



The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College



Literacy Newsletter — Term 1 — December 2023



Welcome to our reading newsletter. Reading is a key focus in our school for pupils and staff. We want to share why it is so important to read, ideas about how to encourage pupils to read and also recommend books they may enjoy. We hope you have a restful Christmas holiday and enjoy the time to dive into a good book!



Notices

A Reading Book is a compulsory part of every pupils' equipment. The school library has lots of new books we would love you to read. We have lots of different genres, big series books even manga! We also have a large section of dyslexia friendly and inclusivity books.

Upcoming Dates Next Term

27th January	Holocaust Memorial Day
5-11th February	Children's Mental Health Week
7th March	World Book Day
8th March	International Women's Day

Top Tutor Group Library Usage

1.	7AL1
2.	7JB1
3.	8AL2
4.	7AL2
5.	7MC2



Our Librarians



We have a fantastic team of librarians at English Martyrs who show excellent commitment to the library.

They have been involved in various activities this term, including the mammoth task of helping input all the recommended reading books onto the library system. They also work on a break and lunch time managing and organising the library.



Governor Visit

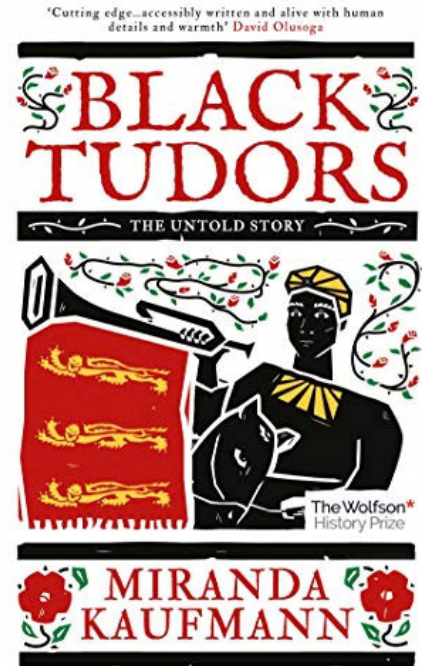


Our school governor Mrs Frain generously donated some books to our library. She was so impressed by her visit, she wrote a letter to our librarian Mrs Thoburn. In it she says, 'It was very reassuring to visit a space that is developing all of the time, being heavily used and appreciated by pupils, and being led by a passionate member of staff.'



Black History Month

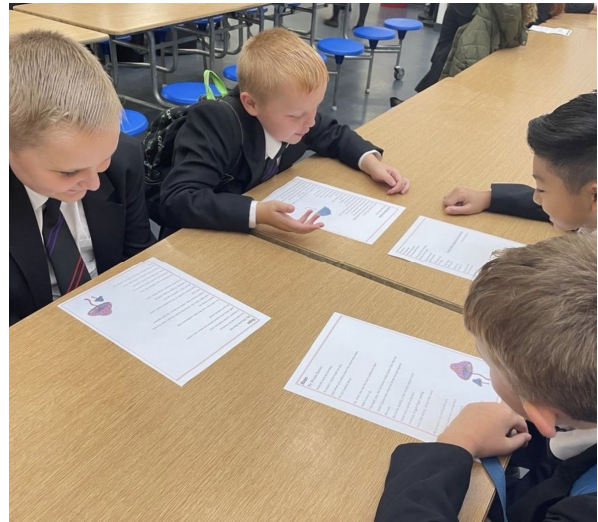
The Librarians chose a selection of books to promote and celebrate Black contributions to society, and to foster an understanding of Black History in general. We linked up with History in a book review competition to promote their book 'Black Tudors'.





National Poetry Day

On the 5th October we celebrated National Poetry Day. The theme this year was 'refuge' and the library displayed lots of these fantastic poems and had some DIY poem activities! Students also got involved in a group reading in their period 4 reading slot.





Gabrielle Kent Author Visit

In October we had the pleasure of inviting author and ex-student

Gabrielle Kent to come in to talk to a select group of Y8 and Y9 students. Gabrielle also donated a signed collection of her books to our library.





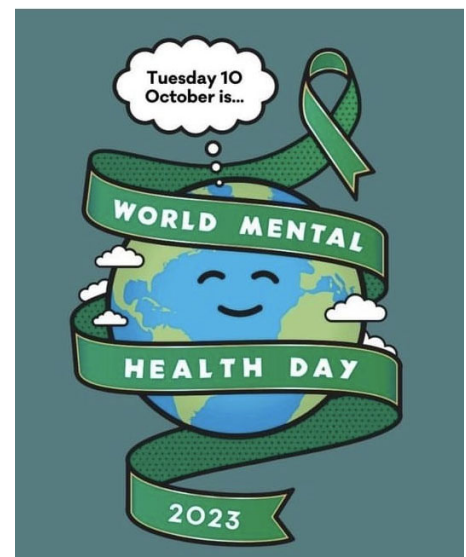
World Mental Health Day



To celebrate World Mental Health Day, our Sixth Form Librarians put together a display of our 'Reading Well For Teens' resources. They are designed to help students understand you're their feelings and boost confidence.



The library has a new 'Inclusivity' and 'Wellbeing' section.





National Harry Potter Book Day



On the 12th of October we celebrated National Harry Potter Book Day. The library created a magical display had lots of activities on at break and lunch.

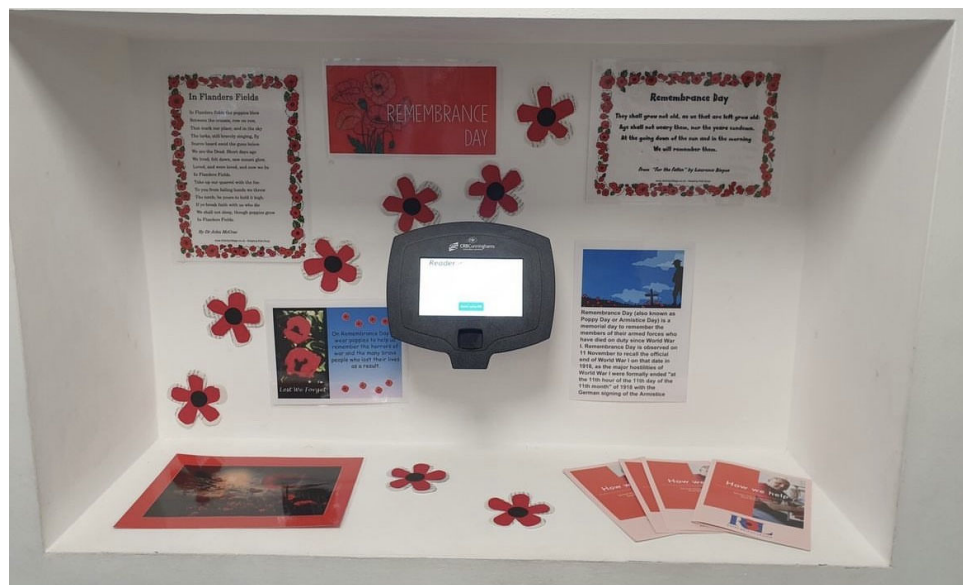




Remembrance Day



The library was involved in numerous activities for Remembrance Day. They teamed up with the History Department to display war literature in the dining hall and the Sixth Form library.





Reading Rewards



This term we were so excited for the grand opening of our new book vending machine. This launches our new reading rewards scheme, with tokens given to top readers in Year 7,8 and 9 along with representatives from top performing tutor groups and 'Student Librarian of the Month'. You can be a 'Top Reader' with a high library usage, Accelerated Reader quizzing and time spent on MyOn.



Non Fiction November



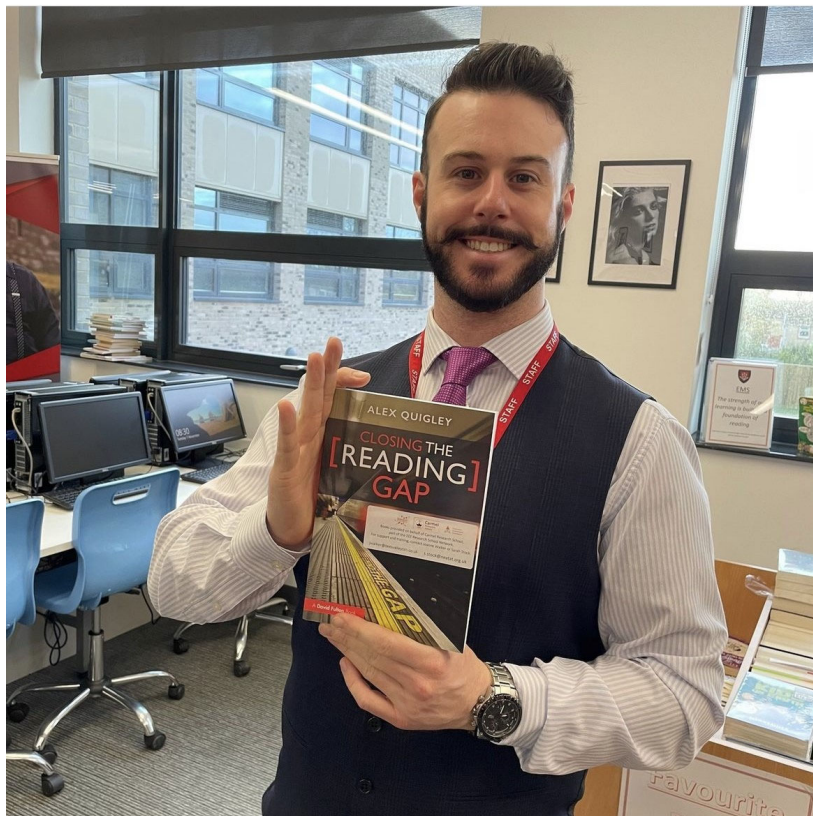
We had a fabulous 'Non-Fiction November' in the library. Our librarians have worked tirelessly to catalogue and organise this section into a Dewey Decimal System. Our new 'True Crime' section has been very popular, after lots of requests to create one.



Staff Reading—CPD



Carmel Research School kindly donated a selection of books for staff support and training. Our staff were really keen to get stuck into them!





Anti-Bullying Day



We had a brilliant Anti-Bullying Week at EMS. The main school and Sixth Form libraries had lots of activities to engage students. Our librarians also created fantastic displays around the school to ensure students knew all the facts.





Book Reviews

Do you enjoy reading? Write a book review for our library! We would love for you to contribute to our termly reading newsletter. Why don't you use our hints and tips (see below) and contribute a review of your most recent book. Each month we will publish one or more reviews from students on social media and there may even be prizes for the best review! How can I contribute? Hand your book review to the library. We would love you to share the books you read over the Christmas holidays.

How to write a great Book Review

1. Brief synopsis
2. Basic themes of the book
3. Who should read the book
4. How it made you feel
5. Summary of what happened (no spoilers)
6. Loved or hated and why
7. How well did the book achieve its goal? 8. Recommend or not...and why
9. Describe your favourite character
10. Star rating

Book Review

Book review by: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Non fiction Fiction

Would you/would you not recommend the book? Why?

Would recommend

Would not recommend

Why? _____

Rating: ☆☆☆☆☆

What is the book about?

Book Illustration

Who would this book be suitable for? Age/Interests

Age: 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Interest:

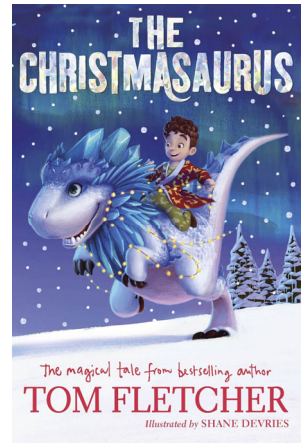
Sport	Animals	History	Stories	Countries
Poetry	Cooking	Funny	Sad	For Boys
For Girls	Toys	Activities	Pictures	Other



Christmas Reading Recommendations

Y7: The Christmasaurus by Tom Fletcher

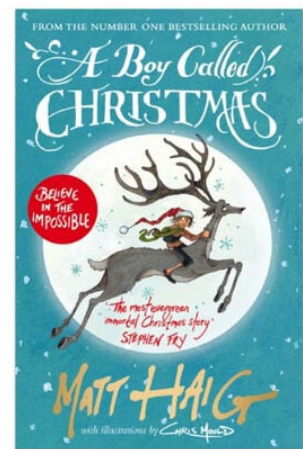
Synopsis: William Trundle is a 10-year-old wheelchair user who is obsessed with dinosaurs. He lives happily with his dad Bob, until one day Brenda Payne, the meanest girl in the whole school (possibly the world!) joins his class and turns William's life upside down. For the first time ever, William feels very different from his friends and he becomes miserable. Little does he know that far away in the North Pole is a lonely dinosaur called the Christmasaurus who also feels very different. On Christmas Eve, the two cross paths in the most unexpected way, leading them to embark on the adventure of a lifetime and build a friendship that will change them both forever.



Recommended by Mrs Thoburn

Y8: A Boy Called Christmas by Matt Haig

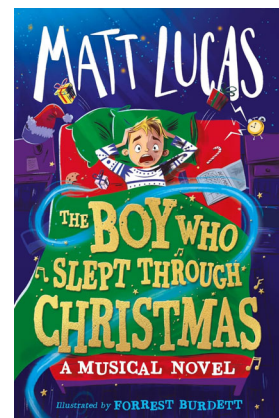
Synopsis: You are about to read the true story of Father Christmas. It is a story that proves that nothing is impossible. If you are one of those people who believe that some things are impossible, you should put this book down right away. It is most certainly not for you. Because this book is full of impossible things. Are you still reading? Good. Then let us begin. A tale of adventure, snow, kidnapping, elves, more snow, and an 11-year-old boy called Nikolas, who isn't afraid to believe in magic.



Recommended by Mrs Phenix

Y9: The Boy Who Slept Through Christmas by Matt Lucas

Synopsis: Dive in to this funny and debut heart-warming magical adventure from star of stage and screen, Matt Lucas - a festive modern classic for young readers! Leo LOVES Christmas. And this Christmas needs to be absolutely perfect, because it's the first one without Mum. Only it all keeps going wrong! Home Alone meets A Christmas Carol in a hilarious adventure with a big dollop of festive magic. Funny, sensitive and emotional in all the best ways, this warm and seasonal family story touches ever so gently on childhood grief but is wrapped up in a chaotic and heart-warming adventure.



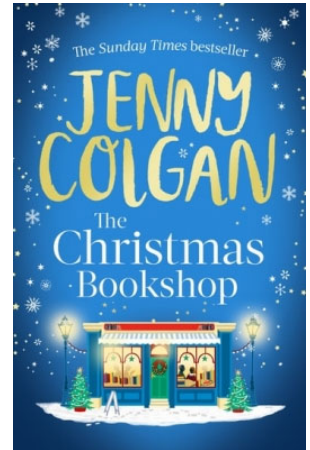
Recommended by The Librarians



Christmas Reading Recommendations

GCSE: The Christmas Bookshop by Jenny Colgan

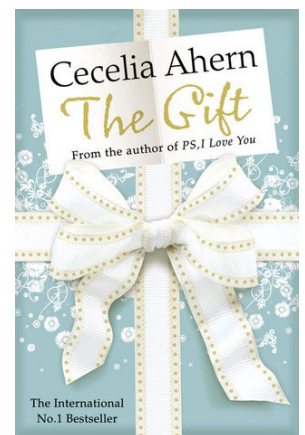
Synopsis: A simply joyous and magical relationship story to brighten up the darkest of times. Carmen's sister Sofia comes to her somewhat reluctant rescue when Carmen is made redundant. *The Christmas Bookshop* goes to the top of my favourite books by Jenny Colgan, she is one of the most consistently fabulous romance writers out there, and if I need a boost I know just where to head. Yes there's romance, you'll also find intriguing family relationships and inviting new friendships. When we meet Carmen she's not at her best, she's definitely not perfect (who is!), and because she's multi-dimensional it adds extra layers to this Christmas tale. I particularly loved the cast of characters, even the smallest part has depth, and then of course there is the Bookshop, which is divinely intriguing and welcoming. Edinburgh becomes a winter wonderland, with snow, beautifully decorated shops, and even if you've never been, the descriptions ensure a spellbinding sparkle.



Recommended by Saphere Y9

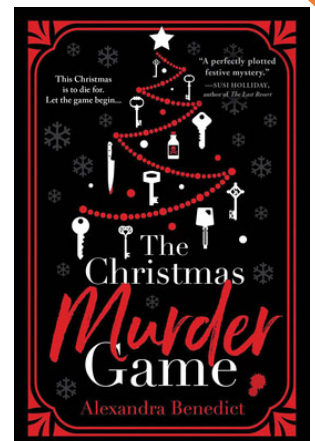
A Level The Gift by Cecelia Ahern

Synopsis: Everyday Lou Suffern battled with the clock. He always had two places to be at the same time. He always had two things to do at once. When asleep he dreamed. In between dreams, he ran through the events of the day while making plans for the next. When at home with his wife and family, his mind was always someplace else. On his way into work one early winter morning, Lou meets Gabe, a homeless man sitting outside the office building. Intrigued by him and on discovering that he could also be very useful to have around, Lou gets Gabe a job in the post room. But soon Lou begins to regret helping Gabe. His very presence unsettles Lou and how does Gabe appear to be in two places at the same time? As Christmas draws closer, Lou starts to understand the value of time. He sees what is truly important in life yet at the same time he learns the harshest lesson of all. In order to find out who you really are. For Lou Suffern, that took time.



Staff : Christmas Murder Game by Alexandra Benedict

Synopsis: The annual Christmas Game is afoot at Endgame House, the Armitages' grand family home. This year's prize is to die for--deeds to the house itself--but Lily Armitage has no intention of returning. She hasn't been back to Endgame since her mother died, twenty-one years ago, and she has no intention of claiming the house that haunts her dreams. Until, that is, she receives a letter from her aunt promising that the game's riddles will give her the keys not only to Endgame, but to its darkest secrets, including the identity of her mother's murderer. Now, Lily must compete with her estranged cousins for the twelve days of Christmas. The snow is thick, the phone lines are down, and no one is getting in or out. Lily will have to keep her wits about her, because not everyone is playing fair, and there's no telling how many will die before the winner is declared.



Recommended by 'Good Reads'



Winter Mini Challenge



Calling all bookworms—the Winter Mini Challenge is for you! The Reading Agency has teamed up with The Youth Sport Trust this year to champion the power of sport and reading. Head to www.wintermini.org.uk from 1st December to sign up, find fun activities and earn rewards for reading.