

Plot Summary

The story is narrated in the first person as an autobiographical memoir told by the titular horse named Black Beauty—beginning with his carefree days as a colt on an English farm with his mother, to his difficult life pulling cabs in London, to his happy retirement in the country. Along the way, he meets with many hardships and recounts many tales of cruelty and kindness. Each short chapter recounts an incident in Black Beauty's life containing a lesson or moral typically related to the kindness, sympathy, and understanding treatment of horses, with Sewell's detailed observations and extensive descriptions of horse behaviour lending the novel a good deal of verisimilitude (the appearance of truth).

Characters:



Farmer Grey



Squire Gordon



Mr. Manly



Lady Wexmire



Lord Wexmire



Mr. York



Quotes

"We call them dumb animals, and so they are, for they cannot tell us how they feel, but they do not suffer less because they have no words."

Themes

Man and the natural world
 Compassion and Love
 Suffering
 Language and Communication



About the Author

Anna Sewell was born in 1820 in Norfolk, into a devoutly Quaker family. Her mother was a successful author of children's books. She was educated at home by her mother due to a lack of money for schooling.

Character Values

Determination

Tolerance

Respect



School of
CHARACTER

Context

Sewell's concern for the humane treatment of horses began early in life when she spent many hours driving her father to and from the station from which he left for work. She was crippled at a young age, and though she had difficulty walking, she could drive a horse-drawn carriage. Later, after reading an essay on animals by Horace Bushnell, she stated that one of her goals in writing was "to induce kindness, sympathy, and an understanding treatment of horses."

Sewell's introduction to writing began in her youth when she helped edit the works of her mother—a deeply religious, popular author of juvenile best-sellers. Sewell spent the last seven or eight years of her life—confined to her house as an invalid—writing *Black Beauty*. The book, a fictional autobiography of a gentle highbred horse, had a strong moral purpose and is said to have been instrumental in abolishing the cruel practice of using the checkrein. (A rein which prevents horses from lowering their heads).

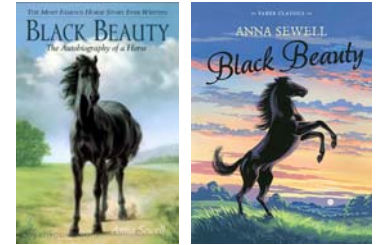
Book vs. Film



Which do you prefer and why?

Pre reading questions

1. Based on the various book covers, what do you think this book will be about?
2. Have you read any other books featuring animals?
3. What are your opinions on animal cruelty? How might this relate to current issues surrounding testing on animals?



Post reading questions

1. Did you find it interesting that the book is narrated by a horse?
2. How do you feel about animal cruelty?
3. Has this made you think differently about the way that humans treat each other and how they treat animals?
4. Who do you think was Black Beauty's best and worst owner?
5. How do you think this book links in with Northampton Academy's Character values?

Key Vocab

Amiable—likes to please

Beseeching—to beg eagerly for

Cob—stocky short legged horse

Cantered—gently galloped

Attentive—alert and watchful

Blundered—to move in a clumsy or careless way

Caparison—a decorative covering for a horse

Cordial—showing heartfelt friendliness

Crupper—a strap from the back of a saddle

Dejected—marked by low spirits

Revere—regard with feelings of respect

Shambles—a great disorder

Constitution—relating to character/disposition

Contemptuously—without respect

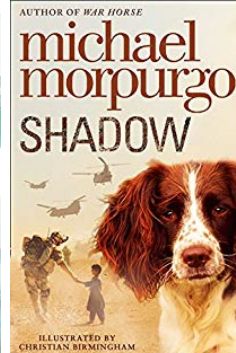
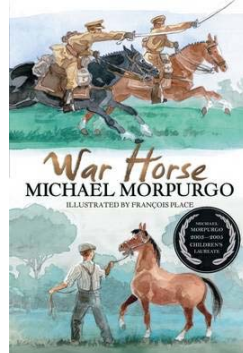
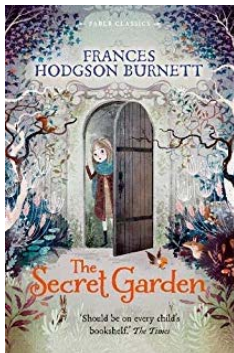
Challenge—can you use these words in a sentence?



Can you spot these words whilst we read?



If you liked this book, try these....

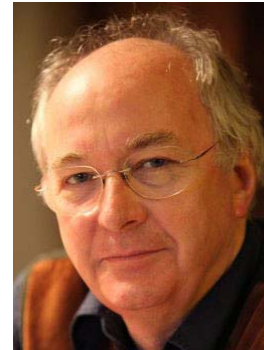
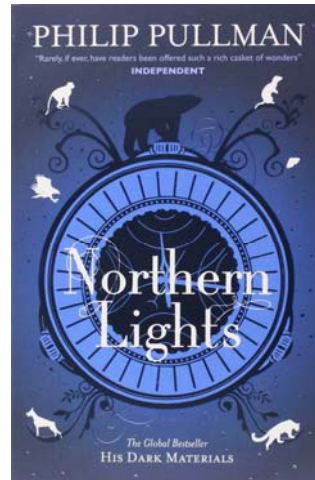


Plot Summary

"Without this child, we shall all die."

Lyra Belacqua and her animal daemon live half-wild and carefree among scholars of Jordan College, Oxford. The destiny that awaits her will take her to the frozen lands of the Arctic, where witch-clans reign and ice-bears fight. Her extraordinary journey will have immeasurable consequences far beyond her own world.

The first volume in Philip Pullman's incredible His Dark Materials trilogy. First published in 1995, and acclaimed as a modern masterpiece, it won the UK's top awards for children's literature.



About the Author

Sir Philip Pullman, CBE, FRSL, is an English novelist. He is the author of several best-selling books, including the fantasy trilogy His Dark Materials. In a 2004 poll for the BBC, Pullman was named the eleventh most influential person in British culture.

Quotes

"As if from heaven itself, pale green and rose-pink, and as transparent as the most fragile fabric, and at the bottom edge a profound fiery crimson."

Context

Pullman published *The Golden Compass*, the first book in the *His Dark Materials* trilogy, in 1995, after he had already enjoyed some success with his Sally Lockhart novels and a number of books for younger children. When setting out to write *The Golden Compass*, Pullman thought about writing a *Paradise Lost* for kids. In Milton's poem, Satan leads an army of rebellious angels in an attempt to overthrow God. The attempt fails, and Satan and his followers are cast out of heaven. Satan, seeking revenge, convinces God's creations, Adam and Eve, to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, thus causing their fall from grace. In Pullman's take on *Paradise Lost*, God is an oppressive, senile old man, and Satan is a dashing heroic figure. But the real hero and centerpiece of Pullman's story is the Eve figure, Lyra Belacqua, on whom the salvation of the universe depends.

Characters:



Lyra



Pan



Roger



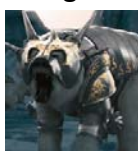
Lord Asriel



Marisa



Iorek



Iofur



Serafina

Themes

(Loss of) Innocence
Identity
Fate and Free Will
Power

Character Values

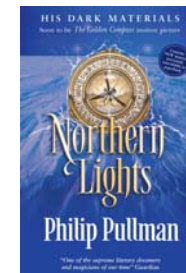
Determination

Ambition



School of
CHARACTER

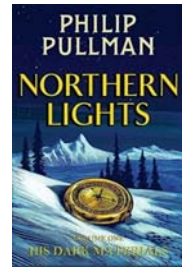
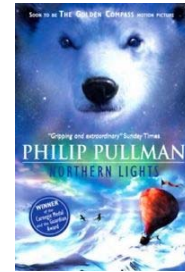
Book vs. Film



Which do you prefer and why?

Pre reading questions

1. Based on the various book covers, what do you think this book will be about?
2. Have you heard of the northern lights—a natural light display over the earth's magnetic poles. How do you think this might be connected to the story?
3. As this book is part of a trilogy, do you think this one will end on a cliff-hanger?



Post reading questions

1. What did you think of the ending? How do you think the story will be continued in the second book?
2. What do you think of Lyra's character? Do you think the prophecy about her will come true?
3. How is good and evil explored throughout the various characters?
4. How do you think this book links in with Northampton Academy's Character values?

Key Vocab

Yore—time long past

Enticing—tempting, alluring

Riveted—fixed to a spot

Lurid—unpleasantly bright in colour

Fret—to worry or stress

Aurora—bands of light caused by charged solar particles

Brazen—unrestrained by convention

Shoal—a stretch of shallow water

Pristine—immaculately clean and unused

Haughty—arrogantly superior and disdainful

Sanguine—optimistic, positive

Ebbing—a gradual decline

Chasm—a deep fissure in the earth's surface

Awe—overwhelming feeling of wonder/admiration

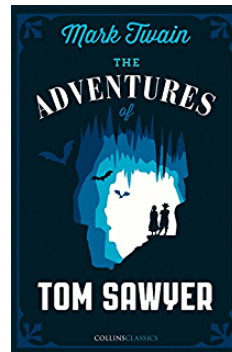
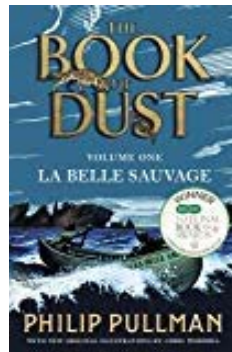
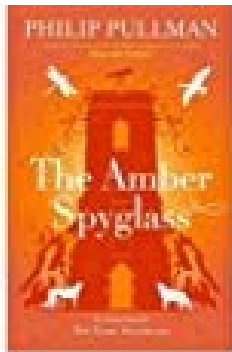
Challenge—*can you use these words in a sentence?*



Can you spot these words whilst we read?



If you liked this book, try these....



Plot Summary

As the novel opens, Percy Jackson is twelve years old. He has never met his father, he hates his abusive stepfather, and he adores his mother. Diagnosed with ADHD and dyslexia, Percy has trouble behaving in school, especially on field trips. Percy now attends Yancy School for Troubled Kids in upstate New York. The only class that catches his interest is Mr. Brunner's Greek mythology course, and his one friend is Grover. When Mrs. Dodds, his pre-algebra teacher, turns into a winged monster and attacks him, Percy is only just able to escape with his life. Percy's life gets more complicated when he learns he's the son of the Greek god Poseidon. At a training ground for the children of deities, Percy learns to harness his divine powers and prepare for the adventure of a lifetime

Characters:



Percy



Annabeth



Grover



Chiron



Sally



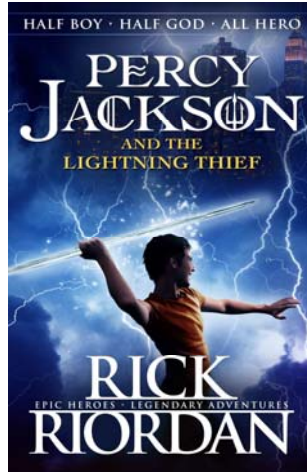
Gabe



Luke



Poseidon



Quotes

"You shall go west, and face the god who was turned. You shall find what was stolen, and see it safely returned. You shall be betrayed by one who calls you a friend. And you shall fail to save what matters most in the end."

Themes

Identity
Versions of Reality
Isolation
Family



About the Author

Riordan was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas. He graduated from Alamo Heights High School, and first attended the music program at North Texas State, wanting to be a guitarist.

Character Values

Determination

Tolerance

Respect



School of
CHARACTER

Context

The novel provides a high-interest, humorous introduction to the Greek myths. It works well if taught in conjunction with mythology, which is a core component of most English state curriculum frameworks.

The author designed The Lightning Thief to be appropriate reading for ages nine through fourteen. The novel offers an excellent chance for students to explore the Classical heritage of Greece as it applies to modern civilization; to analyse the elements of the hero's quest rendered in a modern-day story with a first-person narrator to whom students can easily relate; and to discuss such relevant issues as learning disabilities, the nature of family, and themes of loyalty, friendship and faith.

Book vs. Film



Which do you prefer and why?

Pre reading questions

1. Based on the various book covers, what do you think this book will be about?
2. What do you already know about Greek mythology?
3. Have you read any fantasy books before? What kind of writing style do you expect?



Post reading questions

1. How would you describe Percy's character? Do you want to continue reading the rest of the series?
2. Did you enjoy the elements of Greek mythology?
3. Can you relate to any of Percy's difficulties? What can we learn from how he deals with them?
4. What do you think is the author's message?
5. How do you think this book links in with Northampton Academy's Character values?

Key Vocab

Snicker—laugh quietly

Frayed—worn away

Scythe—a tool for cutting grass

Zeus—supreme God in Greek mythology

Frieze—a decorative piece of stone

Kleptomaniac—someone with an irrational urge to steal

Tartaris—a place where the wicked are punished after death

Metropolitan—relating to a large urban area

Immortal—not subject to death

Wispy—thin and weak

Vaporized—converted into gas

Disgorge—eject stomach contents from mouth

Pulverize—make into a powder by breaking up

Stele—an ancient upright stone slab bearing markings

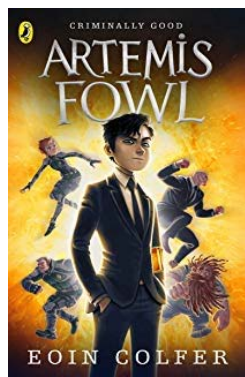
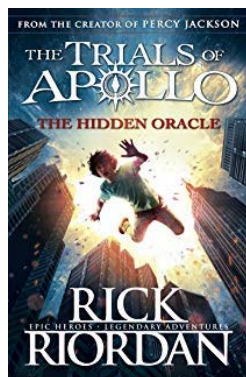
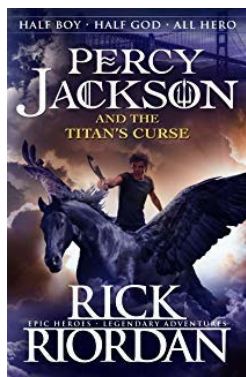
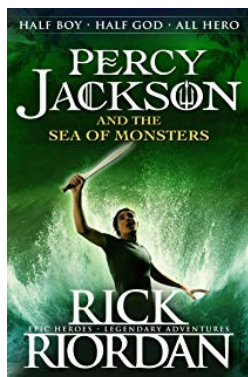
Challenge—can you use these words in a sentence?



Can you spot these words whilst we read?



If you liked this book, try these....



Plot Summary

Born in a refugee camp, all Subhi knows of the world is that he's at least 19 fence diamonds high, the nice Jackets never stay long, and at night he dreams that the sea finds its way to his tent, bringing with it unusual treasures. And one day it brings him Jimmie.

Carrying a notebook that she's unable to read and wearing a sparrow made out of bone around her neck - both talismans of her family's past and the mother she's lost - Jimmie strikes up an unlikely friendship with Subhi beyond the fence.

As he reads aloud the tale of how Jimmie's family came to be, both children discover the importance of their own stories in writing their futures.

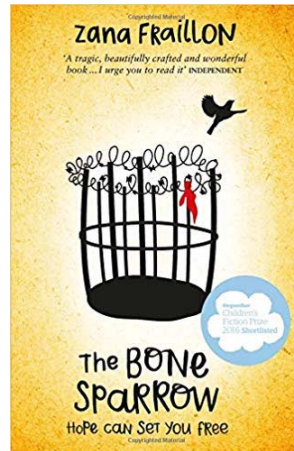
Characters:

Subhi

Maa

Queeny

Eli



Quotes

"Sometimes, at night, the dirt outside turns into a beautiful ocean. As red as the sun and as deep as the sky."

"And the sound of the whisper is as brilliant as a thousand stars being born."

Themes

Friendship

Family

Freedom

Grief and Loss



About the Author

Zana Fraillon is a multi-award winning author of fiction books for children and young adults.

She lives with her husband and 3 children in Melbourne, Australia, and has written 9 books

Character Values

Tolerance

Respect



School of
CHARACTER

Context

A heartfelt, harrowing insight into life as a Rohingya refugee in an Australian detention centre, told through the unforgettable voice of an unforgettable boy.

Zana Fraillon felt compelled to write her novel *The Bone Sparrow* because she could not ignore the millions of people who were being forcibly displaced and the millions of children missing out on a childhood. Zana comments, "The Bone Sparrow was written so we remember the people behind the statistics. Those 65 million stories waiting to be told, those 33 million children wondering if their futures will ever be realised. It was written so we can find the courage to stand for humanity, and the wisdom to imagine a different world. It was written so we may all live in hope."

Do you think it would make a good film?



Pre reading questions

1. Based on the various book covers, what do you think this book will be about?
2. How much do you know about refugees and refugee camps?
3. How would you feel if you didn't have a proper home and felt unwanted by the people in the country where you were?



Post reading questions

1. Who was your favourite character and why?
2. What did you think of the ending?
3. What do you think is the author's message?
4. Can you relate to anything that Subhi and Jimmie went through? How important is their friendship in the novel?
5. How do you think this book links in with Northampton Academy's Character values?

Key Vocab

Cranky—grumpy, irritable

Fug—stale air

Whump—thump

Sparrow—a small bird

Perimeter—the border or outer boundary

Refugee—a person who flees for refuge or safety

Transit—passing across or through, transportation

Avocado—a green pear shaped fruit, savoury taste

Cuffed—to put handcuffs on

Anguish—excruciating or acute distress

Cultivate—to promote or improve the growth

Ration—a fixed allowance of provisions for food

Meagre—deficient in quantity or quality, inadequate

Rohingya—a stateless Indo-Aryan ethnic group who reside in Myanmar

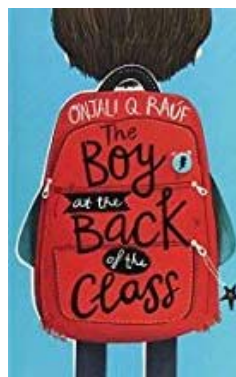
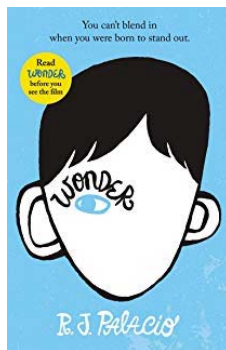
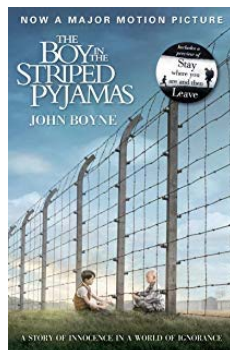
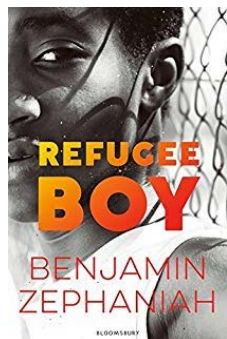
Challenge—can you use these words in a sentence?



Can you spot these words whilst we read?



If you liked this book, try these....



Plot Summary

Nine-year-old Bruno knows nothing of the Final Solution and the Holocaust. He is oblivious to the appalling cruelties being inflicted on the people of Europe by his country. All he knows is that he has been moved from a comfortable home in Berlin to a house in a desolate area where there is nothing to do and no one to play with. Until he meets Shmuel, a boy who lives a strange parallel existence on the other side of the adjoining wire fence and who, like the other people there, wears a uniform of striped pyjamas.

Bruno's friendship with Shmuel will take him from innocence to revelation. And in exploring what he is unwittingly a part of, he will inevitably become subsumed by the terrible process.

Characters:



Bruno



Shmuel



Ralf



Elsa



Gretel



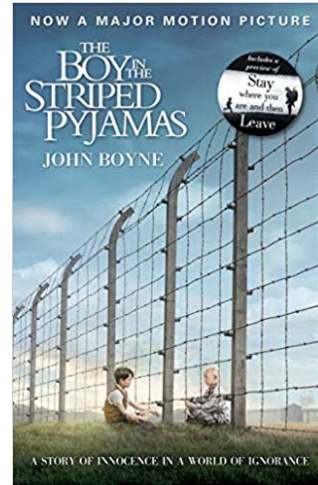
Pavel



Kotler



Grandmother



Quotes

"...Despite the mayhem that followed, Bruno found that he was still holding Shmuel's hand in his own and nothing in the world would have persuaded him to let go."

Themes

Friendship

Innocence and ignorance

Nationalism



About the Author

John Boyne (born 30 April 1971) is an Irish novelist. He is the author of eleven novels for adults and five novels for younger readers. His novels are published in over 50 languages. Other novels include: 'The Boy at the Top of the Mountain'.

Character Values

Respect

Tolerance

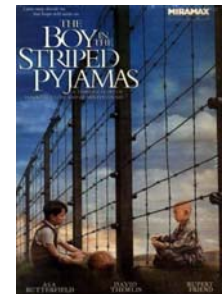
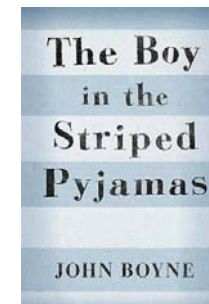


School of
CHARACTER

Context

'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' is a fictional fable about a boy whose father is a Commandant in the German army during World War II, under the regime of the Nazi Party and Adolf Hitler. "Out-With," where Bruno and his family move, is Bruno's word for "Auschwitz," a concentration camp in German-annexed Poland where Jews were imprisoned and murdered during the war. The German Nazi Party, which operated on an Anti-Semitic rhetoric, used these camps to kill six million Jews between 1942 and 1945 (as well as almost five million non-Jewish people, including homosexuals, Romani people, and the mentally disabled). Auschwitz was one of the deadliest and most infamous of these camps. The Allies liberated the prisoners of the camps towards the end of the war, between 1944 and 1945.

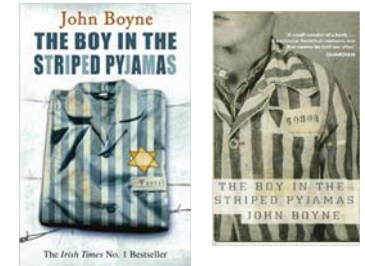
Book vs. Film



Which do you prefer and why?

Pre reading questions

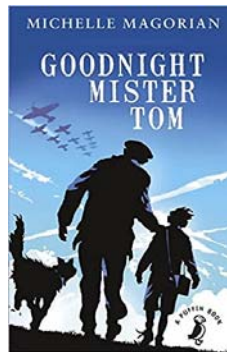
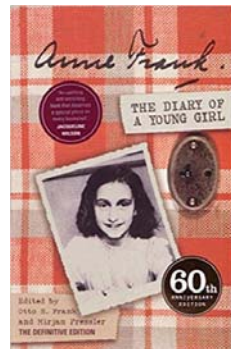
1. Based on the various book covers, what do you think this book will be about?
2. Do you really think this book is about boys wearing striped pyjamas? What do you think they are actually wearing?
3. What do you already know about the Holocaust? Have you ever heard it from a child's point of view? Why do you think this is?



Post reading questions

1. Could you tell what was going to happen after reading one of the last few chapters was titled 'The Haircut'?
2. Do you think the parents realised what happened to Bruno?
3. What did you think of the last chapter?
4. Has this book made you think differently about the Holocaust?
5. How do you think this book links in with Northampton Academy's Character values?

If you liked this book, try these....



Key Vocab

- Desolate**—lonely, empty and isolated
- Incredulous**—shocked by complete disbelief
- Foreseeable**—predicted future event
- Muster**—to summon up a particular feeling
- Commandant**—military officer in charge
- Lieutenant**—a military officer
- Herr**—German for Mr.



Plot Summary

A deeply moving and unforgettable portrait of an ordinary and yet an extraordinary teenage girl. First published over sixty years ago, Anne Frank's Diary of a Young Girl has reached millions of young people throughout the world.

In July 1942, thirteen-year-old Anne Frank and her family, fleeing the occupation, went into hiding in an Amsterdam warehouse. Over the next two years Anne vividly describes in her diary the frustrations of living in such close quarters, and her thoughts, feelings and longings as she grows up. Her diary ends abruptly when, in August 1944, they were all betrayed.

Since its publication in 1947, The Diary of a Young Girl has been read by tens of millions of people, translated into over 60 languages.

Characters:



Anne



Otto



Edith



Margot



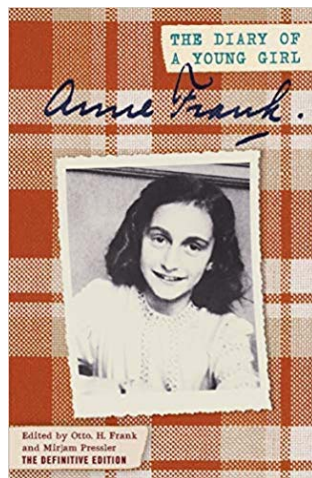
Peter



Miep



Fritz



Quotes

"It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart."

Themes

Adolescence/Coming of Age
 Loneliness and Isolation
 Identity
 Family



About the Author

Born in 1929, Anne's family were Jewish and hid in an annexe to avoid the Nazis. They were eventually found and taken to concentration camps. Anne died in Bergen-Belsen camp at the age of 15.

Character Values

Determination

Tolerance

Respect

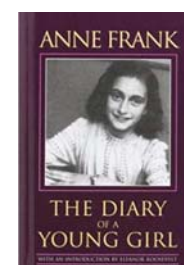


School of
CHARACTER

Context

In 1933 the Franks moved to the Netherlands to escape Nazi persecution. The family lived in relative peace until 1940, when Germany occupied the Netherlands and imposed stringent anti-Semitic laws. These new measures prohibited Jews from riding streetcars, forced Jews to attend separate schools, imposed boycotts of Jewish-owned businesses, and required Jews to wear yellow stars to identify themselves as Jewish. The quality of life of even highly assimilated Jews, like the Franks, became precarious. Within two years after these anti-Semitic laws were imposed, many Jews in the Netherlands were harassed, arrested, and sent to concentration camps where they were herded together and killed. The Franks and other well-connected families were able to heed warning signs in time to make arrangements to go into hiding. This decision put their own lives and the lives of those who cared for them at great risk.

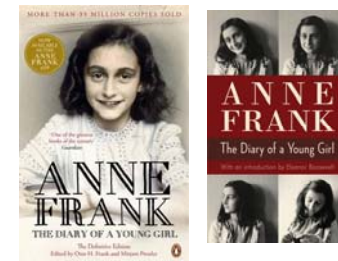
Book vs. Film



Which do you prefer and why?

Pre reading questions

1. Based on the various book covers, what do you think this book will be about?
2. What do you already know about the Nazi Party and the Holocaust?
3. Have you read any other diaries before? What kind of writing style are you expecting? Will it be much different to fiction?



Post reading questions

1. How would you describe Anne's personality?
2. How could school children relate to the struggles Anne faces of adolescence?
3. What can we learn from Anne's experience?
4. Has this made you think differently about how different people are treated?
5. How do you think this book links in with Northampton Academy's Character values?

Key Vocab

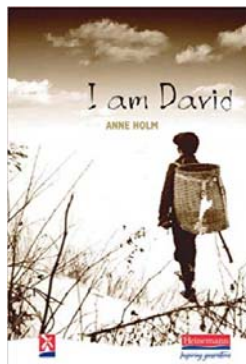
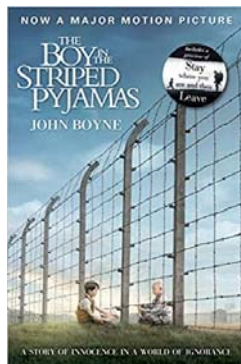
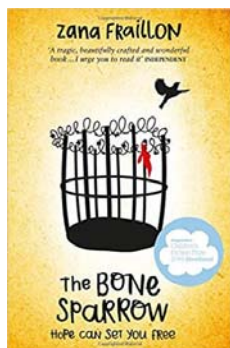
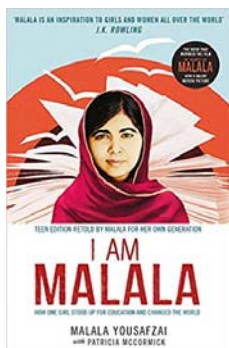
- Finicky**—fussy
Zany—ludicrous, foolish
Bungle—make a mess of something
Seethe—foam as if boiling/angry
Snivel—cry or whine with snuffling
Wangle—accomplishing something by trickery
Enamoured—unreasoning fondness
Swelter—uncomfortably hot
Sullen—showing ill humour
Immigrate—come into a new country
Revere—regard with feelings of respect
Shambles—a great disorder
Tirade—a speech of violent denunciation
Paragon—a perfect embodiment of a concept



Can you spot these words whilst we read?



If you liked this book, try these....



Challenge—*can you use these words in a sentence?*

Plot Summary

When a baby escapes a murderer intent on killing the entire family, who would have thought it would find safety and security in the local graveyard? Brought up by the resident ghosts, ghouls and spectres, Bod has an eccentric childhood learning about life from the dead. But for Bod there is also the danger of the murderer still looking for him - after all, he is the last remaining member of the family.

A stunningly original novel deftly constructed over eight chapters, featuring every second year of Bod's life, from babyhood to adolescence. Will Bod survive to be a man?

Characters:

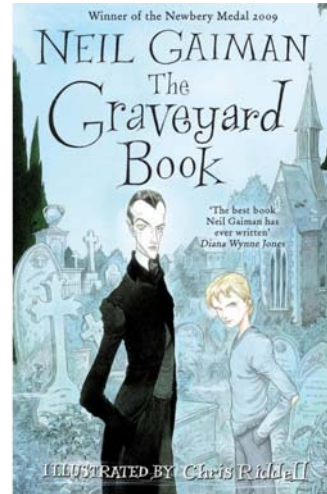
Nobody Owens (Bod)

Mr. Owens

Mrs. Owens

Jack

Silas



Quotes

"It's like the people who believe they'll be happy if they go and live somewhere else, but who learn it doesn't work that way. Wherever you go, you take yourself with you. If you see what I mean."

Themes

Compassion and Forgiveness

Death

Community

Memory and the Past



About the Author

Born in 1960, Gaiman's family is of Polish Jewish and other Eastern European Jewish origins. He is an English author of short fiction, novels, comic books, graphic novels, nonfiction, audio theatre, and films

Character Values

Determination

Tolerance

Respect



School of
CHARACTER

Context

Most of the time, it feels like this novel could be taking place hundreds of years ago, because the ghosts in the graveyard died long ago. They talk and act like they're from the 1800s, or the 1600s, or even longer ago. But little hints let us know we're still in the 21st century: Scarlett talks about cell phones, and schoolyard bullies take videos of their victims. We know that the digital age is exploding around Bod, he's just totally separated from it.

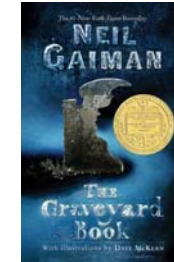
For Bod, the graveyard is both prison and paradise. He's the pet of the graveyard, the living boy who brings change to those who thought they could never change – the dead. He has teachers, food, clothes, reading material, guidance, discipline, and companionship. He has all the necessities, plus adventures galore. On the other hand, he desperately wants to mingle with the living and share in all the living world has to offer.

Do you think it would make a good film?



Pre reading questions

1. Based on the various book covers, what do you think this book will be about?
2. Graveyard has connotations of death—how might this link to the plot of the book?
3. Family is a key theme of the novel—why do you think the idea of family is so important?



Post reading questions

1. What do you think is the book's message?
2. Did you like Bod's character?
3. Why do you think the book follows Bod as he grows up? How does this help us understand Bod as his character develops? How important is this to the story's message?
4. How do you think this book links in with Northampton Academy's Character values?

Key Vocab

Vague—not clear

Beseeking—to beg eagerly for

Drab—dull, boring

Frantically—acting crazy

Endured—to hold out against

Insinuated—to hint at slyly

Methodical—performed in a systematic way

Lucid—clear, completely understood

Mausoleum—a big tomb

Barrow—an ancient burial hill

Stifled—to block or hinder

Treacherous—hazardous, dangerous

Sparse—thin/lacking

Inhabitants—people or animals that occupy or live in a space

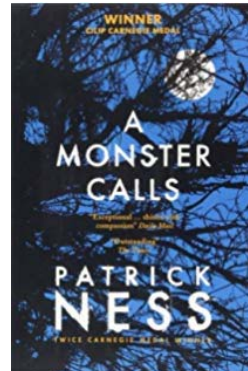
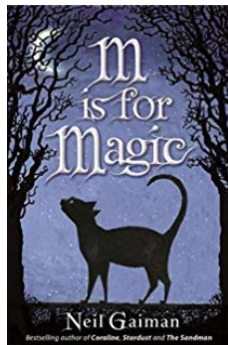
Challenge—*can you use these words in a sentence?*



Can you spot these words whilst we read?



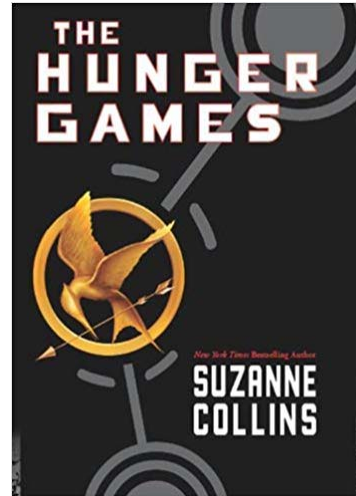
If you liked this book, try these....



Plot Summary

Every year the Capitol of the nation of Panem forces each of its twelve districts to send a teenage boy and girl to compete in the Hunger Games. A twisted punishment for a past uprising and an ongoing government intimidation tactic, The Hunger Games are a nationally televised event in which "Tributes" must fight with one another until one survivor remains. Sixteen year old Katniss Everdeen volunteers in her younger sister's place to enter the games, and is forced to rely upon her sharp instincts

If she's ever to return home to District 12, Katniss must make impossible choices in the arena that weigh survival against humanity and life against love.



Quotes

"Happy Hunger Games!
And may the odds be
ever in your favour!"



About the Author

Suzanne Collins was born on August 10, 1962, in Hartford, Connecticut to Jane Brady Collins and Lt. Col. Michael John Collins. As the daughter of a military officer, she and her family were constantly moving.

Context

The setting of The Hunger Games is post apocalyptic in that Panem is the surviving region in North America after a series of disasters. Suzanne Collins establishes the setting of District 12 through contrast with The Capitol - a city which enjoys extreme wealth and luxury in stark opposition to the poverty and problems experienced in the out lying districts. The inhabitants of The Capitol are presented as superficial, shallow and preoccupied with fashion and appearance. They are kept comfortable through the hard work of the other districts who supply them with both the essentials as well as the materials for a frivolous lifestyle. The Hunger Games therefore utilises this dystopian environment to comment on elements within our own context and leads readers to question the values inherent in the 21st Century.

Characters:



Katniss



Peeta



Gale



Haymitch



Effie



President Snow

Themes

Identity
Society and Class
Community
Power
Love

Character Values

Determination
Tolerance
Respect



School of
CHARACTER

Book vs. Film



Which do you prefer and why?

Pre reading questions

1. Based on the various book covers, what do you think this book will be about?
2. How might the image of a bird be relevant? What might it represent?
3. Have you read any Dystopian fiction before? What would you expect?



Post reading questions

1. Do you admire Katniss' character? How do you think she might develop during the rest of the trilogy?
2. How do you feel about the way Panem treats its people? Is this relevant today?
3. What did you think of the ending? What do you think might happen in the next part of the trilogy?
4. How do you think this book links in with Northampton Academy's Character values?

Key Vocab

Anguish—extreme distress

Incite—provoke or stir up

Terse—brief and to the point

Indifferent—lack of interest

Reap—get or derive

Preposterous—inviting ridicule

Forage—collect or look around for food

Cumulative—increasing by successive addition

Encroach—advance beyond the usual limit

Harvest—the gathering of a ripened crop

Meagre—deficient in amount or quality or extent

Mimic—imitate, especially for satirical effect

Podium—a platform raised above the surrounding level

Obliterated—reduced to nothingness

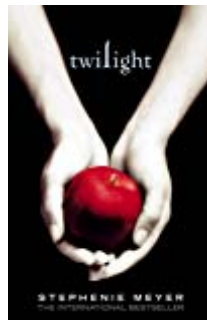
Challenge—*can you use these words in a sentence?*



Can you spot these words whilst we read?



If you liked this book, try these....



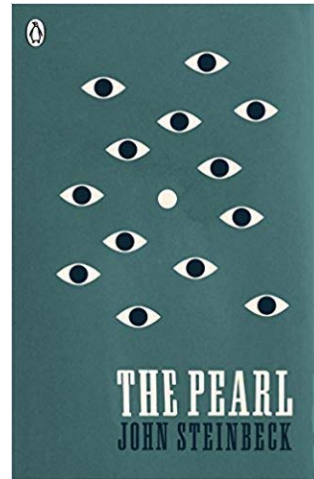
Plot Summary

'The Pearl' is a novella by American author John Steinbeck, first published in 1947.

It is the story of a pearl diver, Kino, and explores man's nature as well as greed, defiance of societal norms, and evil. Steinbeck's inspiration was a Mexican folk tale from La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico, which he had heard in a visit to the formerly pearl-rich region in 1940.

In 1947, it was adapted into a Mexican film named La Perla and in 1987 into a cult Kannada movie Ondu Muttina Kathe. The story is one of Steinbeck's most popular books and has been widely used in schools.

The Pearl is sometimes considered a parable (a short story with a moral message).



About the Author

John Steinbeck (February 27, 1902 – December 20, 1968) was an American author. He won the 1962 Nobel Prize in Literature "for his realistic and imaginative writings, combining as they do sympathetic humour and keen social perception

Context

The Pearl is set in La Paz, a town on the desert peninsula of Baja California. The first colony at La Paz was founded in 1535 by Spanish explorer Hernán Cortés, at a time when mainland Mexico had already been subdued by Spanish conquistadors. This was the first of several failed colonies there. A Jesuit priest, Father Eusebio Kino, came to the area in 1683. His influence and King Felipe II of Spain's 1596 order to colonize Baja California resulted in the founding of Our Lady of Loreto de Concho, a Jesuit mission, in 1697. Loreto was the first permanent Spanish settlement in the Baja California peninsula. Loreto is mentioned in the text as the place Kino urges Juana to travel to in order to escape the trackers.

Quotes

"It is not good to want a thing too much. It sometimes drives the luck away. You must want it just enough, and you must be very tactful with Gods or the gods."

Characters:



Kino

Juana

Coyotito

The Doctor



Juan Thomas



The pearl dealers

Themes

Family
Perseverance
Good and Evil
Paradox

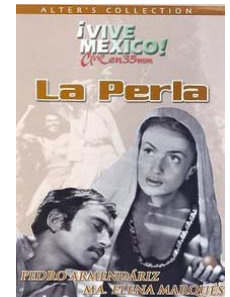
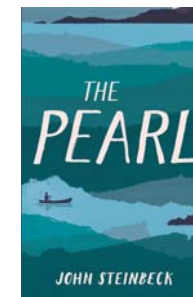
Character Values

Determination
Ambition



School of
CHARACTER

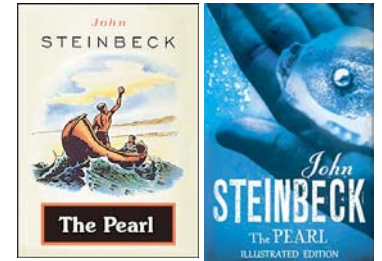
Book vs. Film



Which do you prefer and why?

Pre reading questions

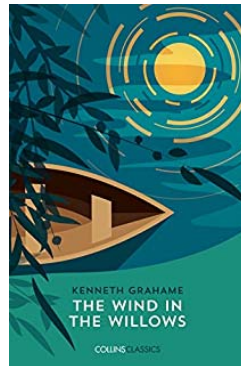
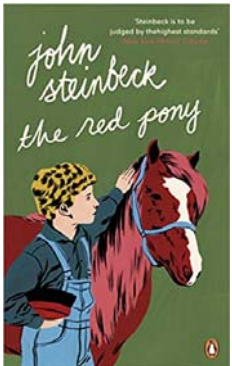
1. Based on the various book covers, what do you think this book will be about?
2. What does 'pearl' have connotations of? How might this link to your predictions? Why would someone want a pearl?
3. The story is set in Mexico—do you know anything about this country?



Post reading questions

1. What did you think of the ending?
2. Do you feel sorry for Kino and his family?
3. How does finding a beautiful pearl change Kino and his family's lives? Does it change for the better or for the worse?
4. How does the book make you feel about communities being invaded?/ colonized?
5. How do you think this book links in with Northampton Academy's Character values?

If you liked this book, try these....



Key Vocab

- Avarice**—greed
Indigent—poor, impoverished
Estuary—a river meeting a sea tide
Incandescence—giving off light
Edifice—building or structure
Malignant—dangerous, harmful, deadly
Monolithic—huge, imposing
Threshed - beat, whipped
Countenanced—tolerated
Contemptuous—scorn or disdain
Lethargy—tired, weak
Subjugation—forced submission, conquer
Furtive—secretive
Lucent—softly bright, radiant



Can you spot these words whilst we read?



Challenge—*can you use these words in a sentence?*