

2021-22 RECOMMENDED READS KS4



Blackout

A series of six short stories all set during the same night in New York City. When a heat wave turns the city's lights off, thirteen teenagers must face love in the darkness – whether it is a past love or blossoming feelings – the truth will come out.

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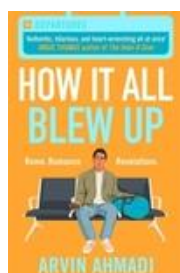


Abike-Iyimide, Faridah

Ace of Spades

At Niveus Private Academy star students Devon and Chiamaka are targeted by an anonymous digital bully – Aces – who is out to get them. A dark and twisty thriller focusing on the destructive nature of racism and homophobia with strong queer and feminist main characters determined to fight back.

T+



Ahmadi, Arvin

How it all blew up

Amir is gay and Iranian which makes for some difficult choices when dealing with his family. A trip to Rome confirms his belief in being himself especially when having to explain his life to a complete stranger. A novel dealing with a clash of cultures but also how you can never really escape your past.

T+



Ainsworth, Eve

Know my Place

Amy is a foster child and is left devastated when her family placement breaks down and she must move into a new foster home. An emotionally realistic read as Amy struggles with issues of abandonment.

T



Albert, Melissa

Tales from the Hinterland

A collection of 12 short stories based on fairy tales. The stories are dark and creepy with the female protagonist usually, but not always coming out the winner. Not to be read before bedtime.

T+



**Anderson,
Natalie C**

**Let's go
Swimming
on
Doomsday**

Abdi lives in the war-torn country of Somalia where Al Shabaab, a militant group, is fighting to oust the Somali government. With his brother already kidnapped by the group and forced to join their ranks, Abdi is recruited by the Americans to spy on Al Shabaab. When all goes terribly wrong, he flees to Kenya and is placed in the care of a female refugee centre. Told through multiple timelines, we slowly learn about Abdi's past and present and his search for redemption.

T+

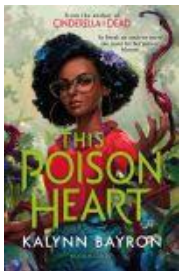


**Barr,
Emily**

**Things to
do before
the end of
the World**

Air on Earth is running out and this atmospheric doom, called The Creep, will end the world in 9 months. Socially anxious Olivia must decide how she wants to spend her final days on Earth, when Natasha, an eccentric distant cousin reaches out. She drags Olivia to Europe on a wild ride, but everything is not as it seems.

T+



**Bayron,
Kalynn**

**This
Poison
Heart**

Briseis can grow plants through a single touch. When she inherits an old family estate with a walled garden filled with deadly plant life, she discovers a talent for concocting tinctures and elixirs. Inspired by 'Little Shop of Horrors' and 'The Secret Garden'.

T+

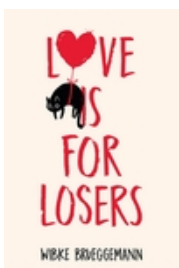


**Bourne,
Holly**

**The
Yearbook**

After years of bullying and abuse, at school and at home, Paige Vickers has had enough and is determined to find her voice in this emotional teenage drama.

T+



**Brueggemann,
Wibke**

**Love is for
Losers**

Phoebe is sarcastic, witty, and definitely not looking for love – or at least not now that her best friend Polly's lips are permanently glued to her new boyfriend Tristan's – until she meets Emma. Written in diary format, Phoebe divulges every thought and feeling she has. This queer romance explores sexuality, first relationships and themes of grief and abandonment while also making you laugh out loud.

T+



**Callender,
Kacen**

**Felix Ever
After**

Felix Love suffers at the hands of bullying when his deadname and photos of him prior to his transition are posted online. Grappling with his identity as a queer, black, transgender man, Felix struggles to find self-love.

T+



**Downham,
Jenny**

**Furious
Thing**

Lexi's stepfather is controlling so instead of keeping her head down she's getting louder and more furious. A powerful empathetic look into a teenage girl's anger against the world.

T+



**Dunford,
C J**

Fake News

Miki, Jonas and Rory have all suffered at the hands of online bullying and fake news so the three fifteen year-olds hatch a plot to prove to everyone they shouldn't believe what they read on the internet. With the help of whizz-kid and spy in training, Leon, the group sets-up a fake news website. With the truth forgotten and alien sightings being reported, things quickly get out of control!

T+



**Forna,
Namina**

**The Gilded
Ones**

This eye-catching front cover contains a powerful and thought provoking read. Set in a patriarchal fantasy world, inspired by an ancient West African culture, women at the age of 16 are judged by their purity. When Dekka fails this test, she is faced with a terrible future. Despite all odds the novel ends on a hopeful note with more titles to follow. A gripping read.

T+



**Foxfield,
Kathryn**

**It's Behind
You**

Lex Hazelton joins 4 other teenagers on the reality TV show 'It's Behind You' in a bid to receive £10,000. To win they must spend the night in the Umber Gorge caves haunted by the heart-eating ghost, the Puckered Maiden. Cocky and resolute on the fact that the show is all fake, Lex is not scared upon entering, but this soon changes as the night drags on, they become trapped, and a murderer is discovered in their midst.

T+

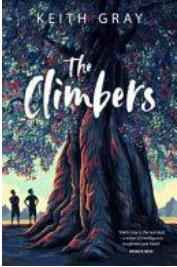


**Garrett,
Camryn**

**Off the
Record**

When ambitious teenage journalist, Josie Wright, wins a contest to write an in-depth article on an actor for a national magazine, she soon learns some shocking and explosive details about his life. Should she let the truth come out? Or keep it 'off the record'?

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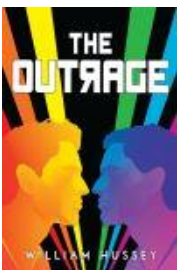


**Gray,
Keith**

**The
Climbers**

Growing up in a small town, Sully is known to be the best tree climber. But when Nottingham moves to town, Sully fears for his status as the best. When an ugly rivalry forms between the two, Sully must decide how far he's willing to go to win. Dyslexia friendly.

T



**Hussey,
William**

**The
Outrage**

Gabriel and his boyfriend Eric must protect each other and themselves as they resist the far-right government that rules this futuristic England, where being gay is against the law.

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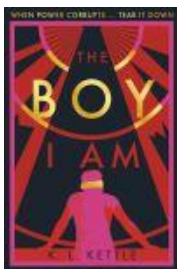


**Juckes,
Sarah Ann**

**The World
between Us**

Alice suffers from a chronic illness and is bed bound but she experiences real life virtually through others filming their daily lives on Stream Cast. After witnessing a horrific event on Stream Cast her mother enlists Rowan to start streaming. As Alice begins communicating with Rowan through the screen, they slowly begin to fall for each other. An honest exploration of living with a chronic illness.

T+



**Kettle,
K L**

**The Boy I
Am**

In a society where women are the elite and men are beneath them, the all-powerful Chancellor rules with a tight fist. When Jude is bought by the Chancellor at the annual auction in the House of Boys, his plans to assassinate her begin to fall into place. Entangled in a rebel plot, he is motivated to revenge the death of his best friend – but does the Chancellor suspect? And how far will he go?

T+



**Lester,
George**



Boy Queen Robin believes he has it all. Two amazing best friends, the perfect secret boyfriend and a great shot at being accepted into the London Academy of Performing Arts. But when he does not get into his dream school, he falls apart. That is until he discovers drag! But it's not all glitter and wigs – juggling friends and dealing with his boyfriend's fear of coming out is stressful. Can Robin push through and discover who he truly is?

T+



**Mann,
Manjeet**

**The
Crossing**

Both Natalie and Sammy are facing an unknown future. Natalie's mum has died, and she doesn't know how to proceed; Sammy has fled his home in Eritrea with the hope of making a new life in Europe. When fate intervenes and the two have a chance meeting, their futures no longer seem unwritten. Told from both perspectives, Natalie and Sammy's narratives are written in verse.

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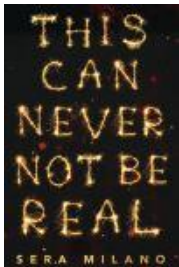


**Meddings,
Lize**

**The Sad
Ghost Club**

Anxiety, loneliness, feeling as if you don't belong. Explore these emotions in this graphic novel. An uplifting, relatable tale about mental health.

T+



**Milano,
Sera**

**This can
never not
be Real**

A group of survivors tell the story of the night terrorists struck their small town's annual festival. It didn't matter why it happened, only that it did and that they survived to tell the tale.

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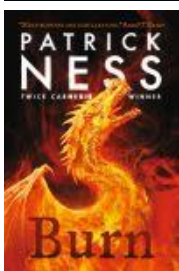


**Murphy,
Cynthia**

**Last One to
Die**

There's a serial attacker on the loose in London and their victims all resemble Niamh who just moved to the city. Her life takes a horrific turn as she gets caught up in the attacks that are taking place.

T+



**Ness,
Patrick**

Burn

In 1950's rural America lives Sarah Dewhurst and her father. Desperate to keep their farm going they hire an animal to help that only the poorest are crazy enough to take on – a dragon. But there's more to the dragon Kazimir that meets the eye and soon Sarah finds herself entangled in a prophecy with Kazimir, the FBI, an assassin and a cult. Completely unique and fantastical this book touches on issues including racism and homophobia.

T+



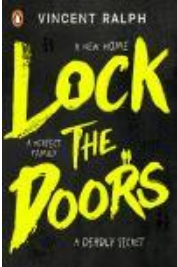


**Power,
Rory**

**Burn our
Bodies
Down**

Desperate to know about her mother's past, Margot discovers her grandmother is still alive. Travelling to the eerie town of Phalene, Margot begins to learn the shocking secrets of the past. At times creepy, this twisting thriller will keep the page turning and the jaw dropping.

T+



**Ralph,
Vincent**

**Lock the
Doors**

Tom and his mother have been through a lot and he thinks they've finally found peace after she remarries and they move into a new house. But this house is not what it seems. A mystery thriller filled with shocking and emotional moments covering a whole host of tough topics including domestic abuse, PTSD and OCD.

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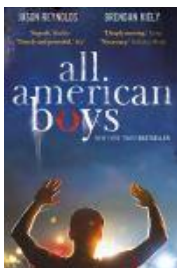


**Reed,
Christina
Hammonds**

**The Black
Kids**

Ashley is the 'black girl' in her friend group, but she's never thought or cared about what that really meant - but now it's 1992 and Los Angeles is burning. After four police officers are acquitted for the murder of Rodney King and violent protests sweep the city, Ashley begins questioning her identity and what it means to be black during a prominent moment America's history.

T+



**Reynolds,
Jason**

**All
American
boys**

Rashid, black, and Quinn, white, are forced to address the prejudices and racism in their town after Rashid is brutally attacked by a white police officer. An all too familiar story that is emotional and thought-provoking.

T+



**Reynolds,
Justin A**

**Forever
ends on
Friday**

Q has been reanimated and has one month left to live and his best friend Jamal is determined to make it great and keep past truths hidden from him. As the chapter's countdown Q's life, the readers' emotions will continue to rise. A heart wrenching exploration of life and death.

T+



**Roth,
Veronica**

**The end
and other
Beginnings
: Stories
from the
Future**

A series of short stories and illustrations set in futuristic settings focusing on technology, human emotions and relationships.

T+





**Rutter,
Bethany**

**Melt my
Heart**

Lily is determined to explore new things during the summer before she heads off to university – and that includes being romanced. But as she explores her feelings, she finds herself being attracted to her best female friend. A relatable, coming of age story.

T+



**Stroud,
Jonathan**

**The
Outlaws
Scarlett
and
Browne :
Being an
account of
their daring
exploits and
audacious
crimes**

Two misfit teenagers form an unlikely team in a future lawless Britain. Escaping from deadly enemies while avoiding wild and savage beats the couple travel across ravaged England. Beautifully written, this is a 'just one more chapter' book that bodes well for the next instalment.

T+



**Thomas,
Angie**

**Concrete
Rose**

Maverick Carter must rearrange his priorities when he discovers he is a father, but old habits die hard and a desire for revenge cause him to struggle. A stand-alone prequel to The Hate You Give, tells the story of Star's parents when they were teenagers.

T+



**Williamson,
Lisa**

**First Day of
my Life**

It's GCSE results day and Frankie and JoJo have agreed to collect them together from the school. When JoJo does not turn up Frankie is worried and decides to discover why. Told by the 3 main characters this is a tale of friendship and planning for the future no matter what life decides to throw at you.

T+



**Jackson,
Tom**

Hackers

Learn all about the history of computing through the eyes of hacking and code breaking in this information book. Hackers is just one titles in the *What's the Issue?* series; other titles include Fake News, Climate Change, and Future Humans. An excellent informative leisure non-fiction.

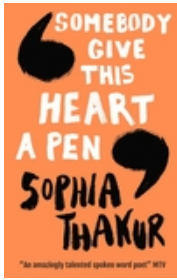
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**SLAM! :
You're
gonna
wanna hear
this**

A diverse collection covering slam poetry from notable performance poets including Dean Atta. Each poet introduces their own work and offers advice on performing your own poetry.

821



Thakur, Sophia

Somebody Give this Heart a Pen A collection of poems by performance artist, **821THA** Sophia Thakur. The works touch on many themes and issues relevant to teenagers today.



Johnson, George M

All Boys aren't Blue George M Johnson, a renowned LGBTQ+ **920JOH** activist, recounts growing up as a queer black man in the USA in a series of personal essays. In this memoir, he explores his childhood memories and ideas of gender identity, sexuality and the meaning of masculinity.



T = Younger Teen Reads

T+ = Older Teen Reads



= Available as an eBook/eAudio

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