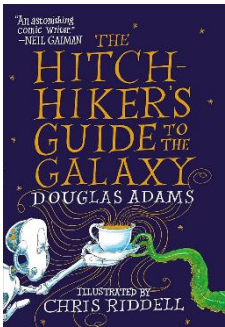


John Mason School

Year 10

# Recommended Reads

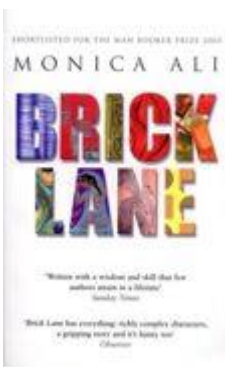




## The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams

It's an ordinary Thursday lunchtime for Arthur Dent until his house gets demolished. The Earth follows shortly afterwards to make way for a new hyperspace express route and his best friend has just announced that he is an alien. At this moment, they are hurtling through space with nothing but their towels and an innocuous-looking book inscribed, in large friendly letters, with the words: DON'T PANIC.

The weekend has only just begun . . .



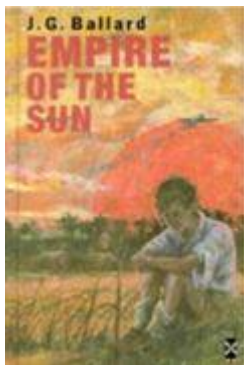
## Brick Lane by Monica Ali

Nazneen's life in London's Tower Hamlets is, on the surface, calm. For years, keeping house and rearing children, she does what is expected of her. Yet Nazneen walks a tightrope stretched between her daughters' embarrassment and her husband's resentments.

Into that fragile peace walks Karim. He sets questions before her, of longing and belonging; he opens her eyes and directs her gaze, but what she sees, in the end, comes as a surprise to them both.

While Nazneen journeys along her path of self-realization, a way haunted by her mother's ghost, her sister Hasina, back in Bangladesh, rushes headlong at her life. Both sisters struggle to dream themselves out of the rules prescribed for them.

## Empire of the Sun by J. G. Ballard



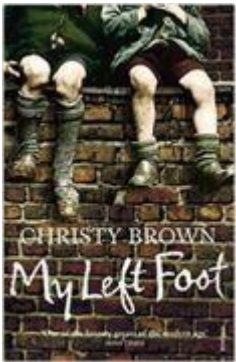
From the master of dystopia, comes his heartrending story of a British boy's four-year ordeal in a Japanese prison camp during the Second World War. Based on J. G. Ballard's own childhood, this is the extraordinary account of a boy's life in Japanese-occupied wartime Shanghai - a mesmerising, hypnotically compelling novel of war, starvation and survival, of internment camps and death marches. It blends searing honesty with an almost hallucinatory vision of a world thrown utterly out of joint. Rooted as it is in the author's own disturbing experience of war in our time, it is one of a handful of novels by which the 20th Century will be not

only remembered but judged.



## **Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte**

Wuthering Heights is a wild, passionate story of the intense and almost demonic love between Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, a foundling adopted by Catherine's father. After Mr Earnshaw's death, Heathcliff is bullied and humiliated by Catherine's brother Hindley and wrongly believing that his love for Catherine is not reciprocated, leaves Wuthering Heights, only to return years later as a wealthy and polished man. He proceeds to exact a terrible revenge for his former miseries.



## **My Left Foot by Christy Brown**

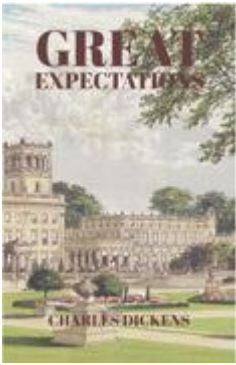
Christy Brown was born a victim of cerebral palsy. But the hapless, lolling baby concealed the brilliantly imaginative and sensitive mind of a writer who would take his place among the giants of Irish literature.

This is Christy Brown's own story. He recounts his childhood struggle to learn to read, write, paint and finally type, with the toe of his left foot. In this manner he wrote his bestseller *Down all the Days*.



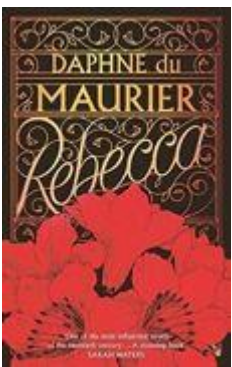
## **The Last of the Mohicans by James Fenimore Cooper**

It is 1757. Across North-Eastern America the armies of Britain and France struggle for ascendancy. Their conflict, however, overlays older struggles between nations of native Americans for possession of the same lands and between the native peoples and white colonisers. Through these layers of conflict, Cooper threads a thrilling narrative, in which Cora and Alice Munro, daughters of a British commander on the front line of the colonial war, attempt to join their father. Thwarted by Magua, the sinister 'Indian runner', they find help in the person of Hawkeye, the white woodsman and his companions, the Mohican Chingachgook and Uncas, his son, the last of his tribe.



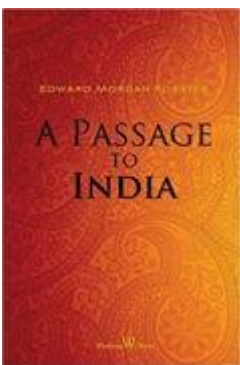
## **Great Expectations by Charles Dickens**

While living with his sister and brother-in-law in a quiet rural life, Pip meets the reclusive heiress Miss Havisham and her adopted daughter, Estella. Pip is attracted to the aloof Estella, who symbolizes the social status he aspires to. Pip's fortunes reverse when he receives money from an anonymous benefactor and as a newly-rich Londoner he feels ashamed at his background. Through adventures involving envious adversaries, a criminal Pip once helped, and Pip's friends Joe, Biddy, Herbert and Wemmick, Dickens's Pip learns to disregard pretensions and appreciate loyalty and love, guaranteed not by birth but by one's character.



## **Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier**

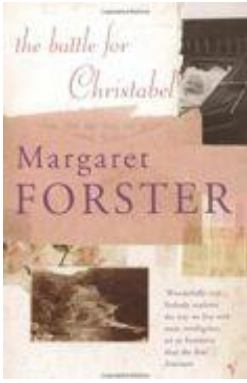
A young and unassuming lady's maid, meets a wealthy and handsome widower, she is immediately swept off her feet in what many would have considered an unlikely 20th Century match. Maxim de Winter, the owner of a large country estate by the name of Manderley, whisks his new bride away to his home in Cornwall, hoping to rid himself of his sinister past. As the heroine begins her new life at Manderley, she comes to the realisation that the shadow of her predecessor, Rebecca de Winter, lives on through the masonry of the home and through the stern and scathing housekeeper, Mrs Danvers.



## **A Passage to India by E. M. Forster**

Dr. Aziz is a young Muslim physician in the British Indian town of Chandrapore. One evening he comes across an English woman, Mrs. Moore, in the courtyard of a local mosque; she and her younger travelling companion Adela are disappointed by claustrophobic British colonial culture and wish to see something of the 'real' India. But when Aziz kindly offers to take them on a tour of the Marabar caves with his close friend Cyril Fielding, the trip results in a shocking accusation that throws Chandrapore into a fever of racial tension.

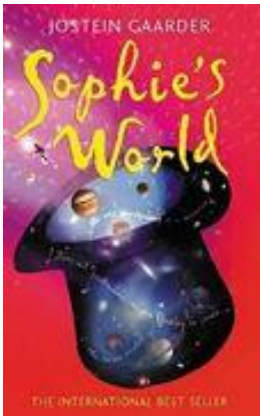




## **The Battle for Christabel by Margaret Forster**

Rowena wants a baby. What she does not want is the baby's father. Yet five years after the birth of Christabel, Rowena is dead, tragically killed in a climbing accident. The battle for Christabel has begun.

With signature skill, Margaret Forster reveals the conflicting personal interests that lie behind each character's claim on the child. Drawn from the perspectives of social workers, grandparents, lovers and foster-mothers, this novel is a remarkable and heartfelt exploration of the complexities of motherhood.



## **Sophie's World by Jostein Gaarder**

When 14-year-old Sophie encounters a mysterious mentor who introduces her to philosophy, mysteries deepen in her own life. Why does she keep getting postcards addressed to another girl? Who is the other girl? And who, for that matter, is Sophie herself? To solve the riddle, she uses her new knowledge of philosophy, but the truth is far stranger than she could have imagined.

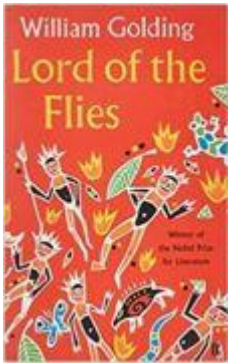
An addictive blend of mystery, philosophy and fantasy.



## **Memoirs of a Geisha by Arthur Golden**

A young peasant girl is sold as a servant and apprentice to a renowned geisha house.

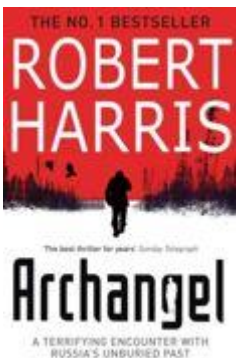
Many years later she tells her story from a hotel in New York, opening a window into an extraordinary half-hidden world of eroticism and enchantment, exploitation and degradation and summoning up a quarter of a century of Japan's dramatic history.



## **Lord of the Flies by William Golding**

A plane crashes on a desert island. The only survivors are a group of schoolboys. By day, they discover fantastic wildlife and dazzling beaches, learning to survive; at night, they are haunted by nightmares of a primitive beast.

Orphaned by society, it is not long before their innocent childhood games devolve into a savage, murderous hunt ...



## **Archangel by Robert Harris**

Historian Fluke Kelso is in Moscow, attending a conference on recently unclassified Soviet papers, when a veteran of the Soviet secret police visits his hotel room and tells Kelso about a secret notebook belonging to Josef Stalin, stolen on the night of his death.

Kelso must survive the violent political intrigue and decadence of Moscow before he can venture to the icy north. There, in the vast forests surrounding the White Sea port of Archangel, Kelso's quest soon becomes a terrifying encounter with Russia's unburied past and Stalin's last secret.



## **The Woman in Black by Susan Hill**

Eel Marsh house stands alone, surveying the windswept salt marshes beyond Nine Lives Causeway. Once, Mrs Alice Drablow lived here as a recluse. Now, Arthur Kipps, a junior solicitor with a London firm, is summoned to attend her funeral, unaware of the tragic and terrible secrets which lie behind the house's shuttered windows.

Mr Kipps has to stay on in the lonely house, sorting out Mrs. Drablow's papers, when the mist begins to enshroud both it and its surrounding graveyard and the high tide cuts it off from the world beyond.



## **A Prayer for Owen Meany by John Irving**

Summer, 1953. In the small town of Gravesend, New Hampshire, eleven-year-old John Wheelwright and his best friend Owen Meany are playing in a Little League baseball game. When Owen hits a foul ball which kills John's mother, their lives are changed in an instant. It is dismissed as a tragic accident but Owen disagrees. He believes that he is God's instrument, put on Earth for a higher purpose. And as the boys come into adulthood to the background of the Vietnam War, a series of remarkable events show that perhaps Owen's divine plan was not imagined after all.



## **The Child in Time by Ian McEwan**

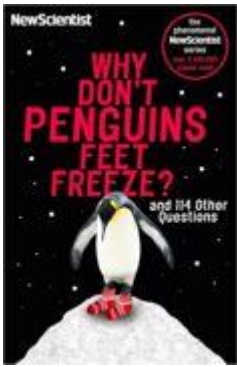
The Child in Time opens with a harrowing event. Stephen Lewis, a successful author of children's books, takes his three-year-old daughter on a routine Saturday morning trip to the supermarket. While waiting in line, his attention is distracted and his daughter is kidnapped. Just like that. From there, Lewis spirals into bereavement that has effects on his relationship with his wife, his psyche, and time itself.



## **Angela's Ashes by Frank McCourt**

Frank McCourt's sad, funny, bittersweet memoir of growing up in New York in the 30s and in Ireland in the 40s.

It is a story of extreme hardship and suffering, in Brooklyn tenements and Limerick slums – too many children, too little money, his mother Angela barely coping as his father Malachy's drinking bouts constantly brings the family to the brink of disaster. It is a story of courage and survival against apparently overwhelming odds.

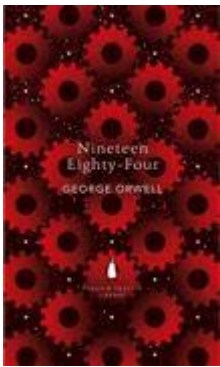


## Why Don't Penguins Feet Freeze? by Mick O'Hare

Why Don't Penguins' Feet Freeze? includes answers to the most fascinating, trivial, idiosyncratic, baffling and strange questions in popular science.

Ever wondered why we have fingerprints? Or whether bumblebees really defy the laws of physics when they fly? And why are eggs egg-shaped? And dogs' noses black? Why do our eyes water when we cut onions? Why doesn't superglue stick to the inside of its tube?

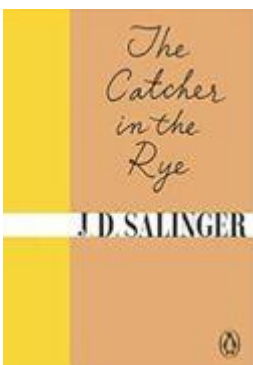
Why Don't Penguins' Feet Freeze? is popular science at its most entertaining and enlightening.



## 1984 by George Orwell

Hidden away in the Record Department of the sprawling Ministry of Truth, Winston Smith skilfully rewrites the past to suit the needs of the Party. Yet he inwardly rebels against the totalitarian world he lives in, which demands absolute obedience and controls him through the all-seeing telescreens and the watchful eye of Big Brother, symbolic head of the Party. In his longing for truth and liberty, Smith begins a secret love affair with a fellow-worker Julia, but soon discovers the true price of freedom is

betrayal.

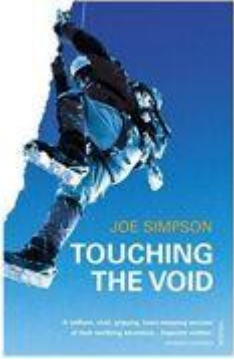


## Catcher in the Rye by J.D Salinger

Holden is the son of a wealthy New York family who moves from boarding school to boarding school after being repeatedly expelled. Although he displays a number of typical teenage characteristics, his adolescent foibles become increasingly disturbing throughout the novel, revealing a self-destructive side. Holden, it seems, has been particularly devastated by the death of his brother Allie, who he considered the perfect child. This has thrown him into an existential crisis of sorts;

he is unable to find joy in life or to cope with his loss. Ultimately on the brink, he capitulates to convention and comes back home.

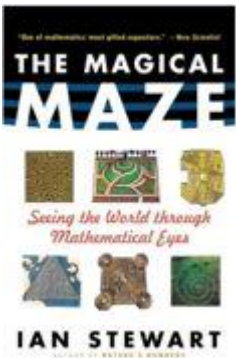




## Touching the Void by Joe Simpson

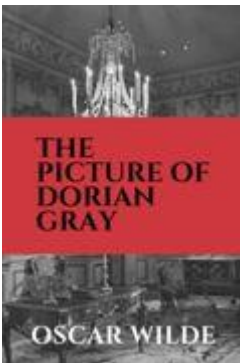
Joe Simpson, with just his partner, Simon Yates, tackled the unclimbed West Face of the remote 21,000-foot Siula Grande in the Peruvian Andes in June of 1995, but before they reached the summit, disaster struck. A few days later, Simon staggered into Base Camp, exhausted and frostbitten, to tell their non-climbing companion that Joe was dead. For three days he wrestled with guilt as they prepared to return home.

Far from causing Joe's death, Simon had paradoxically saved his friend's life.



## The Magical Maze by Ian Stewart

Enter the magical maze of Mathematics and explore the surprising passageways of a fantastical world where logic and imagination converge. For Mathematics is a maze, a maze in your head, a maze of ideas, a maze of logic and that maze in your mind is a powerful tool for understanding an even bigger maze, the one of cause and effect that we call "the universe." That is its special kind of magic. Real magic. Strange magic. Infinitely fascinating magic.



## The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde

Dorian Gray is the subject of a full-length portrait in oil by Basil Hallward, an artist impressed and infatuated by Dorian's beauty; he believes that Dorian's beauty is responsible for the new mood in his art as a painter.

Newly understanding that his beauty will fade, Dorian expresses the desire to sell his soul, to ensure that the picture, rather than he, will age and fade. The wish is granted, and Dorian pursues a libertine life of varied amoral experiences while staying young and beautiful; all the while, his portrait ages and records every sin.