

Lower KS3 Recommended Reading

September 2020

The following offers some suggestions for reading for girls in Years 7 and 8.

They are all good examples of the best books currently available, both old and new (excluding standard classic titles which the girls should be reading additionally). All are available from the School Library and can be reserved via an email to the Librarian.

Happy Reading! From the Library and the English department

Jacqueline Wilson

Dancing the Charleston

Aunty has always looked after Mona. They live in a little cottage on the edge of the Somerset estate near the village graveyard where Mona's mum lies and where Mona often goes to talk to her. When Lady Somerset dies and a new member of the Somerset family inherits the house, things change for Mona who has never really fitted in anywhere. The new Bohemian atmosphere at the house offers opportunities for her to shine and find new friends. Dances and trips to London are wonderful new experiences - but they bring revelations and Mona discovers there are secrets in her past she can't dance away from.

Anna Wilson

Summer's Shadow

When Summer's mother dies Summer's unknown uncle Tristan becomes her legal guardian and Summer is forced to leave London. She moves to Tristan's creepy, old house in Cornwall where she is met with indifference and open hostility from her new family. And the house may be haunted. Scared and lonely, Summer begins to spend more and more time in a beautiful sheltered cove. But she's not alone. A local boy frequents it too. Things are about to change again. Will Summer find both first love and the answers to the mysteries of her new home?

Holly Goldberg-Sloan

To Night Owl from Dogfish

Avery (Night Owl) is bookish, intense, and is afraid of many things. Bett (Dogfish) is fearless, outgoing, and lives in the moment. What they have in common is that they are both twelve years old, and their dads are dating each other. Set in America where it is the norm to attend a summer camp the story develops when Bett and Avery are sent, against their will, to the same camp. Their dads hope that they will become friends - and possibly, one day, even sisters. Against all odds, the girls soon can't imagine a life without each other. But when the worst happens, and their dads break up, Avery and Bett must figure out a way to get them to fall in love again.

Jennifer Bell

The Crooked Sixpence (this isn't Harry Potter and some might find it confusing to start but you'll get drawn in. It's the first of a series)

When Ivy's grandmother Sylvie is rushed to hospital, Ivy and her brother Seb return to Sylvie's house, to find that it's been ransacked by unknown intruders. That's bad but not so unnerving as the appearance of a mysterious feather that scratches an ominous message onto the kitchen wall. There's also a very strange policeman who is determined to apprehend them... with a toilet brush. Ivy and Seb make their escape - only to find themselves in a very different world. Mysterious forces of evil are closing in. Ivy and Seb must act quickly to get to the bottom of a family secret...

Linda Newbery*The Key to Flambards*

Fourteen-year-old Grace Russell spends the summer at Flambards, her mother's ancestral home, recovering from a devastating accident. Becoming increasingly curious about the house and its past, she gets to know two local boys - Jamie, friendly and obsessed with wildlife, and the deeply troubled Marcus, who is struggling to deal with his difficult father. In this beautiful but threatened landscape, Grace unearths her own extraordinary links to the house and people.

Jaclyn Dolamore*Magic Under Glass*

Nimira is picked out of her poor life as a music hall performer by the wealthy and mysterious Hollin Parry who asks her to sing for his automaton piano player. Parry is a sorcerer, who lives in a sprawling house full of locked spaces and secrets. How Nirima falls in love with the fairy locked inside the automaton and sets about releasing him is a story rich in gothic detail. It becomes a tale of love set against a dreadful race against time to save the entire fairy realm, which is in mortal peril.

Laura Remington*The Polka Dot Shop*

When Andy's school announces a new no-uniform policy, her classmates are over the moon - but her heart sinks. All she wants is to dress like everyone else, but her mum's the owner of a run-down vintage boutique, so she's bound to look - well - different. But when Andy finds a gorgeous bag full of designer goodies in the shop's storeroom, everything changes. Can she learn to love vintage, and help transform her mum's shop into something truly special?

Lucy Jago*Montacute House*

Cess works caring for the chickens at Montacute House. On her thirteenth birthday she finds a locket hidden in the chicken coop and is convinced someone has placed it there for her to find. But the day is overshadowed by fear when a boy's body is found and Cess is accused of bewitching her best friend William who has disappeared. Cess is determined to find William but is soon embroiled in a plot that threatens her world and forces Cess to draw on powers she never knew she possessed. Powers that will place her life in danger.

Lisa Williamson

Paper Avalanche (for more mature readers)

Ro Snow is the girl no-one notices - and that is exactly how she'd like things to stay. She doesn't have close friends, she doesn't go to parties and she certainly doesn't chase boys. All because Ro has a secret she can't let anyone discover - her mum is a hoarder. Then Tanvi Shah, a girl who almost died, comes tumbling back into her life, and Ro finds herself losing control of her carefully constructed lies. But if Ro's walls come crumbling down, who's going to take care of her mum?

Louis Sachar

Holes (this is becoming a modern classic, read by many, but not all...)

Stanley's family has a history of bad luck going back generations, so he is not too surprised when a miscarriage of justice sends him to Camp Green Lake Juvenile Detention Centre. Nor is he surprised when he's told that his daily labour at the camp is to dig a hole, five feet wide by five feet deep, and report anything that he finds in that hole. The evil warden claims that it's character building. This is a lie but you must read the book to find out how Stanley survives and what the Warden's motive really is.

Sarah Singleton

The Poison Garden

It is the 1850's, and a young boy, Thomas, leaves his family to be apprenticed to a pharmacist, at the behest of his dead grandmother. He also inherits a magical box which provides him entry into a mysterious garden. While visiting it, he sees a ghostly vision of his grandmother, who tells him she was poisoned, and warns him that he must find the person responsible. She was a member of a guild, each of whom cultivated an individual garden, mastering the art of poison, perfume and medicine. The guild members jostle for power as, one by one, they are murdered...can Thomas solve the mystery, before he in turn is threatened?

Shannon Hale

The Book of a Thousand Days

When a beautiful princess refuses to marry the prince her father has chosen, her father is furious and locks her in a tower with her maid Dashti. But the princess is petulant and spoilt and eats the food in their meagre store as if she were still at court. Dashti soon realises they must either escape or eventually starve. Dashti also discovers, during the course of seven long years, that there is something far more sinister behind her princess's fears of marrying the prince. The choice is stark - face danger beyond the walls of the tower or starve within them...