



# St John Bosco

## ARTS COLLEGE

### KS3 Reading for Pleasure Challenge Year 8 Nature Poetry



## A guide for parents & students

# The Reading Challenge

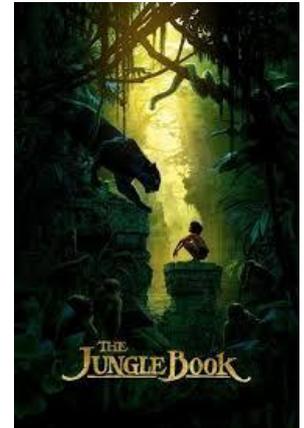
To encourage frequent reading, we are setting some challenges to KS3 students. Below is a reading list ranked in challenge order from Bronze to Silver & Gold. These books can be used as your 10 mins reading book or you could read them at home. You can earn prizes and certificates from your teacher if you read titles from these lists:

## Gold reads



### 1) *The Jungle Book* (Rudyard Kipling)

*The Jungle Book* (1894) is a collection of stories by English author Rudyard Kipling. The tales in the book are fables, using animals in an anthropomorphic manner to give moral lessons. The verses of *The Law of the Jungle*, for example, lay down rules for the safety of individuals, families, and communities. Kipling put in them nearly everything he knew or "heard or dreamed about the Indian jungle." Other readers have interpreted the work as allegories of the politics and society of the time. The best-known of them are the three stories revolving around the adventures of Mowgli, an abandoned "man cub" who is raised by wolves in the Indian jungle. The most famous of the other four stories are probably "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi", the story of a heroic mongoose, and "Toomai of the Elephants", the tale of a young elephant-handler. As with much of Kipling's work, each of the stories is followed by a piece of verse.



The stories explore themes of the jungle, revenge, violence, courage, growing up and family.

### 2) *The Book Thief* (Marcus Zusak)

It's just a small story really, about among other things: a girl, some words, an accordionist, some fanatical Germans, a Jewish fist-fighter, and quite a lot of thievery. . . .

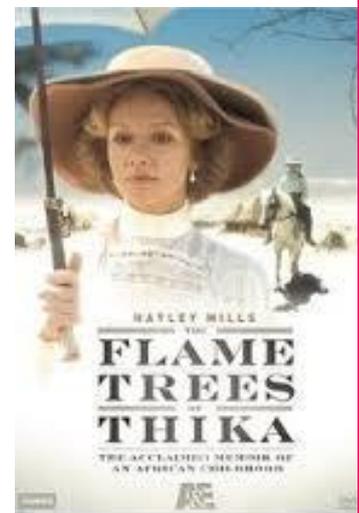
Set during World War II in Germany, Markus Zusak's novel is the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. Liesel scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbours during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement before he is marched to Dachau.



The themes in the novel include love, literature, war, mortality, identity, criminality, suffering, courage, Nazi Germany.

### 3) *The Flame Trees of Thika* (Elspeth Huxley)

In an open cart Elspeth Huxley set off with her parents to travel to Thika in Kenya. As pioneering settlers among the Kikuyu people, they built a house of grass, ate off a damask cloth spread over packing cases and discovered - the hard way - the world of the African. Huxley recalls her childhood on the small farm at a time when Europeans waged their fortunes on a land that was as harsh as it was beautiful. For a young girl, it was a time of adventure and freedom, and Huxley paints an unforgettable portrait of growing up among the Masai and Kikuyu people, discovering both the beauty and the terrors of the jungle, and enduring the rugged realities of the pioneer life.



The story explores themes of growing up, culture, the jungle, the unknown and adventure.



## Silver reads

### 1) *Hoot* (Carl Hiaasen)

*Hoot* is a 2002 young-adult novel by Carl Hiaasen. The setting takes place in Florida, where new arrival Roy makes two oddball friends and a bad enemy, and joins an effort to stop construction of a pancake house which would destroy a colony of burrowing owls who live on the site.

The themes in the novel are friendship, teamwork, growing up, corruption, parental love, environmentalism and integrity.

### 2) *Pax* (Sara Pennypacker)

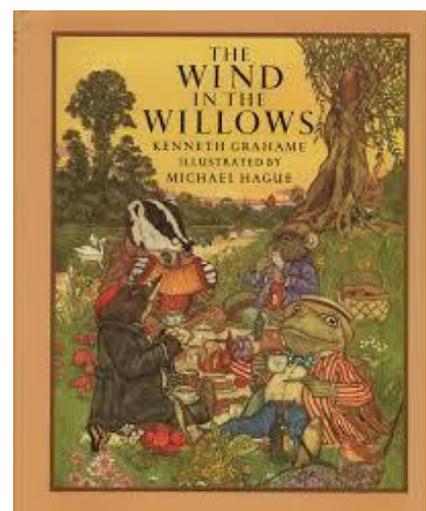
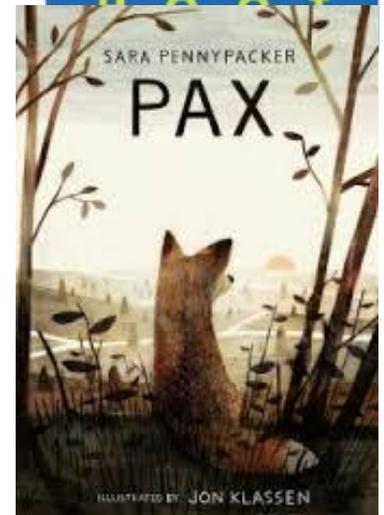
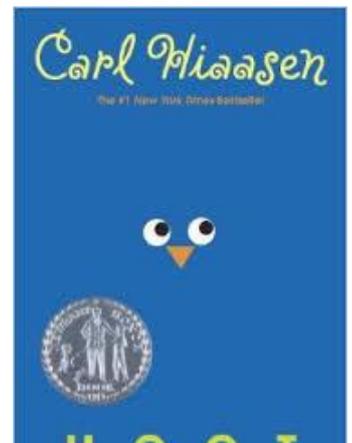
*Pax* was only a kit when his family was killed, and “his boy” Peter rescued him from abandonment and certain death. Now the war front approaches, and when Peter’s father enlists, Peter has to move in with his grandpa. Far worse than being forced to leave home is the fact that Pax can’t go. Peter listens to his stern father—as he usually does—and throws Pax’s favourite toy soldier into the woods. When the fox runs to retrieve it, Peter and his dad get back in the car and leave him there—alone. But before Peter makes it through even one night under his grandfather’s roof, regret and duty spur him to action; he packs for a trek to get his best friend back and sneaks into the night. This is the story of Peter, Pax, and their independent struggles to return to one another against all odds. Told from the alternating viewpoints of Peter and Pax.

The themes in the novel include friendship, nature, conflict, animals and their relationships with humans, family and overcoming difficulty.

### 3) *The Wind in the Willows* (Kenneth Grahame)

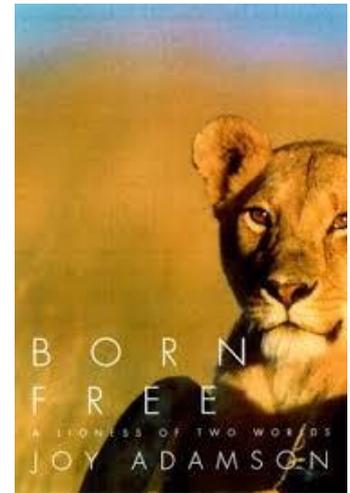
“*The Wind in the Willows*” is a young adult novel by Kenneth Grahame which follows the adventures of the anthropomorphic animals Mole, Rat, Badger, Toad, and their friends. When the novel begins, Mole is at home doing spring cleaning, and he is quite bored with it. He casts down his cleaning instruments and runs to the surface to plow through rabbits along the roads and through grasses in the meadows to the river. It is at the river that Mole meets Rat, and the two form an immediate friendship. This friendship brings Rat’s friends Badger, Otter, and Toad into the story. The novel continues to follow the animals on their adventures and misadventures.

The story explores themes of domesticity, pastoralism, adventure, home and age.



#### 4) *Born Free and Living Free* (Joy Adamson)

A TRUE STORY- in the wilds of Africa a true friendship is forged...between Joy Adamson...and Elsa the lion.  
Joy Adamson's story of a lion cub in transition between the captivity in which she is raised and the fearsome wild to which she is returned captures the abilities of both humans and animals to cross the seemingly unbridgeable gap between their radically different worlds. Especially now, at a time when the sanctity of the wild and its inhabitants is increasingly threatened by human development and natural disaster, Adamson's remarkable tale is an idyll, and a model, to return to again and again.

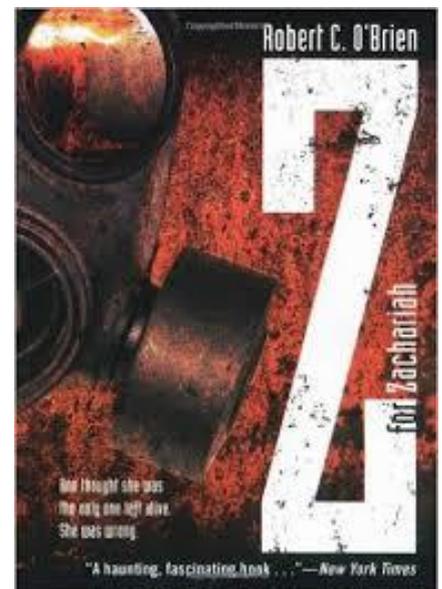


#### 5) *Z for Zachariah* (Robert O'Brien)

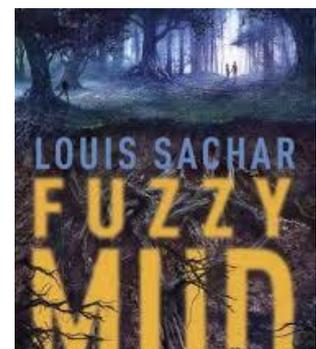
A gripping, thought-provoking story about life after a nuclear holocaust. Ann Burden is sixteen years old and completely alone. The world as she once knew it is gone, ravaged by a nuclear war that has taken everyone from her. For the past year, she has lived in a remote valley with no evidence of any other survivors.

But the smoke from a distant campfire shatters Ann's solitude. Someone else is still alive and making his way toward the valley. Who is this man? What does he want? Can he be trusted? Both excited and terrified, Ann soon realises there may be worse things than being the last person on Earth.

The story explores themes of dystopia, isolation, fear, conflict, and man vs nature.



Bronze reads



### **1) Fuzzy Mud (Louis Sachar)**

"Be careful. Your next step may be your last."

Fifth grader Tamaya Dhilwaddi and seventh grader Marshall Walsh have been walking to and from Woodbridge Academy together since elementary school. But their routine is disrupted when bully Chad Wilson challenges Marshall to a fight. To avoid the conflict, Marshall takes a shortcut home through the off-limits woods. Tamaya reluctantly follows. They soon get lost, and they find trouble. Bigger trouble than anyone could ever have imagined.

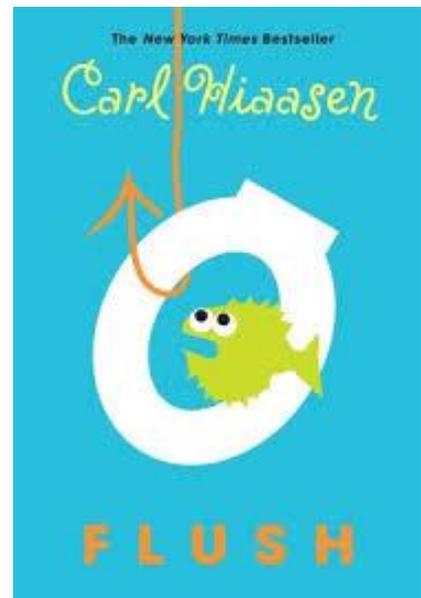
In the days and weeks that follow, the authorities and the U.S. Senate become involved, and what they uncover might affect the future of the world.

The story explores the themes of friendship, growing up, adventure, bullying, environmentalism and global overpopulation.

### **2) Flush (Carl Hiaasen)**

Noah's dad is sure that the owner of the Coral Queen casino boat is flushing raw sewage into the harbour—which has made taking a dip at the local beach like swimming in a toilet. He can't prove it though, and so he decides that sinking the boat will make an effective statement. Right. The boat is pumped out and back in business within days and Noah's dad is stuck in the clink.

Now Noah is determined to succeed where his dad failed. He will prove that the Coral Queen is dumping illegally . . . somehow. His allies may not add up to much—his sister Abbey, an unreformed childhood biter; Lice Peeking, a greedy sot with poor hygiene; Shelly, a bartender and a woman scorned; and a mysterious pirate—but Noah's got a plan to flush this crook out into the open. A plan that should sink the crooked little casino, once and for all.



The story includes themes of the environment, nature, family, friendship and morality.

### **3) Why the Whales Came (Michael Morpurgo)**

'Why the Whales Came' is about ten-year-old Gracie Jenkins, who lives on Bryher, a small island off the western coast of Britain, in the year 1914. "You keep away from the Birdman," Gracie's father warns her. The Birdman lives alone in a cottage that stands all by itself on a hill in the south part of the island. Gracie's father knows stories about him that he thinks are too

horrible to tell her. The Birdman used to live on Samson Island, which people say has a curse on it.

Gracie and her friend Daniel have a fleet of toy boats they have made. When the lake where they usually sail the boats is taken over by bad-tempered swans, Daniel talks Gracie into coming with him to a cove near the Birdman's cottage. She's scared, but she finally agrees. Soon they find themselves on the most frightening adventure of their lives.

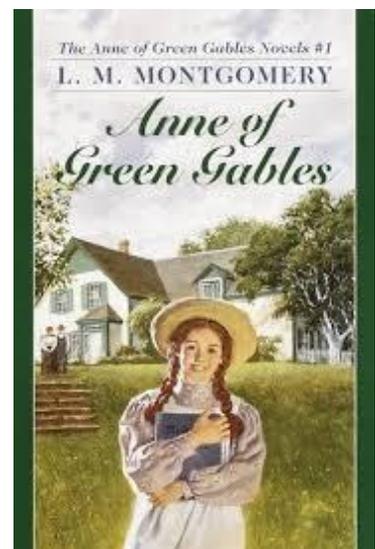
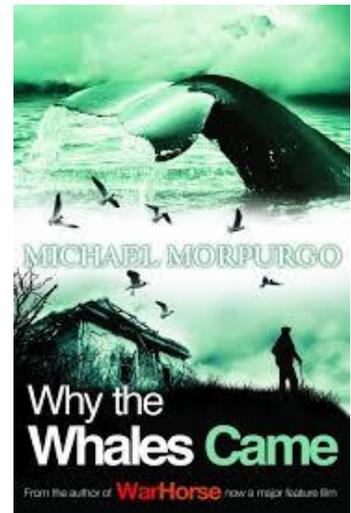
The whales in the novel are narwhals, a type of whale with a long, spiraling horn on the front of its head. In their adventure, Gracie and Daniel find a narwhal's horn. Later, they have to decide whether to help a stranded narwhal.

The novel explores themes of friendship, nature, morality and fear.

#### **4) *Anne of Green Gables* (Lucy Maud Montgomery)**

*Anne of Green Gables* is a 1908 novel by Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery. It recounts the adventures of Anne Shirley, an 11-year-old orphan girl who is mistakenly sent to Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert, a middle-aged brother and sister who had intended to adopt a boy to help them on their farm in Prince Edward Island. The novel recounts how Anne makes her way with the Cuthberts, in school, and within the town.

The novel explores themes of social expectations, nature, family, adversity and adventure.



## **What else can we do?**

There are lots of things that families can do together to support the improvement of reading ability and enjoyment – and not all of them require a book.

## **Talk as a family about reading**

By secondary school most students are competent readers and are less likely to read aloud to an adult. That's a natural progression, but it doesn't mean that parents don't have a part to play. The higher level skills of inference and understanding the craft of an author can be supported by talking about what has been read.

## **Share a book**

Just because you don't necessarily read together doesn't mean that parents and children can't share a book. Young Adult fiction is excellent and well worth a read as a parent. Why not both read the same book?

## **Model what it is to be a reader**

Many parents will read, whether it be fiction, newspapers, online or in any other context. Get in the habit of being seen to read, and valuing reading.

## **Join the free online library**

Library membership a free service for children and adults. There are no overdue fines as books are returned automatically. There is an excellent selection of books, audiobooks and magazines available. The software will work on a range of devices including mobile phones, tablets and laptops

You can join the online library at [www.readliverpool.co.uk](http://www.readliverpool.co.uk).





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