
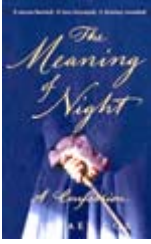
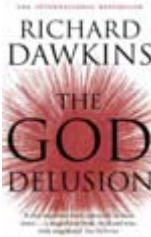





<p><b>Half Of A Yellow Sun</b> by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie  Recommended by Mr P Illott  This is a potent mix of history, politics, love and the brutality of civil war. It rightly won the Orange Booker Prize.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  A masterly, haunting novel that re-creates a seminal moment in modern African history: Biafra's impassioned struggle to establish an independent republic in Nigeria in the 1960s, and the chilling violence that followed. Epic, ambitious, and triumphantly realized, it is a remarkable novel about moral responsibility, about the end of colonialism, about ethnic allegiances, about class and race — and the ways in which love can complicate them all.</p>	
<p><b>Zorro</b> by Isabel Allende  Recommended by Mrs J Sanchez  A superb book and one which Allende creates a convincing past for this hero and in the process answers several of the questions that we have asked ourselves for years.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Beneath the mask, there is a man. In his heart burns the fire of injustice. Duels at dawn, fierce battles with pirates and impossible rescues, these are the deeds that forged the legend of Zorro. In southern California in the late 18th century Diego de la Vega is a child of two worlds, his father an aristocratic Spaniard, his mother a Shoshone warrior. Growing up he witnesses the brutal injustices dealt to native Americans. Later, following the example of his fencing master, the young Diego joins a secret movement devoted to helping the powerless. His first steps on the road to heroism have been taken.</p>	
<p><b>The Little Soldier</b> by Bernard Ashley  Recommended by Mrs S Isaacs  The story presents the trials and tribulations of a young boy faced with survival in his war-torn homeland.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Kaninda is an ex-child soldier from East Africa, orphaned and living in London. When a child from a nearby estate is hit by a car he is drawn into an inter-estate conflict. The story combines current conflicts in London with real war in Africa. A powerful and moving tale of human conflict, pride and friendship.</p>	
<p><b>The New York Trilogy</b> by Paul Auster  Recommended by Mrs T Williams  An unusual trilogy of stories which are very thought provoking.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Paul Auster's signature work, The New York Trilogy, consists of three interlocking novels <i>City of Glass</i>, <i>Ghosts</i> and <i>The Locked Room</i>. All are haunting and mysterious tales that move at the breathless pace of a thriller and look at the nature of identity. In the first a detective writer is drawn into a curious and baffling investigation, in the second a man is set up to spy on someone, and the third concerns the disappearance of a man whose childhood friend is left as his literary executor.</p>	
<p><b>The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas</b> by John Boyne  Recommended by Mrs S Isaacs  A simple story that is compelling to read. Just try it and see!</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Nine year old Bruno knows nothing of the Holocaust. He is oblivious to the appalling cruelties being inflicted on the people of Europe by his country. All he knows is that he has moved from a comfortable home in Berlin to a desolate area where there is nothing to do. He meets a boy who lives a strange parallel existence on the other side of the adjoining fence and who, like the other people there, wears a uniform of striped pyjamas.</p>	
<p><b>The Gum Thief</b> by Douglas Coupland  Recommended By Mr K Bulman  Another superb slice of modern life through ordinary identifiable characters, by the originator of the term <i>Generation X</i> (a great book in itself). This is not his best book (personally that's <i>Girlfriend In A Coma</i>, for me) but it's always interesting and readable with the added bonus of a novel within the novel!</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Roger is a divorced middle-aged 'aisles associate' at a Staples outlet, condemned to restocking reams of paper for the rest of his life. His co-worker Bethany is at the end of her Gothic phase and realises she's facing fifty more years of shelving Post-It notes. One day Bethany discovers Roger's notebook in the staff room. When she opens it up she discovers that this old guy, who she's never considered to be quite human, is writing mock diary entries pretending to be her - and weirdly, he's getting it right. She learns that he has a tragedy in his past, and suddenly he no longer seems like a paper-stocking robot. Every page of this wise, witty and unforgettable novel, Coupland reminds us that love, death and eternal friendship can all occur where and when we least expect them and that even after tragedy has hit one can still find solace in the comedy and strange comforts of modern life.</p>	

<p><b>The Meaning Of Night</b> by Michael Cox  Recommended by Mr S T Plummer  A dark and sinister Dickensian story with a twist.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  A cold October night, 1854. In a dark passageway, an innocent man is stabbed to death. So begins the extraordinary story of Edward Glyver, book lover, scholar and murderer. Glyver always believed he was destined for greatness and he will stop at nothing to win back a prize that he now knows is rightfully his. His is a story of betrayal and treachery, death and delusion, of ruthless obsession and ambition. Thirty years to write, this is a stunning achievement which is full of drama and passion that will captivate readers right up to its final thrilling revelation.</p>	
<p><b>The God Delusion</b> by Richard Dawkins  Recommended by Mr J G W Watson  This book was nominated for Best Book at the British Book Awards where Richard Dawkins won the <i>Author of the Year</i> award. This is a spirited and exhilarating read where Dawkins presents powerful arguments.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  The God Delusion caused a sensation when it was published in 2006. In weeks it became the most hotly debated topic, with Dawkins himself branded as either saint or sinner for presenting his hard-hitting, impassioned rebuttal of religion of all types. He eviscerates the major arguments for religion and demonstrates the supreme improbability of a supreme being and shows how religion fuels war. The God Delusion is a fascinating polemic that will be read by anyone interested in this most emotional and important subject.</p>	
<p><b>Crime and Punishment</b> by Fyodor Dostoevsky  Recommended by Mr P M Duran  I re-read this recently and had forgotten how exciting a novel it is.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Raskolnikov, a destitute and desperate former student, wanders through the slums of St. Petersburg and commits a random murder without remorse or regret. He imagines himself to be a great man, a Napoleon acting for a higher purpose beyond conventional moral law. As he embarks on a dangerous game of cat and mouse with a suspicious police investigator, Raskolnikov is pursued by the growing voice of his conscience and finds the noose of his own guilt tightening around his neck. Only Sonya, a downtrodden harlot, can offer the chance of redemption. This is a story of justice, morality, and redemption from one of Russia's greatest novelists.</p>	
<p><b>Jamaica Inn</b> by Daphne Du Maurier  Recommended by Miss A Hedger  A chilling, mysterious and brilliant read where you are totally drawn into the dark goings on, as the heroine slowly unravels the secrets behind Jamaica Inn and the dark deeds of her uncle.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  On a bitter November evening young Mary Yellan journeys across the rain swept moors to Jamaica Inn in honour of her mother's dying request. When she arrives the warning of the coachman begins to echo in her memory, for her aunt Patience cowers before hulking Uncle Joss Merlyn. Terrified of the inn's brooding power, Mary gradually finds herself ensnared in the dark schemes being enacted behind its crumbling walls and is tempted to love a man she dare not trust. This is a classic and enthralling story of smuggling and Cornish secrets.</p>	
<p><b>The Girl At The Lion D'Or</b> by Sebastian Faulks  Recommended by Mr P Thonemann  I hadn't initially read any of this author's books, and found this so sufficiently good that I read <i>Birdsong</i> immediately afterwards - which was also excellent.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  A beautifully controlled and powerful story of love and conscience, will and desire, which begins when a mysterious young girl arrives to take up a vacancy at the seedy Hotel du Lion D'Or in a small French town in the mid 1930s. As always, Sebastian Faulks sets a great emphasis on the political and historical context in which this story is set.</p>	

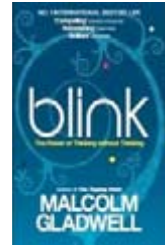
**Blink: The Power Of Thinking Without Thinking** by Malcolm Gladwell

Recommended by Mr S V Baker

An insight into the unconscious mind and how it can be used both by the individual and by corporate interests. An interesting reference book which may empower you to trust your 'instincts' and see many bureaucratic decision-making processes for what they are - misguided, unwieldy and ultimately not particularly useful.

**Synopsis**

Intuition is not some magical property that arises unbidden from the depths of our mind. It is a product of long hours and intelligent design, of meaningful work environments and particular rules and principles. Gladwell reveals how the power of 'blink' could fundamentally transform our relationships, the way we consume, create and communicate, how we run our our businesses and even our societies.



**Brighton Rock** by Graeme Greene

Recommended by Mr D T Bingham

Greene's best, which features 'Pinkie' - his finest and nastiest creation!

**Synopsis**

A gang war is raging through the dark underworld of Brighton. Seventeen-year-old Pinkie, malign and ruthless, has killed a man. Believing he can escape retribution, he is unprepared for the courageous, life-embracing Ida Arnold. Greene's gripping thriller exposes a world of loneliness and fear, of life lived on the 'dangerous edge of things.'



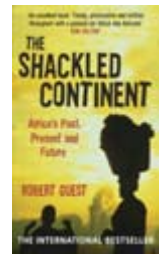
**The Shackled Continent** by Robert Guest

Recommended by Mrs E Grainger

This excellent book looks at Africa and its history, about the wars, sickness and Aids and corrupt African government. Very interesting book which highlights many of the problems and issues they have to endure.

**Synopsis**

Guest's fascinating book seeks to diagnose the sickness that continues to hobble Africa's development. Using reportage, first-hand experience and economic insight, he takes us to the roots of the many problems. Most shocking of all is the evidence that billions of dollars of aid given to Africa has had little perceptible effect on the poor. The Shackled Continent offers insightful, and occasionally controversial, explanations for this state of affairs plus provides an invigorating history and an inspired commentary on the enigma of modern Africa.



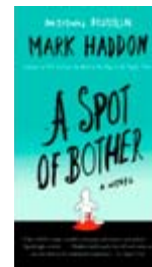
**A Spot Of Bother** by Mark Haddon

Recommended by Mrs S Sofroniou

The number one bestseller and a very enjoyable read. Made me laugh out loud and is just as humorous as his previous novel *Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night Time*.

**Synopsis**

At fifty-seven George is settling down to a comfortable retirement building a shed in his garden, reading historical novels and listening to a bit of light jazz. Feeling unnoticed in the uproar of his family lives, George discovers a sinister lesion on his hip and quietly begins to lose his mind. The way these damaged people fall apart and subsequently come together again as a family, is the true subject of Mark Haddon's disturbing and very funny portrait of a dignified man trying to go insane politely.



**Roman's Journey** by Roman Halter

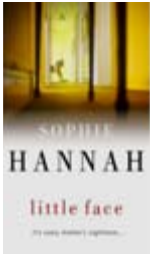
Recommended by Mr J Lewis

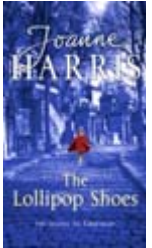
A moving and impressive contribution to the literature of the Holocaust. This tells the story of a young Polish Jew coming to terms with the devastation wrecked by the German invasion of his country. Some 'scenes' - of the young Roman witnessing the murder of his school friends in a forest clearing, or of his friends and himself being used as target practice by Nazi officers out hunting ducks - will live with you forever. I urge you to read this book.

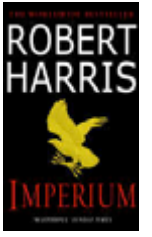
**Synopsis**

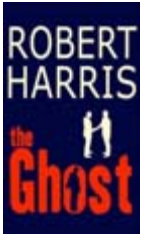
A remarkable story of survival and one that evokes a landscape infected with killing and a whole continent seething with war. Roman Halter was a spirited, optimistic schoolboy in 1939 when he and his family gathered behind the curtains to watch the *Volksdeutsche* (German Polish) neighbours of their small town in western Poland greet the arrival of Hitler's armies with kisses and swastika flags. Within days the family home had been seized and 12-year-old Roman had become a slave of the local SS chief. This is Roman's remarkable six-year journey through some of the darkest caverns of Nazi Europe that claimed the lives of every other member of his family and the 800-strong community of his boyhood.


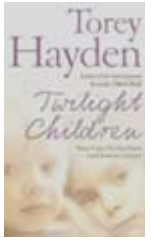


<p><b>Little Face</b> by Sophie Hannah  Recommended by Mrs J Bidwell  A psychological chilling thriller exploring the dynamics of a seemingly happy family and the secrets within. An emotional roller coaster of a read. This is Sophie Hannah's debut novel and her second outing into crime fiction <i>Hurting Distance</i> (which gets equally good reviews) combines her trade mark of an unguessable plot and a cast of highly undesirables!  <b>Synopsis</b>  Alice's baby is two weeks old when she leaves the house without her for the first time. On her return she finds the front door open and her husband asleep on their bed upstairs. She rushes their baby's room and screams. 'This isn't our baby! Where's our baby?' Her increasingly hostile husband swears she must be either mad or lying, and the DNA test is going to take a week. Before the test has been taken, Alice and the baby have disappeared. The police, who initially dismissed her story, fear for her life and try to find her and as they do they find dark incidents in her husband David's past. Incidences include the murder of his ex-wife!</p>	
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<p><b>The Lollipop Shoes</b> by Joanne Harris  Recommended by Mrs U Pulham  A perfectly undemanding holiday read fairy-tale involving lots of chocolate! The story is set in Montmartre (a sequel to her novel <i>Chocolat</i>) and is magical, Christmassy, totally relaxing and enjoyable. To be read with a huge box of chocolates and a glass of mulled wine!  <b>Synopsis</b>  Seeking refuge and anonymity in the cobbled streets of Montmartre, Yanne and her daughters Rosette and Annie live peacefully, if not happily, above their little chocolate shop. Nothing unusual marks them out; then into their lives blows Zozie de l'Alba, the lady with lollipop shoes, and everything begins to change. This new friendship is not what it seems. Ruthless devious and seductive, Zozie has plans of her own - plans that will shake their world to pieces. With everything she loves at stake, Yanne must face a difficult choice; to flee, as she has done so many times before, or to confront her most dangerous enemy...herself.</p>	
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<p><b>Imperium</b> by Robert Harris  Recommended by Mr P Thonemann  I knew a bit about this period in Roman history but this book managed to bring it alive in the most exciting way.  Recommended by Mr S T Plummer  Great insight into the devilish intrigues of Roman politics during the fall of the Republic.  <b>Synopsis</b>  When Tiro, the confidential secretary of a Roman senator, opens the door to a terrified stranger on a cold November morning, he sets in motion a chain of events which will eventually propel his master into one of the most famous courtroom dramas in history. The stranger is a Sicilian, a victim of the island's corrupt Roman governor, Verres. The senator is Cicero, a brilliant young lawyer and spellbinding orator, determined to attain imperium - supreme power in the state. The story is written in Tiro's voice and it takes us inside the violent, treacherous world of Roman politics, and how one man fought to reach the top.</p>	
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<p><b>The Ghost</b> by Robert Harris  Recommended by Mr DT Bingham  A cracking literary thriller and a thinly veiled critique of the Blair years as a bonus.  <b>Synopsis</b>  The narrator of Robert Harris's new novel is a ghost-writer assigned to write the memoirs of a former British Prime Minister. But all is not as it should be; the ex-PM, Adam Lang, finds himself exiled in Martha's Vineyard with a war crimes indictment hanging over him. A previous 'ghost' died in mysterious circumstances and it doesn't take him long to realise he has made a terrible mistake, particularly as the ex-prime minister turns out to be a man with secrets in his past that are returning to haunt him - secrets with the power to kill.</p>	
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<p><b>One Child / Twilight's Children</b> by Torey Hayden  Recommended by Mr A Luke  Torey works in schools with children with difficulties and often appalling home lives. She tells how she has brought children out of themselves to be acceptable in society in a page-turning and awe inspiring way.  <b>Synopsis</b>  Hayden's books are a poignant memoir of people's victimisation and abuse, children who are gifted and troubled or children traumatised by the horrors of war. Whilst heartbreaking we see how Hayden ultimately gains successful steps to their recovery.</p>		
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**The Line of Beauty** by Alan Hollinghurst

Recommended by Mr R W Searby

A disturbingly dark depiction of 1980's London. The novel explores the effects of AIDS on the city's gay scene as the disease explodes into public consciousness.

**Synopsis**

Nick, living with a Conservative MP and his family in Notting Hill, conducts a number of affairs between 1984-87 as the shadow of the disease extends. A mix of money, politics, drugs and love provide all the ingredients for a major public scandal. Fluently poised prose by one of our most talented contemporary novelists. This novel won the Booker Prize in 2004.



**A Thousand Splendid Suns** by Khaled Hosseini

Recommended by Mrs S Sofroniou

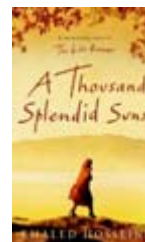
Searing and not for the faint-hearted! This novel made me appreciate my own life much more and I enjoyed this almost as much as The Kite Runner - although I felt the ending was a little drawn out.

Recommended by Mrs S Luke

Absolutely loved it - a highly enjoyable and engrossing read.

**Synopsis**

Mariam is only fifteen when she is sent to Kabul to marry the troubled and bitter Rasheed, who is thirty years her senior. Nearly two decades later, in a climate of growing unrest, tragedy strikes fifteen-year-old Laila who must leave her home and join Mariam's unhappy household. With the passing of time comes Taliban rule over Afghanistan, the streets of Kabul loud with fear, the women's endurance tested beyond their worst imaginings. This is an unforgettable portrait of a wounded country and a deeply moving story of family and friendship. It is a heart-wrenching story of an unforgiving time, an unlikely bond and an indestructible love.



**The Kite Runner** by Khaled Hosseini

Recommended by Miss V Dempster

A beautiful story and a compelling read. Book reviews on his latest novel are just as good, so read them both!

**Synopsis**

This book unfolds against Afghanistan's destructive history, from the fall of the monarchy to the terrifying oppression of the Taliban. Set amidst a culture and a country that existed before the Soviets, before the Taliban, before Al Qaeda and before the US invasion, this title is a story about fathers and sons, sin and atonement, the casualties of fate and, finally, injustice and the human yearning for redemption.



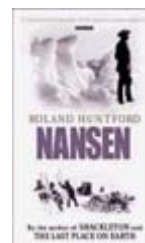
**Nansen** by Roland Huntford

Recommended by Dr D A Lockett

A tremendous and gripping biography of a major polar explorer and force for good.

**Synopsis**

Nansen was a prime illustration of Carlyle's dictum that the history of the world is but the biography of great men. He was not merely a pioneer in the wildly diverse fields of oceanography and skiing, but one of the founders of neurology. A restless, unquiet Faustian spirit, Nansen was born into the new Norway of Ibsen and Grieg. He was an artist and historian, a diplomat who had dealings with Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, and who played a part in the Versailles Peace Conference, where he helped the Americans in their efforts to contain the Bolsheviks. He also undertook famine relief in Russia. Finally, working for the League of Nations as both High Commissioner for Refugees and High Commissioner for the Repatriation of Prisoners of War, he became the first of the modern media-conscious international civil servants. This biography of Nansen draws on a wealth of new material including diaries and other untapped documents.



**Freedom at Midnight** by Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins

Recommended by Miss P Newsome

A very powerful and well written story. It reads like an epic drama but it's all real! This book is long and detailed but a fabulous read.

**Synopsis**

This book by Lapierre and Collins is about nations, states, ethnic and religious tension, violence and non-violence. Mountbatten, Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah are the central players in this drama. There is so much we can learn from the history of the British withdrawal from India. It explores the reasons why certain decisions were made and puts the awful after-events into some kind of perspective. Some shocking stories appear as sub plots and heart warming acts of kindness in adversity might even renew your faith in human nature.



**The Tailor of Panama** by John Le Carre

Recommended by Miss P Newsome

A great story with subtle twists in the tale. This novel really makes you think whilst you enjoy the read.

**Synopsis**

Harry Pendel is the charismatic proprietor of Pendel and Braithwaite Limitada of Panama, through whose doors everyone who is anyone in Central America passes; Andrew Osnard is mysterious and also a spy. His secret mission is to keep a watchful eye on the political manoeuvrings leading up to the American handover of the Panama Canal in 1999 and to secure for himself the immense private fortune that has until now churlishly eluded him.



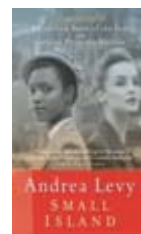
**Small Island** by Andrea Levy

Recommended by Mrs E Grainger

A thoroughly good read which brings back memories of immigrants arriving in the UK after World War 2.

**Synopsis**

Small Island is the amazing story of the first wave of Jamaicans who arrived in Britain. Andrea Levy describes the hopes and fears of a group of immigrants who, after fighting for the Mother country in the Second World War, find that their reception is not the warm embrace they had hoped for and opportunities to make a success of life in London are harder to find than they expected. This award winning book is a story about prejudice, Britain's and American GI's racism, middle-class Londoners snobbery towards the Cockneys, the Jamaicans towards the "small islanders" and the British Empire's treatment of its Caribbean and Indian colonies.



**Saturday** by Ian McEwan

Recommended by Mr R Wallace

An accomplished piece of work, which brings across beautifully a man's everyday struggles and the impending Iraq war.

**Synopsis**

Saturday is a novel set within a single day in 2003. Henry Perowne is a contented man and a successful neurosurgeon, happily married to a newspaper lawyer and enjoying good relations with his children who are now young adults. Outside his comfort zone of the hospital the world is not so easy or predictable. There is an impending war against Iraq and a general darkening and gathering pessimism since the New York and Washington attacks two years before. On this particular Saturday morning, Perowne's day moves through the ordinary to the extraordinary, from an unusual sighting in the early morning sky to his usual squash game, and from trying to avoid the hundreds of thousands of war protestors filling the streets of London, to a seemingly minor car accident. McEwan has written a masterful novel that keeps you balanced on the edge of your seat as Perowne's happy safe world is unexpectedly shattered.



**Suite Francaise** by Irene Nemirovsky

Recommended by Miss C. J. Lewis

A fantastic portrayal of life in occupied France during the Second World War. Nemirovsky, a Russian Jew, who fled the Communists to come to France, was just establishing herself as a serious author when she was deported to a concentration camp (Auschwitz), where she later died. The manuscripts for these books were discovered and published by her daughter a few years ago, and represent two out of a planned set of five novels following some of the same characters. The translation from the French is excellent (and comes with background notes) plus the subject matter fascinating and enlightening. I can't recommend it highly enough.

**Synopsis**

Beginning with France's fall to the Nazis in 1940, this book ends with Germany turning its attention to Russia. It presents a depiction of a group of Parisians as they flee the Nazi invasion and make their way through France. It then follows the inhabitants of a rural community who find themselves thrown together in ways they never expected.



**Popular Music** by Mikael Niemi

Recommended by Reverend A Keep

This is about a very ordinary boy growing up at an ordinary time but in an extraordinary place - in the far north of Sweden in a little village within the Arctic Circle. It's easy to read as each chapter is a story in itself. It's intriguing, very human and often hilariously funny and, occasionally rough and raw.

**Synopsis**

A humorous tale about being a boy in Pajala, Sweden, and growing up there in the 1960s and 70s. To date the rights for this book have been sold to 14 countries.



**The Time Traveller's Wife** by Audrey Niffenegger

Recommended by Mrs U Pulham

Absolutely fascinating - couldn't put it down. Very beautiful, sad and touching.

**Synopsis**

This bestselling debut novel from Audrey Niffenegger explores the perfect marriage, one that is tested by challenges the couple can neither control nor predict. An imaginative extension of everyday life, the story asks: "What if two people who loved each other and got married, then faced a life in which one person remained constant while the other slipped fluidly in and out of time?" A modern love story with a twist that invites us to linger over questions of how life and love change over time.



**An Utterly Impartial History of Britain** by John O'Farrell

Recommended by Mr P McDonough

Described as a "hilarious, highly informative and cantankerous journey through Great Britain's bizarre and fascinating story", this is a hugely enjoyable new take on broad sweep history. No event or character is safe from O'Farrell's wicked sense of humour. My favourite extract is the one relating to the incident known as "The Boston Tea Party" (in which American colonists, disguised as Mohawk Indians, threw tea from British ships into Boston harbour as a protest against custom duties. "The British were losing the PR war. What they really needed was a reporter down on the shoreline giving moving accounts of the ecological disaster that this massive tea spill represented for local marine life. This poor gannet is coated in Lapsong Souchong; the otter's fur is thick with Earl Grey. The smell of Bergamot is overpowering". Great stuff!



**An Instance of the Fingerpost** by Iain Pears

Recommended by Mr M Northen

The story takes place in Oxford in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and contains four versions of the same story (The Death of the Dean), told by as many witnesses. Iain Pears fills his story with contemporary theories and believes that instead of just repeating the physical aspects of this period we understand their mentality.

**Synopsis**

England in the 1660s, Charles II has been restored to the throne following years of civil war and Oliver Cromwell's short-lived republic. Oxford is the intellectual seat of the country, a place of great scientific, religious and political ferment. A fellow of New College is found dead in suspicious circumstances. A young woman is accused of his murder. We hear the story of the death from four witnesses—each tells his/her own version of what happened. Only one reveals the extraordinary truth. A compelling historical mystery with a plot that twists and turns and keeps you guessing until the very last page.



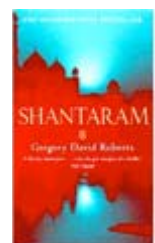
**Shantaram** by Gregory Roberts

Recommended by Ms N Mirzoeff

This is a most compelling story of modern India, from the inside out. A true story which will shock and enlighten.

**Synopsis**

Shantaram is a novel based on the life of the author, Australian Gregory David Roberts. In 1978 Roberts was sentenced to nineteen years' imprisonment as punishment for a series of armed robberies. Two years later he escaped from the maximum security prison and became one of Australia's most wanted men for the next ten years. His life on the run takes him from New Zealand to Bombay, India where the story starts. He meets many people and joins the Indian Mafia which he is enthralled with and loved by its leader. He sets up a free health clinic in the slums where he learns about the Indian culture and characteristics of the people he later comes to love. He learns of life and who and what kind of man he is and ends up realising that he must fight for what he believes is right, and build an honest life in Bombay. \* N.B. - the film rights have recently been sold to Warner Bros and they are set to produce and release Shantaram, starring Johnny Depp, in 2008.



**The Radetzky March** by Joseph Roth

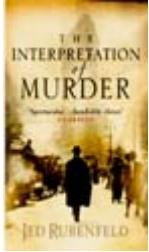

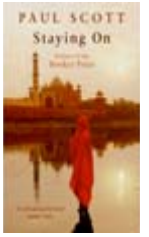

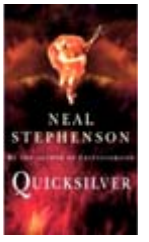
Recommended by Mr S T Plummer

Fascinating, compelling and melancholic window into the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

**Synopsis**

Translated from the German, The Radetzky March charts the history of the Trotta family through three generations spanning the rise and fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It should be appreciated not only as great literature but also a valuable historical document. It is an important commentary on how the legacy of those times still affects the Austrian society today.



<p><b>The Interpretation</b> by Jed Rubenfeld  Recommended by Mrs J Bidwell  Fascinating psychoanalytical murder novel, part based on fact and the historical Freud. A novel on many levels: a social history of New York at the turn of the last century, a murder mystery and an insight into the relationship between Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  The novel was inspired by Sigmund Freud's 1909 visit to America, accompanied by protégé and rival Carl Jung. When a wealthy young debutante is discovered bound, whipped and strangled in a luxurious apartment overlooking the city, and another society beauty narrowly escapes the same fate, the mayor of New York calls upon Freud to use his revolutionary new ideas to help the surviving victim recover her memory of the attack, and solve the crime. However nothing about the attacks is quite as it seems. There are those in very high places determined to stop the truth coming out, and also stop Freud's startling theories taking root on American soil.</p>	
<p><b>Sovereign</b> by C J Sansom  Recommended by Mr T J Chilton  Great detective novel convincingly set in Tudor times. This is the third book in the Matthew Shardlake trilogy (other titles are Dissolution and Dark Fire). If you like P D James you'll love these books.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Autumn 1541. A plot against the throne has been uncovered, and Henry VIII has set off from London to York, along with his fifth wife, Catherine Howard, to quell his rebellious northern subjects. Awaiting his arrival are lawyer Matthew Shardlake and his loyal assistant. In addition to processing petitions to the king, Shardlake's task is to protect a dangerous conspirator until he is transported back to London for interrogation. But when a local glazier is murdered, things get a little more complicated as the murder seems to be not only connected to Shardlake's prisoner but also to the royal family itself. Shardlake stumbles upon a cache of secret papers that throws into doubt the legitimacy of the entire royal line, and a chain of events unfolds that threatens Shardlake with the most terrifying fate of the age, imprisonment in the Tower of London.</p>	
<p><b>Staying On</b> by Paul Scott  Recommended by Mr T W Corbett  Funny and deeply moving, "Staying On" is a unique, engrossing portrait of the end of an Empire. He received the prestigious Booker Prize for his novel just before he died.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Tusker and Lily Smalley stayed on in India. Given the chance to return 'home' when Tusker, once a Colonel in the British Army, retired they chose instead to remain in the small hill town of Pangkot, with its eccentric inhabitants and archaic rituals left over from the days of the Empire. Only the tyranny of their imposing landlady threatens to upset the quiet rhythm of their days.</p>	
<p><b>A Town Like Alice</b> by Nevil Shute  Recommended by Miss A Hedger  Based on a true story and an excellent classic novel.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Jean Paget has survived World War II as a prisoner of the Japanese in Malaya. After the war she comes into an inheritance that enables her to return to Malaya to repay the villagers who helped her to survive. But her return visit changes her life again, when she discovers that an Australian soldier she thought had died has survived. She goes to Australia in search of him and of the town he described to her. Jean sets out to apply the same determination that helped her to survive the war, to turning the community into 'a town like Alice'.</p>	
<p><b>Quicksilver</b> by Neal Stephenson  Recommended by Mr R P Cross  Winner of the 2004 Arthur C. Clarke Award. A brilliant bulging historical novel, thrillingly accomplished. An extraordinary achievement from one of the most remarkable and original writers of our time and packed with fascinating characters.</p> <p><b>Synopsis</b>  Neal Stephenson brings to life a cast of unforgettable characters in a time of breathtaking genius and discovery, men and women whose exploits defined the age of the High Baroque. Daniel, Jack and Eliza traverse a landscape populated by mad alchemists, Barbary pirates, and bawdy courtiers, as well as historical figures including Samuel Pepys, Ben Franklin, and other great minds of the age. Travelling from the infant American colonies to the Tower of London, the glittering courts of Louis XIV, and all manner of places in between, this magnificent historical epic brings to vivid life a time like no other, and establishes its author as one of the pre-eminent talents of our own age.</p>	



**Night** by Elie Wiesel

Recommended by Dr D A Lockett

An extraordinary literary achievement and a monument to those who perished in the Holocaust. Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

**Synopsis**

Born into a Jewish ghetto in Hungary, Elie Wiesel was sent as a child to the Nazi concentration camps at Auschwitz and Buchenwald. This is his account of that atrocity, the ever-increasing horrors he endured, the loss of his family and his struggle to survive in a world that stripped him of humanity, dignity and faith. Describing in simple terms the tragic murder of people from a survivor's perspective, Night is among the most personal, intimate and poignant of all accounts of the Holocaust. A compelling consideration of the darkest side of human nature and the enduring power of hope, it remains one of the most important works of the twentieth century.



Compiled by Mrs J Bidwell, Piper Library.  
December 2007