

## Recommended Reads for Key Stage 4 & 5

### Action, Mysteries, Horror & Thrillers

*Famous Last Words* or *Bad Girls Don't Die*— Alender  
*The Inheritance Games* by Jennifer Lynn Barnes  
*Frozen Charlotte* by Alex Bell  
*S.T.A.G.S.* (& sequels) by M.A. Bennett  
*Bodyguard* series; *Bulletcatcher* by Chris Bradford+  
*The Bunker Diary*; *Martyn Pig*; *iBoy* - Kevin Brooks  
*Dead Time* (& sequels); *The Bone Room+* -A Cassidy  
*And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie\*  
*Say Her Name* by Juno Dawson  
*Mortal Chaos* or *Lie, Kill, Walk Away* -M Dickinson  
*A Gathering Light* by Jennifer Donnelly\*  
*Zero Day* by Jan Gangsei  
*Every Line of You* by Naomi Gibson  
*The Enemy* (& sequels) by Charlie Higson  
*House of Silk*, *Moriarty*, *Magpie Murders*-Horowitz+  
*Silence and Bones* by June Hur  
*A Good Girl's Guide to Murder* (& sequels)- Jackson  
*Sawbones* or *Blade & Bone* by Catherine Johnson  
*The Long Weekend* by Savita Kalhan+  
*Salem's Lot*, *Carrie* or *It* by Stephen King\*  
*Watchers* by Dean Koontz\*  
*Splinters of Sunshine* by Patrice Lawrence  
*Bluebeard, Bluebeard* by Attica Locke\*  
*We Were Liars* or *Genuine Fraud* by E Lockhart  
*Mina and the Undead* by Amy McCaw  
*Girl, Missing*; *Here We Lie*; *Blood Ties* by S McKenzie  
*#Murdertrending* by Gretchen McNeil\*  
*One of Us is Lying* (& sequels) by Karen McManus  
*I am Still Alive* or *Rules for Vanishing* by K Marshall  
*Knife Edge\**; *Blame* by Simon Mayo  
*The Recruit (Cherub)* (& sequels) by R Muchamore+  
*Even If We Break* by Marieke Nijkamp  
*Foul Play* (& sequels) or *Ghost Stadium* - T Palmer+  
*13 Minutes* by Sarah Pinborough  
*We Begin At The End* by Chris Whitaker\*  
*The First Day of My Life* by Lisa Williamson

### Autobiographies/Memoirs/Biographies

*I Know Why a Caged Bird Sings* by M. Angelou\*  
*A Street Cat Named Bob* by James Bowen\*+  
*Playing the Enemy* by John Carlin\*  
*In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote\*  
*Hope in a Ballet Shoe*: Michaela & Elaine DePrince

*Wave: Life After the Tsunami* by S. Deraniyagala\*  
*One Dog at a Time* (& sequels) by Pen Farthing\*  
*Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank  
*I, Ada* by Julia Gray (part-fictionalised, part bio)  
*Marley & Me* by John Grogan\*  
*Mud, Sweat and Tears* by Bear Grylls\*  
*Fever Pitch* by Nick Hornby\*  
*This is Going to Hurt* by Adam Kay\*  
*The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller\*  
*War Dog* (WWII) by Damien Lewis\*  
*The Boy on the Wooden Box* by Leon Leyson  
*Diary of a Young Naturalist* by Dara McNulty  
*Today Everything Changes* by Andy McNab\*+  
*Chinese Cinderella* by Adeline Yen Mah\*  
*A History of the World in 21 Women*-Jenni Murray\*  
*The Greatest: Muhammed Ali* by WD Myers+  
*Dreams From My Father* by Barack Obama\*  
*Becoming* by Michelle Obama\*  
*You Are a Champion* by Marcus Rashford  
*Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi (graphic novel)\*+  
*Touching the Void* by Joe Simpson\*+  
*Beautiful Country* by Qian Julie Wang\*  
*Educated* by Tara Westover\*  
*Night* by Elie Wiesel\*  
*Black Boy:A Record of Youth&Childhood*-R Wright\*  
*Autobiography of Malcolm X*—MalcolmX & A Haley\*  
*I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai

### Classics (off the beaten path) & Literary Fiction:

#### Challenging KS4/5 reads

*Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe\*  
*Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Adichie\*  
*Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line* - Deepa Anapparo\*  
*The Testaments; The Handmaid's Tale* – Atwood\*  
*The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett\*  
*Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury\*  
*The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cicneros\*  
*All The Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr\*  
*Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha* by Roddy Doyle\*  
*Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison\*  
*Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernadine Evaristo\*  
*Birdsong* or *Snow Country* by Sebastian Faulks\*  
*Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi\*  
*The Sweetness of Water* by Nathan Harris\*  
*Woman in Black* by Susan Hill\*  
*The Kite Runner* by Khalid Hosseini\*  
*Not Without Laughter* by Langston Hughes\*  
*A More Perfect Union* by Tammye Huf\*

**Brave New World** by Alex Huxley\*  
**Never Let Me Go** by Kazuo Ishiguro\*  
**To Kill a Mockingbird** by Harper Lee\*  
**Cider With Rosie** by Laurie Lee\*  
**Small Island** by Andrea Levi\*  
**The Road** by Cormac McCarthy\*  
**Circe** or **Song of Achilles** by Madeline Miller\*  
**The Bluest Eye** or **Beloved** by Toni Morrison\*  
**Hamnet** by Maggie O'Farrell\*  
**All Quiet on the Western Front** by EM Remarque\*  
**The God of Small Things** by Arundhati Roy\*  
**Home Fire** by Kamila Shamsie\*  
**Anita and Me** by Meera Syal\*  
**The Color Purple** by Alice Walker\*  
**Nickel Boys** by Colson Whitehead\*  
**Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit** – J Winterson\*

#### Complex/Difficult/Thought-provoking Issues

**Change is Gonna Come** – various BAME authors  
**Poet X; Clap When You Land; With the Fire on High**  
by Elizabeth Acevedo^  
**7 Days** or **Magpie** by Eve Ainsworth  
**Simon vs the Homo Sapiens Agenda** – B Albertalli  
**Booked; Rebound; Crossover**-Kwame Alexander+^  
**The Hypnotist** by Laurence Anholt  
**Thirteen Reasons Why** by Jay Asher  
**Black Flamingo** by Dean Atta^  
**Noughts & Crosses** or **Boys Don't Cry** -M Blackman  
**Tiger Eyes** or anything by Judy Blume  
**Firekeeper's Daughter** by Angeline Boulley  
**Am I Normal Yet?** (Spinster Club series)- H. Bourne  
**See Through Me; Dumb Chocolate Eyes** - K Brooks  
**Hate List** by Jennifer Brown  
**Junk** or **The Hit** by Melvin Burgess  
**Heart-Shaped Bruise** or **Afterlove** y Tanya Byrne  
**Looking for JJ; No Virgin/No Shame**-Anne Cassidy  
**The Perks of Being a Wallflower** by S. Chbosky  
**Stolen** by Lucy Christopher  
**The Chocolate War** by Robert Cormier  
**Toffee; One; Moonrise** by S Crossan+^  
**Meat Market** or **What's the T** by Juno Dawson  
**A Swift Pure Cry; Solace of the Road** -S. Dowd  
**The Pavee and the Buffer Girl** by Siobhan Dowd+  
**Furious Thing; Before I Die** by Jenny Downam  
**Out of My Mind** or **Out of My Heart** by S Draper  
**Heroic; Being Billy; Saving Daisy** by Phil Earle+  
**Mockingbird; Seeing Red** by Kathryn Erskine  
**The Universe versus Alex Woods** by G. Extence

**If I Stay; Just One Day** by Gayle Forman  
**The Ones That Disappeared** by Zana Fraillion  
**Full Disclosure** of **Off the Record** by Camryn Garrett  
**Baby Girl** by Emma Hill  
**After the Fire** by Will Hill  
**Looking at the Stars** by Lewis Hine  
**The Outsiders** by SE Hinton  
**And the Stars Were Burning Brightly** by D Jawando  
**That Asian Kid; Girl in Broken Mirror** by S Kalhan  
**That's Not What Happened** by Kody Keplinger  
**I am Thunder; Kick the Moon** - Muhammed Khan  
**Rose, Interrupted, Indigo Donut, Orangeboy or Eight Pieces of Silva** by Patrice Lawrence  
**Brock, Pike, Rook & Lark** by Anthony McGowan+  
**Run, Rebel** or **The Crossing** y Manjeet Mann+^  
**Out of Heart; A Beautiful Lie** by Irfan Master  
**Sister Heart** by Sally Morgan^  
**Slay** by Brittney Morris  
**The Sky is Everywhere** or **I'll Give You...**by J Nelson  
**No Fixed Address; Word Nerd** by Susin Nielson  
**All the Bright Places & Holding Up Universe** - Niven  
**Before I Fall; Vanishing Girls** by Lauren Oliver  
**Where the Crawdads Sing** by Delia Owens\*  
**My Sister's Keeper; Small Great Things** -J Picoult\*  
**Patron Saints of Nothing** or **After the Shot Drops**  
by Randy Ribay  
**Rani & Sukh; (Un)arranged Marriage; Killing Honour; The Gun; Stay a Little Longer** - Bali Rai+  
**Gloves Off^; Wrecked^; Black Heart Blue** by L Reid  
**Long Way Down^; All American Boys** - J Reynolds  
**Extraordinary Means** by Robyn Schneider  
**The Lovely Bones** or **Lucky** by Alice Sebold\*  
**The Boxer** or **Run, Riot** Nikesh Shukla  
**Counting by 7s** by Holly Sloan  
**The Million Pieces of Neena Gill** by E Smith-Barton  
**Stone Cold** by Robert Swindells  
**Everything I Thought I Knew** by Shannon Takaoka  
**Lies We Tell Ourselves** by Robin Talley  
**The Hate U Give** or **On the Come Up** by A Thomas  
**The List** by Siobhan Vivian  
**It's Kind of a Funny Story** by Ned Vizzini  
**My Name is Leon** by Kit de Waal  
**What Momma Left Me** by Renee Watson  
**Liclle Bit** (& sequels), **Uprising** or **The Humiliations of Welton Blake+** by Alex Wheatle  
**The Art of Being Normal** by Lisa Williamson  
**Frankly in Love** by David Yoon

***In The Wild Light*** by Jeff Zentner  
***Teacher's Dead, Face, Terror Kid*** or ***Gangsta Rap***  
by Benjamin Zephaniah

### Dystopian or Science Fiction

***The Power*** by Naomi Alderman\*  
***Chasing the Stars*** by Malorie Blackman  
***Gamer*** (& Virtual Combat series) by Chris Bradford+  
***Ink*** (& sequels) by Alice Broadway  
***World War Z*** by Max Brooks\*  
***Three Bullets*** by Melvin Burgess  
***The Girl With All the Gifts*** by MR Carey\*  
***Matched*** (& sequels) by Ally Condie  
***The Maze Runner*** (& sequels) by J. Dashner  
***Cell 7*** (& sequels) by Kerry Drewery  
***The Upper World*** by Femi Fadugba  
***The Gender Game*** by Bella Forrest  
***Gone; Front Line*** (& sequels) by Michael Grant  
***Lifers*** by M.A. Griffin  
***Department 19*** (& sequels) by Will Hill  
***The Outrage*** by William Hussey  
***Bearmouth*** by Liz Hyder  
***Raybearer*** by Jordan Ifueko  
***The Loneliest Girl in the Universe*** or ***The Quiet at the End of the World*** by Lauren James  
***Maladapted*** by Richard Kurti  
***I Am Number Four*** (& sequels) by Pittacus Lore  
***Legend*** (& sequels) by Marie Lu  
***Station 11*** by Emily Mandel\*  
***The Passengers; The One*** by John Marrs\*  
***The 100*** by Kass Morgan  
***Killer T*** by Robert Muchamore  
***No Man's Land*** by Joanna Nadin  
***The Knife of Never Letting Go*** series by Patrick Ness  
***Z For Zachariah*** by Robert O'Brien  
***The Loop*** by Ben Oliver  
***Replica*** or ***Delirium*** (& sequels) by Lauren Oliver  
***Only Ever Yours*** by Louise O'Neill  
***Divergent*** (& sequels) by Veronica Roth  
***Plague Land*** by Alex Scarrow  
***Scythe, Unwind*** (& sequels) -N Shusterman  
***Concentr8*** by William Sutcliffe  
***Contagion*** or ***Slated*** (& sequels) by Teri Terry  
***The Martian*** or ***Project Hail Mary*** by Andy Weir\*  
***Partials*** (& sequels) by Dan Wells  
***Uglies*** or ***Zeroes*** (& sequels) by Scott Westerfield  
***The Forever*** by Chris Whitaker  
***The Infinity Files*** by SM Wilson

***The 5th Wave*** (& sequels) by Rick Yancey

### Environment or Climate Change Fiction

***American War*** by Omar El Akkad\*  
***The Drowned World*** by J.G. Ballard\*  
***Exodus*** by Julie Bertanga  
***Parable of the Sower*** by Octavia Butler\*  
***The Well*** by Catherine Chanter\*  
***Greenwood*** by Michael Christie\*  
***Breathe*** by Sarah Crossan  
***The Ice People*** by Maggie Gee\*  
***The Territory*** by Sarah Govett  
***Floodworld*** & ***DustRoad*** by Tom Huddleston  
***The End We Start From*** by Megan Hunter  
***Green Rising*** by Lauren James  
***Runners*** by Ann Kelley  
***Unsheltered, Prodigal Summer*** or ***Flight Behaviour***  
by Barbara Kingsolver\*  
***The Carbon Diaries*** by Saci Lloyd  
***The Dog Runner & Across Risen Sea*** - B MacDibble  
***The Overstory*** by Richard Powers\*  
***Floodland*** or ***Snowflake, AZ*** by Marcus Sedgwick  
***Dry*** by Neal & Jarrod Shusterman  
***The Survival Game*** or ***The Island*** by Nicky Singer  
***The Grapes of Wrath*** by John Steinbeck\*

### Fantasy, Epic or Urban Fantasy or Magic Realism

***Children of Blood and Bone*** by Tomi Adeyemi  
***A Jigsaw of Fire & Stars*** by Yaba Badoe  
***Six of Crows; Crooked Kingdom*** by Leigh Bardugo  
***Cinderella is Dead*** by Kalyann Bayron  
***City of Bones*** (& sequels) by Cassandra Clare  
***Legendborn*** by Tracy Deonn  
***Half Bad*** (& sequels) by Sally Green  
***The Gilded Ones*** by Namina Forna  
***The Deathless Girls*** by Kiran Millwood Hargrave  
***The Eye of the World*** (Wheel of Time) by R Jordan  
***A Blade So Black*** (& sequels) by L.L. McKinney  
***Burn*** by Patrick Ness  
***Way of Kings*** (Stormlight Archive) by B Sanderson  
***Voyages in Underworld of Orpheus Black***-Sedgwick  
***Oh My Gods*** by Alexandra Sheppard  
***An Ember in the Ashes*** (& sequels) by Sabaa Tahir  
***Children of the Quicksands*** by Efua Traore

### History & War

***The Short Knife*** by Elen Caldecot  
***Wolf Children, Bomber, Red Shadow, Eleven Eleven***  
or ***The Great Revolt*** by Paul Dowswell

**Copper Sun** by Sharon M Draper  
**When the Sky Falls** by Phil Earle  
**Under a War-Torn Sky** or **Suspect Red** by L. Elliott  
**Fatal Throne: Henry VIII** (multiple YA writers)  
**An Act of Love** or **The Trap** by Alan Gibbons  
**Grenade, Ground Zero** or **Prisoner B-3087** - A Gratz  
**Bone Talk** by Candy Gourlay  
**The Mercies** by Kiran Millwood Hargrave\*  
**Sawbones** or **Blade and Bones** by C Johnson  
**Orphan, Monster, Spy** by Matt Killeen  
**Among Red Stars** by Gwen Katz  
**When the World Was Ours** by Liz Kessler  
**The Librarian of Auschwitz** by Antonio Iturbe\*  
**The Beekeeper of Aleppo** by Christy Lefteri\*  
**Dog Tags: Semper Fido** or **Strays** by CA London  
**A Berlin Love Song** by Sarah Matthias  
**Red Stars** by Davide Morosinotto  
**Fallen Angels** or **Sunrise over Fallujah**-WD Myers  
**Things a Bright Girl Can Do; Silent Stars** - S Nicholls  
**Salt to the Sea** or **Fountains of Silence** - R Sepetys  
**Maus** by Art Spiegelman (graphic novel)\*+  
**Milkweed** by Jerry Spinelli  
**The Land** (& sequels) or **Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry** by Mildred Taylor  
**Code Named Verity & Enigma Game; Firebird+** by Elizabeth Wein  
**Cane Warriors** or **Kemosha of the Caribbean** by Alex Wheatle  
**Kent State** by Deborah Wiles^  
**My Dear I Wanted to Tell You** by Louisa Young\*  
**The Book Thief** by Marcus Zusak

#### **Humorous books**

**Half My Facebook Friends Are Ferrets** by J Buckle  
**The Princess Diaries** by Meg Cabot  
**A Man Called Ove** by Fredrik Backman\*  
**The Private Blog of Joe Cowley** by Ben Davis  
**Boys Don't Knit** or **An English Boy in NY** by T Easton  
**An Abundance of Katherines** by John Green  
**Noah Can't Even; Alex in Wonderland** - SJ Green  
**The Boomerang Effect** by Gordon Jack  
**The Reformed Vampire Support Group** by Jinks  
**Hellbent** or **Henry Tumour** by Anthony McGowan  
**Don't Even Think About It** – Sarah Mylnowski  
**Discworld** series by T Pratchett (try **The Last Hero**)\*

**Good Omens** by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman\*  
**Geekhood** series by Andy Robb  
**The Rosie Project** (& sequel) by Graeme Simsion\*  
**Something I Said** by Ben Bailey Smith  
**The Gifted, The Talented and Me** by W Sutcliffe  
**Dark Lord: The Teenage Years** by Jamie Thomson  
**The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole** – Sue Townsend  
**The Savages** and **American Savage** by M Whyman

#### **Relationships**

**Ace of Spades** by Faridah Abike-Iyemede  
**Yes, No, Maybe So** by R Albertalli & Aisha Saeed  
**Beautiful Broken Things** or **Fierce Fragile Hearts**  
 Sara Barnard  
**Tender Earth** by Sita Brahmachari  
**We Come Apart** by S Crossan & Brian Conaghan^  
**Alex & Eliza** by Melissa de la Cruz (Hamilton)  
**On Midnight Beach** by Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick  
**Floored: When Seven Lives Collide** (various authors)  
**Fault in Our Stars** or **Looking for Alaska** by J Green  
**Why We Broke Up** by Daniel Handler  
**To All the Boys I've Loved Before** by Jenny Han  
**Slammed** or **Regretting You** by Colleen Hoover  
**Hold Back the Stars** by Katie Khan  
**Falling Fast** (& sequels) by Sophie McKenzie  
**Release** by Patrick Ness  
**One Day** or **Sweet Sorrow** by David Nicholls\*  
**Unboxed; Second Best Friend** by Nan Pratt  
**Heartstopper** graphic novels by Alice Oseman+  
**The Boy in the Black Suit** by Jason Reynolds  
**Attachments & Fangirl** by Rainbow Rowell  
**Written in the Stars** by Aisha Saeed  
**The Art of Racing in the Rain** by Garth Stein\*  
**Shiver** or **The Raven Boys**(&sequels) - M. Stiefvater  
**Our Chemical Hearts** by Krystal Sutherland  
**They Both Die at the End** by Adam Silvera  
**Love is a Revolution** by Renee Watson  
**If You Come Softly** by Jacqueline Woodson  
**Everything, Everything & Sun is Also a Star**-Yoon

\* = Books written for adults; may contain mature content  
 + = top picks for reluctant readers or readers who prefer visual/less dense texts. Includes some dyslexia-friendly titles; quick-paced reads of longer books  
 ^ = verse novel