
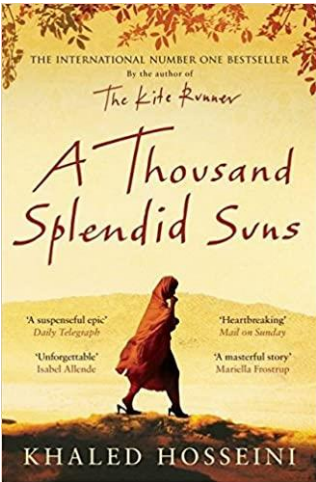
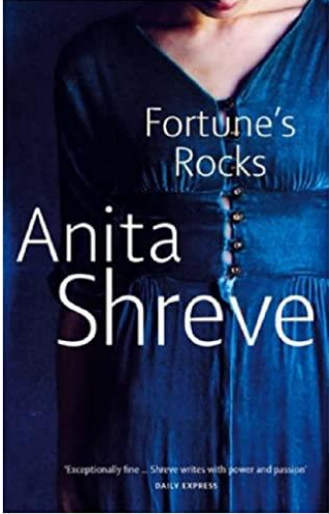
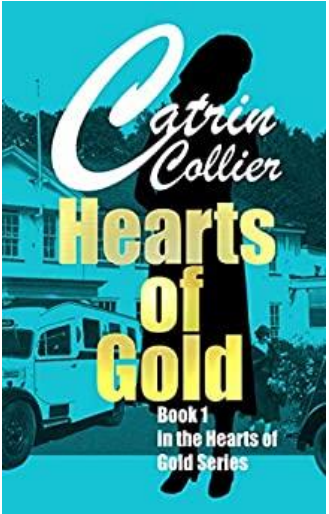
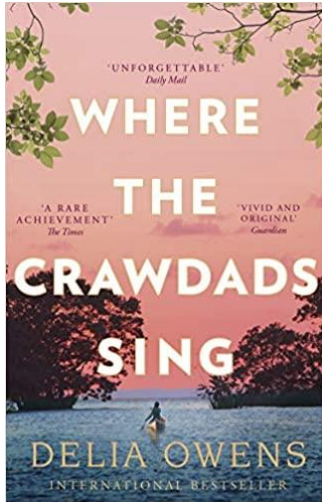


Miss Hogg's Desert Island Books

Book cover	Book Title and Author	Blurb	Reason for choice
	<p>'The Great Gatsby' – F. Scott Fitzgerald</p>	<p>A consummate summary of the 'roaring twenties', and a devastating expose of the 'Jazz Age'. Through the narration of Nick Carraway, the reader is taken into the superficially glittering world of the mansions which lined the Long Island shore in the 1920s, to encounter Nick's cousin Daisy, her brash but wealthy husband Tom Buchanan, Jay Gatsby and the mystery that surrounds him.</p>	<p>This is my all-time favourite book. I have three copies of it: my well-worn annotated copy, a slimline copy which fits in any handbag for indulging in while travelling, and my collectors' edition copy. I honestly believe that studying this book at A level allowed me to fully appreciate it in a way I would never have done otherwise. The book contains my favourite quote: 'I was within and without, simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life,' which is a notion which I feel we probably all share at some point. The author perfectly captures the moral failures of a society obsessed with wealth and status, as well as the real conflict between illusion and reality. I think, in some way, we are all searching for our own green light.</p>
	<p>'A Thousand Splendid Suns' – Khaled Hosseini</p>	<p>Mariam is only fifteen when she is sent to Kabul to marry Rasheed. Nearly two decades later, a friendship grows between Mariam and a local teenager, Laila, as strong as the ties between mother and daughter. When the Taliban take over, life becomes a desperate struggle against starvation, brutality and fear. Yet love can move a person to act in unexpected ways, and lead them to overcome the most daunting obstacles with a startling heroism.</p>	<p>This book will never leave me and was the first book that made me cry. The subject matter is crushingly upsetting at times, but there is such beauty and love in the relationships between the main characters. I was left emotionally exhausted by the end, but I was just blown away by how good the book was and how it was so beautifully written. An absolute must read for those living such a comparatively privileged life in Great Britain.</p>

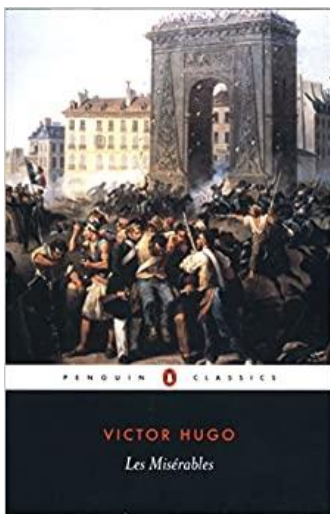
	<p>'Fortune's Rocks' – Anita Shreve</p>	<p>It is the summer of 1899, and Olympia Biddeford and her parents have retired from the heat of Boston to the coastal resort of Fortune's Rocks. When the celebrated essayist John Haskell is invited to stay, no one foresees the affair that is to follow. What begins as the briefest of silences becomes a relationship that is both passionate and destructive, six short weeks that will shape the rest of their lives.</p>	<p>This was the first Anita Shreve book I read, and the one that has stuck with me the most. The intense but highly inappropriate relationship between Olympia and John Haskell is written in such a way that you are able to empathise with both characters, rather than it being sensationalistic. In a way it seeks to highlight the foundations on which a successful relationship should be built, and what you should not settle for. The book contains so much historical detail too, including 19th century medicine, law and order and lifestyles of the people living at this time.</p>
	<p>'Hearts of Gold' – Catrin Collier</p>	<p>Trainee midwife Bethan Powell lives and works in the shadow of the Graig Workhouse during the Depression. Her work is gruelling, the financial hardship and friction at home between her communist miner father, rigidly Chapel mother, unruly brothers, and dishonest aunt, distressing. The working-class of Pontypridd do not inhabit the same world as the 'crache', or gentry, who live the other side of town. When Bethan forms for Dr Andrew Johm, their love has to overcome formidable prejudice, until a sinister discovery forces Bethan to choose between the pull of her heart and a deeper sense of duty to her family.</p>	<p>I first became aware of this book via the BBC adaptation a number of years ago and, having followed the drama series, was desperate to read the book. It is a work of fiction woven around the social history of the time. It is set in the 1930s, right in the heart of the depression, where families are struggling to survive. The story centres on Bethan, who is a nurse and a major contributor to the household, helping to keep the family from total poverty. Despite its title, it is not a typical romance novel. It is a book about struggles and family loyalty as well as the power of decisions and consequences.</p>



'Where the Crawdads Sing' – Delia Owens

For years, rumours of the 'Marsh Girl' have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life - until the unthinkable happens.

There is a reason that over 40,000 people have taken the time to write glowing reviews of this book on Amazon. This was a lockdown purchase and I found it so engaging that I devoured it in only a day. The themes of loneliness, abandonment and isolation run through the whole book and the main character, Kya, is so fragile and vulnerable but also incredibly strong, brave, and inspirational. The novel also makes you reflect on our natural world and our relationship with it. I was really sad when this book came to an end and it is without a doubt one which I will pick up to read again in the future.

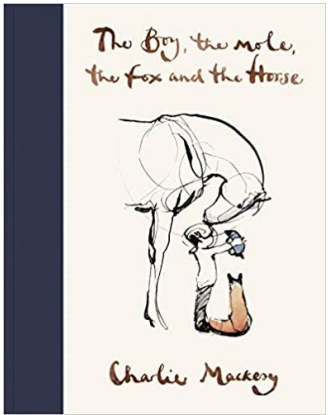


'Les Misérables' – Victor Hugo

Victor Hugo's tale of injustice, heroism and love follows the fortunes of Jean Valjean, an escaped convict determined to put his criminal past behind him. But his attempts to become a respected member of the community are constantly put under threat: by his own conscience, when, owing to a case of mistaken identity, another man is arrested in his place; and by the relentless investigations of the dogged policeman Javert. The tale offers philosophical insight on the good deeds that can happen even amid ignorance and poverty.

Victor Hugo says, in the preface of his novel, that 'so long as ignorance and poverty exist on earth, books of the nature of 'Les Misérables' cannot fail to be of use,' and he is so right. There is no direct translation of the title, but it generally refers to the poverty-stricken people of society. Like many, I first became aware of this novel through the West End musical of the same name, which remains my favourite musical to date. Every single character has a real depth to them, and it is incredible how closely intertwined their lives become. It is a tale of redemption, of highlighting how it is never too late to make amends for the past. Just make sure you pick up a good translation of the book (like this one) as otherwise it will be a struggle to read!

	<p>'Factfulness' — Hans Rosling</p>	<p>When asked simple questions about global trends – what percentage of people around the world are living in poverty; why the global population is increasing; how many girls finish school – we systematically get the answers wrong. It turns out that the world, for all its imperfections, is in a much better state than we might think. But when we worry about everything all the time instead of embracing a world view based on facts, we can lose our ability to focus on the things that threaten us the most.</p>	<p>I was recommended this book by so many people and I am so glad that I took their advice. This book is so readable and accessible to all and challenges everything I believed about the world we live in. At the moment, more than ever, we are feeling guilty and depressed about the terrible state of the world, but this book not only made me feel more positive and hopeful about humanity, but also showed that we can really make a difference. The learning I gained from this book inspired me to turn it into a new Scheme of Learning for Year 7, to encourage them to explore their misconceptions of the world early on within their studies of Geography.</p>
	<p>'The Jigsaw Man' – Paul Britton</p>	<p>Forensic psychologist Paul Britton has assisted the police in over a hundred cases and has an almost mythic status in the field of crime deduction. What he searches for at the scene of the crime are not fingerprints, fibres or bloodstains - he looks for the 'mind trace' left behind by those responsible. The Jigsaw Man is not only a detective story involving some of the most high-profile cases of recent years, but also a journey of discovery into the darkest recesses of the human mind to confront the question 'Where does crime come from?'</p>	<p>I have always been fascinated by stories of real crime and the reasons for why criminals do what they do. Before I decided I wanted to be a teacher, I was looking into studying Forensic Science with Criminology at university. I soon decided this was not a great idea as science has never been my strong point, but I have remained interested in forensics and criminal psychology all the same. The subject matter is, as expected, pretty horrific at times, but it is so interesting to see how Paul came to helping the police to solve some of the most brutal crimes in recent British history.</p>

	<p>'The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse' – Charlie Mackesy</p>	<p>A book of hope for uncertain times. Enter the world of Charlie's four unlikely friends, discover their story and their most important life lessons. The conversations of the boy, the mole, the fox and the horse have been shared thousands of times online, recreated in school art classes, hung on hospital walls and turned into tattoos.</p>	<p>This was another lockdown purchase. I decided I needed a copy of this book after seeing all the beautiful illustrations that people were sharing on social media. This is a real 'coffee table book' and, not only is it beautifully presented but, is quite possibly the most inspirational book I have ever owned. It gives you hope. The conversations between the Boy and the friends he finds along the way reflect the truths that many of us have forgotten and remind us to be gentle with both ourselves and others. Just a word of warning though: if you buy one copy, you will end up buying several more for family and friends!</p>
	<p>'Guess How Much I Love You' – Sam McBratney</p>	<p>Sometimes, when you love someone very, very much, you want to find a way of describing how much you treasure them. But, as Little Nutbrown Hare and Big Nutbrown Hare discover, love is not always an easy thing to measure. The story of Little and Big Nutbrown Hares' efforts to express their love for each other has become a publishing phenomenon.</p>	<p>I was a little bit too old for this book when it was first published in 1994, but I remember reading it to my sister when she was little. It has since become my very favourite children's book and I buy a copy of it for every friend who has a new baby. The story is far from complex, but it is such heart-warming tale about the immeasurable love between a parent and their child, with each trying to outdo each other with their descriptions of their love for each other.</p>