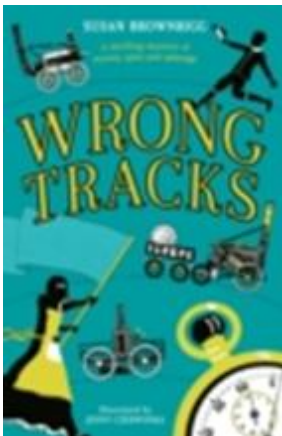


HGS Book Recommendations

July 2025



Sizzling Summer Reads



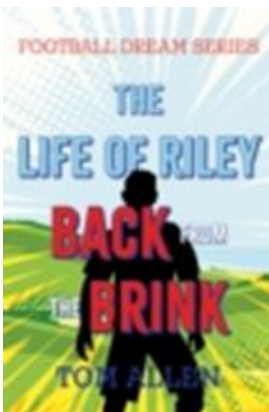
KS
3

Who is sabotaging the Rainhill Trials? It is 1829. Everyone is talking about the exciting new railways and young Edward Entwistle cannot believe his good fortune: a chance encounter sees him offered a job at the Stephenson's Steam Locomotive Manufactory. The Stephensons are preparing for an important competition – The Rainhill Trials.

A race of innovation and daring which will award the winner a contract to run the new Liverpool & Manchester Railway.

Edward must protect the father and son inventors' latest creation – their precious Premium Engine – but strange and dangerous accidents keep stalling construction. Edward and his new loco-mad friend Prudence soon realise someone is trying to scupper the Stephenson's chances.

It is up to the friends to spot sabotage and chase down spies in a thrilling race against the clock. Inspired by the Rainhill Trials.



KS
3

Riley Adams has three passions in life: family, friends and football.

Despite often finding school difficult, Riley finds happiness in friendships with his 'band of brothers and sisters', who play for his beloved Highfield Flyers FC. Riley and the Flyers learn to play together and focus, bringing them great moments and taking them close to glory.

Rivalries form and the desire to win grows until...

Riley's world is turned upside down when his mum receives life-changing news. Can he really care about football again? What will happen to Mum? How will he cope with life now?



KS 3 KS 4

With the Second World War looming, four young people sit on a train waiting to be evacuated to a safer place...but they don't want to go.

They climb out of the carriage and head back home to Greenwich, forming an unlikely friendship. They spend their days trying to be useful. Laurence is building a secret machine. Gemmy searches bombed-out homes for things of value - only to find an adorable mutt she can't even give away.

Franklin wants to join the Fire Service, although it means lying about his age.

Olive looks after her father, who is broken by the deaths of his fellow firefighters. And together, the four roam the streets of London, discovering their resilience amongst the secrets of the city. But as the Blitz unleashes a barrage of bombs on London, turning the sky ragged with flame, can the friends keep each other safe and survive?



KS 3 KS 4

Welcome to a world of glittering courts, dangerous bargains and dazzling trickery. A wild misfit in the human world, Nettle is enthralled by the glamour of the faery realm, with its two moons and scarlet stars.

She grows close to Conor, a human stolen centuries before, and she also falls under the spell of mysterious Ellion, a Shadow Faery.

To try to help her beloved grandmother who is fading in her world, Nettle makes a pact with the faery king.

He'll heal her grandmother in exchange for Nettle completing three tasks.

She agrees, not realising that deception lurks in this enchanted place, and that she has been tricked...In this dangerous fantasy kingdom Nettle discovers, too late, her part in an age-old love story and the price she will pay.



KS 4

Welcome to Bletchley Park... with dragons.

London, 1923. Dragons soar through the skies and protests erupt on the streets, but Vivien Featherswallow isn't worried. She's going to follow the rules, get an internship studying dragon languages, and make sure her little sister never has to risk growing up Third Class.

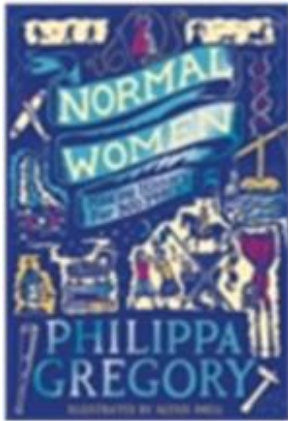
By midnight, Viv has started a civil war. With her parents arrested and her sister missing, all the safety Viv has worked for is collapsing around her.

So when a lifeline is offered in the form of a mysterious 'job', she grabs it.

Arriving at Bletchley Park, Viv discovers that she has been recruited as a codebreaker helping the war effort – if she succeeds, she and her family can all go home again.

If she doesn't, they'll all die. At first Viv believes that her challenge, of discovering the secrets of a hidden dragon language, is doable.

But the more she learns, the more she realises that the bubble she's grown up in isn't as safe as she thought, and eventually Viv must decide: What war is she really fighting?



KS
4

The bestselling, critically acclaimed new women's history book from Philippa Gregory for 2025 – adapted for teen and YA readers!

Today, when we think of women of the past, we often think of the 1800s and 1900s - crinolines and stagecoaches, bonnets and balls - a time when women were told they were naturally inferior to men, and must stay at home while men went out to work and have fun.

HUGE MISTAKE! There is so much more to women's history than bonnets and big dresses! Ordinary women have been doing extraordinary things FOR EVER - it just didn't make the history books (written by men!).

Join multi-award-winning author Philippa Gregory as she tells the story of ordinary English women, making history for 900 years. Meet farmers, highwaywomen, pirates, 'female husbands', slaves, soldiers, criminals, writers, inventors, rioters and more - protesting, working, playing, taking risks, getting rich (and getting even!). Their story is one of ingenuity, diversity, rebellion, survival - and sisterhood.



KS
4

KS
5

You've heard of Frankenstein's monster, you've heard of Dracula, but have you heard of the Villa Diodati?

Eve, Griffin, Hal and Ren embark on a summer they'll never forget at the birthplace of all things Gothic. The summer is beset by mysterious happenings, as the monsters they create begin to clamber out of their minds.

Events rise to a horrible climax when, on a dark and stormy night, one of the villa's guests is found dead and each of our foursome becomes a suspect in a gruesome murder. It was supposed to be the trip of a lifetime. But when the stuff of nightmares becomes their reality, will they make it out alive?

Perfect for fans of Wednesday and Stranger Things.



KS
4

KS
5

When Sariah's birthday celebrations at a music festival turn sour with the disappearance of one of her friends, she knows she can't rely on the police to find her.

The authorities are no more help than they were when her friend's twin sister, another young woman of colour, went missing five years earlier.

Sariah feels guilty that her uncanny ability to predict people's needs didn't help to keep her friends safe.

She is determined to find out what's happened to Deja.

But the more she cracks the clues leading to her, the closer she gets to home ...



KS
4

KS
5

At sixteen, Honora 'Nora' Holtzfall is the daughter of the most powerful heiress in Gamanix; her family controls all the money - and all the magic - in the entire country.

But when her mother is found murdered in an alley, the family throne and fortune are up for grabs, which means Nora will be pitted against her cousins in the deadly Veritaz trials to determine the rightful inheritor. But there's a surprise rival in the form of Ottoline, aka Lotte, the illegitimate daughter of Nora's aunt, who was left with nuns as a baby.

Thrown into the Veritaz, she is suddenly surrounded by a hostile family she never knew she had. But as the Holtzfalls wage their battles of privilege, something bigger and more sinister bubbles beneath the surface, and revolution is in the air.

Incredible tests, impossible choices, and deadly odds await both girls.



KS
5

Her parents' divorce has Maaryah bidding bye-bye to Dubai and her life of luxury . . . and hello to dreary London, where things get . . . complicated.

After joining a new school, Maaryah deals with annoying-yet-fit boys, the sorts of friendships every teen girl should have, house parties – and the truth of what it's like to be the only girl who wears a hijab.

Can Maaryah stay true to herself, even when another bombshell rocks her world . . . ?



KS
5

Two boys can't remember the last time they had a hug.

Meet Finlay. He's studying for his nursing degree at Glasgow University, against all the odds.

But coming straight from care means he has no support network. How can he write essays, find paid work and NOT fall for the beautiful boy at uni, when he's struggling to even feed himself?

Meet Banjo. He's trying to settle in with his new foster family and finish high school.

But he can't forget all that has happened, and his anger and fear keep boiling over. How can he hold on to the one good person in his life, when his outbursts keep threatening his already uncertain future?

Can Finlay and Banjo let go of the past before it drags them under?

