



**Wildern School English Department
Summer Booklet
Year 7 into Year 8**

Recommended reads:

Reading widely is one of the best ways that your child can prepare themselves for English in Year 8. Reading extensively and for pleasure fosters the development of stronger reading habits and increases literacy skills such as vocabulary, comprehension and inference. These will help your child achieve, not only in English, but across the curriculum where these skills are also in demand.

The following reading list has been put together with Year 8 readers in mind. These texts are widely available and we hold copies in the school LRC. For further suggestions, this is a useful website:

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks3-pupils/suggested-reading-list-for-year-8-pupils-ks3-age-12-13/>

- 1) **Welcome to Nowhere by Elizabeth Laird** - Omar dreams of being a successful businessman and ruling the world. But living in Syria, this 12-year-old's dreams are set in a time and place where things can change rapidly – especially when his older brother finds himself in a dangerous situation and the whole family has to flee to safety.
- 2) **The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton** A story of struggle, growing up, gangs and peer pressure. A classic of modern teenage fiction.
- 3) **Chinese Cinderella by Adeline Yen Mah** -The unforgettable story of a young Chinese girl's struggle to find acceptance within her own family and her survival amongst siblings and parents who think she represents bad luck. She finds writing a form of release. Based on the author's own life.
- 4) **Animal Farm by George Orwell and Chris Mould** - George Orwell's unabridged text is set to new and vibrant cartoon-style illustrations by award-winning illustrator Chris Mould. The images help to lift a classic novel that is too often presented with typesetting from another era that 21st-century teens can find off-putting.
- 5) **The Coral Island by R.M. Ballantyne** -A boy's own story of Ralph, Jack and Peterkin who are shipwrecked on a coral island. As they work together and discover how to live and survive on the island their world is suddenly threatened by pirates. A good counterpoint to read with Lord of the Flies.
- 6) **Coram Boy by Jamila Gavin** -A stunning period drama of deception, child stealing, mistaken identity and searching for long lost families. An amazing piece of historical fiction.

- 7) **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time by Mark Haddon**
-Christopher isn't like other teenagers. He finds it difficult to talk to other people, hates being touched and reacts badly to certain colours. When the neighbour's dog is murdered he causes chaos trying to find out who did it.
- 8) **The Day of the Triffids by John Wyndham** -Bill wakes up to find he's the only person left on Earth who can see. Everyone else has been blinded by a mysterious meteor event. Can he save the world from extraterrestrial carnivorous plants
- 9) **Flambards by K.M. Peyton** -Christina is sent away to live with her nasty uncle in his dilapidated house. While there she discovers a passion for horses and begins to understand the peculiar world around her.
- 10) **The Flame Trees of Thika by Elspeth Huxley** -Elspeth Huxley's autobiographical story of her life in Africa with her parent settlers – living among the Kikuyu in Kenya in a traditional grass house and working the land.
- 11) **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams** -Arthur's Friday doesn't start well when his house is demolished. The Earth is obliterated soon after, to make way for a bypass, and then he finds out his best friend is an alien. Can things get any worse?
- 12) **Small Steps by Louis Sachar** -The sequel to 'Holes'. Armpit is now a gardener living in Texas and trying to stay out of trouble by making the right choices. But things never seem to go his way.
- 13) **How I Live Now by Meg Rosoff** - Daisy, a streetwise American 15 year old and Edmond, her cousin from England are evacuated to the countryside. After briefly falling in love, her world is shattered by an unimaginable event. How will she live now?
- 14) **I am David by Anne Holm** -The story of 15-year-old David's quest – escaping from the concentration camp where he has lived his life and travelling across a Europe unknown to him to try and find his home.
- 15) **Joby by Stan Barstow** -11-year-old Joby finds the world he lives in strange and disturbing and struggles to understand the division in society, his friends and family. A thought-provoking social comment.
- 16) **Journey to the River Sea by Eva Ibbotson** -An orphaned young girl and her governess travel thousands of miles from boarding school to South

America with distant relatives. An exotic and wonderfully described adventure. An easier book to read for Year 8 children.

- 17) **A Kestrel for a Knave by Barry Hines** -A modern classic and very popular with reluctant boy readers. Billy Casper is a troubled teen growing up in Barnsley. He finds an escape in Kes, a Kestrel, which transforms his life.
- 18) **Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell** - The dystopian novel in which the terms 'big brother' and 'room 101' first appeared. Winston Smith works for the Ministry of Truth where his job is to rewrite history. He rebels and longs for freedom. A more challenging novel for students in Year 8.
- 19) **The Tulip Touch by Anne Fine** -No one wants anything to do with Tulip, who is avoided by children and teachers alike. But Natalie is drawn to her and finds her dangerous and interesting. When things go too far, Natalie isn't able to stop events spinning out of control, leading to a stunning and unexpected ending.
- 20) **The Giver by Lois Lowry**-12 year old Jonas lives in a world with no poverty, no crime, and where everyone is the same. But when takes the role of "receiver of memory" he becomes one of the only people to understand how the world he lives in came about. A poignant read for Year 8 children.
- 21) **The Dam Busters by Paul Brickhill** -The true story of the 617 squadron's historic bombing raid on the Ruhr dam using 'bouncing bombs' devised by Barnes Wallace.
- 22) **Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson** -Jess creates the world of Terabithia to escape from his annoying family. Reached only by a rope swing, he and his friend Leslie live out their adventures, until an earth-shattering tragedy strikes.
- 23) **The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett** -A spellbinding story about Misselthwaite Manor and an unwanted lonely child who discovers a hidden and magical garden.

Short stories and comprehension tasks:

These quick reads and accompanying questions are useful tasks to help keep your child's mind active over the long break.

Shards of Glass

People are like glass. They look pretty strong, but really they're fragile, easy to break.

The hot sun beats down on my neck and back. My battered straw hat makes my head itch, and my dress is far too small, exposing my wrists and lower legs to the burning rays. The burlap sack containing my few possessions slumps beside me on the dusty platform.

Glass can be broken by physical force, by dropping or throwing it, whether by accident or with the intent to harm. Glass can also be broken by invisible pressures, building and building until it finally cracks. It seems a mystery as to why it breaks so suddenly- glass is transparent, but it can hide any amount of stress.

I look down at my ticket. I don't recognise the town name printed on it, but that is indifferent to me. I wipe my brow and pull my socks up even further in a desperate attempt to protect my skin. There is no shade here, or any people. Everything is covered in a layer of brown dust- apparently including the very air I'm breathing. It's as though this platform has been abandoned to the point where even the moisture has forgotten it. But that's okay. I know how it feels.

Like glass, when people are broken, they become spiky and hard to touch. They can accidentally hurt others, and then the others don't want to come back.

I trace an aimless pattern in the dirt with my scuffed sandal toe. The clock on the station sign has stopped, so I don't know how long the train will take to get here. It could be a few minutes, a few hours or even the rest of the day. I sigh. The tracks look rusty, as though the train hasn't been used in a long while, and a few shrivelled plants lie in the gravel, having given up long ago.

Glass takes time to be repaired. You have to work out where all the little pieces go before you can even begin. When you go to glue it back together, some of them don't fit because the glue needed is so thick and strong. Tiny shards are lost- tiny pieces of a person's personality. Once you've glued the glass back together, it is easier to break again. Every time you repair it, the shape changes, eventually beyond recognition. It's almost beautiful, in a sad kind of way.

I hear a scraping noise and see a cloud of dust coming over the horizon. The old, weathered train stops in front of me, and I walk up to it. On the way, I pick up a broken bottle from the floor. Maybe if I mend it, then somebody, somewhere will be mending too. I step onto the train and watch as the dirty platform disappears behind me. I'm moving on, looking for something to replace my lost shards, and harden the glue between the repairs I've had to make for myself.

Please answer the following questions in full sentences:

- 1) The writer uses 'glass' as a metaphor for human emotions throughout the text. What does this mean?

- 2) Make a list below of all the ways the writer compares being human to glass:

- 3) How would you describe the mood of the narrator in this piece? Why?

4) What do these words mean? (Provide a definition) Which one would you say was the best fit to describe the tone of this piece? Why?

-Pensive –

-Reflective –

-Melancholy-

-Lugubrious –

5) A student, having read this piece, said the following: 'The atmosphere of this story is overall quite mournful, but I believe there is hope offered in the final paragraph'.

To what extent do you agree?

Write an answer to this question, saying whether you fully agree/partially agree/do not agree with the statement. Why do you feel this way? Support your opinion with references to the text (quotations) and explain why the quotations you have chosen support your ideas.

CHALLENGE: The writer makes the choice to compare the human experience to glass. What object/thing would you choose to compare being human with? Why?

The Dream Asylum

The Dream Asylum was not a nice place. It was a tall, concrete building that occasionally oozed a sinister blue light and never had the same number of floors as before. There were hardly any windows and they often changed position. It was almost as if the entire building rearranged itself when no one was looking, a playful child intent on making the adults doubt their sanity.

The whole Asylum was built for one purpose: giving the 'treatment'. The 'treatment' was a brilliantly clever idea, so well thought out and planned that nothing could ever go wrong. Of course, similar people had claimed the Titanic was the 'unsinkable ship'.

In principle, it was perfect. You'd have a bad dream, the horrifying type that harasses you night after night, and simply sell it to the Asylum. Your dream is gone, never to return, and you get paid for it. Perfect, right? Or, that was the idea. In reality, people began selling good dreams, (as those are worth far more) for a little extra cash. Or they began scoffing cheese before they went to bed, hoping for a nightmare they could part with.

Of course, an idea so perfect and wonderful simply had to go wrong at some point. People who had sold their dreams began getting side effects, ones they hadn't been warned about, ones that made their thoughts dangerous and terrifying. Soon, the Asylum even began taking dreams you didn't want to sell; your family holiday at the beach or when you learnt to ride a bike. The Asylum became its own person; a building that suddenly didn't need staff to operate the machines anymore.

Then, it wasn't just taking dreams; it was taking memories too. People left the building with a wad of cash and no idea who they were or how they came to be there. The worst part about the Dream Asylum, though, was that no one realised how dangerous it had become until it was too late. The damage was done; thousands of people wandering around without a clue as to who they were or what had happened to them.

It was shut down, supposedly. The plan was to knock the building down, pave over the foundations. But somehow, the planning always got delayed, until suddenly it was as if the planning was never there to begin with. The building remained, oozing its new blue light.

As time went on, it became part of the landscape, just another building in the background. Occasionally mothers used it to scare their children; 'If you don't behave, the Dream Asylum will reopen and gobble you up!'

People soon forgot the horrors the Asylum caused; it was easier than remembering.

Please answer the following questions in full sentences:

- 1) The genre of this story is 'dystopian'. What does this mean?
- 2) What other genre would you say this story has elements of? Why? Give reasons for your answer.
- 3) *It was almost as if the entire building rearranged itself when no one was looking, a playful child intent on making the adults doubt their sanity.*
What impression of the Dream Asylum does this description give you? Why?
- 4) The Dream Asylum initially paid people for their bad dreams. Why do you think this is? What does the Dream Asylum want with these dreams?
- 5) *The whole Asylum was built for one purpose: giving the 'treatment'. The 'treatment' was a brilliantly clever idea, so well thought out and planned that nothing could ever go wrong. Of course, similar people had claimed the Titanic was the 'unsinkable ship'.*

What is the 'treatment'?

What is implied about the people who thought it was a good idea through the reference to the 'Titanic'?

- 6) *Dystopian literature typically depicts events that take place in the future, it often features technology more advanced than that of contemporary society.*

How does this statement apply to 'The Dream Asylum'?

- 7) Below is an image of an artist's interpretation of 'The Dream Asylum'. Write a description inspired by this image and using the first paragraph of the text to support you.



The Lighthouse

Before he pushed the loaded supply boat out into the sound, he turned his back to the wind, reached into his waistcoat pocket and delicately drew out a folded square of paper. He re-read the copper-plate writing that was so familiar. "Thy way is in the sea, and my path in the great waters." He read the words slowly and deliberately and, although he was not religious, the message carried some deeper significance which was not clear to him. He returned the paper back into his pocket, repeated the words in his mind, and pushed the bow of the boat seaward.

The lighthouse defiantly stood proud of the jagged rocks; a broken jaw of granite. He was always met by the three keepers who stood unwavering in any weather; the sealskin collars on their coats were drawn up to their chins.

The men never spoke; they had lost their words to the wind. In fact, no one could remember their names or if they had any family; letters from relatives had stopped long ago. The boat was unloaded; the keepers ignored the diving Kittiwakes, Terns and Guillemots that searched for food. Then, in procession, the boy followed the keepers up the rough, whitewashed steps into the lighthouse. The metal door, blistered with rust, thudded closed behind them.

The windowless, circular room was panelled with cedar and smelt of burning lamp-oil. At this stage, the boy always sat at the scrubbed pine table and was handed a metal mug of steaming tea, whilst the men emptied the cases of supplies. However, on this occasion, the last occasion, they joined him at the table and in solemn silence removed their boots and coarse woollen socks.

Whilst their hands and faces were ruddy and russet from years of exposure to the elements, he was initially surprised how ebony white their legs and feet were, but, as he gazed closer, he understood the significance of their gesture. Stretched between their toes was an opalescent skin, as fine as gossamer.

"Is you surprised boy? We don't want no help...we just wanted you to know." Then silence.

His mouth was sloe dry, his brow was breaking out in a cold sweat and his heartbeat raced. He later regretted not asking them more; about the gills behind their ears, their hairless bodies or their scales, but it seemed almost normal and he was happy for them.

He refused to discuss their disappearance.

At night-time, he would look out to the lighthouse, its beam spun a silver path over the ocean's phosphorescence; he believed that if he stared hard enough, perhaps it would come to him.

But it took another eighty years and a Mr Morse to turn the pattern of flashes, from the lighthouse beam, into dots and dashes. Translated they read - "Thy way is in the sea, and my path in the great waters".

Please answer the following questions in full sentences:

1) What does the protagonist find out about the three men in the lighthouse? How do you know? Use quotations to support your ideas.

2) *The men never spoke; they had lost their words to the wind. In fact, no one could remember their names or if they had any family; letters from relatives had stopped long ago.*

What impression of the men does this give you? What does it allow you to question/understand/imagine/feel about them? Why?

3) Why do the men remove their boots and socks? What does this allow the protagonist to understand?

4) *But it took another eighty years and a Mr Morse to turn the pattern of flashes, from the lighthouse beam, into dots and dashes. Translated they read - "Thy way is in the sea, and my path in the great waters".*

This extract is a reference to Morse Code. What does this allow you to further understand about the meaning of the story?

5) What is 'phosphorescence'?

6) Choose one of the following creative responses to this text.

a) Write a diary extract from the perspective of the protagonist after you have made the discovery. You may wish to use these questions to

inspire your response: Who are you? What is your connection to the lighthouse? How did you come to be there? What are you thinking/feeling after you've made the discovery? What will you do next? What does "Thy way is in the sea, and my path in the great waters" mean to you?

- b) Write a newspaper article detailing the events of the above story. This should be your headline:

THE SECRETS OF THE LIGHTHOUSE- REVEALED!

Key Vocabulary

Please see below for three key vocabulary lists that your child can become familiar with over the Summer break. Pre-learning this vocabulary will enable your child to feel confident as they approach these new texts/topics in Year 8, and will support them to be able to use these terms accurately in their lessons. The following websites are very useful in supporting the learning and acquisition of new vocabulary:

<https://visuwords.com/>

Creates a graphic visualising a word, including related words and their meanings

<https://www.etymonline.com/>

Informs you of the etymology of a word, including root words

<https://wordsift.org/>

Will sift through a text and organise the words based on importance and frequency

<u>Romantic Poetry/Revolutionary voices</u>	<u>The Woman in Black</u>	<u>Romeo and Juliet</u>
Enlightenment: an 18th century movement that stressed the belief of science and logic.	Trope: A commonly repeated theme or motif throughout a text.	Soliloquy: Speaking a character's thoughts aloud regardless of any one else on stage.
Rationality: having reason and logic.	Superstitious: belief in things that are not real.	Treacherous: guilty of deception and lying.
Romanticism: a literary movement in the 18th century.	Spiritualism: communication with spirits.	Deceived: to deliberately lie or trick.
Revolutionary: causing dramatic change.	Supernatural: beyond scientific explanation.	Conciliatory: a tone to create goodwill and forgiveness.
Neoclassicism: the revival of classical style literature.	Deduce: arrive at a logical conclusion.	Caustic: sarcastic in a bitter way.
Sublime: of great excellence and beauty.	Motif: a repeated idea in a text.	Lenient: less harsh or strict than expected.
Subjective: based on personal feelings or emotions.	Macabre: strange and horrifying because it is about death.	Aggrieved: feeling as though you have been treated unfairly.
Tranquility: calm	Ominous: a worrying impression that something bad is going to happen.	Elizabethan: a text written during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.
Transcendence: beyond a normal or physical level.	Physiognomy: judging a person's character from the way they look.	Subvert: Undermine power or authority.
Vivacious: lively and animated.	Epistolary: a narrative told through letters.	Rueful: Expressing sorrow or regret.
Euphoric: Intense excitement and happiness.	Demonic: relating to demons or evil spirits.	Apprehensive: anxious or fearful that something horrible will happen.
Jubilant: overjoyed	Grotesque: repulsively ugly or distorted.	Gratified: to be given satisfaction.
Eternal: existing forever	Secluded: a place not seen or visited by many people.	Distressed: suffering extreme anxiety or pain.
Infinite: limitless or endless	Villainous: guilty or wicked or criminal behaviour.	Adrift: floating without being steered.
Rebellion: an action against authority or convention.	Victorian: a text written during the reign of Queen Victoria.	Conflicted: confusion or inconsistent feelings.
Anarchy: a state of disorder.	Unorthodox: breaking tradition and not normal.	Antithesis: opposite

e.

