



ST BENET BISCOP
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Recommended Reads

Recommended Read	A good read if...
English	
Year 7 & 8 War Horse by Michael Morpurgo	...You enjoyed reading Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo
Year 7 & 8 Goodnight Mister Tom by Michelle Magorian	...You are keen to read more fiction set against the backdrop of the war, but from a different perspective. This time, focusing on the experience of evacuee children.
Year 8 & 9 Northern Lights / His Dark Materials by Philip Pullman	...You are interested in adventure stories, with plenty of plot twists. An epic trilogy.
Year 8-10 Lionheart Girl by Yaba Badoe	...You fancy a read where mysticism, fear and West African witchcraft are blended together. A memorable and atmospheric read.
Year 9 A Kestrel for a Knave by Barry Hines	...You fancy reading a modern classic. This novel is very popular with reluctant readers, and boys seem to like it especially. Billy Casper is a troubled teen growing up in Barnsley. He finds escape in Kes – a kestrel. It transforms his life.
Year 8&9 Madame Doubtfire by Anne Fine	...You struggle a little bit with reading and are looking for something accessible. Lydia, Christopher and Natalie's parents have divorced. When their mum looks to hire a nanny, their dad Daniel gets the job, using a cunning disguise! An uplifting read for less confident readers.
Year 9-11 Lord of the Flies by William Golding	...You fancy reading about boys who find themselves stranded on a desert island. A life with no adults... it might sound idyllic... but there are dangers within...
Year 9-11 I'm the King of the Castle by Susan Hill	...You read Lord of the Flies and enjoyed it! Two boys' lives collide by circumstance. One terrorises the other, but in Hang Wood, things get even.
Year 9-11 The Woman in Black by Susan Hill	...You like a terrifying, gothic read. A chilling mystery about a woman in black who the villagers only talk about in terrifying true ghost stories.
Year 10-13 Brighton Rock by Graham Greene	...You fancy a gripping, challenging read. This novel is about Pinkie who is caught in the middle of a gang war. Living a life on the edge, he kills a man and believes he can carry on as if nothing happened. Particularly good for students in Year 12 and 13 who are studying the crime genre in English Literature.
Year 10-13 The Catch in the Rye by JD Salinger	...You fancy a challenging read, focused on Holden Caulfield – a teen who has been expelled from his fourth school.

Year 10-13 Dracula by Bram Stoker	...You like classic gothic stories. This is the tale of Dracula's move from Transylvania to England. Utterly terrifying.
Year 10-13 The Great Gatsby by F Scott Fitzgerald	...You enjoy a party! Jay Gatsby throws epic parties – they last for days, and anyone who is anyone attends them. But the parties serve a purpose. Do his parties bring to Gatsby what he dreams of? Particularly good for students in Year 12 & 13 who are studying Aspects of Tragedy in English Literature.
Year 10-13 Shakespeare by Bill Bryson	...You want to read about the myths, lies and reality of Shakespeare in a humorous way. This is non-fiction.

Maths

Year 7&8 Maths Games and Activities by Claudia Zaslavsky and More Maths Games and Activities by Claudia Zaslavsky	...You are keen to read, and solve a range of mathematical puzzles and problems.
Year 7&8 The Number Devil by Hans Magnus Enzenberger	... You want to read about 12-year-old Robert who hates his maths teacher: he sets his class boring problems and won't let them use their calculators. Then in his dreams Robert meets the Number Devil, who brings the subject magically to life, illustrating with wit and charm a world in which numbers can amaze and fascinate, where maths is nothing like the dreary, difficult process that so many of us dread. The Number Devil knows how to make maths devilishly simple.
Year 7&8 Good Benito by Alan Lightman	... You want to read about Bennett "Benito" Lang, who is a lonely and confused young boy who finds solace in the ordered and rigorous laws of mathematics and physics. But as an adult, when he most needs the irrefutable order and precision of science itself, Benito will learn that, despite its expansive beauty and power, it is no match for the unfathomable desires and pains of the human heart.
Year 9 The Indian Clerk by David Leavitt	... You want to merge interests in maths and History. January, 1913, Cambridge. G.H. Hardy - eccentric, charismatic and considered the greatest British mathematician of his age - receives a mysterious envelope covered with Indian stamps. Inside he finds a rambling letter from a self-professed mathematical genius who claims to be on the brink of solving the most important mathematical problem of his time. Hardy determines to learn more about this mysterious Indian clerk, Srinivasa Ramanujan, a decision that will profoundly affect not only his own life, and that of his friends, but the entire history of mathematics.
Year 9 Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions by Edwin A. Abbott	... You enjoy reading satire. This is a satirical novella by the English schoolmaster Edwin Abbott Abbott, first published in 1884. Written pseudonymously by "A Square", the book used the fictional two-dimensional world of Flatland to comment on the hierarchy of Victorian culture, but the novella's more enduring contribution is its examination of dimensions.
Year 9 The Math Olympian by Richard Hoshino	... You want an inspirational story about a love for all things mathematical. As a small-town girl in Nova Scotia bullied for liking numbers more than boys, and lacking the encouragement of her unsupportive single mother who frowns at her daughter's unrealistic ambition, Bethany MacDonald's road to the International Math Olympiad has been marked by numerous challenges.

Year 9 The Solitude of Prime Numbers by Paolo Giordano, Shaun Whiteside	... You fancy reading a bestselling international literary sensation about whether a "prime number" can ever truly connect with someone else. A prime number can only be divided by itself or by one—it never truly fits with another. Alice and Mattia, both "primes," are misfits who seem destined to be alone. Haunted by childhood tragedies that mark their lives, they cannot reach out to anyone else. When Alice and Mattia meet as teenagers, they recognize in each other kindred, damaged spirit.
Year 10 & 11 Humble Pi – A Comedy of Maths Errors – Matt Parker	...You want a lively and humorous read about how maths is everywhere in our lives.
Year 10 & 11 The Code Book – The Secret History of Codes and Code Breaking – Simon Singh	... you want to read about the history of man’s urge to uncover the secrets of codes, from Egyptian puzzles to modern day computer encryptions.
Year 10 & 11 Measuring the World by Daniel Kehlmann	... You want to read about the parallel but contrasting lives of two geniuses of the German Enlightenment - the naturalist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt and the mathematician and physicist Carl Friedrich Gauss. Towards the end of the 18th century, these two brilliant young Germans set out to measure the world.
Year 10 & 11 Fractals, Googols, and Other Mathematical Tales by Theoni Pappas	... You want a treasure trove of stories that make mathematical ideas come to life. Explores math concepts and topics such as real numbers, exponents, dimensions, the golden rectangle in both serious and humorous ways. Stories such as the parable of p, the number line that fell apart, Leonhard the magic turtle and many others offer an amusing and entertaining way to explore and share mathematical ideas regardless of age or background.
Year 10 & 11 How long is a piece of string – Rob Eastway & Jeremy Wyndham	...You ever wondered how the meter in a taxi works? Or why a lift takes so long to respond to your call? Is there a mathematical secret to making a hit single? And how long is a piece of string? In this fascinating book you will find the answers to these and many other intriguing questions of everyday life.
Year 12&13 Beyond Infinity: A MatheMATTical Adventure by Charles Ames Fischer	... You want to read about Matthew “MatheMatt” Forsythe, who discovers a weird computer and a secret door at school, a series of events unfolds where he and his friends solve one mathematical puzzle after another. After finding a teleportal, Matt and his friend Kelsie travel to a strange world where numbers are actually alive! There they meet the mad scientist Maglio and the ghostly Fifty-Seven and discover that some of the numbers are mysteriously disappearing. They must race against time to find the significant numbers Sixty-One and Three Hundred Thirteen. But why are the numbers disappearing? And what is so important about the number eight?

RE / Philosophy & Ethics

Year 7/8/9 Pig Heart Boy by Malorie Blackman	...You want to get into a good ethical debate. 13-year-old Cameron is dying and his only hope is a heart transplant. When there are no human hearts available his father finds a doctor willing to use a pig’s heart.
Year 7-9 The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe	...You fancy escaping to Narnia – a place found by accident in the back of a wardrobe, where it is always winter and never Christmas. A story that is a Christian allegory: a tale of the fight between good and evil.
Year 10-13 The Midwich Cuckoos by John Wyndham	...You fancy the idea of a story where everyone in a quiet English village falls asleep unexpectedly. When they wake a day later all the women are inexplicably pregnant. It soon becomes clear that all the children have abilities and powers that are not normal. This novel will provoke philosophical and ethical debate.

Year 9-11 Are You There, God? It's me, Margaret	...You fancy a read about Margaret, who is convinced she isn't normal. Her friends are more grown up than her and she's starting a new school. She is unsure about whether to follow her mother's or her father's religion. So she talks to God, with surprising results.
Year 10-13 Sophie's World by Jostein Gaarder	...You are looking for a philosophical read.
Year 10-13 The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom	...you enjoy an emotional rollercoaster of a read! An uplifting read that makes you think about the people you influence and encounter, even if you don't realise it at the time.

Art & Design

Year 7-9 Framed by Frank Cottrell Boyce	...You like the sound of a novel about how paintings moved by the National Gallery in London, to a cave in North Wales and how they alter the lives of the village folk – especially Dylan.
Year 10-13 The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde	...You fancy a Gothic classic, about a young man who sells his soul, for a life of eternal beauty. He remains young, and beautiful while a portrait of him ages and withers.
Year 10-13 The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt	... You fancy a haunting, unforgettable read. 13-year-old Theo's life is torn apart when he loses his mum. He is tormented by an unbearable longing for her, and down the years, clings to the thing that most reminds him of her: a small, strangely captivating painting that ultimately draws him into a criminal underworld.

History

Year 7&8 The Garbage King by Elizabeth Laird	...You are interested in History and specifically your studies on the slave trade. Mamo is from a very poor family where everyone has died except for him and his sister. Then a slave trader, claiming to be his uncle, kidnaps Mamo.
Year 8&9 The Book Thief by Markuz Zusak	...You are interested in History, and specifically Nazi Germany and World War 2. This novel is narrated by Death and tells the story of a young girl hiding during the war.
Year 7 - 9 The Diary of a Young Girl / The Diary of Anne Frank by Anne Frank	...You are keen to read the diary kept by Anne Frank while she was in hiding for two years with her family during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands.
Year 8&9 Animal Farm by George Orwell	...You are interested in History and want to learn about the Russian Revolution through a symbolic story, based on a very troubled farm.
Year 8&9 Coram Boy by Jamila Gavin	...You enjoy historical fiction. This is a stunning period drama of deception, child stealing, mistaken identity and searching for long lost families.
Year 8&9 I am David by Anne Holm	...You fancy reading about David's quest. He is a 15-year-old boy, escaping from a concentration camp where he has lived all his lived.
Year 10-13 I, Claudius by Robert Graves	...You like ancient history. The scheming, brutal and dangerous world of Roman nobility is brought to life in this historical thriller. An intense and gripping novel.
Year 10-13 Catch 22 by Joseph Heller	...You fancy a read focusing on the end of WW2. Yossarian thinks his life is in danger – not from the enemy, but from his own side. He tries to find any excuse to avoid an increasing number of dangerous missions.

Year 10-13 Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro	...You fancy a moving novel about a butler who tries to devote his life to his profession, despite his master being a Nazi sympathiser. A challenging read.
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PSHE / Health and Social Care / CPLD

Years 7-11 Be Resilient – How to Build a Strong Teenage Mind	...You are looking for a read that will offer clear and practical advice on how to develop strategies for mental toughness. The book explores issues such as trust, keeping healthy and how to regulate emotions.
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Year 9-13 The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time	...You like a crime story. This story has no ordinary detective though. Christopher isn't like other children. He finds people difficult to talk to, and to understand. When he discovers his neighbour's dead dog, he decides to find out what happened to it, and makes some huge personal discoveries along the way. Be sure to get the version suitable for younger readers.
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Year 7-9 Fearless! How to be your true, confident self, by Liam Hackett	...You want to read how stereotypes influence everything – from how you feel about your body, to your interests and career aspirations. Being more aware, can help you take more control of how you feel.
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Year 10-11 Noah Can't Even by Simon James Green	...You are interested in reading LGBTQ+ literature. Noah desperately wants to be like everyone else. But with a mother who works as an unconvincing Beyonce lookalike and a father who isn't around, Noah is struggling with life. Laugh out loud moment of teenage angst, with a twist.
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Modern Languages – Spanish and French

Year 7-9 Tin Tin - Hergé	...You want to read one of the most famous European comics of the c.20 th .
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Year 7 -9 Astérix - Goscinny & Unerzo	...You want to read a bande dessinée comic book series about a village of indomitable Gaulish warriors who adventure around the world and fight the Roman Republic, with the aid of a magic potion, during the era of Julius Caesar, in an ahistorical telling of the time after the Gallic Wars.
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Year 7 -9 Les Schtroumpfs – Peyo	...You want to read a French comic series about the Smurfs!
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Year 10&11 Le Petit Prince - Saint - Eupéry	...You want to read a story that follows a young prince who visits various planets in space, including Earth, and addresses themes of loneliness, friendship, love, and loss. Despite its style as a children's book, The Little Prince makes observations about life, adults and human nature.
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Year 10 & 11 Le Petit Nicolas - Sempé & Goscinny	...You want a challenging read about an idealized version of childhood in 1950s France.
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Year 10-13 The Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Luin Zafon (translated from Spanish into English)	...You want a page turner that will keep you reading all night long. A city slowly heals from its war wounds, and Daniel, an antiquarian book dealer's son who mourns the loss of his mother, finds solace in a mysterious book entitled The Shadow of the Wind, by one Julian Carax. But when he sets out to find the author's other works, he makes a shocking discovery: someone has been systematically destroying every copy of every book Carax has written. In fact, Daniel may have the last of Carax's books in existence. Soon Daniel's seemingly innocent quest opens a door into one of Barcelona's darkest secrets--an epic story of murder, madness, and doomed love.
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Geography

Year 7&8 Underland by Robert Macfarlane	...You are looking for a good non-fiction read. Ten years in the making, Underland is his enthralling record of journeys deep into the worlds beneath our feet. From the burial grounds of the Mendip Hills to the hidden catacombs of Paris, and further, to the deep blue, ancient ice of Greenland, Macfarlane explores - through myth, memory and experience – our most feared and venerated spaces of loss, discovery and deep time.
Year 9-11 Around the World in 80 Days by Jules Verne	...You want to read a novel that is set right across the globe. In the story, Phileas Fogg of London and his newly employed French valet Passepartout attempt to circumnavigate the world in 80 days on a wager of £20,000 set by his friends at the Reform Club.
Year 9-11 H is for Hawk by Helen Macdonald	...You fancy something a little bit different. H is for Hawk tells Macdonald's story of the year she spent training a northern goshawk in the wake of her father's death. Her father, Alisdair Macdonald, was a respected photojournalist who died suddenly of a heart attack in 2007. Having been a falconer for many years, she purchased a young goshawk to help her through the grieving process.
Year 10-13 The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini	...You are interested in reading a novel set in Afghanistan, against the backdrop of the rise of the Taliban. This is a heart-breaking novel, and one that you will not be able to put down. It deals with friendship, regret and trying to atone for terrible mistakes.
Year 7-9 Floodworld by Tom Huddleston	...You are interested in the environment. When the sea level rose, a wall was built to protect London. Now Kara and Joe are stuck in the middle between the privileged few inside the wall and the ruthless Mariners out on the ocean. An action-packed, edge-of-the-seat thriller with an environmental edge.
Year 10-13 A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini	...You read The Kite Runner and love it – you'll love this just as much. The novel focuses on the lives of women in Kabul, and is just as emotional as The Kite Runner.
Year 11-13 The Almighty Dollar by	... You are interested in the world's finances. Follow a single dollar in this non-fiction read, to see how the global economy really works.

Science Fiction

Year 7 Dread Wood by Jennifer Killick	...You enjoy being kept on the edge of your seat! As the fear and dread build up in this tense thriller, a group of misfits is forced to work as a team to defeat the most terrifying of hidden attackers. Not for the faint-hearted, this edge-of-seat horror is hard to put down, with many chapters ending on a cliff-hanger.
Year 7 -9 Saving Celeste by Timothee de Fombelle	...You are interested in ideas about the future and what life might be like. Step into a future where tower blocks rise hundreds of floors up into the sky, where nobody goes outdoors except in their car, and society is run by a giant multinational corporation, 'Industry'. Meanwhile, Earth's natural habitats have shrunk to tiny fenced-off areas, the air is full of smog and the rivers and seas heavily polluted – yet no one seems to care. When a teenaged boy's new friend Celeste falls ill with a mysterious disease that seems to be directly linked to the ailing planet, he is determined to find out what is wrong, and find a way to save her. This beautifully formed novella uses a thought-provoking metaphor as a rallying cry to protect our planet. Hailed as a fable for our times, it is ultimately a story of hope and love.
Year 9 – 11 Green Rising by Lauren James	...You're after a topic read. When teenagers across the globe develop the ability to grow plants from their skin, they become the subject of fierce debate - but could they use their powers to save the planet?

Year 9-11 Invictus by Ryan Graudin	...You are interested in the idea of time travel. Born out of time, Far McCarthy has always planned to be a time traveller, but his hopes are dashed when a computer appears to malfunction. However, it turns out to have been no malfunction, but a plot – one which will involve him, and everyone he loves.
Sport / PE	
Year 7&8 Bend It Like Beckham by Narinder Dhama	... You have an interest in football. Jess just wants to play football but her wedding-obsessed parents have other ideas so she hides it from them. But when Jess and her friend Jules join a lady's team and get spotted by a talent scout, it all kicks off ...
Year 7 & 8 The Silent Striker by Pete Kalu	... You are interested in football as an inclusive sport. Marcus lives and breathes football. It seems he might even have the makings of a professional player. However, Marcus' life is about to change. For one thing, Marcus finds that he has acquired a girlfriend. Then there's the fact that he's getting into trouble in school. Finally, he discovers that he is losing his hearing.
Year 7 Jaz Santos v The World by Priscilla Mante	When Jaz's mum leaves home, she knows that she has to be the best at football to get her back. Warm-hearted and funny, this book explores the sexism in society and gives lots of opportunities to learn about real-life women football players.
Year 7-9 Blindside by Aidan Chambers	... You are looking for an Ideal read for those with reading difficulties including dyslexia. Nate is a keen runner. Not only that, but he's good. He is the best in his club and a future as an athlete seems promising. Then comes a terrible bike accident. Now in hospital, Nate must come to terms with his lack of mobility. He must learn to use a wheelchair and accept that even after extensive physio his leg will never fully recover. It's not easy trying to face the fact that his running dreams are over. A resentful Nate wallows in his own bitterness, rejecting the kindness of those around him and snubbing his former running friends. Then a combination of a congenial nurse and an extraordinary fellow patient with a heart defect help Nate to accept the alternative path the future holds for him.
Drama / Performing Arts	
Year 7-9 Billy Elliott by Melvin Burgess	...You enjoyed studying the musical Billy Elliott in Year 9, or you want to prepare for studying the musical version, if you are in Year 7 or 8. It is a novel about a boy from the North East who defies all the odds and expectations to develop his interest and talent in ballet.
Year 9 Stone Cold by Robert Swindells	...You enjoyed studying the topic on homelessness. This is a gripping dual narrative that will have you hooked and highlights the dangerous situation those people are in, who are homeless.
Year 9-11 Your Shoes by Michele Roberts	...You enjoyed studying the topic on homelessness and want to read something a little different but connected to the same themes and ideas. This is a short story written in the form of a dramatic monologue, from the perspective of the mother whose child has runaway. The story explores family tensions and the emotional and psychological impact of a parents who has lost their child.
Year 10-13 Life in Motion by Misty Copeland	...You have an interest in dance, and ballet especially. Copeland was the first African American female soloist in the history of the prestigious American Ballet Theatre. At 13, she came to the barre relatively late and from a chaotic home life, but talent and drive quickly saw her outshine her peers. Copeland is frank about the racism and sizeism she experienced in an environment that still favours pale skin and narrow hips. She turns the spotlight back on the women of colour who wore pointe shoes

	before her: the way she talks about her mentor Raven Wilkinson is especially moving. There's also an abridged, accessible version for younger readers, for so many of whom Copeland is an icon.
Year 10-13 The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo by Taylor Jenkins Reid	...Your interests are in Drama and History. The novel tells the story of the fictional Old Hollywood star Evelyn Hugo, who at age 79 gives a final interview to an unknown journalist, Monique Grant.