

Beaminster School

Historical Fiction Reading List

Years 7 – 11



Below you will find a list of excellent books that all contain relevant and interesting stories with a strong connection to key historical events. Why not try one and see what you think? If you cannot find the book, have a chat with Mr Lithgow and he may be able to get hold of a copy for you.

Historical Fiction Reading List

Suggested Year Group	Title	Author	Notes
Year 7	Wulf the Saxon: A Story of the Noman Conquest	GA Henty	Written in the late 19 th century, this is still an entertaining read. It describes the critical period when Saxon England gave way to the Normans.
Year 7	The Stormin' Normans & The Measly Middle Ages	by Terry Deary	Part of the Horrible History Series. An easy read, entertaining and accessible.
Year 7	Matilda Bone	Karen Cushman	A young teenage girl encounters the medical world of the Middle Ages. Filled with witty dialogue this is an entertaining and informative read.
Year 7	The Eagle of the Ninth by Rosemary Sutcliffe	Rosemary Sutcliffe	An exciting tale as the mystery of what happened to the 9 th Roman legion in Britain is relayed
Year 7	The Sword in the Stone	TH White	Written in the 1930s, this is still an entertaining read even if not truly historical. It tells of the mythical King Arthur.
Year 7	Fire Bed and Bone	Henrietta Branford	Even readers with little knowledge of (or interest in) British feudal systems and peasant revolts may find themselves engrossed in this unique fictional tale set in 1381 and told from a hunting dog's point of view
Year 7	Catherine Called Birdy	Karen Cushman	It is an exciting historical novel in diary format, set in thirteenth century England. It won the Newbery Honor and Golden Kite Award in 1995.
Year 7	The Winter Hare	Joan Elizabeth Goodman	In 1140, with England divided between the supporters of King Stephen and those of the Empress Matilda, twelve-year-old Will Belet, small for his age but longing to be a knight, comes to his Uncle's castle to be a page and soon finds himself involved in dangerous intrigues and adventures.

Suggested Year Group	Title	Author	Notes
Year 8	Children of the New Forest	Captain Maryatt	A book set in the turbulent times of the English Civil War. Four children are orphaned and are forced to move to the New Forest
Year 8	My Story: Civil War, Thomas Adamson, England 1643-1650	Vince Cross	A teenager and his best friend find their families fighting on opposite sides of the English Civil War.
Year 8	Dead Famous: Oliver Cromwell and His Warts	by Alan Macdonald	A very light comic analysis of one of this country's most significant figures
Year 8	I, Coriander	Sally Gardner	A beautiful and magical story. It is set in the 1640s and 1650s. It tells of how rapidly a life can change as the heroine tries to recover all that she has lost.
Year 8	My story: Mill Girl, A Victorian Girl's Diary 1842-1843	Sue Reid	The harsh reality of life in a Victorian factory as seen through the eyes of a teenage girl.
Year 8	History in a Hurry: Industrial Revolution	John Farman	Funny, short and accessible. This is a comic telling of a fascinating period in British history

Suggested Year Group	Title	Author	Notes
Year 9	Coram Boy	Jamila Gavin	A rich and exciting story of two children of very different backgrounds. Set in the 1750s it describes the horrifying reality of slavery.
Year 9	The Wave	Morton Rhue	A true story of how easily groups of young people can be indoctrinated and persuaded to act in ways that defy belief.
Year 9	The astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing	MT Anderson	A complex story set in Revolutionary America of the 1770s as he struggles for independence as a black teenager in a world of slavery.
Year 9	When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit	Judith Kerr	The true story of young girl adapting to her life as a refugee from Nazi Germany.
Year 9	The diary of a young Girl	Anne Frank	The poignant diary of the teenage Anne who is in hiding in Nazi occupied Amsterdam during WWII. A classic.
Year 9	War Horse	Michael Morpurgo	Turned into an excellent film this book tells of a Devon farmer and his family's struggles against the backdrop of WWI. A moving study of the relationship between a boy and a horse.
Year 9	Unheard Voices	Malorie Blackman	A compilation of stories are woven into a sometimes harrowing depiction of the slave trade.

Suggested Year Group	Title	Author	Notes
Year 10	The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	Mark Twain	Set in the southern states of the USA at the time of slavery, it tells the exciting tale of a young boy who escapes from his guardian into the wilds.
Year 10	Black Beauty	Anna Sewell	The story of a black horse in 19 th century England. Highs and lows reveal much of the attitude to animals and progress at the time.
Year 10	Gulliver's Travels	Jonathon Swift	A fantasy adventure written in the late 18 th century. An early satirical piece. Made into several films.
Year 10	Great Expectations	Charles Dickens	An atmospheric tale of social class and heroism.
Year 10	Private Peaceful	Michael Morpurgo	A passionate and emotional story of two brothers set against the backdrop of WWI. Love and jealousy conspire in the story told in flashback.
Year 10	Goodnight Mr Tom	Michelle Magorian	A sad story as a boy I evacuated in World War II. The book has been turned into a TV series and film. It has won plenty of awards too.
Year 10	To Kill a Mockingbird	Harper Lee	A modern American classic. This hard hitting social and legal drama tale tells the story from a young girl's point of view. It is a bitter - sweet tale of racial intolerance and injustice in America in the 1930s.
Year 10	Of Mice and men	John Steinbeck	Tackling universal themes, this remains a modern classic of American literature. Two down and outs struggle to make their dreams come true in an unforgiving America.
Year 10	Stasiland	Anne Funder	The story of a divided country and the collisions that take place when the Berlin Wall finally comes down in 1989.

Suggested Year Group	Title	Author	Notes
Year 11	Rebecca	Daphne du Maurier	Set in Cornwall, this mystery of a potential murder. Set in the early 20 th century
Year 11	Brave New World	Aldous Huxley	Set in a bleak future. This tale draws parallels with the threat of authoritarian government and dictators.
Year 11	The Grapes of Wrath	John Steinbeck	Set in the economic Depression of dustbowl America in the 1930s, this classic study of human nature and fortitude still strikes chord today
Year 11	Long Walk to Freedom	Nelson Mandela	The autobiography of one of the 20 th century's most charismatic leaders. It tells the story of the early part of Mandela's life including his life in South African prisons.
Year 11	Empire of the Sun	JG Ballard	This story based on the author's childhood tells of life in Shanghai during WWII as Japan invades China and the boy finds himself interned in prison.
Year 11	All quiet on the Western Front	Erich Maria Remarque	An anti-war story telling of the experiences of a class of young German students encouraged to join the German Army in WWI by their teacher.
Year 11	1984	George Orwell	A study of the worst excesses of political dictatorship from its classic opening line to the last.