavement.

BRESLIN Theresa Whispers in the graveyard

Solomon is a very angry young man; his mother has left him and he feels let down by his father and teachers as he struggles with dyslexia. His refuge is the graveyard but when the rowan tree is felled in a storm a malevolent force is unleashed. Winner of the Carnegie medal.

BROOKS Kevin Martyn Pig

Martyn has no great affection for his drunken, abusive father but he certainly doesn't mean to kill him. Left alone in the house he ends up in a tangled subterfuge to keep the body hidden until he and his friend Alex can dispose of it. Part mystery story and part black comedy. Shortlisted for the Carnegie medal.

BROOKS Kevin The road of the dead

When Ruben and Cole discover that their sister has been found strangled on Dartmoor they set off from their London home to investigate. A dark, menacing crime story more suitable for mature KS4 readers.

BURGESS Melvin The ghost behind the wall

David encounters a vindictive ghost in the air ducts of his flats and is accused of the vandalism it causes to an old man's flat. In reality the old man is suffering from dementia and the "ghost" is the spirit of the old man as a child. An unusual exploration of a difficult subject which was shortlisted for the Carnegie medal.

CHAMBERS Aidan Postcards from no man's land

Two interwoven stories - and a life that spans the generations, linking Jacob Todd, embattled soldier, and, over fifty years later, his seventeen year old grandson, Jacob, who is visiting Amsterdam for the commemoration of the Battle of Arnhem. A central theme to the book is the nature of love and relationships and what is acceptable. Winner of the Carnegie medal and a book for mature KS4 readers.

CHOLDENKO Jennifer Al Capone does my shirts

Moose moves with his family to Alcatraz island. He has left all his friends behind and has a new school to get used to and must make new friends. His mother is kept busy looking after his sister who has a form of autism. that she has no time to listen to his concerns. Moose and his friends come up with a cunning plan to make money from their convict neighbours but all doesn't go according to plan! Shortlisted for the Carnegie medal. Humorous at times but a poignant read.

COLFER Eoin Airman

In one dark night on the island of Great Saltee, a cruel and cunning betrayal destroyed Conor's life and stole his future. Now Conor must win the race for flight, to save his family and to right a terrible wrong. This is a fabulous fantasy adventure story that maintains its pace throughout the 400+ pages.

CROSS Gillian Tightrope

The wall was just waiting for someone to get up there and tag it. Twenty feet up in the air, with nothing to stop you if you fell. Ashley knew she could do the wall but she didn't know that someone would be watching her, stalking her.....Ashley becomes involved with a local

to ensure their child has this one chance in life. Otis Gardner trades on the misery of others and falsely takes their money as he travels the country pretending to be a Coram man. But what does he do with the babies? This emotionally charged read won the Whitbread Children's fiction prize in 2000.

GIBBONS Alan **The edge**

A taut, tense, compelling thriller which grips from page 1. Excellent! Dealing with the themes of racism and families. A boy and his mother try to escape from her violent boyfriend but in doing so encounter racial hatred and family resentments. More suitable for mature KS4 readers.

GLASS Linzi **Ruby Red**

A well written and evocative novel which should promote discussion. A girl lives in Johannesburg and witnesses the difference between the blacks and the whites. This is a love story which involves racism in families.

GRANT Helen **The vanishing of Katharina Linden**

Pia is the last person to see her Katharina Linden alive on the day she disappears. How could a ten-year-old girl vanish in a place where everybody knows everybody else? Pia is determined to find out what happened to Katharina. But then the next girl disappears... A dark, brooding novel in the tradition of Grimm's fairy tales.

GRINDLEY Sally **Spilled water**

Lu Si-Yan is sold into slavery when her father dies and her mother is too ill to work. A harsh tale of Chinese society at a time when girls were considered worthless and only one child was allowed per family. The cruelty of her uncle and the Chen family cannot break Lu Si-Yan's spirit and her courage is extraordinary under the circumstances.

HEDGES Carol **Red velvet**

Elly is staying with her mother in her Aunt's old house when she discovers its dark history. The skeleton of a young girl, dead for hundreds of years, was found in an old chest in a bedroom. Elly is determined to discover the secrets surrounding her death.

HEDGES Carol **Jigsaw**

Annie has always been an outsider in her English school. Uprooted from her home in Norway when her parents split up, she has never felt accepted by her peers. When her chief tormentor, Grant Penney, commits suicide Annie feels compelled to find out what drove such an outwardly confident person to this. A tense coming of age crime thriller.

HEDGES Carol **Bright angel**

The official story is that Bryn's father died in an accident at work but Bryn knows it isn't true. He knows someone wanted his father dead and he's determined to find out why. But it's not easy battling against Globecorp; after all they do control everything! An exciting science fiction thriller.

HIASSEN, Carl **Scat**

An environmental mystery set in America that is very entertaining. Mrs Starch, Nick's biology teacher, disappears during a field trip to Black Vine Swamp. Lessons are learned by Nick and his classmates and Mrs Starch proves to have a heart despite her scary appearance and strictness.

HOLM Ian

I am David

David escapes from a concentration camp and flees across Europe in an attempt to find a safe haven. Utterly alone he has to decide who he can trust. This story has become a modern classic.

HOROWITZ Anthony

The French confection

When the hard-up Diamond Brothers, Tim and Nick, win a weekend for two in Paris, it looks as if their luck is taking a turn for the better. But looks can be deceptive; no sooner have they arrived in the capital than the brothers are up to their necks in danger. A short, humorous crime caper.

KEANEY Brian

Jacob's ladder

A story which recounts the experience of a teenager who appears to have lost his memory, but is in fact dead. An absorbing adventure/mystery story which also reflects on death.

KENNEN Ally

The beast

In the depths of a reservoir lives a monstrous creature. Its existence is unknown to anyone except the teenage boy who feeds it. Six years ago it was a vicious little baby, now it has grown huge, and its rusting cage can't hold it much longer... A fast-paced action story.

KING-SMITH Dick

Crowstarver

From the moment he's left as a foundling in a lambing-pen on Outoverdown Farm during the 1930/40s, Spider Sparrow is surrounded by animals. Adopted by the kindly shepherd and his wife, Spider's learning disabilities don't stop him becoming an integral part of farm life and his magical rapport with all animals is Spider's unique gift. This is a gentle, poignant story for reflective, younger readers.

LAIRD Elizabeth

The garbage king

A heartfelt and eye-opening story of homelessness set in Ethiopia. It follows two runaways, from different backgrounds, as they struggle to survive on the streets of Addis Ababa.

LAIRD Elizabeth

The prince who walked with lions

Alamayu, an Abyssinian prince, tells us his story from his sickbed at Rugby School in flashbacks. When the British kill his father as part of the colonial expansion, Alamayu becomes a prisoner of the British. He is taken away from the people who rescue him and sent to a public school, where he stands out as a prince without a kingdom. Based on fact, this historical and multicultural story gives us unforgettable insight into Alamayu's life. The lions become a metaphor for courage and links with his past.

LANDMAN Tanya

Apache

A moving historical tale of a North American Apache Indian girl who seeks revenge for the murder of her family members. In order to do this she becomes an Apache warrior, traditionally exclusive to males in the tribe. A very compelling story.

McCAUGHREAN Geraldine **The kite rider**

A well written tale set in ancient China. A young boy joins the circus and becomes a bird boy, flying high in the sky on his own kite. He knew his father's spirit lived among the clouds. He had seen him go up there with a soul and come down again without one. An unusual setting but packed with action and adventure. .A Carnegie medal winner.

McCAUGHREAN Geraldine **The white darkness**

A thriller set in Antarctica.. Sym struggles to survive in Antarctica where she has been taken by her mad uncle, and is helped by her imaginary friend, Titus Oates. In such isolation, whom do you trust – the living or the dead? Upper KS3/4.

McCAUGHREAN Geraldine Forever X

It's not the greatest start to a summer holiday. The car breaks down, miles from anywhere, and suddenly Joy and her family are stuck in the first bed-and-breakfast they can find. It is called Forever Xmas, where they celebrate Christmas every day of the year, complete with Christmas dinner, Santa Claus and presents. Slightly surreal story with touches of humour throughout.

MacPHAIL Catherine Wheels

James is convinced he has seen the man who killed his father, the man who caused the crash and who put James into a wheelchair. Everyone says he's wrong, that the teenage driver was killed, but James won't listen. Only Kirsty believes him, but she has her own reasons for joining in the hunt for a dead man. A cracking short thriller.

MARK Jan Heathrow nights

Russell and his friends are banned from a school trip and instead spend the week at Heathrow airport. For Russell it provides a lot of time for him to reconsider his life. The story covers the themes of adolescence and families.

MARK Jan Turbulence

Clay's seen a lot of Westerns with Dad and lots of zombie films with Gran. A normal family, or so it seems, if you don't count her little sister. Then Mum invites the Stranger to dinner and life becomes like a soap...And you know the trouble with soaps - almost anything can happen! Some excellent one-liners and running jokes. Shortlisted for the Carnegie medal.

MATTHEWS Andrew The shadow garden

Matty's sixth sense tells her that Tagram House is harbouring a dark secret. The master, Dr Hobbes, seems charming on the surface but underneath Matty detects a glint of razor-sharp steel. Her fears lead Matty to the eerie Shadow Garden and she eventually discovers what's buried there. Now she must untangle the mystery before disaster engulfs everyone.

MULLIGAN Andy Trash

This is a fast-paced mystery/ adventure story but grounded in the harsh reality of the life of the poor. There is danger and tension which builds throughout the book. Trash itself becomes a metaphor for how the people of Behala are perceived and treated. The feel-good factor lies in the basic honesty of the boys, the friendship they form and the helping hands they encounter. There is fantasy in the lucky breaks and the way the plot resolves, so that it is ultimately an entertaining and lively read.

NAIDOO Beverley The other side of truth

The children of an outspoken Nigerian journalist, Sade and her younger brother Femi witness their mother's shooting. Plans are hastily made for them to travel to England but when they arrive in London things quickly start to unravel and the children's safety is far from assured. A compelling and thought-provoking read which won the Carnegie medal.

NESS Patrick A monster calls

An unforgettable story of a boy coming to terms with the death of his mother, with the help of a supernatural monster who mysteriously leaves traces of his existence and who gradually takes possession of Conor and guides him to a resolution. The plot was written by Siobhan Dowd but the story is all Patrick Ness's own. Winner of Carnegie and Greenaway awards 2012.

ORME David Plague

Some excellent gothic touches to this gripping tale. An historical story, set in London, is about an apothecary's assistant's experiences of the Great Plague in 1665.

PEET MAL

Keeper

Even if you are not a fan of football, this supernatural story is engrossing and fascinating in the psychology of the goalkeeper hero. It also addresses the issues of deforestation and how to cope with sudden media fame.

PEET Mal

Tamar

A story of love, jealousy and tragedy set in World War 2. A girl discovers her family's wartime history as resistance fighters in Nazi occupied Holland. A breathtakingly powerful novel by an award-winning author. Winner of the Carnegie medal.

PERERA Anna

The glass collector

A good value multi layered story with the popular theme of families living by sorting trash but set in Africa. Descriptions of the sight and smell of the rubbish are particularly effective. Aaron, the hero, has a special talent for collecting glass which gets leads him into adventure, romance and trouble. It is easy to get deeply involved in his world

PITCHER Annabel

my sister lives on the mantelpiece

Family life disintegrates when Rose, a twin, dies. This story has a humorous take on a tragic situation and encompasses many issues including alcoholism and racism. Jamie finds it hard to come to terms with his parents splitting up and desperately seeks to reunite his family. It is as much Jasmine's story as his.

POWLING Chris

Blade

Rich is warned to stay away from Toxon, the school bully and his "little friend" the blade. But his best mate Lee decides to challenge Toxon at his own, dangerous game. Many serious issues to discuss in this Barrington Stoke play designed for pupils with a reading age of 8.

PRATCHETT Terry

The amazing Maurice and his educated rodents

Maurice, an amazing cat who has survived on the toughest streets in the whole of the Discworld, reckons that rats are dumb. Then he finds that there is a new kind of rat around, rats who have been eating wizards' rubbish and can now talk. With the help of a stupid looking kid, Maurice has a brilliant idea. Everyone knows the story of the Pied Piper and Maurice reckons he's onto a winner. Full of word play and puns, this novel won the Carnegie medal.

PRICE Susan

The Sterkarm handshake

The Sterkarms have plundered the borders of England and Scotland for generations. Now in the 16th century, their way of life looks threatened, for intruders have come, calling themselves "Elves", bringing sweet gifts and honeyed promises. But the Elves come from a polluted 21st century future. To them the 16th century looks like a paradise, ripe for the taking, full of opportunities waiting to be exploited. The only problem is the Sterkarms themselves. A complex, multi-layered novel for mature KS4 readers. Winner of the Guardian Children's fiction prize.

REEVE Philip

Fever Crumb

A prequel to Mortal Engines, this grand adventure is set in historical London. Fever Crumb is an intelligent and inquisitive orphan, who discovers herself. A complex and fascinating literary fantasy.

REEVE Philip

Here lies Arthur

A reworking of the legend of King Arthur from the viewpoint of Myrddin's servant and companion. This historical adventure story is a very entertaining read and was shortlisted for the Carnegie medal.

REEVE Philip

Mortal engines

A fantasy adventure in which cities roam the countryside demolishing smaller towns and looking for relics and technology of the Ancients. An appealing science fiction story with an original theme. The first title in a series.

ROSOF Meg

The Bride's Farewell

This historical novel is a sort of pilgrimage where a kaleidoscope of characters are encountered along the way but, like Chaucer's pilgrims, all are not what they seem. A vastly entertaining story though perhaps not one for the boys.

ROSOF Meg

Just in case

Fifteen year old David Case changes his life to try to beat his perceived fate. What would you do if you thought fate was out to get you? A mystery story with a good dose of humour.

SEDGWICK Marcus

My swordhand is singing

A gripping page turner full of intrigue and mystery. An historical novel inspired by the vampire folklore of Eastern Europe. Winner of the Teenage Book Prize and shortlisted for Carnegie medal.

SEPETYS Ruta

between shades of gray

Learn what it is like to be captured and transported across Russia to Siberia to a labour camp, from a survivor. The qualities of people shine out brightly against the greyness of Lina's life and romance begins for her. Above all, it is a story of hope and promise for a better future.

STEINBECK John

Of mice and men

George and his large, simple-minded friend Lennie are drifters. Finding work on a ranch in California's Salinas Valley, they hope to stay long enough to get some money together. But kind-hearted, childlike Lennie is prone to getting into trouble; unable to control either his emotions or his enormous strength, he is a target for the casual cruelty of others.

WALLACE Jason

Out of shadows

Robert Jacklin, is enrolled in a Zimbabwean boarding school just after the war for independence. Robert Mugabe has come to power offering hope, land and freedom to black Africans. The school is still predominately white with a few token black pupils but the racial tension is bubbling beneath the surface. Winner of the Branford Boase Award and Costa Children's Book of the year and on Carnegie shortlist. Strong language is used throughout and some racist language which reflects the period in which the story is based. KS4

WILSON Jacqueline

The dare game

Sequel to Tracy Beaker. Tracy is now 12 years old. When life with her foster mum doesn't turn out as she planned, she bunks off school and starts to hang out with a couple of slightly older boys at a derelict house. Needless to say they get themselves into all sorts of bother!

WILSON Jacqueline

The illustrated mum

Covered from head to foot with glorious tattoos, Marigold is the brightest, most beautiful mother in the world. That's what Dolphin thinks, but her older sister Star, isn't so sure any more. She loves Marigold too, but sometimes she just wishes she was more normal...

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