



We hope that you and your child have had a great start to the academic year. As the winter season and Christmas approaches, we are delighted to be able to share a selection of books that cover a range of reading ages and topics of interest which your child may like to read.

In these half-termly newsletters, we're delighted to be collaborating with best-selling authors to give you an even wider selection of book recommendations. You and your child can watch each of them talk about their recommendations by using your phone to scan the QR codes next to their photos .

With the wide variety of books showcased here, we hope that you may be able to select some that your child might enjoy as we approach the festive season.

Please note that unless otherwise stated, the texts are suitable from Year 7 and up, but please do research the books before selecting them to ensure that they are appropriate for your child.

In addition to exploring the books mentioned in this newsletter, you can encourage reading in other ways too. For example:

- Find out what your child is curious about, or takes an interest in, and look at books around these topics.
- If your child struggles with reading and this poses an obstacle to their enjoyment, explore the blurbs of books and select a couple to try on audiobook. You can often borrow these for free from your local library too.
- Support your child with reading for purpose. You could read recipes and cook some of these over the Christmas break.

Whatever you and your child choose to read, we hope you enjoy it and we wish you a wonderful end to 2022.

SHORTER-LENGTH READS

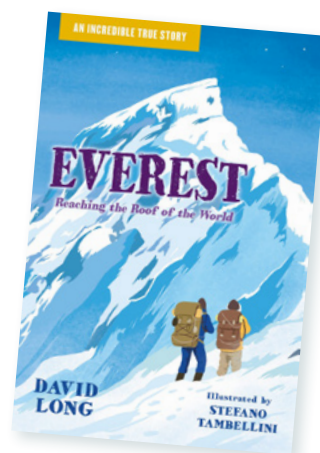


Rat PATRICE LAWRENCE

When his mum is sent back to prison, Al knows exactly who's to blame. Mr Brayker, who lives downstairs, has been making trouble for Al's mum ever since they moved in, and Al's determined to get his revenge. But things don't turn out exactly as he'd imagined...

Everest DAVID LONG

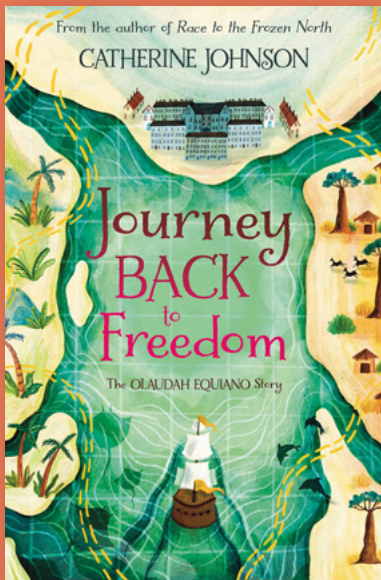
Everest is the world's highest mountain, towering like an icy giant over the Himalayas. For the millions of people living nearby, it has always been a magical place, known as "Goddess Mother of the World" or the "Peak of Heaven". To explorers and adventurers, it represents a perilous but thrilling challenge to be conquered.



Birdsong KATYA BALEN

After a devastating car crash, Annie is unable to play her flute and retreats from the music she's always loved. She exists in a world of angry silence – furious with her mum and furious she can't seem to play her beloved flute anymore. Then she meets Noah. As their friendship grows, the blackbird's glorious song reignites Annie's passion for music. But when tragedy strikes again, will her fragile progress be put at risk?



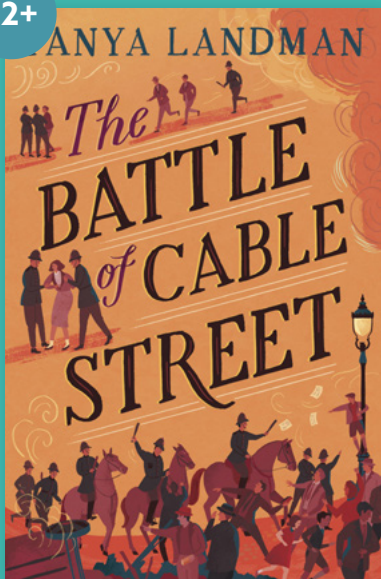


Journey Back to Freedom

CATHERINE JOHNSON

Olaudah Equiano's childhood was brought to an abrupt end when he was enslaved aged 11. He spent much of the next eight years of his life at sea, seeing action in the Seven Years' War. When he was finally able to buy his freedom, he went on to become a prominent member of the abolition movement and published one of the first books by a Black African writer. *Journey Back to Freedom* focuses on Equiano's early life, demonstrating the resilience of the human spirit and one man's determination to be free.

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The Battle of Cable Street

TANYA LANDMAN

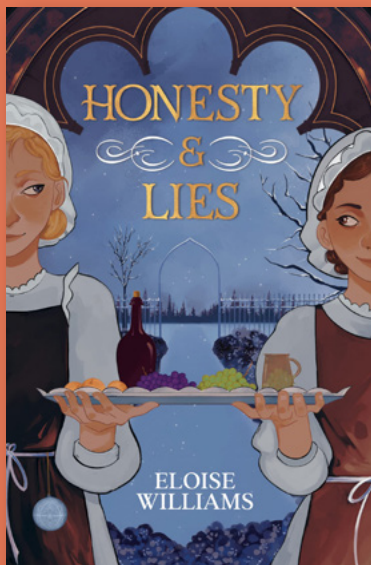
Life has always been tough on the streets of Stepney, where Elsie and her brother Mikey are growing up in a vermin-infested slum nicknamed "Paradise". But the rise of antisemitic fascist Oswald Mosley and his Blackshirts in the 1930s stirs up trouble between families who have lived closely together for years, and Elsie sees friendships torn apart.

LONGER-LENGTH READS

Honesty and Lies

ELOISE WILLIAMS

London, 1601. Honesty, a storyteller seeking fame and fortune, befriends Alice, a maid to Queen Elizabeth I. But can Alice be trusted? A tale of intrigue, scheming and plots set in the spellbinding world of the Elizabethan court. A thrilling adventure where nothing is as it seems. To watch Eloise talk about her new book, scan the QR code here:



Lore

ALEXANDRA BRACKEN

For centuries, Zeus has punished the gods with a game called the Agon, which turns them mortal for one week, and at the mercy of being hunted by those with godly ambitions. Only a handful of the original Greek gods remain, the rest replaced by the mortals who killed them and ascended. After her family's murder by a rival bloodline, Lore escapes and vows to repay her parents' sacrifice by doing one thing – surviving. For seven years, she has pushed back dark thoughts of revenge except for one week, every seven years. A week that is fast approaching...

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Harper Drew: Talent Show Takeover KATHY WEEKS

Welcome to the hilarious world of Harper Drew... there's a whole lot of DRAMA, but luckily she has tried and tested methods to deal with it! Perfect for fans of Dork Diaries. Book two in the series.

To watch Kathy talk about her new book, scan the QR code here:



Swarm Enemy: Book 2

TIM PEAKE AND STEVE COLE

When Danny's best friend Jamila goes missing, and no one remembers she exists, Danny knows the alien Swarm are back on Earth. They've tracked the digital energy signals Jamila has been unintentionally transmitting. Her alien-enhanced DNA can be used to clone super-strong beings with super-powers, and now it's not just the Swarm who are after her...



Witch

FINBAR HAWKINS

After witnessing the brutal murder of her mother by witch-hunters, Evey vows to avenge her and track down the killers. But she has promised her mother that she will keep Dill, her little sister safe. As the lust for blood and retribution rises to fever pitch, will Evey keep true to the bonds of sisterhood and to the magic that is her destiny? Watch Finbar talk about *Witch*, and read an extract from it, here:



The Snow Angel

LAUREN ST. JOHN

Growing up in vibrant, crowded Nairobi, Makena has only one dream: to climb Mount Kenya like her hero: her mountain guide father. But when her beautiful world is shattered, she finds that in the city's darkest places, there are a thousand ways to fall, each more deadly than any crevasse. Watch Lauren read an extract from *The Snow Angel*, here:



Terciel and Elinor - The Old Kingdom 1

GARTH NIX

In a land where the dead will not stay dead, eighteen-year-old orphan Terciel is learning to wield a mighty and terrible power: necromancy. For he is the Abhorsen-in-Waiting, the latest in an ancient line of necromancers tasked with protecting the Old Kingdom and preventing the Dead from crossing over to the realm of the living.





The Last Storyteller

DONNA BARBA HIGUERA

Petra's world is ending. Earth will soon be destroyed by a comet, and only a few hundred scientists and their children – among them Petra and her family – have been chosen to journey to a new planet. They are the ones who must carry on the human race. Hundreds of years later, Petra wakes to this new planet – and the discovery that she is the only person who remembers Earth. A sinister Collective has taken over the ship during its journey, bent on erasing the sins of humanity's past. They have systematically purged the memories of all aboard – or purged them altogether. Petra alone now carries the stories of our past, and with them, any hope for our future. Can she make them live again?

Love, Secret Santa

S. A. DOMINGO

A festive clean teen romance.

It's nearly Christmas, but Angel Green isn't celebrating – she's too busy studying for a scholarship exam. On top of that, she's organising her school's charity fundraising campaign to help a local hospice. Unfortunately, her fundraising partner is totally unreliable. Thank goodness for her Secret Santa who keeps leaving her amazing presents, including an intriguing hand-made advent calendar. Angel is dying to find out who it is...



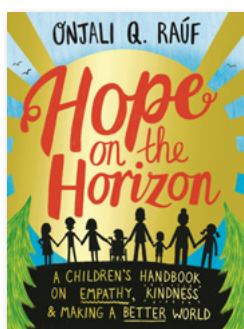
NON-FICTION RECOMMENDATIONS

You may be interested in exploring some of the recommendations below. However, there is such a wide variety of non-fiction texts available to you – about all sorts of topics, issues and interests – so if nothing catches your eye here, do look up books about things that interest you, or ask a teacher/librarian for advice!

Hope on the Horizon

ONJALI RAÚF

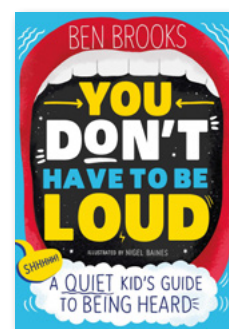
Growing up, there is so much out of our control and to feel frustrated about. But in this inspiring and practical handbook, Onjali Raúf, shares her top ten ways for finding hope, creating change and making a difference. Because with a bit of compassion, a big dollop of hope and even the smallest act of kindness, magical things can happen. Hope is on the horizon; here’s how children everywhere can find it. **Parental guidance recommended: issues related to discrimination, injustice and prejudice are included.**



You Don't Have to be Loud

BEN BROOKS

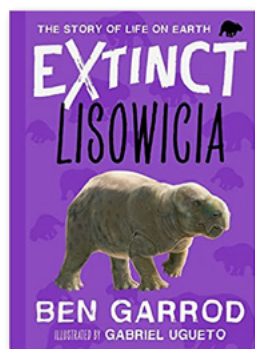
Do you sometimes feel afraid of talking in front of people, making a mistake or saying the wrong thing? You’re not alone. In this book, Ben introduces readers to some of the most famous, talented and brilliant shy people – including Charles Darwin, David Bowie, Greta Thunberg, Rosa Parks, Beyonce and Emma Watson – who used their special quietness to achieve awesome things, and he shares his tips for growing up shy in a world that can sometimes feel, well, LOUD.



Books from the Extinct Series

BEN GARROD

TV scientist Ben Garrod presents the biggest extinction events ever, told from the point of view of evolution’s superstars, the most incredible animals ever to swim, stalk, slither or walk our planet. His unique exploration of the most destructive, yet most creative force in nature makes top level science fun. His two newest books in the series are Tyrannosaurus Rex and Lisowicia, but there are several others to explore too! Watch Ben talk about the series, and his reasons for writing it, here:



Together We Can

NED HARTLEY

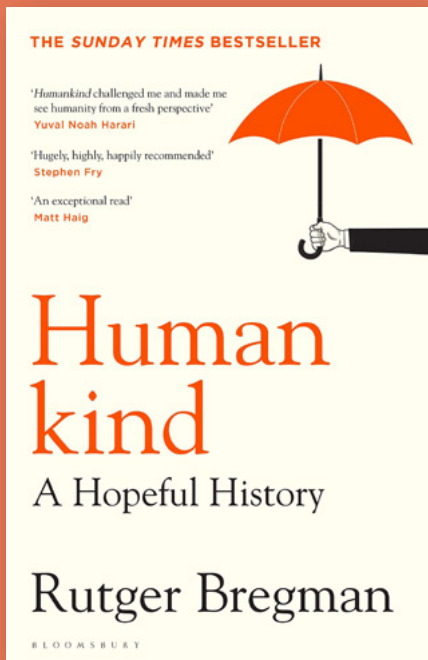
From inventing vaccines in record time to dealing with climate change, the biggest challenges we face can only be overcome when teams of people work together towards a common goal. Together We Can is a celebration of what we can achieve when human beings work collaboratively.



FOR OLDER READERS

Human Kind: A Hopeful History RUTGER BREGMAN

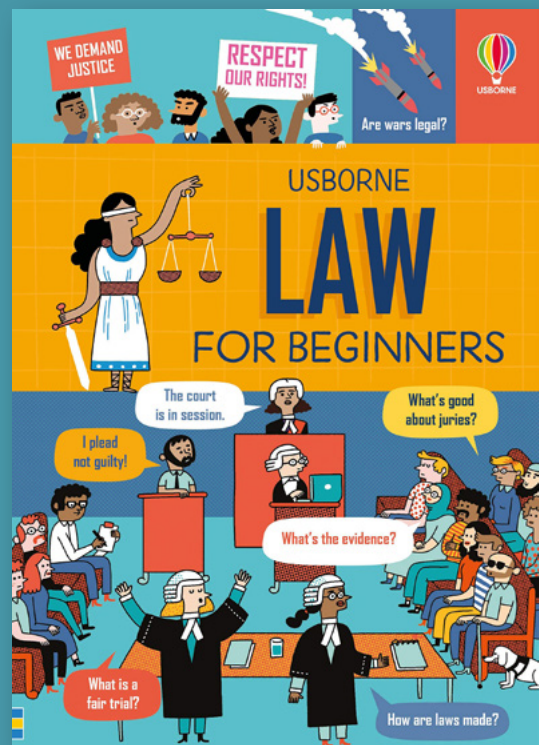
It's a belief that unites the left and right, psychologists and philosophers, writers and historians. It drives the headlines that surround us and the laws that touch our lives. Human beings, we're taught, are by nature selfish and governed by self-interest. Humankind makes a new argument: that it is realistic, as well as revolutionary, to assume that people are good. The instinct to cooperate rather than compete, trust rather than distrust, has an evolutionary basis going right back to the beginning of Homo sapiens.



Law for Beginners

HALL ROSE

An entertaining and thought-provoking guide to what laws are, who makes them and how people enforce them. It covers crime and punishment as well as social and citizenship issues such as politics and international law, using a mixture of debates, cartoon strips and clear diagrams.



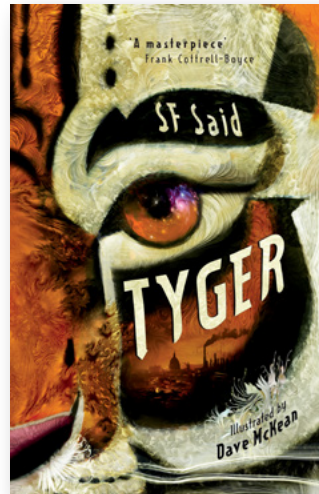
AUTHOR RECOMMENDATIONS



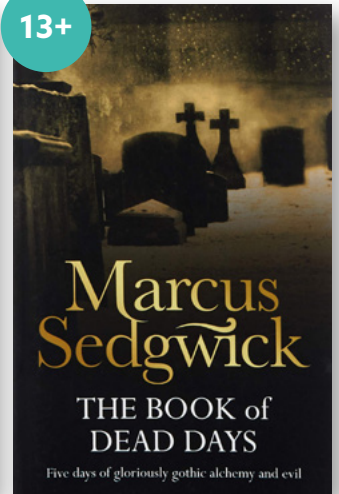
MARCUS SEDGWICK RECOMMENDS...

Award-winning author Marcus Sedgwick has written over 50 books during his career and he also teaches writing, to share his expertise. We are so delighted that he is joining us as a PiXL Reading Ambassador!

He will be featuring in every other newsletter and this month, Marcus has selected a range of books which he feels are perfect winter-themed reads for the current season. To find out more about the books he's selected, scan the QR code below:



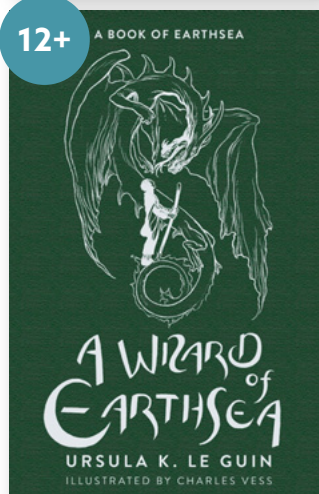
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PHIL EARLE RECOMMENDS...

We are delighted that award-winning author Phil Earle is a PiXL Reading Ambassador this academic year and is sharing his book recommendations and tips for reading. Despite finding reading difficult when he was younger, Phil has gone on to write many incredible books; his most recent novels are *When the Sky Falls* and *While the Storm Rages* and these have been extremely popular.

In his video this half term, Phil shares about his difficulties with reading and experience as a male reader. To watch this, and hear his recommendations, scan the QR code:





DARREN SIMPSON RECOMMENDS...

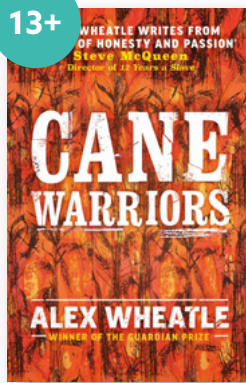
Darren Simpson is a fantastic author, and his three books were shared on various newsletters last academic year: Scavengers, The Memory Thieves and Furthermoor. We are so pleased that Darren is a PiXL Reading Ambassador this academic year. He is passionate about sharing book recommendations with students and parents, but also to hear what they think about books he's shared or ones they'd like him to explore, so feel free to use the hashtag #PiXLReading on Twitter to share your thoughts! To watch his video containing several recommendations for students across the Key Stage 3-4 range, scan the QR code:



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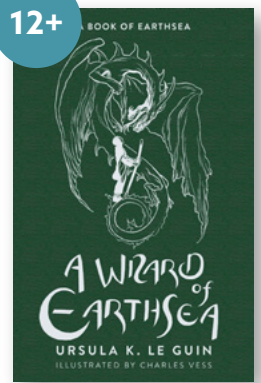
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KAYLNN BAYRON RECOMMENDS...



Kalynn is a wonderful author who has written fantastic books such as Cinderella is Dead, This Wicked Fate and This Poison Heart. She is passionate about reading and loves sharing recommendations. To find out more about this half-term's recommendations from Kalynn, scan the QR code below to hear her talk about them:



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