



# IAN RAMSEY CE ACADEMY

Together to learn, to grow, to serve

# Reading Newsletter



# Welcome

Welcome to our March edition of the Reading Newsletter! I hope you enjoyed our last edition. This month's is packed with even more reading-related information. I hope you enjoy what is included, but if there is anything you want to see that isn't here yet, why not drop the Academy and email and let me know what you would like to be included?

In this month's edition, you'll find information about:

- fiction,
- non-fiction
- poetry
- authors and their work
- Bedrock Vocabulary
- World Book Day
- how to help your child with their reading journey
- what's new in reading;
- local libraries
- and much more.

So, sit back, grab a cuppa and enjoy our Reading Newsletter.

As always, your support is hugely appreciated,

Mrs Chapman-Jones



# this MONTH in history

# MARCH

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>1921:</b> Richard Wilbur, author of <i>Beowulf</i> , born.	<b>1930:</b> D. H. Lawrence dies. <b>1942:</b> John Irving (The Cider House Rules) born.	<b>1926:</b> John Merrill (Lost in Translation) born.	<b>1852:</b> Nikolai Gogol (The Government Inspector) dies.	<b>1942:</b> Susan Hill (The Woman in Black) born. <b>1995:</b> Patricia Highsmith (The Talented Mr Ripley) dies.	<b>1806:</b> Elizabeth Barrett born. <b>1888:</b> Louisa May Alcott (Little Women) dies.	<b>1274:</b> St. Thomas Aquinas dies. <b>1964:</b> Bret Easton Ellis (American Psycho) born.
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1945:</b> 'Kiss Me Kate' opens in Britain. <b>1945:</b> International Women's Day 1 <sup>st</sup> observed.	<b>1776:</b> Adam Smith publishes the influential economics book 'The Wealth of Nations'.	<b>1801:</b> First official census in Britain, showing a population of 10 million.	<b>1952:</b> Douglas Adams (The Hitchhiker's guide to the Galaxy) born.	<b>2001:</b> Robert Ludlum (The Bourne Ultimatum) dies.	<b>1911:</b> L. Ron Hubbard (Mission Earth) born.	<b>1883:</b> Karl Marx dies.
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>1998:</b> Benjamin Spock (The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care) dies.	<b>1941:</b> Isaak Babel (Crossing into Poland) dies.	<b>1893:</b> Wilfred Owen (war poet) born.	<b>1952:</b> Amy Tan (The Bonesetter's Daughter) born.	<b>1895:</b> Frederick Douglass dies. <b>2005:</b> Hunter S. Thompson (Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas) dies.	<b>1860:</b> George Eliot finishes her novel 'The Mill on the Floss'.	
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>1948:</b> Andrew Lloyd Webber is born.	<b>2016:</b> GPR investigation of Shakespeare's tomb concludes that his skull has probably been stolen.	<b>1853:</b> Anti-slavery newspaper 'The Provincial Freeman' first published in Ontario.	<b>1811:</b> Percy Bysshe-Shelley is expelled from the University of Oxford.	<b>1892:</b> Walt Whitman dies. <b>1914:</b> Tennessee Williams (A Streetcar Named Desire) born.	<b>1866:</b> Us President Johnson vetoes civil rights bill but it later becomes the 14 <sup>th</sup> amendment.	<b>1941:</b> Virginia Woolf dies.
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				
<b>1912:</b> Captain Robert Scott, storm-bound near the South Pole makes final entry in his diary 'The end cannot be far'.	<b>1894:</b> George Bernard Shaw's play 'Candida' premieres at the theatre Royal, South Shields, England.	<b>1855:</b> Charlotte Bronte (Jane Eyre) dies. <b>1962:</b> John Fowles (The French Lieutenant's Woman) born.				

# Author spotlight

## This month's author: David Almond

David Almond is a world-renowned writer who was born and raised in Newcastle. He attended UEA and studied English and American Literature before entering the world of work which included jobs as a labourer on building sites, a tank cleaner in a shipyard, a brush salesman, a postman, a hotel porter and a primary school teacher.

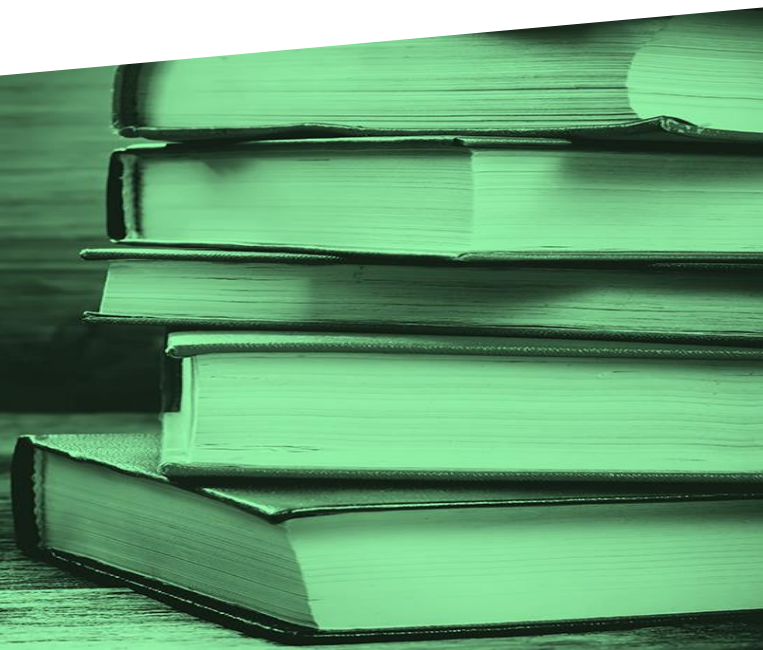
On weekends and in school holidays, David wrote short stories and began having his work published in magazines. As he approached thirty, he gave it all up, resigned from his job, sold his house and moved to a Norfolk commune where he spent a year writing, and writing and writing.

His first novel took him five years to write and was rejected by every UK publisher. Instead of being discouraged, David squared his shoulders and kept on writing. He wrote stories, poems and plays. He worked in Adult Literacy and as a part time special needs teacher. He edited a literary magazine and his first two story collections were published by Iron Press.

Then came *Skellig*. And everything changed.

*Skellig* has been published in 40 languages. It has sold over a million copies in the English language. It has become a stage play, a radio play, a movie and an opera. Thanks to *Skellig*, a whole new creative world opened up for David and he's since written many more novels, stories, plays, opera librettos and songs. He has won some of the world's major literary prizes.

David now lives in Newcastle. He is Professor of Creative Writing at Bath Spa University. He is fascinated by the nature of creativity, by the writing process and by education. He works with artists, musicians, actors, teachers, directors, and dancers. He works with, and writes for, children and adults. He believes that every story we write or read or act or sing or dance is an act of optimism and a move against destructive forces that want to stifle us. He keeps on writing.



# Author to academy



Dear pupils of Ian Ramsey CE Academy,

I hope you're all well and coping OK in these very strange and difficult times. I'm not sure how I'd have taken it all when I was your age. I grew up on a council estate in Gateshead. I loved running about with my friends, playing football in the streets and fields. It would have been difficult to have my freedoms curtailed, as you have now. Still, we can look forward to the days when we'll all have more liberty again. I know I'd have spent a fair amount of time reading. Books were (and are!) really important to me. They took me out of myself, allowed me to experience and imagine other lives. Reading was so important to my education and to my whole life. I used to write as well as read. I wasn't a particularly good or brilliant school pupil, but I knew I wanted to be a writer from a very young age. I used to scribble stories in notebooks – didn't matter how messy or weird they were. Nobody else had to see them. Writing allowed me to explore the world, experiment with ideas, to understand a bit more about myself. I've published lots of books now, of course. But in many ways, I'm the same now as I was then. I scribble in notebooks, I write stories, I wander about in the world. And most of my stories are set in the North East. They're about people like us who speak like us and who live in the kinds of places that we do.

My most recent novel is *Brand New Boy*, set in a Northeastern school. In April my next novel comes out. It's called *Bone Music* and is about a girl who moves from Newcastle to the wide-open spaces of Northumberland. My best-known book is *Skellig*, which has been published all around the world, and which has been turned into a film, a stage play and an opera. All these books are mainly for young people like you. I hope that when young people read them, they begin to think, 'Maybe I could try to write something like that!'

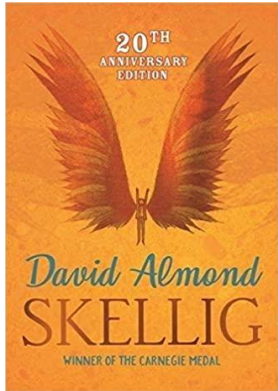
Anyway, look after yourselves. Keep reading. Keep writing. And let's all be optimistic!

All best wishes,

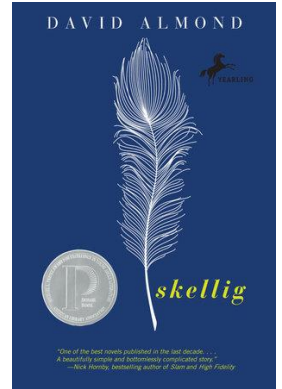
*David Almond*



# From page to screen

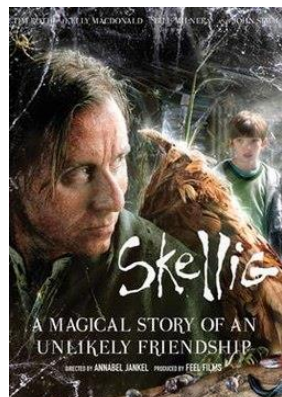


This month's From Page to Screen concerns our Spotlight author. Originally published in 1998, *Skellig* is a novel written by David Almond for children. The novel focuses on 10-year-old Michael and his family who have recently moved. His baby sister was born prematurely and may not live because of a heart condition. When Michael goes into the garage of his new house, he finds a strange, emaciated creature hidden amongst the boxes. This is Skellig. But who, or more importantly what, is Skellig? And how will he impact on Michael's family?



The novel was the Whitbread Children's Book of the Year and won the Carnegie Medal from the Library Association.

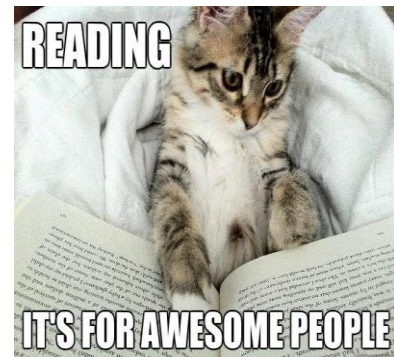
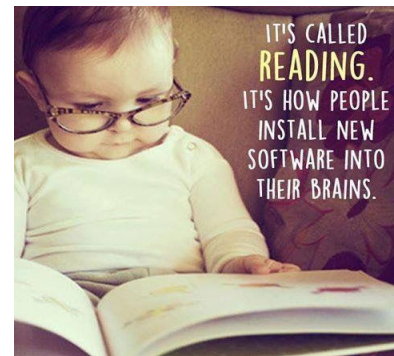
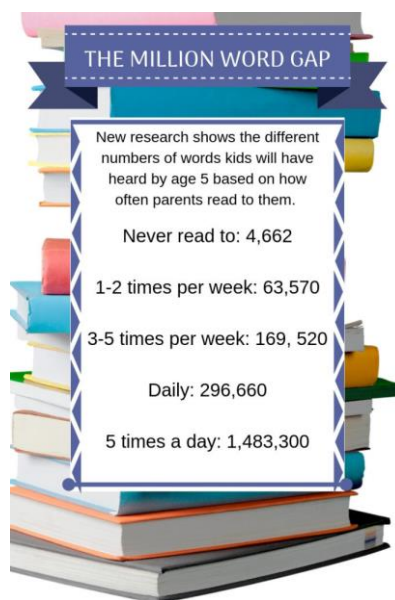
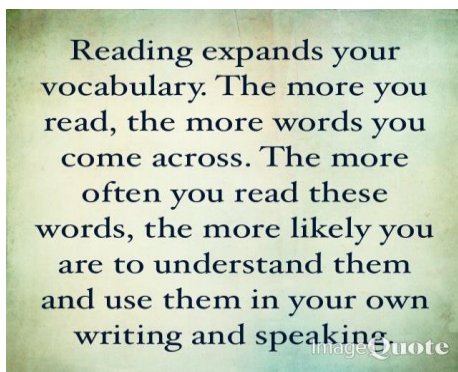
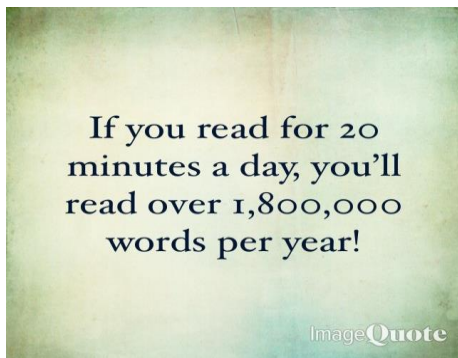
In 2009, *Skellig* became part of Sky 1's plan to invest in producing new high-definition dramas. Filmed in Caerphilly, Wales and with scenes shot in and around Cardiff, cast members included Oscar-nominee Tim Roth in the title role. The film was nominated for various RTS Television Awards including Best Effects in Special Effects.



# Reading Facts

If children say they don't like reading it is because they haven't found the right book yet! Reading magazines, autobiographies, fact files, blogs, memes all count.

If your child is struggling to read, then why not direct them to Mrs Bailey, Ian Ramsey CE Academy's very own Librarian, keeper of books and fount of all knowledge in book related matters? We can guarantee that she will find a book your child will love. And if you contact her via email, it will all be socially distanced, meaning your child can find a book they enjoy at no risk to themselves!



# Reading Challenge Grid

Can you complete a row of three in any direction? Can you complete all four corners? Can you complete all the boxes on the grid?

Hand in your completed tasks, with book titles and a short review, to Mrs. Poppleton (in person or via email) to be entered into the termly prize draw!

Read at least one book from your year group reading challenge.	Read a book about do-overs or fresh starts.	Read a book everyone seems to have read but you.
Read a book you have seen on someone's bookshelf (in real life, on a Zoom call, in a TV show etc.).	Read a book where the main character works at your current or dream job.	Read a book about a social justice issue.
Read a classic.	Read a book set somewhere you would like to visit.	Read a book that is non-fiction, like a biography or autobiography.





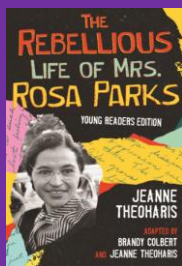
# What's new?

## Non-fiction

### 'The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks' by Jeanne Theoharis

Rosa Parks is one of the most well-known Americans today, but much of what is known and taught about her is incomplete, distorted, and just plain wrong. In this young readers' edition of the NAACP Image Award—winning *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, Jeanne Theoharis shatters the myths that Parks was meek, accidental, tired, or middle class. She reveals a lifelong freedom fighter whose activism began two decades before her historic stand that

sparked the Montgomery bus boycott and continued for 40 years after.



## Fiction

### 'The Gilded Ones' by Namina Forna

'There's gold running through 16-year-old Deka's veins. She fears it will make her an outcast from her village when she is discovered, but what it does is make her a warrior — an alaki, to be specific.

Namina Forna's debut book, the first in a trilogy of YA fantasy, stems from her experience as a young girl in West Africa and in America. As she told Refinery29, "Fantasy allows us to ask questions that I as a teenage girl was asking. There were all these questions that I wanted to understand about life: about what it means to be a woman, about religion, about all of these things. And I think with *The Gilded Ones*, there's that safety of examining things through the lens of fantasy."

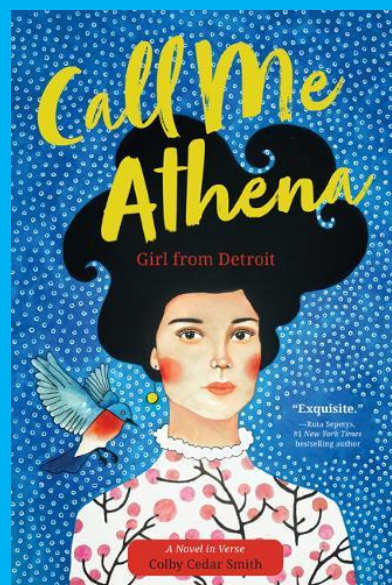


## Poetry

### 'Call me Athena: Girl from Detroit' by Colby Cedar Smith.

*CALL ME ATHENA* is a stunning and gorgeous debut from Colby Cedar Smith. Untamed and beautifully wild, this novel in verse careens from the hilltops of France to the olive groves of Greece to the bustling city streets of Detroit. Full of love & images that conjure family, hope, hardship and holding onto our dreams when things fall away from us. With lush, lyrical language, vibrant characters & a storyline that will keep you enthralled from beginning to end, this is a book that stays with you long after the last poem. I love this story. (Ellen Hagan, co-author of *Watch Us Rise* and author of *Reckless, Glorious Girl*)

Exquisite. A beautiful novel in verse. (Ruta Sepetys, #1 New York Times bestselling author and Carnegie Medal winner.)



# Staff Recommendations



Mrs Chapman-Jones recommends:  
**'The Places I've Cried in Public'** by  
Holly Bourne

Although this is a YA book, I read this for one of the book clubs that I am a member of. I was shocked at the change in Amelie and can see how easily this could be a true story. An engaging and hard hitting read.



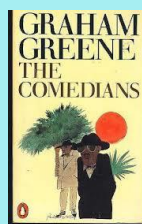
Mr. Patrick recommends:  
**'Fifty Fifty.'** by Stephen  
Mearns

This was recommended to me by a colleague, and I really enjoyed it. The novel follows two sisters, both accused of murder. But who committed the crime? And who will be found guilty?



Mrs Robson recommends:  
**'The Comedians'** by  
Graham Greene

Set in Haiti under the rule of François "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his secret police, the Tontons Macoutes, the novel explores political repression and terrorism through the figure of an English hotel owner.



Mr. Snowden recommends:  
**'The Hand of Christ'** by  
Joseph S Nagle

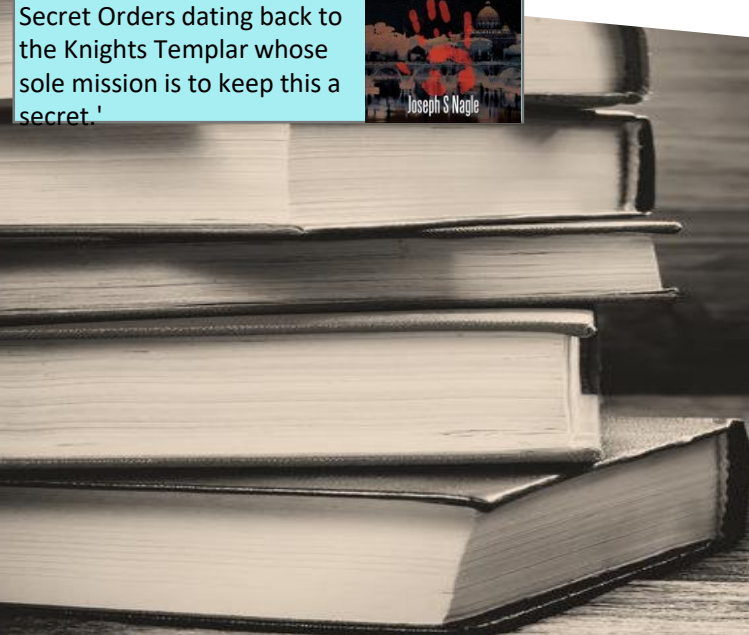
'Imagine if Jesus of Nazareth had fathered a child ... 2000 years later, what would the potential consequences of that be?

Secret Orders dating back to the Knights Templar whose sole mission is to keep this a secret.'



Miss Godfrey recommends:  
**'Winter's Orbit'** by Everina  
Maxwell

This was so good I stayed up long past bedtime to find out how it all resolved! It is a YA novel with galactic overlord aliens, espionage plots and arranged marriage with brilliant representations. It was just amazing!



# The Masked Reader

## Who's that behind the book?



Can you make a head start by guessing who this pilgrim is?



Guess who is Tucking into this book!



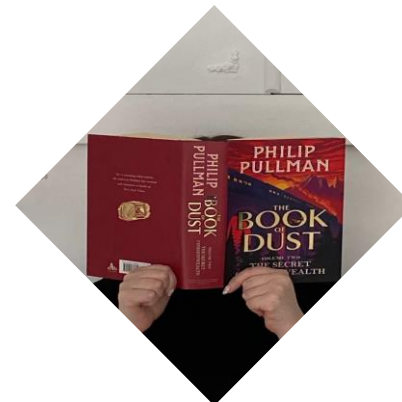
Get in the zone and identify this supportive staff member.



Mr P Is enjoying the demise of Mr Y, but which member of staff is it?



Which member of staff has swapped brushes for books this moth?



She doesn't Cook anymore, but does she dust? Which member of staff is taking a break from House work?

### Featured books:

**I Am Pilgrim** by Terry Hayes

**Diamonds and Dust** by Carol Hedges

**Memphis 68 – The Tragedy of Southern Soul** by Stuart Cosgrove

**The End of Mr Y** by Scarlett Thomas

**Watchmen** by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons

**The Book of Dust** by Phillip Pullman



# Local Libraries

## Yarm Library

Located at the bottom end of Yarm High Street, Yarm Library is easy to miss. But if you are in Yarm and have time to spare, a visit is a must! The library offers a separate children's section and reading room.

Unfortunately, due to the current Lock Down, Yarm library is not open for people to visit but will be open as soon as lockdown permits.

The library is open:

- Monday and Wednesday: 10am – 5pm
- Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: 10am – 7pm
- Saturday: 10am – 12.30pm
- Sunday: Closed all day.



# Have you been to..?

## Seven Stories

Seven Stories, the National Centre for Children's Books is a museum and visitor center dedicated to children's literature and based in the Ouseburn Valley, Newcastle upon Tyne, close to the Quayside. The renovated Victorian mill in which it is housed has seven levels. It is the first and only museum in the UK wholly to the art of British children's books..

Seven Stories has a changing programme of exhibitions, aimed at both children and adults. They bring together original manuscripts and illustrations from some of the UK's best loved children's books. Among some of their most distinguished patrons are Jacqueline Wilson, Terry Jones, Phillip Pullman and Quentin Blake.

Activities include dressing up, dramatic fun, creative writing and wordplay, illustration and craft. The museum hosts talks from children's authors including our Spotlight author David Almond, Catherine Rayner, Michael Foreman, Terry Deary, Judith Kerr, Julia Donaldson and Oliver Jeffers.

The museum includes one of the largest independent, specialist children's bookshops in Britain, with over 50, 000 titles.



# Bedrock Learning

Research has shown that children with wide vocabularies make excellent progress at school and in further education. For this reason, we have invested in an innovative literacy improvement tool called Bedrock Vocabulary. It is a website that helps children to learn very important academic vocabulary, whilst encouraging them to read regularly.

As your child progresses through the curriculum, they will study hundreds of words, whilst reading fiction and non-fiction texts regularly. Bedrock Vocabulary supports their progression and builds the skills and competencies they need to achieve. The programme guides them through scaffolded learning at an appropriate level for their individual needs. Pupils will also fill in an online vocabulary notebook to practise using the vocabulary they learn, and you can see and edit this yourself.

Pupils should complete a minimum of two lessons per week for it to be effective. Pupils can complete two consecutive lessons, one after the other, but we recommend they wait 48 hours between lessons. Pupils will not be able to complete more than two lessons in a day.

Stars of the month:



<b>February Stars</b>	<b>Most progress (Pupil)</b>	<b>Most progress (Class)</b>
Year 7		
Year 8		
Year 9		
Year 10		
Year 11		



# World Book Day 2021

## Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March



Exciting times are ahead, as World Book Day is fast approaching! As always, we will be celebrating World Book Day at Ian Ramsey Academy, however this year it will be a little bit different.

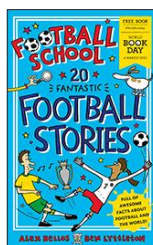
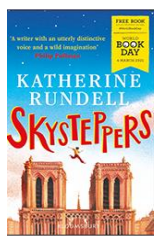
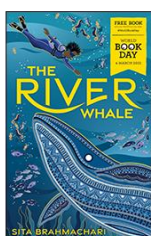
Instead of handing out paper vouchers, this year all pupils will be sent a digital book token which can be exchanged for a World Book Day book or can be redeemed for £1 off any book from participating retailers. Tokens are valid until 28<sup>th</sup> March and be redeemed at major supermarkets and bookshops.

Don't worry if you can not print the voucher as Mrs Bailey has once again arranged for numerous copies of each book to be delivered to the LRC; these will be available when school reopens.

If you're not sure what to spend your voucher on, why not visit the World Book Day website and find out which titles are on offer? Or, if you head to the 'Teens' section, you can listen to the Author Podcasts (and tick off one of the tasks from next term's Reading Challenge) and discover the realities of being an author.

There are also some great recommendations in the *Power Reads* list, copies of which are in the LRC. If one takes your fancy, send Mrs Bailey a request and she will deliver them to your Tutor Room when school reopens.

[www.worldbookday.com](http://www.worldbookday.com)



# World Book Day

# Final notes

Access to a full-time education is every pupil's right. However, to truly benefit from the opportunity, so much more is required. As the curriculum has substantially changed over recent years in content and challenge, poor reading ability is a factor that can significantly impact on pupils' access to a wide range of subjects.

Pupils must be able to read for them to achieve academically. As pupils progress through an increasingly specialised curriculum, there is a growing need to ensure that pupils are trained to access the academic language and conventions of different subjects. Therefore, putting reading at the heart of the curriculum will support all pupils to be able to read well.

WE WANT ALL OF OUR PUPILS TO BE CONFIDENT READERS.

If you've enjoyed this month's edition of the reading newsletter, don't forget to visit our dedicated reading section on our website. Click on 'Curriculum' and 'Reading' (or click on this link: <https://ianramsey.org.uk/curriculum/reading/> ) to uncover a world of books and recommendations and challenges including:

- Book recommendations. These change every term and are thematically linked to all the topics covered by each subject that term.
- Reading challenges
- Desert Island Book lists
- Reading quotes
- Recommend a book

We hope you've enjoyed March's newsletter and look forward to sending you April's edition.

\*Answers to the Masked Reader:

1. Mr Janes
2. Miss Tucker
3. Mr Hutchinson
4. Mr Patrick
5. Mrs Devenney
6. Mrs Jevons

