

Education Library Service Recommended Secondary Fiction Spring Term 2021



Brahmachari, Sita

When Secrets Set Sail

Hachette
Interest age:

Pbk 7.99 9781510105430
10+ Reading age: 10+

Usha is devastated when her Gran dies and feels lost. Then her Gran's ghost appears with work for her to do. Immy was found as a baby and has been looked after by the lady who found her and is being adopted by Usha's family. Neither wants this change in their family circumstance. Usha's busy parents run a home for refugees but are being threatened with eviction. Both girls see a different ghost and together they must uncover past secrets to save the refugee centre and their home.



Curham, Siobham

Clementine and Rudy

Walker
Interest age:

Pbk 7.99 9781406390230
13+ Reading age: 12+

Rudy is 15, a street artist and gets a buzz from posting her first piece of artwork in her hometown of Brighton. She has a tough life and lives with her Mum. Clementine is the same age and has a privileged life and lives nearby with her Mum, stepdad and younger stepbrother. She sees Rudy's street art and it speaks to her and she pens an accompanying poem on Instagram. The two develop an unlikely friendship and collaborate on street art projects. Both are feminists. The girls sneak out at night to put their street art around Brighton but are eventually caught by police who arrest them. They are both cautioned. Rudy's Mum's boyfriend is supportive, but Clementine's stepdad has controlling behaviour. An engaging story with realistic and likeable main characters. Covers some challenging issues which are well handled. A what's next for Jacqueline Wilson or Cathy Cassidy readers.



Darnton, Tracy

The Rules

Little Tiger
Interest age:

Pbk 7.99 9781788952149
14+ Reading age: 14+

A gripping and tense thriller about 17 year old Amber whose Dad has always trained her to be prepared for the worse, survival techniques and be prepared to run. She has been looked after by the authorities and has had a list of foster families, since her Mum's death. Her Dad is in USA, however, her Dad has returned to UK and she wants to avoid him at all costs, as she fears for her safety. Amber is a convincing heroine and resilient. An enjoyable, exciting read.



Dodd, Amber Lee

The Thirteenth Home of Noah Bradley

Scholastic
Interest age:

Pbk 6.99 9781407189444
10+ Reading age: 10+

The Bradley family are constantly escaping from a centuries old curse which means that every home they ever live in is destroyed by a typhoon or flash flood that affects no other houses on the street, or they are chased out of town by a flock of persistent birds. They have just moved to their thirteenth house and Noah wants this one to work out - he's got some good friends at school and desperately wants himself and his deaf brother Billy to put down roots. But the curse returns - so he must find a way to break it. A fast paced, mystery, family and adventure story. Good characterisation, deals well with contemporary issues of friendship, bullying and resilience.



Elliott, Rebecca

They Say I'm Pretty Funny for a Girl

Penguin
Interest age:

Pbk 7.99 9780241374627
12+ Reading age: 12+

14 year old Haylah is not one of the slim beautiful popular girlie girls. She is obsessed with comedy, longs to pursue it as a career and is always jotting down material in her notebook. However, when she sees one of the older cool lads Leo do a comedy routine at school, she secretly writes material for him for a competition and posts it in his locker. When Leo finds out, it seems a perfect dream to write comedy and spend time with the popular boy she has a crush on. Meanwhile, Haylah's mum has a new boyfriend who her little brother adores, but Haylah is certain will only bring them all pain as her father did. Excellent relatable tale of teenage friendships and family life. Superb characterisation and laugh out loud funny.



Ellis, Kat

Harrow Lake

Penguin
Interest age:

Pbk 7.99 9780241397046
13+ Reading age: 12+

Lola Nox is the daughter of a celebrated horror filmmaker and thinks nothing can scare her. But when her father is brutally attacked in their New York apartment, she's swiftly packed off to live with a grandmother she's never met in Harrow Lake, the eerie town where her father's most iconic horror movie was shot. The locals are weirdly obsessed with the film that put their town on the map - and there are strange disappearances, which the police seem determined to explain away, and she is convinced someone is stalking her. The more Lola discovers about the town, the more terrifying it becomes. Because Lola's got secrets of her own. And if she can't find a way out of Harrow Lake, they might just be the death of her. Terrifically creepy atmospheric horror tale, with good characterisation and plenty of eerie weirdness, and a mystery at the heart which keeps the reader's attention. Well written and compelling narrative that would engage even the non-horror enthusiast.



Fraillon, Zana

The Lost Souls Atlas

Orion
Interest age:

Pbk 6.99 9781510106826
11+ Reading age: 12+

After Twig's dad goes missing, he meets up with a boy called Flea who invites him to join him on the streets, stealing cars and pick-pocketing to survive. Then one day Twig wakes up and can't remember where he is or how he got there. He is told he is in the Afterlife, and if he wants to keep his memory he has to go on a journey and solve some riddles. To help him out he has the Lost Soul Atlas, and a bossy raven called Krruk. Exciting and also humorous, but with flashbacks and plot twists which require a mature reader.



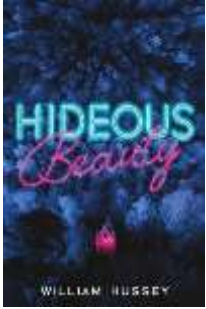
Harrell, Rob

Wink

Hot Key
Interest age:

Pbk 7.99 9781471409141
11 Reading age: 11

Ross has recently had a diagnosis of a rare form of eye cancer. He wants to remain "normal" not have to wear a hat or lose hair. This is a touching and humorous look at Ross trying to come to terms with his situation and what life has thrown at him. How he copes at school, home and with his treatment. There are Batpig comic strips at the start of some chapters, who experiences similar things to Ross. Based on the author's experience of eye cancer. Set in USA and has American spellings throughout. Great for empathy and is ultimately uplifting.



Hussey, William

Hideous Beauty

Usborne
Interest age:

Pbk 7.99 9781474966177
14+ Reading age: 12+

Dylan is forced to come out after his secret relationship with Ellis is exposed on social media, but to his surprise, everyone is really supportive - or appears to be. But Dylan's and El's happiness is short-lived, and following a tragic accident, Dylan begins to realise how little he knows about the boy he loves...or those closest to him. A mystery, thriller and romance all thrown into one. A compelling read, the plot has many twists and turns. Strong emotional stuff. Very accessible to younger teens.



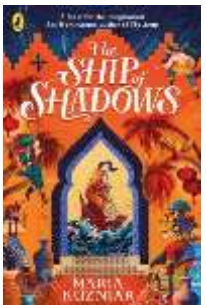
Jawando, Danielle

And the Stars were Burning Brightly

Simon & Schuster
Interest age:

Pbk 7.99 9781471178771
14+ Reading age: 14+

When fifteen-year-old Nathan discovers the body of his older brother Al who has taken his own life, his whole world is torn apart. Al was the talented one in the family who could see beyond the Manchester estate that they live in. Convinced that his brother was in trouble, Nathan decides to retrace Al's footsteps. As he does, he meets Megan, Al's former classmate, who is as determined as Nathan to keep Al's memory alive. Together they start seeking answers, but will either of them be able to handle the truth about Al's death when they eventually discover what happened? Realistic and accessible novel which is very thought provoking. Written in largely short alternate chapters by Nathan and Megan, the story uncovers the bullying Al endured and the betrayal of his lifelong best friend. It shows the awfulness of social media, the trolling and the bullying and how if you are desperate to be part of your teenage peer group, it has a dehumanising effect as you never have to face the people you are destroying.



Kuzniar, Maria

The Ship of Shadows

Penguin
Interest age:

Pbk 7.99 9780241372913
10+ Reading age: 10+

Aleja lives in the Spanish port of Seville and dreams of being an explorer, but of course girls can't do that. But her life is changed forever when the pirate captain of the fabled Ship of Shadows rescues Aleja from being wrongly accused of being a thief. Once on board the Ship Aleja meets the band of ruthless women who are it's crew, but also begins to discover that there is magic and mystery here, and soon is embroiled in a quest to North Africa to search for clues to a lost city in the Sahara and a magical map which will point to untold riches. Will Aleja want to become part of the crew or return home to Spain? Super swashbuckling adventure tale with engaging characters, easy to read with plenty of chases and scrapes to keep the reader's interest.

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