

THE HIGHGATE

CONTEMPORARY
Twenty One

The HiGH-Great read
novels chosen by and for Highgate pupils
from recent fiction

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Foreword

Reading is at the heart of the School's culture and we are keen to nurture a passion for books that will last a lifetime.

As part of this, the English Department has put together a list of five books for each year group from which we hope pupils will select at least three titles: we believe these are amongst the most rewarding, challenging and appropriate texts for their ages.

If pupils do read at least three of these books each year, it will allow them to leave school having delved into a minimum of 21 of the finest and most enriching examples of contemporary writing.

Alongside these texts, we would also encourage pupils to read more widely from the best of current young adult fiction recommended by our Librarians. From the outset we hope to convince pupils that reading for pleasure can take a very wide variety of forms

Rebecca Hyam

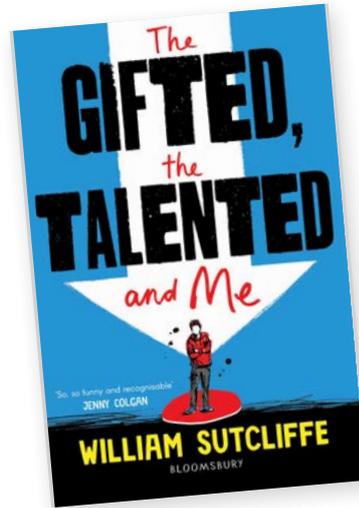
The Highgate English Department

Until I feared I would lose it,
I never loved to read.
One does not love breathing.

Harper Lee

WARNING!

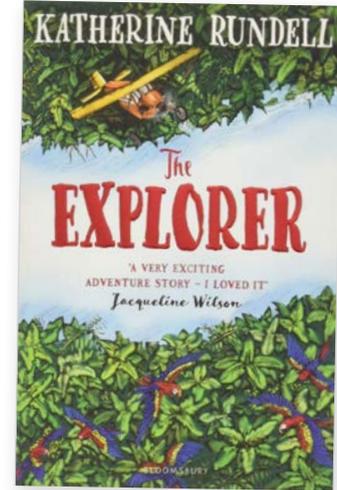
Some of these novels explore potentially disturbing issues and some contain more adult themes and language. **Readers must ensure that their parents and carers are comfortable with these choices of books.**



The Gifted, the Talented and Me

William Sutcliffe

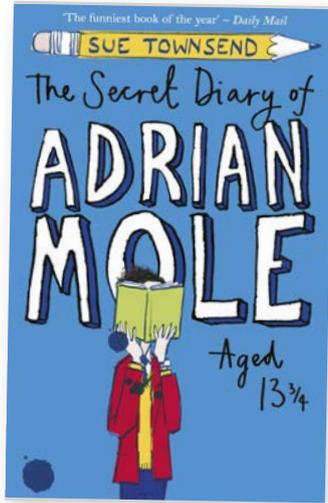
Comic satire in which an ordinary boy from Stevenage moves to a pretentious school in Hampstead. Sunday Times children's book of 2019.



The Explorer

Katherine Rundell

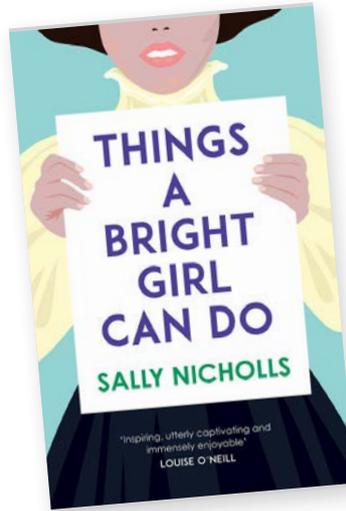
A group of children surviving in the Amazon after their plane crashes.



The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole

Sue Townsend

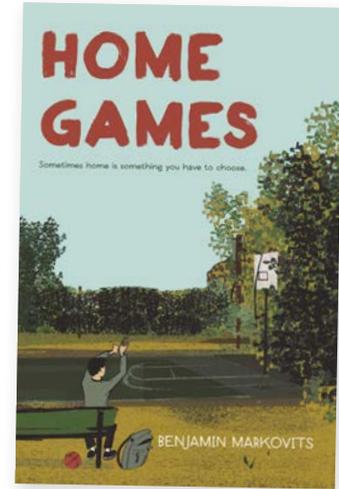
A comic account of the daily life of a 13-year-old school-boy.



Things a Bright Girl Can Do

Sally Nicholls

Historical fiction in which three girls play their part in the Suffragette movement.

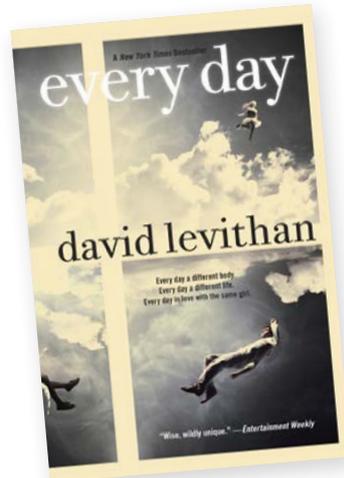


Home Games

Ben Markovits

A shy 12-year-old boy navigating the divorce of his parents and also the basketball team at his new school.

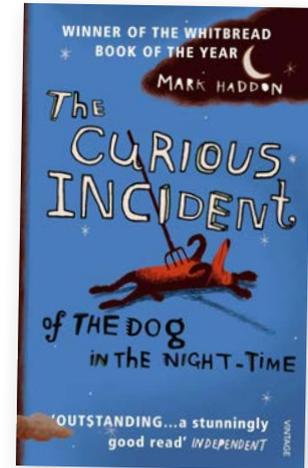
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Every Day

David Levithan

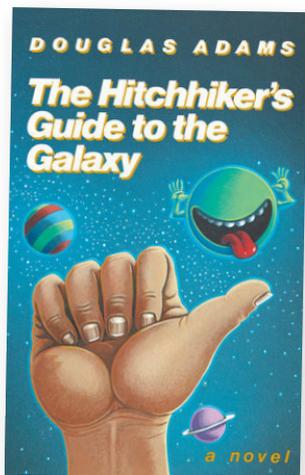
A love story in which a teenager wakes up to a different body and living a different life each day.



The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night

Mark Haddon

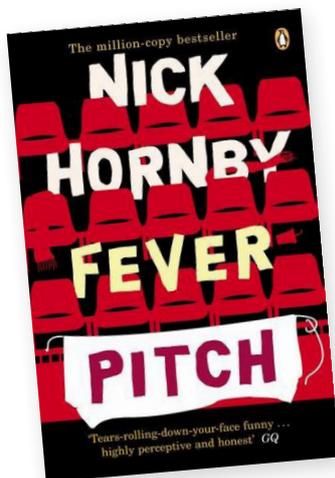
A murder mystery novel navigated by an autistic 15-year-old.



The Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy

Douglas Adams

Comedy science fiction.



Fever Pitch

Nick Hornby

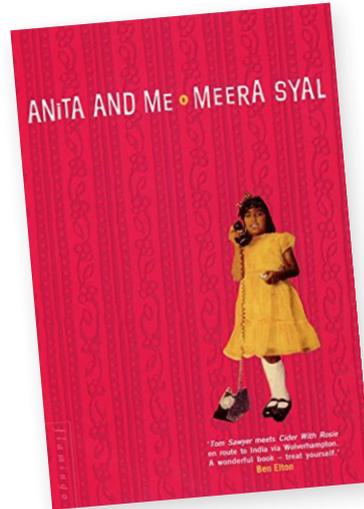
A comic memoir that captures the agony and ecstasy of football fandom.



The Hate U Give

Angie Thomas

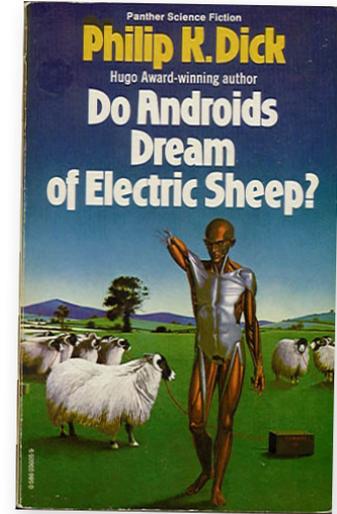
Exploring the life of a black teenager in America caught between a poor suburb and a rich school, who witnesses the fatal shooting of her unarmed best friend by police.



Anita and Me

Meera Syal

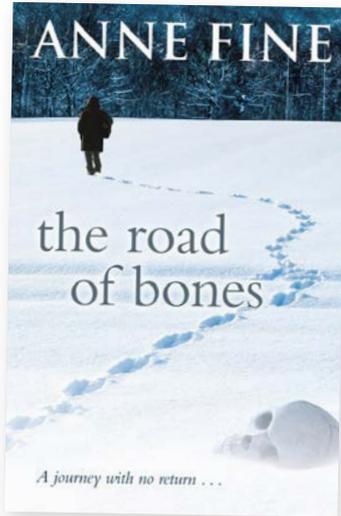
A rites of passage story about growing up as the only Punjabi family in the Midlands. Funny and poignant.



Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?

Philip K Dick

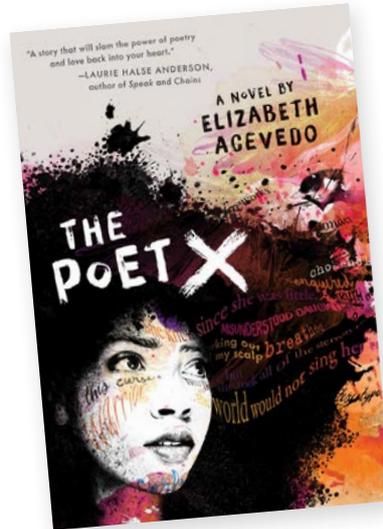
Ground-breaking sci-fi short stories, harvested by Hollywood.



The Road of Bones

Anne Fine

Post-revolutionary world set in a terrifying totalitarian Motherland, where five heads of state are being whittled down to one.



The Poet X

Elizabeth Acevedo

A 15-year-old girl working through adolescent tension by writing poetry.

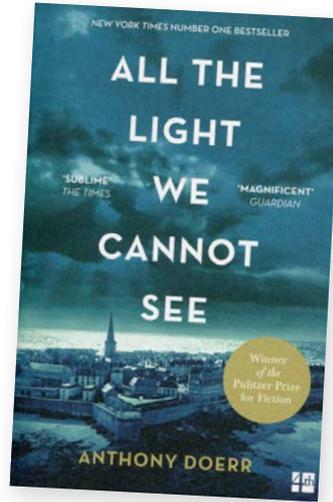


One

Sarah Crossan

Social commentary at its most original, telling the story of conjoined twins.

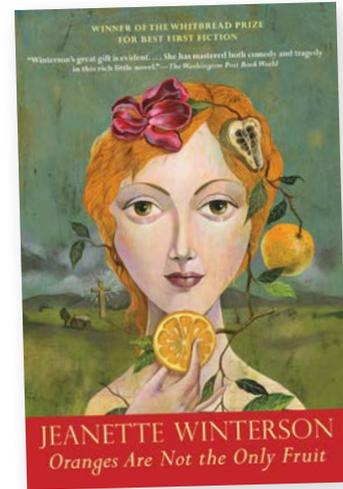
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All the Light We Cannot See

Anthony Doerr

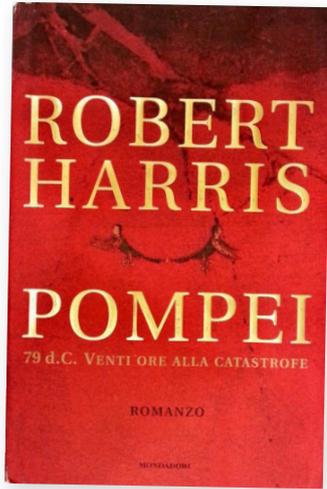
Powerful Pulitzer-prize winning historical drama that tells the story of two teenagers in the Second World War.



Orange are Not the Only Fruit

Jeanette Winterson

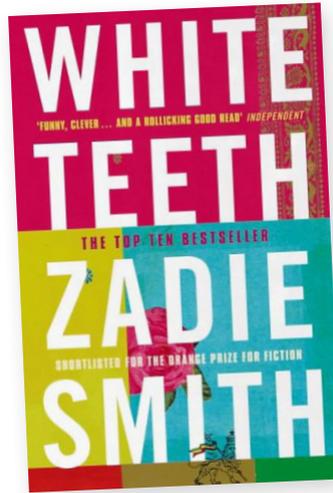
A coming-of age story, about identity and sexuality, set in a closed Pentecostal community.



Pompei

Robert Harris

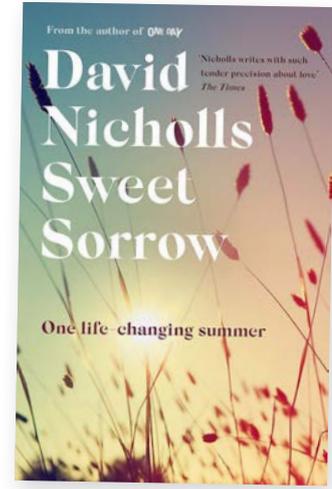
A thriller set around the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.



White Teeth

Zadie Smith

Family dramas set around race, gender and love.

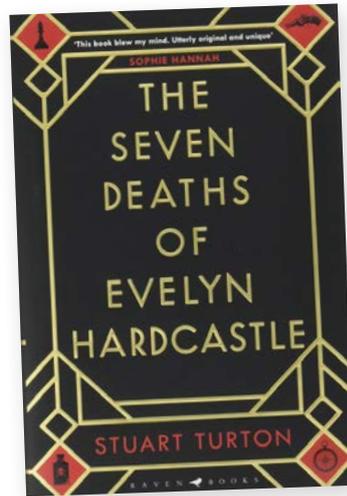


Sweet Sorrow

David Nicholls

An unsentimental story of first love: humorous and poignant.

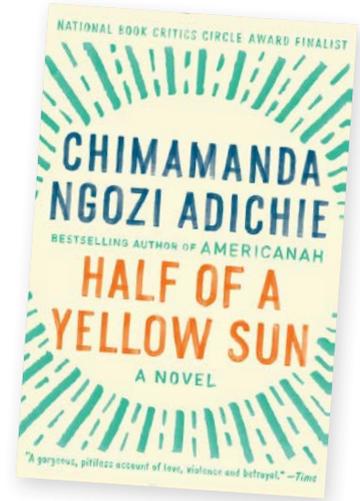
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The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle

Stuart Turton

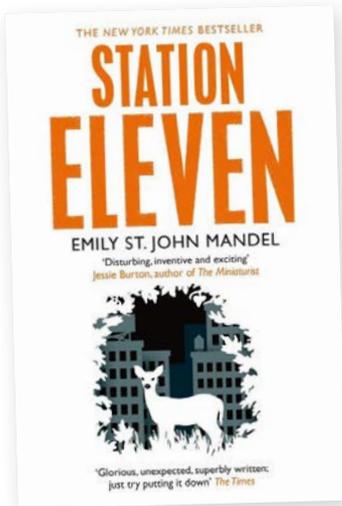
A narrator with amnesia who keeps waking up on the same day in another man's body.



Half of Yellow Sun

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

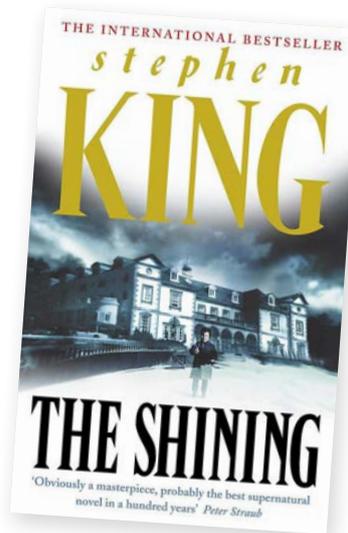
Re-telling of the Nigerian civil war through the perspective of two sisters.



Station Eleven

Emily St John Mandel

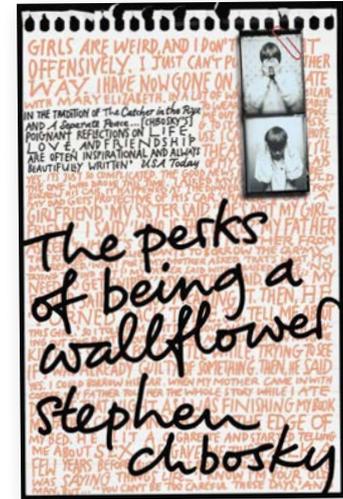
Apocalyptic vision in which most of humanity has been wiped out by a flu virus.



The Shining

Stephen King

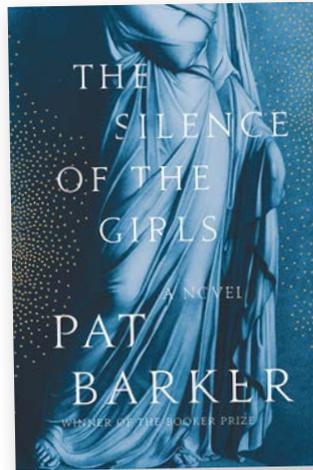
Ghostly encounters in a hotel coincide with domestic unrest in a writer's life.



The Perks of Being a Wallflower

Stephen Chbosky

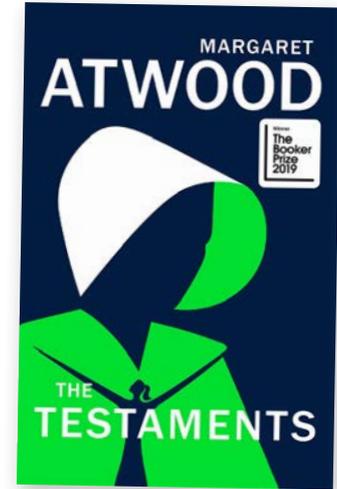
High school coming of age novel that deals with all the big issues.



The Silence of the Girls

Pat Barker

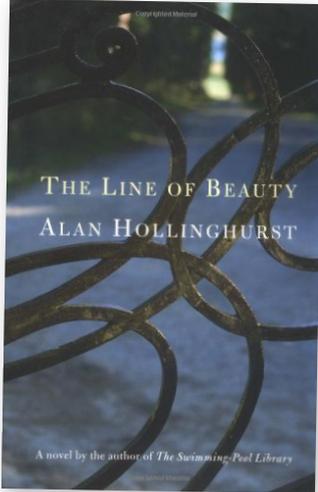
Homer's Illiad from the perspective of the women.



Testaments

Margaret Atwood

The 2019 Booker-prize winning speculative novel that is hopeful as well as harrowing.



The Line of Beauty

Alan Hollinghurst

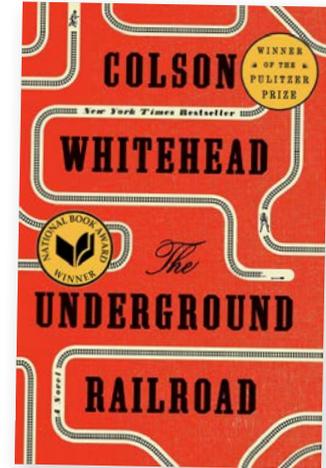
Class, politics and sexuality in Thatcher's Britain.



Machines Like Me

Ian McEwan

An alternative 1980s Britain in which the robots have arrived: love story, social comedy and disturbing commentary.

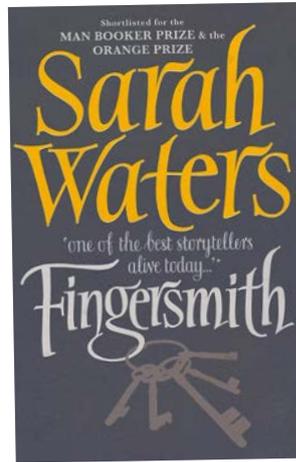


The Underground Railroad

Colson Whitehead

A genre-bending tale of escape from slavery.

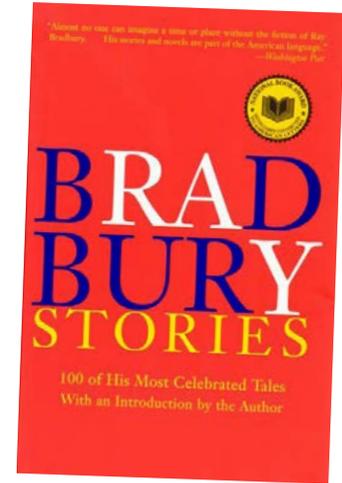
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Fingersmith

Sara Waters

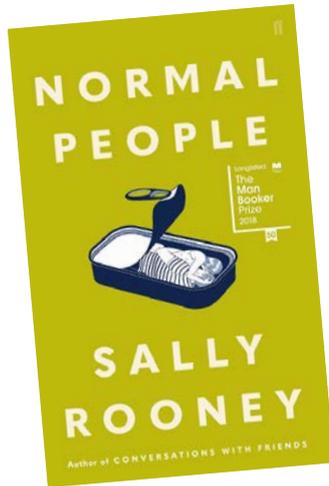
Historical crime novel set in Victorian London, with one of the finest twists in modern fiction.



Bradbury Stories

Raymond Bradbury

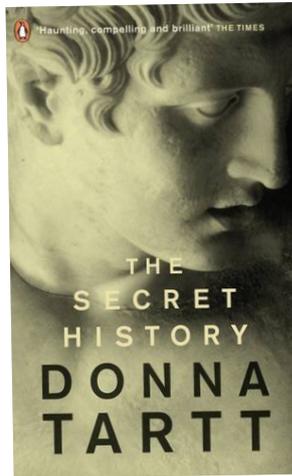
Definitive collection of the science fiction.



Normal People

Sally Rooney

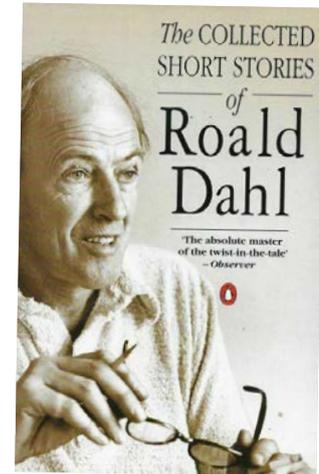
'A future classic' that explores a love story between two Dublin University students across time.



The Secret History

Donna Tartt

A dark and compelling thriller that explores a murder in reverse.



Roald Dahl's Collected Stories

Roald Dahl

Disturbing, twisted and compelling. Not for children.



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