



# IAN RAMSEY CE ACADEMY

Together to learn, to grow, to serve

# Reading Newsletter



# this MONTH in history

# JANUARY

1919 J. D. Salinger is born.	1920 Isaac Asimov is born.	1892 J. R. R. Tolkien is born.	1643 Isaac Newton is born.	1926 Margaret Laurence is born.	1910 Wright Morris is born.	1919 Robert Duncan is born.
8 Cyrus Colter is born.	9 Kathleen Mansfield Beauchamp (Katherine Mansfield) dies.	10 Ernest Poole dies.	11 Thomas Hardy dies.	1952 Walter Mosley is born.	1941 James Joyce dies.	1912 Tillie Olsen is born.
15 Frank Conroy is born.	16 William Kennedy is born.	17 William Stafford is born.	1882 A. A. Milne is born.	1809 Edgar Allan Poe is born.	1993 Maya Angelou reads her poem "On the Pulse of Morning" at the inauguration of President Bill Clinton.	1950 George Orwell dies.
1908 Sinclair Ross is born.	1930 Derek Walcott is born.	1670 William Congreve is born.	1882 Virginia Stephen (Virginia Woolf) is born.	1929 Jules Feiffer is born.	1832 Lewis Carroll is born.	1873 Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette is born.
29 Edward Abbey is born.	1873 Johannes V. Jensen is born.	1915 Thomas Merton is born.	31	30	29	28

# Welcome

Welcome to our January 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?

This newsletter is a chance to find out about:

- fiction
- non-fiction
- poetry
- authors and their work
- Vocabulary
- 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



# Author spotlight



## This month's author: James Harris

Last term, Year 7 pupils were given the opportunity to participate in one of our first live author visits of the school year. James Harris gave a fantastic presentation, talking us through his own work, as well as giving some hints and tips to our budding writers.

James Harris is a local author, based in Middlesbrough. In 2019 he won the Hachette Childrens' Novel prize at the Northern Writers' Awards with his first ever book *The Unbelievable Biscuit Factory*

He then went on to publish *Happy Town Must Be Destroyed* and continues to mentor and be a workshop leader for Writers' Block North East, a creative writing and development company based in Middlesbrough.



# Author to academy

Hiya,

I'm just writing this to tell you... I *hate* writing.

There, I said it.

Well, I mean, I don't *hate* writing, not really, but I don't enjoy it.

Well, I say that, I *do* enjoy it, when I'm doing it. Like, I'm enjoying writing this now, but I always worry before I start that what I write is going to be terrible.

And sometimes it is.

No, scratch that.

*Usually* it is.

Well, not terrible, but not as good as I hoped.

But here's the secret of good writing: the first draft of anything is *supposed to be terrible*. Or at least, not as good as you'd hope.

That's why we invented rewriting.

Rewriting is when things get good.

Any book or comic or magazine article or advert or blog post or cracker joke or tweet you've read that was any good will usually have been rewritten at least a couple of times. I rewrote this sentence a couple of times, that's why it's so AWESOME and ends with an unexpected satsuma.

In the first draft it ended with an unexpected banana but I like the word "satsuma" better so there it is.

That's another secret of good writing: if you want what you're writing to be BRILLIANT you should probably try writing about something you love, or at least try to get some of the things you love in there somehow. I love satsumas. Bananas are all right, but satsumas are the fruit boss. And unexpected satsumas are the satsuma boss. There'll be another one along later in this letter.



# Author to academy

And here's another-nother secret of good writing: make every page your favourite page. A pop band called Roxette once said "don't bore us, get to the chorus" and that is my number one rule for writing my books. It this bit boring? Then let's make it AWESOME. Can I make something explode? Can I make *someone* explode (harmlessly, of course)? Can I throw a satsuma in there somehow? An exploding satsuma, like a juicy hand grenade packed with vitamin C? YES, I CAN BECAUSE IT'S MY BOOK AND I CAN DO WHAT I WANT.

Of course, you will have your own ideas about what is exciting and awesome and what isn't. Maybe you don't think satsumas are awesome at all. You're wrong, of course, but I urge you to throw what you like into your stories, and don't worry about what *I* like.

Write to delight yourself. And then rewrite to delight yourself *more*.

As for reading: read what you want. But don't be afraid to explore. An author called Haruki Murakami once said, "If you only read the books that everyone else is reading, you can only think what everyone else is thinking." He's Japanese, and his books are weird, and wonky, and wise and dreamlike but strangely peaceful, and I *love* them but I only found out I love them because I took a chance. I'd never read a book translated from Japanese before. I'm glad I tried it, and I'm glad it was good!

It might not have been, but it was worth the gamble.

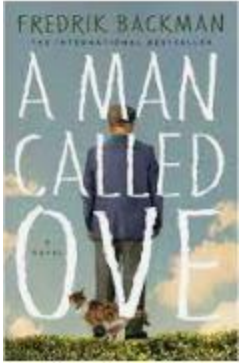
I think that's it. Read what you like, write what you like, and maybe one day you will write an utterly brilliant satsuma.

Cheers!

James Harris



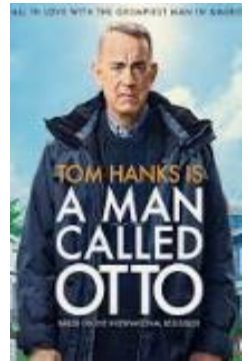
# From page to screen



This month's feature is *A Man Called Otto*.

Based on the 2013 novel, *A Man Called Ove*, the film follows the life of Otto, a grump who's given up on life following the loss of his wife and wants to end it all.

When a young family moves in nearby, he meets his match in quick-witted Marisol, leading to a friendship that will turn his world around.





The most sold book is the Bible. The Bible is sold all over the world, which makes it the most sold book there is! At an estimate, there are 5 billion printed copies of it around the world.

The longest book in the world is 'Remembrance of Things Past'. According to Guinness World Records, 'Remembrance of Things Past' is the longest book in the world. It has 9,609,000 characters, including spaces. It was written by Marcel Proust who was from France, in 1912.

The Codex Leicester is the most expensive book in the world. You're not going to believe how much it sold for... The science book sold for 30.8 million dollars in 1994. It was Leonardo da Vinci's science diary!

It is believed that the first ever book written was 'The Epic of Gilgamesh'. The story was written in 2100 BCE in the cuneiform script, which is one of the oldest forms of writing.





# 2023 Reading Challenge

The 52 Book Club's

# 2023

## READING CHALLENGE

1. A BOOK WITH A SUBTITLE
2. FEATURING AN INHERITANCE
3. TITLE STARTING WITH THE LETTER "G"
4. TITLE STARTING WITH THE LETTER "H"
5. TITLE STARTING WITH THE LETTER "I"
6. UNDER 200 PAGES
7. A CITY OR COUNTRY NAME IN THE TITLE
8. DYSTOPIAN FICTION
9. A BOOK WITH A DEDICATION
10. TAKES PLACE DURING THE ROARING TWENTIES
11. A BOOK ABOUT SECRETS
12. HIGH FANTASY
13. PUBLISHED POSTHUMOUSLY
14. A SURVIVAL STORY
15. SET IN AUSTRALIA
16. FEATURING ONE OF THE "SEVEN DEADLY SINS"
17. BY A CARIBBEAN AUTHOR
18. SET DURING A WAR OTHER THAN WWI OR WWII
19. TYPOGRAPHIC COVER
20. A BOOK ABOUT SIBLINGS
21. A SECOND-HAND BOOK
22. A BODY-POSITIVE MESSAGE
23. AN ALLITERATIVE TITLE
24. NORDIC NOIR
25. A FASHIONABLE CHARACTER
26. HAS AN EPILOGUE
27. NEWBERY MEDAL WINNER
28. INCLUDES A FUNERAL
29. SENDS YOU DOWN A RABBIT HOLE
30. AN AUTHOR WITH A SAME NAME AS YOU
31. SET IN A WORKPLACE
32. PUBLISHED BY MACMILLAN
33. A BANNED BOOK
34. FEATURING MYTHOLOGY
35. A BOOK YOU MEANT TO READ LAST YEAR
36. CHAPTERS HAVE CLIFFHANGERS
37. WRITTEN IN PRESENT TENSE
38. AN ENEMIES-TO-LOVERS PLOT
39. THE FINAL BOOK IN A SERIES
40. WRITTEN BY A COMEDIAN
41. A CHARACTER WHO IS A REFUGEE
42. TIME IN THE TITLE
43. A BOOK "EVERYONE" HAS READ
44. A CONTEMPORARY SETTING
45. FIRST WORD IN THE BOOK IS "THE"
46. SCRIPT FONT ON THE SPINE
47. SET IN THE CITY OF DUBLIN
48. A BOOK BY OCTAVIA E. BUTLER
49. BOOKS ON THE COVER
50. RELATED TO THE WORD "MURDER"
51. DOESN'T FIT ANY OF THE OTHER 51 PROMPTS
52. PUBLISHED IN 2023

READ  
MORE  
BOOKS!

The  
**52**  
Book  
Club

[www.the52bookclub.com](http://www.the52bookclub.com)



# What's new?

## Non-fiction

### *Spare* by Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex

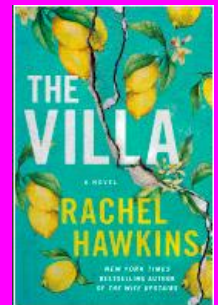
With its raw, unflinching honesty, *Spare* is a landmark publication full of insight, revelation, self-examination, and hard-won wisdom about the eternal power of love over grief. Prince Harry wishes to support British charities with donations from his proceeds from *Spare*.



## Fiction

### *The Villa* by Rachel Hawkins

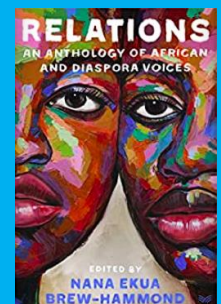
From *New York Times* bestselling author Rachel Hawkins comes a deliciously wicked gothic suspense, set at an Italian villa with a dark history, for fans of Lucy Foley and Ruth Ware. As kids, Emily and Chess were inseparable. But by their 30s, their bond has been strained by the demands of their adult lives. When Chess suggests a girls' trip to Italy, Emily jumps at the chance to reconnect with her best friend.



## Poetry

### *Relations: An Anthology of African and Diaspora Voices* by Nana Ekua Brew-Hammond

Fresh and electrifying--stories, poems, and essays by African and diaspora writers, edited by author Nana Ekua Brew-Hammond. *Relations* punctures the human illusion of separation. New and established storytellers reshape the narratives that divide and subjugate, revealing the truth of our shared humanity despite differences in language, identity, class, gender, and beyond.



# Pupil Recommendations



## *Skandar and the Unicorn Thief* by A.F. Steadman

Thirteen-year-old Skandar Smith has only ever wanted to be a unicom rider. To be one of the lucky few selected to hatch a unicom. To bond with it for life; to train together and race for glory; to be a hero. But just as Skandar's dream is about to come true, things start to take a more dangerous turn than he could ever have imagined.



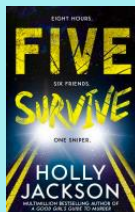
## *The First to Die at the End* by Adam Silvera

In this prequel to the international bestselling phenomenon of *They Both Die at the End*, two new strangers spend a life-changing day together after Death-Cast make their first fateful calls. It's the night before Death-Cast goes live, and there's one question on everyone's mind: Can Death-Cast actually predict death, or is it an elaborate hoax?



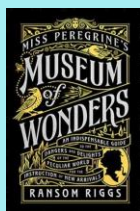
## *Five Survive* by Holly Jackson

The brand new, explosive crime thriller from Holly Jackson, bestselling, award-winning author of the *Good Girl's Guide to Murder* trilogy. Eighteen-year-old Red and her friends are on a road trip in an RV, heading to the beach for Spring Break. It's a long drive but spirits are high. Until the RV breaks down in the middle of nowhere.



## *Miss Peregrine's Museum of Wonders - Miss Peregrine's Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs

A gloriously rich and utterly delightful handbook perfect for longtime fans and new readers alike, covering everything from how to blend in with suspicious normals to the most popular time loops to visit as a temporal tourist.



## *Nick and Charlie* by Alice Oseman

Everyone knows that Nick and Charlie are the perfect couple - that they're inseparable. But now Nick is leaving for university, and Charlie will be left behind at Sixth Form. Everyone's asking if they're staying together, which is a stupid question - they're 'Nick and Charlie' for God's sake!



# Staff Recommendations



## *A Chip Shop in Poznan* by Ben Aitken

An amusing story about a British writer who wanted to experience living in Poland for a year and takes on a variety of jobs during that time. In 2016 Ben Aitken moved to Poland while he still could. It wasn't love that took him but curiosity: he wanted to know what the Poles in the UK had left behind. He flew to a place he'd never heard of and then accepted a job in a chip shop on the minimum wage.



## *Lessons In Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus

Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute take a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with - of all things - her mind. True chemistry results.



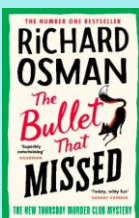
## *It Starts With Us* by Colleen Hoover

Lily and her ex-husband, Ryle, have just settled into a civil co-parenting rhythm when she suddenly bumps into her first love, Atlas, again. After nearly two years separated, she is elated that for once, time is on their side, and she immediately says yes when Atlas asks her on a date.



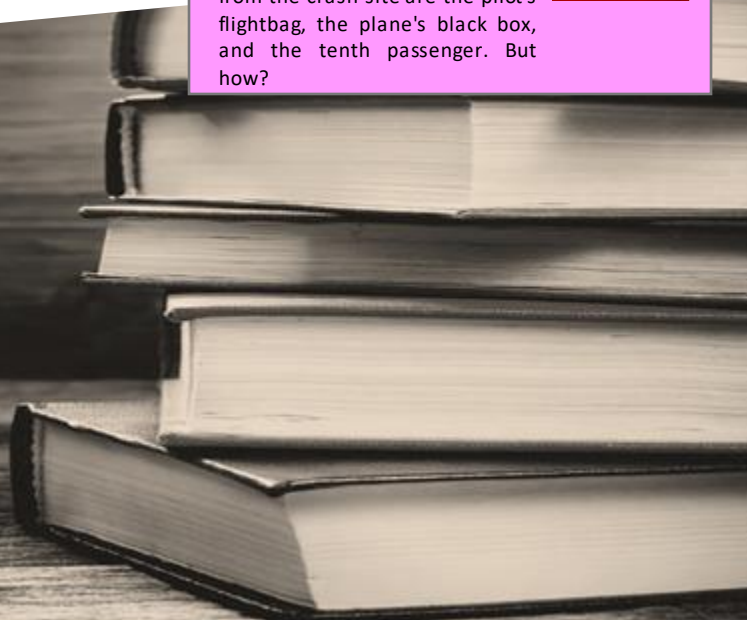
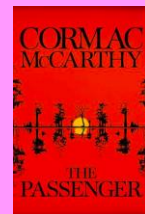
## *The Bullet That Missed* by Richard Osman

It is an ordinary Thursday, and things should finally be returning to normal. Except trouble is never far away where the Thursday Murder Club are concerned. A local news legend is on the hunt for a sensational headline, and soon the gang are hot on the trail of two murders, ten years apart.



## *The Passenger* by Cormac McCarthy

1980, Pass Christian, Mississippi: It is three in the morning when Bobby Western zips the jacket of his wetsuit and plunges from the boat deck into darkness. His delivight illuminates the sunken jet, nine bodies still buckled in their seats, hair floating, eyes devoid of speculation. Missing from the crash site are the pilot's flightbag, the plane's black box, and the tenth passenger. But how?



# House recommendation: Aidan

## House Captain

Dr. Leatherland recommends:  
*Sparring Partners* by John  
Grisham

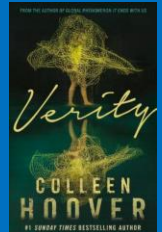
The *Sparring Partners* are the Malloy brothers, Kirk and Rusty, two successful young lawyers who inherited a once prosperous firm when its founder, their father, was sent to prison. Kirk and Rusty loathe one another and speak to each other only when necessary. As the firm disintegrates, the fiasco falls into the lap of Diantha Bradshaw, the only person the partner's trust. Can she save the Malloys, or does she take a stand for the first time and try to save herself?



## House Prefect

recommends: *Verity* by Colleen  
Hoover

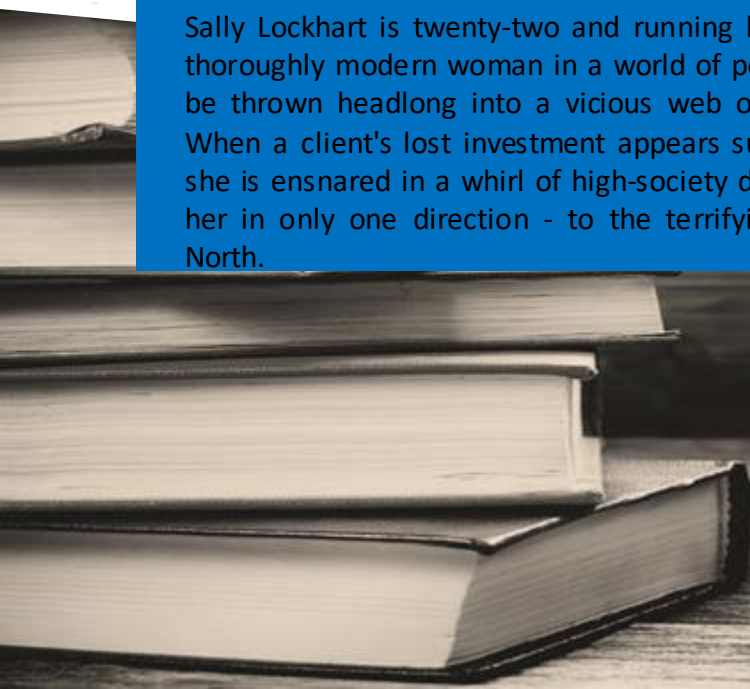
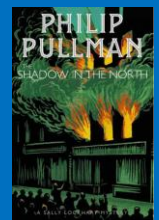
Lowen Ashleigh is a struggling writer on the brink of financial ruin when she accepts the job offer of a lifetime. Jeremy Crawford, husband of bestselling author Verity Crawford, has hired Lowen to complete the remaining books in a successful series his injured wife is unable to finish. Lowen arrives at the Crawford home, ready to sort through years of Verity's notes and outlines, hoping to find enough material to get her started. What Lowen doesn't expect to uncover in the chaotic office is an unfinished autobiography Verity never intended for anyone to read.



## House Pupil

recommends: *The Shadow in the  
North* by Philip Pullman

Sally Lockhart is twenty-two and running her own financial consultancy - a thoroughly modern woman in a world of pompous men - but she's about to be thrown headlong into a vicious web of murder, mystery and pure evil. When a client's lost investment appears suspicious, Sally investigates. Soon she is ensnared in a whirl of high-society danger and deceit, which can lead her in only one direction - to the terrifying secret of the Shadow in the North.



# Local Libraries

## The Literature Network

*The Literature Network* offers searchable online literature for the students, educators and reading enthusiast. Their author index is quick and easy to use, and the online library currently has over 3500 full books and over 4400 short stories and poems by over 260 authors. To help any extra revision, their quotations database has over 8500 quotes, and our quiz system features over 340 quizzes. A fantastic resource to use whether you're looking for your next book to read or preparing for any assessments.



# First liners



Can you guess the title of the book from the first line?

1. Of course I have secrets.

2. I'm awoken by a shrill scream.

3. 'Once upon a time, in a faraway kingdom, there was a woman called Francesca who couldn't be on time to save her life...'

4. Anna said there was only one place to find a meaningful gift for MDash- the Antique Warehouse.

5. From where I sim the story of Arthur Less is not so bad.

6. As Tess and Em crept soundlessly to a corner of the kitchen and crouched down to makes themselves as small as possible, Tess chanted the words to herself.

7. Today will be different.

8. The Trieste neighbourhood in Rome is, one might say, one of the focal points of this story that has many other focal points.

9. My entire life's work rests on the outcome of this match.



# Word of the Month

## Quixotic

(Origin: English)

*Quixotic* means to idealistic, to the point of being unrealistic and impractical. Interestingly, the word has roots in *Don Quixote*, the hero of a 17<sup>th</sup> century Spanish novel. The adjective *quixotic* is based on his name and has been used to describe unrealistic idealists since at least the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The novel has given English other words as well. Dulcinea, the name of Quixote's beloved, has come to mean "mistress" or "sweetheart," and rosinante, which is sometimes used to refer to an old, broken-down horse, comes from the name of the hero's less-than-gallant steed, Rocinante.





# Reading for Pleasure

Reading is a huge part of our academy. Throughout our school, we have implemented a number of reading strategies that will give pupils access to a wide range of literature both inside and outside the classroom.

Our *Reading for Pleasure* lessons have been met with fantastic positivity and enthusiasm from our KS3 pupils. Texts have been specifically chosen that link not only to our curriculum, but to our Christian values as well. This year, pupils will enjoy a range of texts such as:

## Year 7

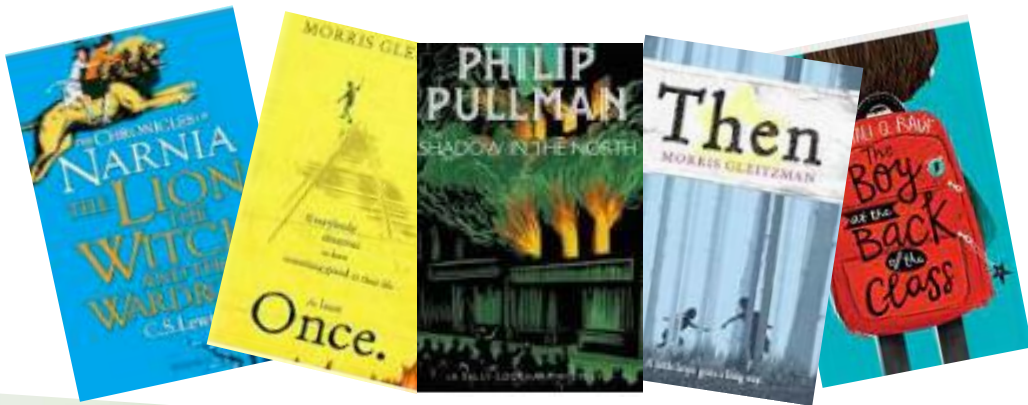
*The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis  
*Once* by Morris Gleitzman

## Year 8

*The Shadow in the North* by Philip Pullman  
*Then* by Morris Gleitzman

## Year 9

*The Boy at the Back of the Class* by Onjali Q. Raúf



# Final Notes

Reading is so important to our Academy. The key aim of our reading drive is to encourage Reading for Pleasure. I leave you with the words of Ernest Hemingway:

**There is no  
friend as loyal  
as a book.**

—ERNEST HEMINGWAY



I hope you've enjoyed reading this month's newsletter. As an Academy, we believe you should never be stuck for reading information and recommendations - visit our dedicated reading section on our website for ideas, competitions recommended lists and more. 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

I hope you've enjoyed January's newsletter and look forward to sending you our February edition!

\*Answers to First Lines:

1. Can You Keep a Secret? by Sphe Kinsella
2. Do Not Disturb by Claire Douglas
3. On a Night Like This by Lindsey Kelk
4. Uncommon Type by Tom Hanks
5. Less by Andrew Sean Greer
6. Secrets by Freya North
7. Today Will Be Different by Maria Semple
8. The Hummingbird by Sandro Veronesi
9. Carrie Soto is Back by Taylor Jenkins Reid

