

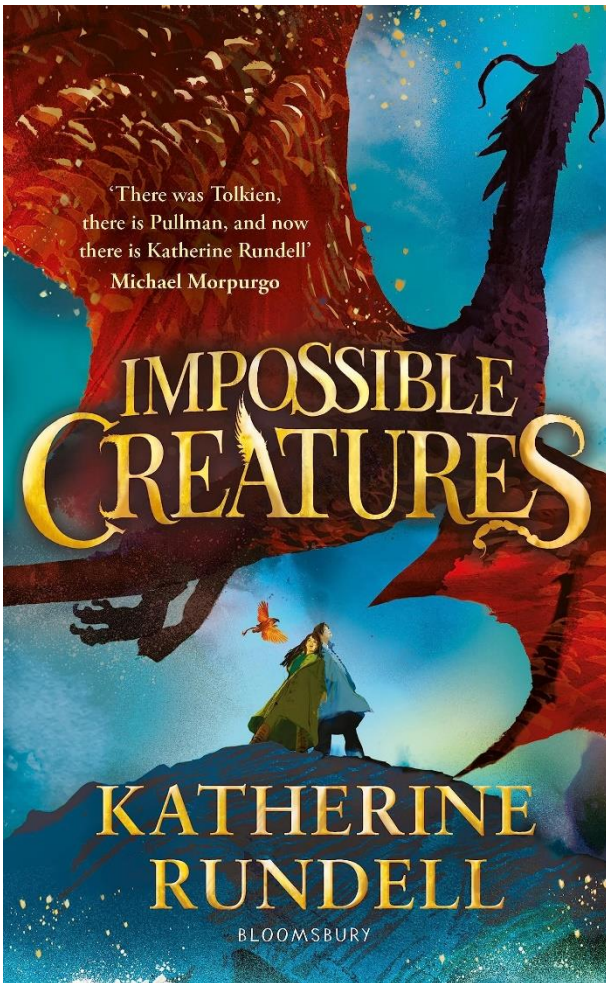
KINGSHILL READS



CIRENCESTER
KINGSHILL
SCHOOL

Welcome to the fifth edition of **KINGSHILL READS** and the first of 2025! KINGSHILL READS is our termly newsletter of reading recommendations to make sure you're never stuck for a book! As always, any member of staff at school would love to hear about what you are reading at the moment, and if you have any suggestions for books to feature in future editions, just let a member of the English Department know!

BOOK OF THE TERM



Impossible Creatures by Katherine Rundell

Suitable for: Years 7 – 10

A wonderful addition to the Extend Programme this year is the 'Books and Biscuits' club run by Ms Thomas. Currently, the group are reading *Impossible Creatures* by Katherine Rundell and, with a sequel due later this year, it seems a great opportunity to feature this brilliant novel as our Book of the Term!

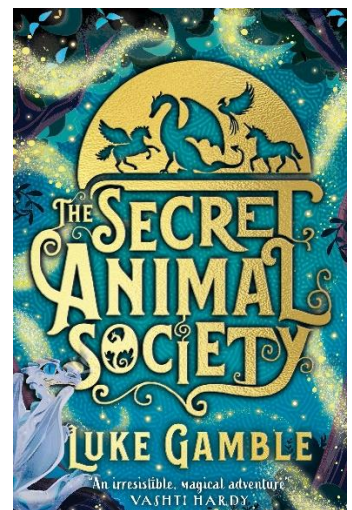
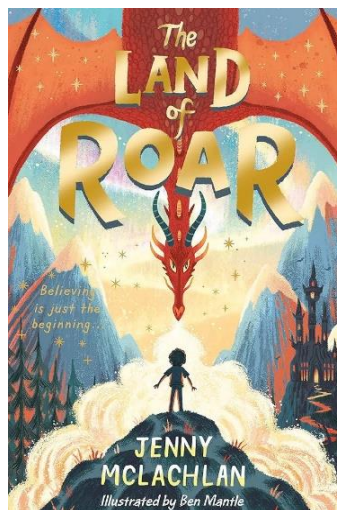
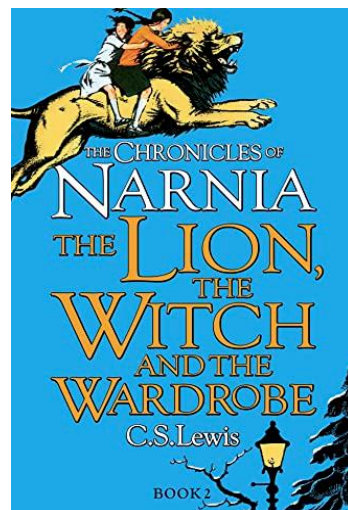
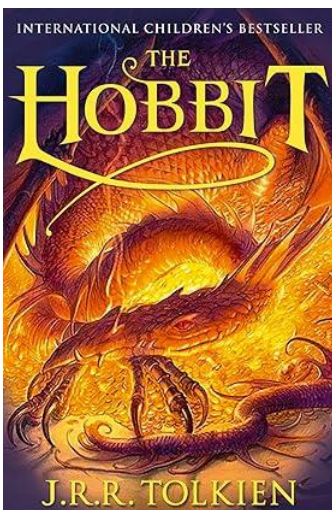
Impossible Creatures, is a breath-taking fantasy book, packed with great action and incredible, magical creatures. The Archipelago is a collection of hidden, secret islands inhabited by all the magical creatures you probably think are just myths or stories: dragons, griffins, sphinxes, unicorns, krakens, and many more. But the Archipelago is in trouble. Something dark has taken root at its centre and the islands' glimourie (magic) is disappearing.

Mal knows something's wrong with the glimourie, but her biggest concern right now is the man who just tried to murder her. Why would someone want her dead? Thrown together with a boy from our world, Christopher, and hunted by the would-be murderer, Mal embarks on an unplanned journey across the Archipelago to look for answers.

Katherine Rundell has created an incredibly believable magical world with writing that sweeps you up and main characters who are simultaneously flawed yet inherently pure and good.

Mr Smith, Head of English

IF YOU LIKE IMPOSSIBLE CREATURES, TRY THESE...



STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS



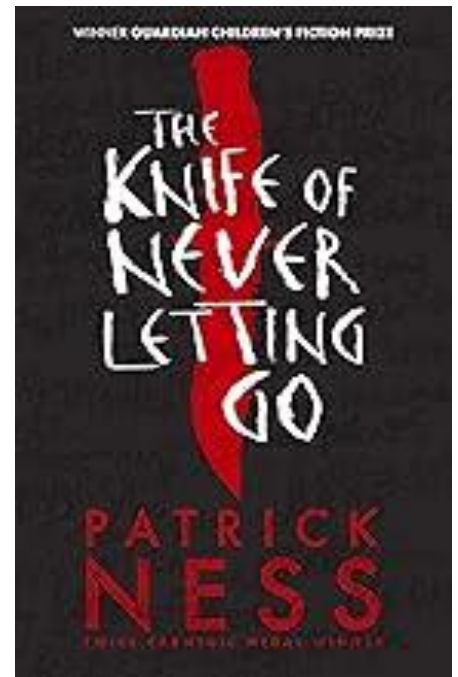
***This Wicked Fate* by Kaylynn Bayron**

Suitable for Years 8 - 10

This Wicked Fate is a sequel to the first book, *This Poison Heart*, which deals with identity, family, origins and trust. The book starts with the death of Briseis' adopted mother therefore setting the characters on a quest to find the pieces of the Arabus heart in an attempt to bring her mother back to life.

This book has a very good balance between fantasy and reality. The moral of the book is that love isn't a weakness it's a strength you should embrace and to accept yourself for who you are rather than trying to hide yourself from others. I would definitely recommend this book to people who enjoy a mystery series with Greek myths thrown in!

Seraphina, Y8



***The Knife of Never Letting Go* by Patrick Ness**

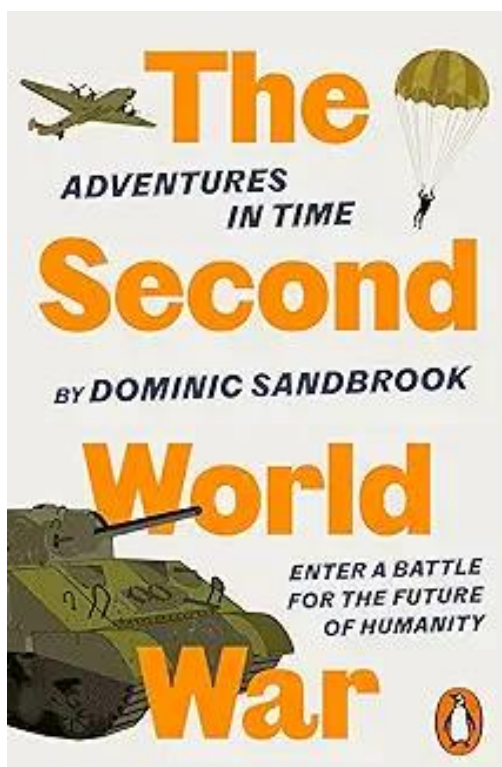
Suitable for Years 8 - 11

The first instalment of the Chaos Walking trilogy is set in Prentisstown, a town where all women have been wiped out by a germ, animals can talk, and everyone can hear everyone else's thoughts in a constant, overwhelming 'Noise'.

This book is about a boy named Todd Hewitt, who in 30 days, will become a man. All is ordinary until he stumbles across a spot of complete silence, which is impossible, but little did he know his life would change forever...

I would recommend this book for Years 8-11, and for those who enjoy fast-paced dark, dystopian books, that will always keep you on the edge of your seat! I really enjoyed the action and emotional scenes that bring this book to life!

Anabelle, Y8



***Adventures in Time: The Second World War* by Dominic Sandbrook**

'The Second World War' is a brief overview of one of the deadliest conflicts in human history. The book uses a unique style of writing as most of the battles and events are shown through the eyes of the ordinary people who were at the forefront of it all. In addition, it shows the war from the perspectives of the overarching powers in the world.

The book has been split into five distinct parts, each separated into smaller chapters. Each chapter follows the paths of the significant stepping-stones that lead the way for the victory of the allied forces.

Each major battle is covered in detail outlining the contexts of some battles. However, it does not enter into too much detail and avoids becoming a gory read. However, the book doesn't shy away from presenting some of the savage and merciless acts committed during these terrible years.

I recommend this as a read for people who are looking to learn more about the Second World War. This is an appropriate read for people who do not already know much about the war, and it is a good initial read that is fast paced and engaging.

Josh, Y9

FROM THE LIBRARY

Burn by Patrick Ness

Suitable for Years 9 – 11

“On a cold Sunday evening in early 1957, Sarah Dewhurst waited with her father in the parking lot of the Chevron Gas Station for the dragon he’d hired to help on the farm.”

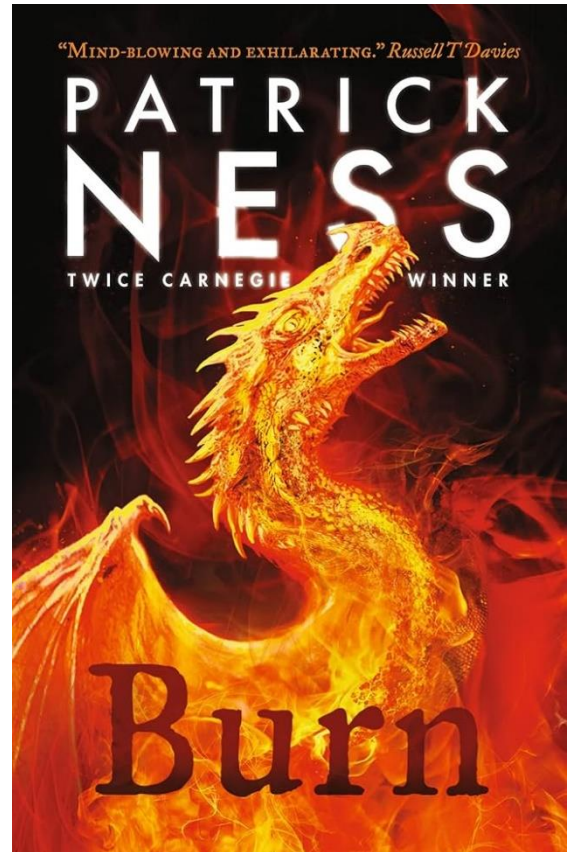
However, it turns out that Kazimir, their dragon, has more to him than meets the eye....

Kazimir knows something Sarah doesn’t. He has arrived at the farm because of a prophecy. A prophecy that involves a deadly assassin, dragon worshippers, two secret agents – and Sarah Dewhurst herself.

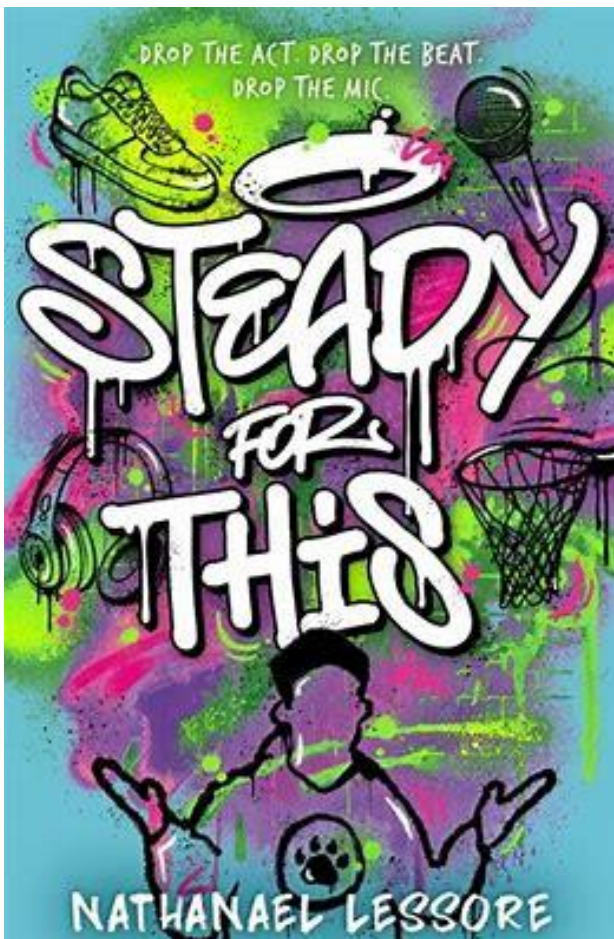
From the bestselling author of the *Chaos Walking* trilogy: *Ask the Answer*, *A Monster Calls* and *Monsters of Men*, *More Than This* and *The Rest of Us Just Live Here*, comes a story of mystery fantasy and history all rolled into one as Sarah becomes embroiled in a dangerous journey of redemption and revenge.

I wasn’t sure what to expect with this book, but Patrick Ness remains inventive, original and thoroughly absorbing and the writing is as beautiful and evocative as ever. If you haven’t read any of his books, give *Burn* a try!

Mrs Evans, Librarian



GUEST RECOMMENDATION



Each term we ask someone from outside our immediate school community, but with a passion for children’s literature, to recommend a book they feel you might enjoy.

This term, Sarah Cooksley, Head of Learning and Participation at Cheltenham Festivals, has kindly reviewed a book for us. Not only is Sarah no stranger to YA fiction from her time as a Head of English, but she also helps to organise the hugely successful Reading Teachers = Reading Pupils programme.

Steady For This by Nathanael Lessore

Suitable for Year 7-11

Steady for This is a hilarious and heart-warming portrayal of Shaun’s (AKA MC Growls) journey of finding himself and his place in the world. Themes of friendship, loyalty, poverty, anxiety and the challenges facing young carers permeate this book. Not to mention this book celebrates the freedom and creativity that can be found in language even when language doesn’t come easily to you.

Lessore explores many of the issues facing working class young people without it being preachy – it is genuinely laugh-out-loud funny, and the characters are so relatable. There is a Shaun, a Shanks, a Tanisha and a Siobhan in almost every school. I would enthusiastically recommend this to all readers between 11 and 16.

*Sarah Cooksley,
Head of Learning and Participation at Cheltenham Festivals*

SUBJECT SPOTLIGHT

At Kingshill, reading is not just for English lessons, so each term a member of staff from a different department will recommend a book they think you might enjoy and that will enhance your understanding of their subject. Our fifth SUBJECT SPOTLIGHT recommendation comes from our Head of Science, Mr David.

A Short History of Nearly Everything by Bill Bryson

Suitable for Years 9-11

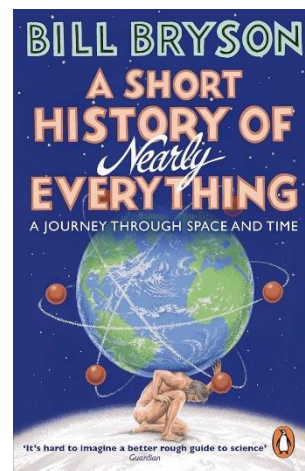
A Short History of Nearly Everything by Bill Bryson does exactly what it says on the tin. All those times over the years where I thought 'I wonder what would happen if?' or 'how did that get discovered?' are brilliantly answered in this text. It has every branch of Science in it and everything is explained in a way that makes it useful to a complete novice or Stephen Hawking!

The book covers a whole range of essential topics such as atoms, cells and particles but it also covers topics such as lightning storms, tectonic plates and evolution. Each topic contains the knowledge necessary to understand it but also interesting stats and facts and funny or interesting stories about the scientists who worked in that field all intricately woven together to bring the content to life.

Before reading this book, I was completely unaware that one thunderstorm is thought to contain the same energy used by the United States in four days or that when thinking about the scale of things the nucleus of an atom compared to the total size of an atom is the same as the size of a fly to the size of a cathedral!

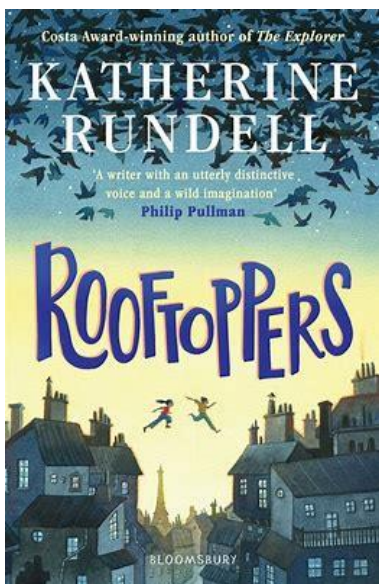
For all of those KS4 students out there that still can't remember what a proton, neutron or electron is this is the book for you! I would recommend ALL students read this through Years 10 and 11 to support their learning

Mr David, Head of Science



NEW CHAPTERS

Each edition of KINGSHILL READS will showcase some of the books you are enjoying with your tutors twice a week as part of our NEW CHAPTERS reading programme.



Rooftoppers by Katherine Rundell (Year 7 New Chapters book)

Suitable for Years 7-9

Found floating in a cello case in the middle of the English Channel after a shipwreck on her first birthday by eccentric young scholar Charles, Sophie seems to be marked out for an unconventional existence. Growing up in Charles's shabby home in England, she learns to love music and to read Shakespeare, but very little about how to be ladylike. On her twelfth birthday, the disapproving authorities intervene, but before they can take her away to an orphanage, the discovery of a chance clue in her cello case makes Charles and Sophie decide to ignore the authorities, and instead run away to Paris in search of Sophie's long lost-mother, whatever the consequences may be.

There is a wistful, old-fashioned charm to Katherine Rundell's second book: her poetic language and imaginative approach set this book apart from many other adventure stories for this age group. Whimsical, beautifully-written and as carefully balanced as the tightrope Sophie learns to walk, *Rooftoppers* is a sensitive and emotionally-resonant novel with an uplifting message about the power of hope.

The Book Trust

BOOKISH THOUGHT FOR THE TERM...

"Stories are the most important thing in the world. Without stories, we wouldn't be human beings at all."

- Philip Pullman