

Hackney Secondary Reading Ambassadors Book Recommendations

The following ten recommendations are by the same reviewer.

Reviewer's comment:

'...highlighted are the ones that made me cry. I could do a whole exhibition on books that have made me cry and why, right down to the lines that started my tears but I've tried to lighten it slightly with some more underground books and some happy ones.'

Gilded ones - Namina Forma

- RECOMMENDED AGE 14 -17
- First person
- Fantasy Fiction

This book is honestly amazing and is the start of a few if you are looking to get into a good series. It centres around Deka and her journey as she learns about herself and her place as a village girl turned warrior in the war against the very literal monsters that plague her world. Very powerful and immersive but has some dark imagery and themes that some may find distressing such as torture and mention of SA at two points.

7.6/10

They both die at the end - Adam Silvera

- RECOMMENDED AGE 14 and up
- Multi-Perspective
- AU romance
- LGBTQ+

This first got popular on TikTok along with many others but is one of the few that I found that were a genuinely good read. It's pretty easy to make your way through and exists in a similar but alternate universe where there's a system that calls you up the day that you will die. It follows two strangers who get their call and sees them through their goodbyes, last day experiences and unlikely relationship with each other. Bonus points 'cause it made me cry but most books do.

8.2/10

The First One to Die at the End - Adam Silvera

- RECOMMENDED AGE 14 and up
- Multi-Perspective
- AU romance
- LGBTQ+

This is the prequel to They both die at the End and for some reason was not nearly as popular as the first one but I think quite possibly even better. This time the story follows the very first call that the system makes and the effects of this. Similarly two guys who wouldn't have met otherwise are the focus of the plot, and I cannot see how you can read this and not love both of them and

weeping by the end. So pure, again an easy read but it does deal with some medical issues within the book so TW for that.

8.6/10

Everything Everything - Nicola Yoon

- RECOMMENDED AGE 12 and up
- First person
- Realistic Fiction / Romance

This was a genuinely interesting read. It focuses on a girl who is allergic to everything so lives her life in her sterile white room only with breaks to meet personal tutors in her kitchen so she doesn't miss out on school. She forms a relationship with the boy across the street through exchanging messages after he writes his number on his window. Plot twists at the end which I didn't really enjoy at the time but after a re-read it makes sense throughout the book. The author also wrote *The Sun is Also a Star* which is also amazing. They are both now movies too.

7.3/10

The Foreshadowing - Marcus Sedgwick

- RECOMMENDED AGE 12 and up
- First Person
- War Fiction

The first time I read this I read it on a plane, and I'm pretty sure I was done in about 4 hours. It's heavy but it's devastatingly good. Set in 1915, the book works back from chapter 100 to 0. 17 year old Sasha Fox can see the future though not clearly or with a sense of certainty, as expected this can be rather dangerous and tragic in war time. I loved this one. It gets progressively more chaotic as you go in but in the most war time / future seeing / elegant way possible. Definitely one of Sedgwick's masterpieces.

8.67/10

The Inheritance games - Jennifer Lynn Barnes

- RECOMMENDED AGE 12 - 17
- First Person
- Fiction

I read this very recently because of BookTok and let's just say I'm surprised I liked it. Super easy to read and is best for an audience that is looking for love triangle stuff meets puzzles and mystery. The main character is Avery, and she one day is pulled out of school to be informed that she appears in one of the richest men in America's will. This is one of a trilogy and would recommend buying it as a set because I guarantee you if you like the first one then you'll love the rest. Not very refined but it's nice and fun, with added tension for both murder and romance

6/10

Good Girl's Guide to Murder - Holly Jackson

- RECOMMENDED AGE 12 plus
- Third Person
- Mystery

This one is pretty well known and is also part of a trilogy, following Pippa Fitz-Amobi into looking at a cold case in her town about a guy who murdered his girlfriend. I absolutely love everything about this book and its series, and have re-read it many many times. Definitely there for the mystery and though there is a romance subplot it doesn't really arise until the very end, so don't be deterred by that if romance isn't what you're looking for. Because its characters are all in sixth form it also doesn't feel drowned out from day to day life like some other mystery books. Please just read it - it's amazing.

9/10

One - Sarah Crossan

- RECOMMENDED AGE 12 plus
- First Person
- Story Poetry
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This will destroy you. Inside and out, completely and fully so if you're not ready for that just don't choose it, walk away. Tippy and Grace are conjoined twins, aged 16 when their parents were told that they wouldn't make it past 2. They've been homeschooled their whole lives but now they're starting high school for the first time. The story is made up of poems - don't let that scare you just think of it as a book with really weird formatting - that are from Grace's point of view as they undergo surgery, friendship break-ups, debilitating sickness and bullying. Again this is heavy so while I would say that it should definitely be on your list, you may want to bring tissues. It's also lovely and warm and pure. Again please read it.

9.5/10

The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo - Taylor Jenkins Reid

- RECOMMENDED AGE 15 plus
- Duo perspective
- YA fiction
- LGBTQ+

This also got popular on TikTok so much so that if you search for it on amazon it comes up with 'TikTok made me buy it' as a tag; however I can proudly say that I got to it first. This book is a phenomena quite truly; it has this strong voice of storytelling that is intertwined with an old Hollywood feel. It starts off with Evelyn Hugo as an old woman reaching out to give an exclusive interview that turns out to be a request for this journalist, Monique Grant, to write her biography. Her life story and how she met her seven husbands, are told throughout the interviews she has with Monique. Loved it, every second, and if you don't cry then something's wrong with you because it's soul shattering.

8.9/10

The Fault in Our Stars - John Green

- RECOMMENDED AGE 13 plus
- First person
- Medical Romance

Ouch. Honestly my comments might have to end there. This book is so wonderfully good, Hazel Grace has terminal lung cancer and Augustus had a touch of osteosarcoma that he has overcome by sacrificing his leg - his words not mine. They met at Cancer Kid support group and form a friendship that grows throughout the book until you can feel it through the pages. I'm being

dramatic but this book deserves it. John Green did such an amazing job in capturing the chaos and tranquillity that come in waves with chronic and terminal illness. If you read one book this year, let it be this one.

9.7/10

Recommendations by various reviewers.

Front Lines, by Michael Grant

- RECOMMENDED AGE 14 plus

Review: I love this book. Not only is it gripping and filled with action it has a bit of love drama for the hopeless romantics out there. I think this also appeals to history lovers who find a long history book challenging and somewhat daunting because it is actually very historically accurate - aside from the fact that girls were not allowed to be frontline soldiers.

After the Fire, by Will Hill

- RECOMMENDED AGE 14 plus

Review: After the Fire is a life-changing book about a girl who lives in a cult. Moonbeam feels safe with Father John and her Brothers and Sisters. But soon she realises there is horror in her community and she needs to get out, before it is too late.

Salt to the Sea, by Ruta Sepetys

- RECOMMENDED AGE 15 plus

Review: Salt to the Sea is a brilliant book about four people from very different places and how they all come together on a ship called the Wilhelm Gustloff to escape the horrors of World War 2. But freedom comes at a price.

Florian - a Prussian spy
-Pregnant Polish Girl

Joana - Lithuanian nurse

Alfred - German nazi

Emilia

Skulduggery Pleasant, by Derek Landy

- RECOMMENDED AGE 11 plus

Review: This book is the beginning of the series where Stephania meets the partner and solves the case of the dead uncle.

