Reading List for Year 8 students

For students: What an opportunity! A week to lose yourself in a book, watch a documentary with your family on the sofa or pop a podcast in your ears while you go for a walk. Don't worry - the aim is not for you to read all of these! The aim is to enjoy a wide range of resources from a wide range of subjects, so don't limit yourself to your 'favourite' subjects or those in which you are strongest – reading should take you beyond your experience. See where the subjects can take you.

For parents: We want to promote intellectual curiosity and scholarship through independent reading, so please play your part in encouraging your child to read for pleasure. Departments have given you a wide range of resource formats, thus preventing the need to buy anything new (unless your child wants it as a special birthday gift!) – we highly recommend using your local library (you can order books in advance to collect for Reading Week): Find me a Library! Instructions on how to access our fantastic resources from the LRC are also included at the end.

Art

Explore the department's virtual Art Library at: rdgart.dropmark.com/768899

- *Draw 50 Airplanes, Aircraft, and Spacecraft* by Lee J Ames – available here (PDF)
- *Draw 50 Vehicles* by Lee J Ames – available here (PDF)
- Anatomy for the Manga Artist by Christopher Hart – available here (PDF)
- *You Will be Able to Draw by the End of This Book* by Jake Spicer

Biology

- Catalyst Magazine - Archive (catalyst-magazine.org) issue 33
- *Catalyst is an exciting science journal for young people aged 14-19. Covering scientific research and industrial developments, real life STEM stories, career journeys, STEM expeditions and adventure*.
- catalyst-magazine-issue33.pdf

Chemistry

- Catalyst27_1_microplastics_and_the_oceans.pdf (stem.org.uk)
- Chemistry and art teaching resources | RSC Education
- Temperature-controlling textiles | Feature | RSC Education
- Frozen in time | Feature | RSC Education

Classics

Watch:

- Horrible Histories:
  Rotten Romans Compilation
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dohpfFPi6U&ab_channel=HorribleHistories
  Caligula's Craziest Moments
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=T15yLjfA_ec&ab_channel=HorribleHistories
  The Evil Emperors Song

www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWwAC9dOTCE&ab_channel=HorribleHistories

- Extra mythology (greek mythology) – youtube e.g.
  Prometheus: Prometheus - Origins - Greek - Extra Mythology
  Hercules: The Twelve Labors of Hercules - The Quest for Phat Loot! - Greek - Extra Mythology - Part 1
  There are many more

Read:

- Rick Riordan - many books from the series are available in the LRC (and almost certainly your local library), including:
  Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief:
  Twelve-year-old Percy Jackson is on the most dangerous quest of his life. With the help of a satyr and a daughter of Athena, Percy must journey across the United States to catch a thief who has stolen the original weapon of mass destruction — Zeus' master bolt. Along the way, he must face a host of mythological enemies determined to stop him. Most of all, he must come to terms with a father he has never known, and an Oracle that has warned him of betrayal by a friend.
  Greek Heroes:
  Who cut off Medusa's head? Who was raised by a she-bear? Who tamed Pegasus? It takes a demigod to know, and Percy Jackson can fill you in on all the daring deeds of Perseus, Atalanta, Bellerophon, and the rest of the major Greek heroes. Told in the funny, irreverent style readers have come to expect!
  The Trials of Apollo:
  How do you punish an immortal? By making him human. After angering his father Zeus, the god Apollo is cast down from Olympus. Weak and disoriented, he lands in New York City as a regular teenage boy. Now, without his godly powers, the four-thousand-year-old deity must learn to survive in the modern world until he can somehow find a way to regain Zeus's favor. But Apollo has many enemies—gods, monsters, and mortals who would love to see the former Olympian permanently destroyed. Apollo needs help, and he can think of only one place to go . . . an enclave of modern demigods known as Camp Half-Blood

- Roman Mysteries by Caroline Lawrence - many books from the series are available in the LRC (and almost certainly your local library), including:
  The Thieves of Ostia:
  Flavia Gemina is a natural at solving mysteries. The daughter of a ship's captain living in Ostia, the port of Rome, in AD79, she and her three friends, Jonathan, a Jewish boy (and secretly a Christian); Nubia, an African slave girl; and Lupus, a mute beggar boy, must work together to discover who is beheading the watchdogs that guard people's homes, and why.

- Homer's Iliad and Odyssey by Gillian Cross - available in the LRC:
  Homer's Iliad

  The Spark: It begins with a seemingly small dispute—a golden apple and a beauty contest—that spirals into a bitter ten-year war after Prince Paris abducts Helen of Sparta.

  The Conflict: Outside the golden city of Troy, gods observe from Mount Olympus while brave heroes clash. But the violence isn't just on the battlefield; a petty, prideful quarrel between the Greek kings Achilles and Agamemnon threatens to destroy the army from within.

  The Theme: A tale of human bravery, the heartbreak of war, and the devastating consequences of pride.

  Homer's Odyssey

  The Journey: It details the incredible ten-year voyage of Odysseus, the cleverest king of ancient Greece, as he struggles to cross the "wine-dark sea" and return home to his family.

  The Obstacles: His journey is packed with human endurance, terrifying monsters, and unknown dangers.

  The Homefront: While Odysseus braves the wrath of the sea and the gods, his wife Penelope waits in Ithaca, holding off rival suitors in hopes of his return.

- Daughter of Darkness by Katharine and Elizabeth Corr - available in the LRC [part of a series]:

  "Daughter of Darkness" by Katharine and Elizabeth Corr is a YA Greek mythology fantasy following Deina, a Soul Severer who shepherds the dead for Hades. Desperate for freedom, she joins a perilous Underworld quest to retrieve Orpheus's dead wife, Eurydice. The team must navigate deadly traps and questionable loyalties to survive.

- Pegasus and the Flame by Kate O'Hearn - available in the LRC [part of a series]:
  When Pegasus crashes onto a Manhattan rooftop during a blackout storm, 13-year-old Emily's life changes forever. Thrust into a war between Roman gods and the Nirads (multi-armed stone warriors), she, her friend Joel, and the goddess Diana must save Olympus before its magical flame burns out.

- The Impossible Gladiator by M.G, Leonard:
  When world-famous illusionist Kinetic disappears during a live broadcast from the Colosseum, Sim, Jeopardy, and Nelson find a historical clue suggesting he is trapped in the past. The trio must navigate secret time doors to the dangerous world of Ancient Rome to rescue him.

- Time Riders Gates of Rome by Alex Scarrow - available in the LRC [part of a series]:
  Gates of Rome follows a disastrous "Project Exodus" mission, where 300 modern Americans sent to 54 AD instead arrive early during Emperor Caligula's reign. With Maddy and Sal hunted by a kill-squad, the TimeRiders are trapped in the past while Caligula uses future knowledge to increase his power

- Gladiator Fight for Freedom by Simon Scarrow - available in the LRC [part of a series]:
  Gladiator: Fight for Freedom is a historical adventure novel by Simon Scarrow. It follows young Marcus, whose father is murdered and mother sold into slavery. Enslaved and forced to train as a gladiator, Marcus plots to escape, avenge his father, and expose a secret that could free all slaves.

- Who let the gods out by Maz Evans - available in the LRC [part of a series]:
  Elliot's life is spiraling out of control—his home is under threat and his mum is seriously ill. But everything changes when a shooting star crashes onto his farm. The "star" is Virgo, a young Zodiac goddess on a mission. Together, they accidentally unleash Thanatos, the evil daemon of death. To stop him, they must call on Zeus and the long-retired Olympian gods for help.

Listen

- Greeking out: a podcast for the whole family that retells stories from Ancient Greece and beyond! Featuring a narrator Kenny Curtis (a 30-year veteran in kids radio) and the Oracle of Wifi, who breaks in with facts and tidbits on Ancient Greek history and culture.
  Greeking Out from National Geographic Kids Podcast | Listen on Amazon Music
  Greeking Out from National Geographic Kids | Podcast on Spotify

Computer Science

Learn Programming

- The LRC also has a variety of books on programming. At Year 8 we recommend focusing on Python programming although other languages such as Javascript or web development in HTML are also appropriate. Keen students may find extensions on Python such as the ability to make games in Pygame particularly interesting.
- Students interested in learning Python programming can also refer to this video: Python Full Course for Beginners [2025]

Books

- **Hello World : How to be human in the age of the machine** by Hannah Fry - You are accused of a crime. Who would you rather determined your fate – a human or an algorithm? Hannah Fry takes us on a tour of the good, the bad and the downright ugly of the algorithms that surround us.
- ***Algorithms to Live By: The Computer Science of Human Decisions*** by Brian Christian, Tom Griffiths - an exploration of the use of computer science in addressing life's problems

Upcoming Competitions:

- November – **UK Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge**
  Year 8s participate in this challenge at the **Inters** level. Students should prepare for this imminent challenge by practising the past challenges (listed as **UK Bebras Challenge**) available on their website https://www.bebras.uk/
- January – **Perse Coding Team Challenge**
  Students will be able to enter in pairs to write code to solve a series of increasingly challenging problems with Python code. There are plenty of past challenges to practise with on the competition website: https://pctc.cuttle.org/
- April – **Bebras Coding Challenge**
  Students can also get ahead and practice for the Coding Challenge at an appropriate difficulty level. At Year 8, students should be preparing their Python skills for the ***Navigators*** challenge which requires foundational knowledge in Python programming. For students who are still building their Python skills, practice with the Novice and Explorers challenges may be more appropriate.
- The practice challenges are also available at https://www.bebras.uk/

Drama

- Symbolism Ibsen to Strindberg and the fathers of Modern Theatre.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xiiaed3puhY
- A Monster Calls Resource pack 'packed' with Symbolism!
- https://readingschoolco.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/ESjpb_2seCpBqVkELpj6z48Bua3K4a9ob9TdxqzlsjhM2A?e=BXf5jy
- Year 8: Character and Conflict
- Theme: Heroes, Villains and Choices
- The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas (stage adaptation)
- Coram Boy by Helen Edmundson
- The Hobbit (stage adaptation)
- DNA by Dennis Kelly
- Challenge Read
- Animal Farm (stage adaptation)
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Electronics

- What is electricity and how a computer works (examples from StoryBots): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ax6bUF_8txM
- The power of circuits: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HOFp8bHTN30

English

- “Goldfish Boy”: Lisa Thompson
- “Murder Most Unladylike”: Robin Stevens
- “One of Us is Lying”: Karen McManus
- “Detective Stories” chosen by Phillip Pullman
- “The Murder Of Roger Ackroyd”: Agatha Christie
- “Hallowe’en Party”: Agatha Christie
- “The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde”: Robert Louis Stevenson, available here
- “Ghost Stories” chosen by Robert Westall

French

Books

- Pick any book from the “French KS3” section in the LRC
- Pick a French comic book in French and its English translation as well to compare! (Astérix, Alone)

Music

- French pop 2025 playlist

Films

- Astérix Mission Cleopatra
- Tintin
- Boule et Bill

Geography

Tim Marshall - Prisoners of Geography - Available in the LRC
- Any chapter apart from ‘China’ which we will study in class

Hans Rosling - Factfulness - Available in the LRC
- Particularly recommend reading the Introduction, Chapter 6: The Generalisation Instinct and Chapter 11: Factfulness in Practice

Bill Bryson - A Short History of Nearly Everything - Available in the LRC
- Chapter 17: Into the Troposphere

Fred Pearce - Peoplequake: Mass Migration, Ageing Nations and the Coming Population Crash - Available in the LRC

German

- https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbxb2fqe9oNggIAoYqsYOtQ: People are being interviewed on the street. You will get German and English subtitles so you can understand everything that is said.
- Go on: Reading School Videos - Documents - MFL - Videos and enjoy a German film

History

Read

- Black and British by David Olusoga. This chapter looks at the experience of black people during the Victorian period. The full book is available in the LRC or the History department Black and British by David Olusoga.pdf

Watch

- The Amritsar Massacre is a brutal moment in the history of the British Empire. The Massacre That Shook the Empire - All 4 (channel4.com)
- The Industrial Revolution The Industrial Revolution: Crash Course European History #24 - YouTube
- See also the historical fiction list here: Year 7 and 8 Historical fiction reading list from the LRC.docx

Mathematics

- All about Infinity (maths.org)
- How are Fibonacci numbers expressed in nature? | HowStuffWorks
- The Mysterious Math of Perfection | Quanta Magazine
- How to Convert Binary Into Decimal (and Vice Versa) | HowStuffWorks
- Mathematician Cracks the 33 Problem | HowStuffWorks
- Trillions and Quadrillions: A Short Guide to Absurdly Big Numbers | HowStuffWorks
- Professor Stewart's cabinet of Mathematical curiosities – Ian Stewart
- 50 Ideas you really need to know Maths – Tony Crilly

Mandarin

舒克贝塔和五角飞碟

- Shuke, Beta and the Flying Disk
- https://www.amazon.co.uk/%E8%88%92%E5%85%8B%E8%B4%9D%E5%A1%94%E5%92%8C%E4%BA%94%E8%A7%92%E9%A3%9E%E7%A2%9F-%E8%88%92%E5%85%8B%E8%B4%9D%E5%A1%94%E4%BC%A0%E6%B3%A8%E9%9F%B3%E7%89%88%E6%A1%A5%E6%A2%81%E4%B9%A6-ZONG-DONG-ZHENG/dp/752171699X/ref=sr_1_2?crid=LE80A4M027VO&keywords=%E8%88%92%E5%85%8B%E5%92%8C%E8%B4%9D%E5%A1%94&qid=1650979393&s=books&sprefix=%E8%88%92%E5%85%8B%E5%92%8C%E8%B4%9D%E5%A1%94%2Cstripbooks%2C57&sr=1-2
- Chinese edition (This is one chapter of a fairy tale series, very good for younger children, Year 7 and 8s for example)

西游记

- https://www.amazon.co.uk/Monkey-King-Penguin-Clothbound-Classics/dp/0141393440/ref=sr_1_1?crid=24D8TYUBOZA2Q&keywords=journey+to+the+west&qid=1650979278&s=books&sprefix=%2Cstripbooks%2C186&sr=1-1
- English edition

罗小黑战记

- [HD]The Legend of Luoxiaohei Cat.1-Meow [En Sub New Edition]羅小黑戰記
- Anima series with English subtitles, short and very good for beginners

Music

- https://www.amazon.co.uk/Around-World-80-Musical-Instruments/dp/1913519910/ref=sr_1_4?crid=2DSUO0BMHOJOV&keywords=world+music+book&qid=1665126018&qu=eyJxc2MiOiIwLjAwIiwicXNhIjoiMC4wMCIsInFzcCI6IjAuMDAifQ%3D%3D&s=books&sprefix=world+music+book%2Cstripbooks%2C78&sr=1-4
- https://songexploder.net/
- Sonic Academy - YouTube; music production tutorials and insights

Physical Education

- The Champion Mind: How Great Athletes Think, Train and Thrive
- Jim Afremow

Physics

- What if? 2 - Randall Monroe (sequel to the one we already recommend in our poster, released last month)
- Stories from Physics (assorted from IOP) - IOP Stories from Physics

PSHE

Read about important social issues that impact all of us using Issues Online and Complete Issues Online

Issues Online
https://www.issuesonline.co.uk/subscription/login
Username: reading **Password:** 5491

Complete Issues Online
https://www.completeissues.co.uk/
Username: readingschool
Password: readingschool

Spanish

- Short stories to learn vocabulary and to practice listening skill
- **Interactive activities**

- "Vuela" - Corto animado para trabajar el vocabulario básico de las emociones: Vocabulario de las emociones con el corto "Vuela" para nivel A1-A2
- Actividad de español nivel A2 para trabajar los demostrativos en base a un vídeo y actividades de gramática con explicación: Los demostrativos en español | Actividades A1-A2
- Games to practice vocabulary:
  Vocabulario de las partes de la casa - ProfedeELE
- Explanation and games to practice prepositions and adverbs
  Preposiciones y adverbios de lugar - ProfedeELE

Theology & Philosophy

1. Euthyphro - Plato
2. The Origin of Life: Chance or Design? - The Faraday Insitute for Science and Religion

Accessing resources from the LRC

Using the LRC Before Reading Week

- By the start of October half-term, all year 7, year 9 and year 12 pupils will have been invited to the LRC to discover the range of resources available to them both within school and from home.
- New students should have received a Guide to Using the LRC.
- All pupils can borrow books from the LRC for Reading Week.

E-Resources Available From Home 24/7 The LRC subscribes to a range of high quality e-resources that can be accessed from home. An alphabetical list, complete with links and login details can be found on here https://readingschoolco.sharepoint.com/SitePages/LRC%20E-Resources.aspx This includes two **ebook** platforms. Both platforms can be accessed using pupil Office 365 logins:

VLeBooks is a small ebook library and provides access to both fiction and non-fiction ebooks. Books can be read online. You can access VLeBooks via this link www.vlebooks.com. This includes 6th form wider reader titles. You can also preview books we do not own.

ePlatform by Wheeler's is our new ebook and audiobook platform found here: https://readingschool.eplatform.co

The ePlatform library catalogue is full of bestselling, popular fiction titles. Students can have 2 books out on loan at any one time, and they will automatically return after 2 weeks, or students can return them early in order to loan a new book. The eBooks can be read on a computer, laptop, or through the free App on your tablets or smartphones.
Reading through your web browser on a laptop or computer
Students can browse the collection or search for a specific book title, author or publisher and loan the book they choose. It is then assigned to them for the 2-week period.
Reading through the App
To download the App, search "ePlatform" in the App store and download. Click on the app and you will then need to search for the library which will be **Reading School**. Once you start typing, it will bring up the school on the list. Click the 3 little lines in the top left corner and select sign in. Using the App, the books will be temporarily downloaded to the device so students will not need internet connections once the book has been loaned to read, great for travelling!
To access these resources, visit the LRC (Learning Resources) area of SharePoint and navigate to the eResources section. You can also click this link.

Some of these resources require passwords, which are available from the LRC eResources page on SharePoint.

British Medical Journal	Online version of the weekly medical journal
The Economist Online	Provides insight and opinion on international news, politics, business, finance, science and technology.
Hachett/Hodder Magazine Online Archive (Review Magazines)	Written by board examiners, so is great for A-Level students. Ten titles accessible online, including Economic Review.
Issues Online	Excellent source of information, including statistics, on a wide range of social issues.
Complete Issues	Useful for articles on a wide range of current social issues.
JSTOR	JSTOR is an online archive of core scholarly journals in a wide variety of disciplines.