

# Summer Reading Challenge 2025



Complete these fun challenges over the summer and hand in to your English Teacher in September for reading recognition points and the chance to win a prize.

**We can't wait to see what you've done!**



Queensbridge School

Full Name:

Form:

# Queensbridge is a reading school.

This summer is your chance to prepare to start your secondary school adventure as you mean to go on; as a reader! Simply complete the challenges in this booklet and get an adult to sign off your achievements. Give your completed booklet to your English Teacher in September and you will receive 10 reading recognition points, and be in with a chance of winning a prize! 😊



You can find books in your **local library**, **charity shops**, **book shops**, and maybe even the **houses** of your family and friends! We have over **9,000** waiting for you in our QB library...

# Join your local library –for free!

Being a member of your local library is a fantastic way to access thousands of books, whilst also supporting your local community. Signing up is simple, it can be done in person or online:

## Becoming a Member

Membership is free and you can join at any age. You do not need to live within Birmingham to have a Birmingham Library membership. You can use your Library card at any Library within Birmingham Library Service

## Joining online

Scan the QR code and fill in the form. To obtain a card you take this number to any local library in Birmingham with proof of your name and current address. If you only require access to our eLibrary then you do not need to visit a Library.

## Joining at a Library

You can join by visiting any of our Libraries with proof of your name and current address.

## Under 18

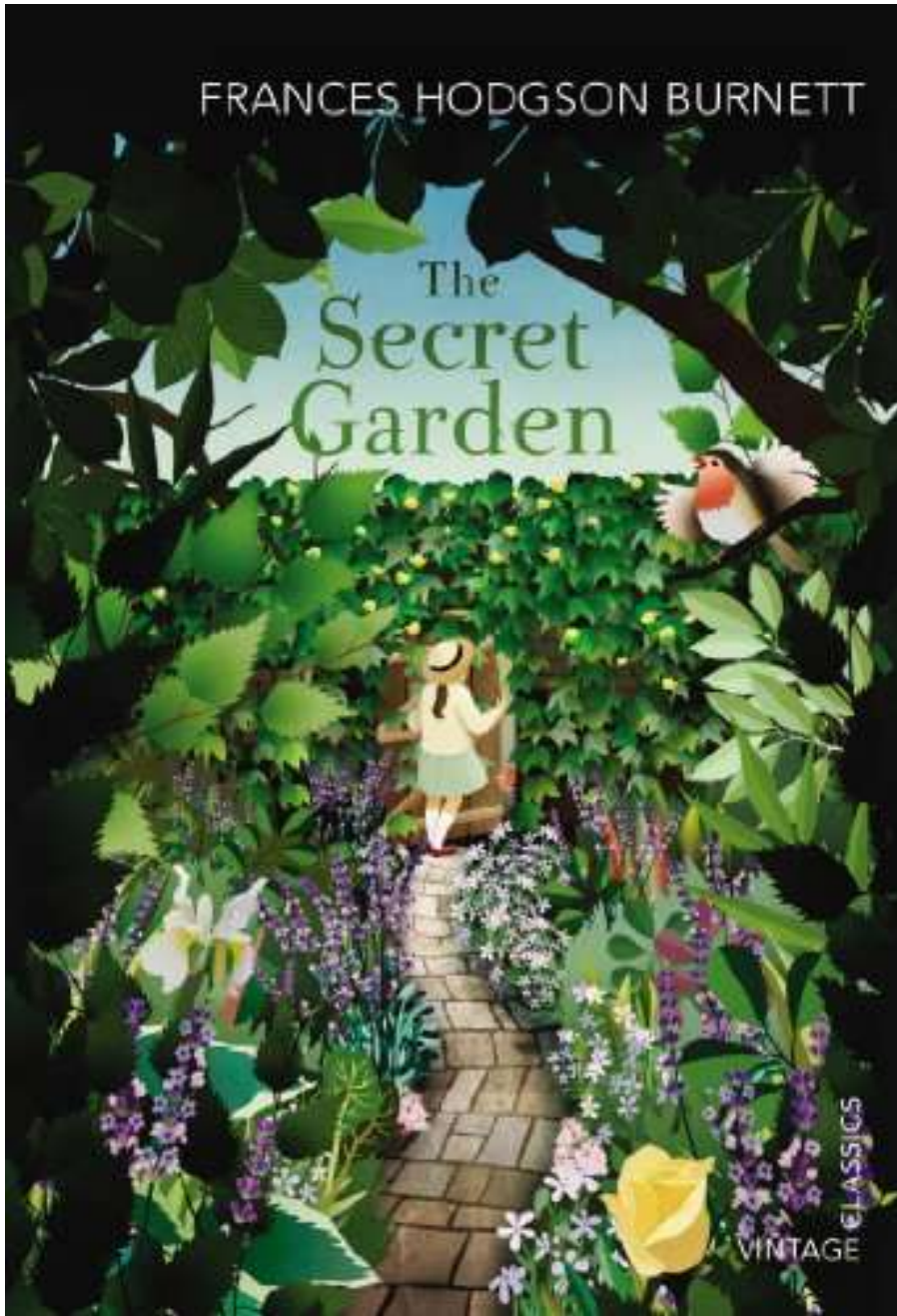
**15 or under** you will need a parent, carer or a responsible adult over 18 in the family to act as guarantor.



Join using the QR code

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

# The Secret Garden



In a house full of sadness and secrets, can young, orphaned Mary find happiness?

Mary Lennox, a spoiled, ill-tempered, and unhealthy child, comes to live with her reclusive uncle in Misselthwaite Manor on England's Yorkshire moors after the death of her parents. There she meets a hearty housekeeper and her spirited brother, a dour gardener, a cheerful robin, and her willful, hysterical, and sickly cousin, Master Colin, whose wails she hears echoing through the house at night.

With the help of the robin, Mary finds the door to a secret garden, neglected and hidden for years. When she decides to restore the garden in secret, the story becomes a charming journey into the places of the heart, where faith restores health, flowers refresh the spirit, and the magic of the garden, coming to life anew, brings health to Colin and happiness to Mary.

**Challenge 1:** Read an extract from **‘The Secret Garden’** by Frances Hodgson Burnett and then answer a few questions about it (you will read this again in your first week at QB in an English lesson!)

## The strangest house any one ever lived

IT was the sweetest, most mysterious-looking place any one could imagine. The high walls which shut it in were covered with the leafless stems of climbing roses, which were so thick that they were matted together. Mary Lennox knew they were roses because she had seen a great many roses in India. All the ground was covered with grass of a wintry brown, and out of it grew clumps of bushes which were surely rose-bushes if they were alive. There were numbers of standard roses which had so spread their branches that they were like little trees. There were other trees in the garden, and one of the things which made the place look strangest and loveliest was that climbing roses had run all over them and swung down long tendrils which made light swaying curtains, and here and there they had caught at each other or at a far-reaching branch and had crept from one tree to another and made lovely bridges of themselves. ‘I’ here were neither leaves nor roses on them now, and Mary did not know whether they were dead or alive, but their thin grey or brown branches and sprays looked like a sort of hazy mantle spreading over everything, walls, and trees, and even brown grass, where they had fallen from their fastenings and run along the ground. It was this hazy tangle from tree to tree which made it all look so mysterious. Mary had thought it must be different from other gardens which had not been left all by themselves so long; and indeed it was different from any other place she had ever seen in her life.

“How still it is” she whispered. “How still”



Climbing roses



Hazy – not very clear

Then she waited a moment and listened at the stillness. The robin, who had flown to his tree-top, was still as all the rest. He did not even flutter his wings; he sat without stirring, and looked at Mary.

"No wonder it is still," she whispered again. "I am the first person who has spoken in here for ten years."

She moved away from the door, stepping as softly as if she were afraid of awakening some one. She was glad that there was grass under her feet and that her steps made no sounds. She walked under one of the fairy-like grey arches between the trees and looked up at the sprays and tendrils which formed them. "I wonder if they are all quite dead," she said. "Is it all a quite dead garden if I wish it wasn't."

If she had been Ben Weatherstaff she could have told whether the wood was alive by looking at it, but she could only see that there were only grey or brown sprays and branches and none showed any signs of even a tiny leaf-bud anywhere.

But she was *inside* the wonderful garden and she could come through the door under the ivy any time, and she felt as if she had found a world all her own.

The sun was shining inside the four walls and the high arch of blue sky over this particular piece of Misselthwaite seemed even more brilliant and soft than it was over the moor. The robin flew down from his tree-top and hopped about or flew after her from one bush to another. He chirped a good deal and had a very busy air, as if he were showing her things. Everything was strange and silent and she seemed to be hundreds of miles away from any one, but somehow she did not feel lonely at all. All that troubled her was her wish that she knew whether all the roses were dead, or if perhaps some of them had lived and might put out leaves and buds as the weather got warmer. She did not want it to be a quite dead garden. If it were a quite alive garden, how wonderful it would be, and what thousands of roses would grow on every side!

Her skipping-rope had hung over her arm when she came in, and after she had walked about for a while she thought she would skip round the whole garden, stopping when she wanted to look at things. There seemed to have been grass paths here and there, and in one or two corners there were alcoves of evergreen with stone seats or tall moss-covered flower urns in them.



Ben Weatherstaff  
The gardener at  
Misselthwaite Manor



alcoves

As she came near the second of these alcoves she stopped skipping. There had once been a flower-bed in it, and she thought she saw something sticking out of the black earth-some sharp little pale green points. She remembered what Ben Weatherstaff had said and she knelt down to look at them.

“Yes, they are tiny growing things and they might be crocuses or snowdrops or daffodils,” she whispered.

She bent very close to them and sniffed the fresh scent of the damp earth. She liked it very much.

“Perhaps there are some other ones coming up in other places,” she said. “I will go all over the garden and look.”

She did not skip, but walked. She went slowly and kept her eyes on the ground. She looked in the old border beds and among the grass, and after she had gone round, trying to miss nothing, she had found ever so many more sharp, pale green points, and she had become quite excited again.

“It isn’t a quite dead garden,” she cried out softly to herself. “Even if the roses are dead, there are other things alive.”

She did not know anything about gardening, but the grass seemed so thick in some of the places where the green points were pushing their way through that she thought they did not seem to have room enough to grow. She searched about until she found a rather sharp piece of wood and knelt down and dug and weeded out the weeds and grass until she made nice little clear places around them.

“Now they look as if they could breathe,” she said, after she had finished with the first ones. “I am going to do ever so many more. do all I can see. If I haven’t time today I can come tomorrow.”



snowdrops



crocuses



daffodils



robin

She went from place to place, and dug and weeded, and enjoyed herself so immensely that she was led on from bed to bed and into the grass under the trees. The exercise made her so warm that she first threw her coat off, and then her hat, and without knowing it she was smiling down on to the grass and the pale green points all the time.

The robin was tremendously busy. He was very much pleased to see gardening begun on his own estate. He had often wondered at Ben Weatherstaff. Where gardening is done all sorts of delightful things to eat are turned up with the soil. Now here was this new kind of creature who was not half Ben's size and yet had had the sense to come into his garden and begin at once.

Mistress Mary worked in her garden until it was time to go to her midday dinner. In fact, she was rather late in remembering, and when she put on her coat and hat, and picked up her skipping-rope, she could not believe that she had been working two or three hours. She had been actually happy all the time; and dozens and dozens of the tiny, pale green points were to be seen in cleared places, looking twice as cheerful as they had looked before when the grass and weeds had been smothering them.

"I shall come back this afternoon," she said, looking all round at her new kingdom, and speaking to the trees and the rose-bushes as if they heard her. Then she ran lightly across the grass, pushed open the slow old door and slipped through it under the ivy. She had such red cheeks and such bright eyes and ate such a dinner that Martha was delighted.



Ivy covered door

'pale green points'



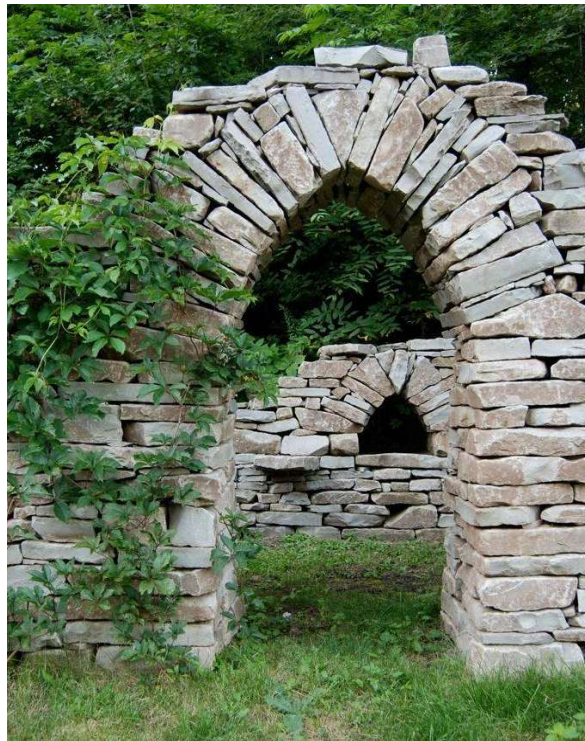
# What else is found in the garden?



Climbing roses



Ivy covered stone walls



'Fairy-like  
grey arches'

# Questions about the extract:

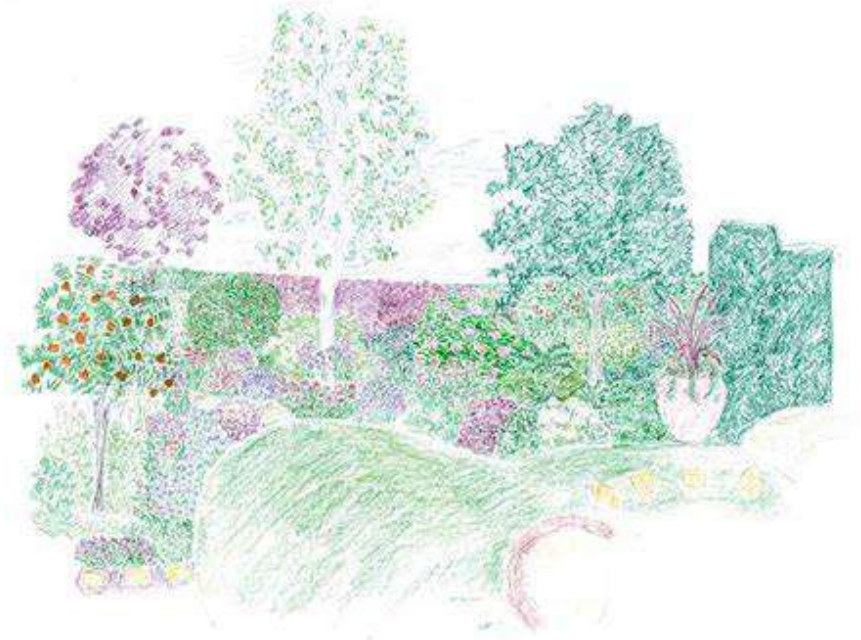
1. What does the word “stillness” mean in the sentence: “How still it is,” she whispered?
2. What did Mary find growing in the flower bed near the alcove?
3. Why was Mary unsure if the roses were dead or alive?
4. How does the author use description to make the garden seem magical or mysterious? Give one example from the text.
5. Do you think Mary enjoyed being in the garden? Give a reason for your answer.

# Challenge Two: Design your own secret garden

Using the extract as inspiration, design your own secret garden on the next page. You will be using this in September in your English lessons

This could include:

- Stone walls
- Arches
- Roses
- Wildflowers
- Pond
- Benches
- Trees
- Winding paths
- Doors







# Challenge 3: Read the book review of 'The Haunting of Tyrece Walker' by J.P. Rose and then read Chapter One of the novel (we recently enjoyed a visit from this author!)



Kasha's Book Sematary rated it ★★★★★

Oct 10, 2022

Tyrese has been struggling with grief and all the feelings that come after the loss of a loved one at such a young age.

His mom decides that some time off would be really beneficial to him and would give him the chance to reconnect with his culture and his old self. So they take a flight to Jamaica where Tyrese will still struggle at the beginning to adapt.

I loved that Tyrese as a character felt so real and his story so truthful. It is great to see a young character dealing with the trauma of losing his dad. Parental death is not something portrayed in MG books and I feel like it helps for kids to feel represented.

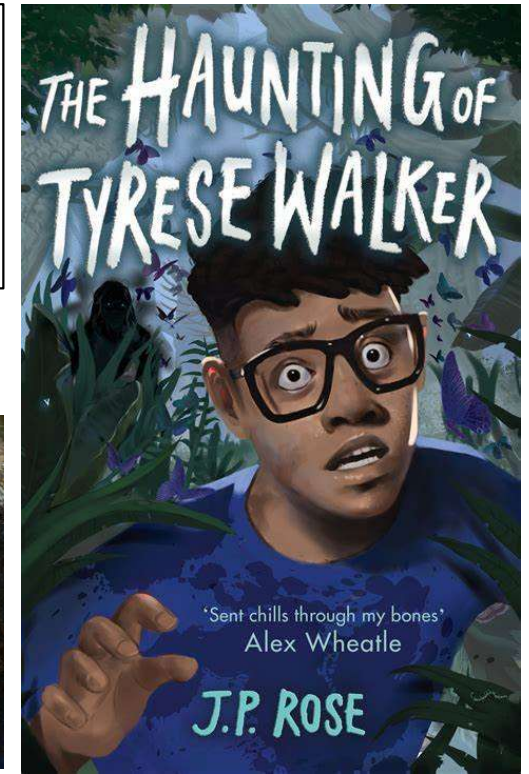
The book was also filled with Jamaican culture and I loved to learn so many things about the culture and their beliefs.

As Tyrese is starting to come out of his shell, he starts to feel a presence that seems to be watching him, haunting him. He learns about a legend, the mysterious Shadow Man and is convinced that he is after him. But why is he targeting Tyrese and how is he going to get rid of it?

The story also offers great family and friendship values and the horror keeps getting more and more intense. We even find some body horror moments that are also not always seen in a MG story.

**Perfect for:** Readers of any age looking for a spooky MG read perfect for the season. With a lot of heart, supernatural elements and fantastic life lessons. [\(less\)](#)

Middle Grade (KS3)



Read this review of The Haunting of Tyrece Walker which can be found on GoodReads.com

Does this review make you want to read it, or does it put you off? Explain your answer.

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# Circle the review that you think makes the book sound most appealing...



PiginDani rated it ★★★★★

Oct 31, 2022

Now, that was a complete surprise. When a book has the word Haunting in the title, you don't expect to cry, and yet, I did!

The Haunting of Tyrese Walker is both skin-crawlingly creepy and beautiful. It magnificently and powerfully links supernatural activity & grief together, so much so I was mesmerised.

Key aspects I loved ~

\*Short chapters. 1 - for the obvious reason, and 2 - because J P has also managed to fill each chapter with tension, suspense, fear, uncertainty, and so much more that it's damn near impossible to put down. You will literally say, "Just one more chapter."

\*The descriptions. You go from the sinisterly atmospheric to the most tender words possible. And then you have the descriptions of the insects, infection and the surrounding evil. It truly is terrifying and gross.

\*Tyrese. Of course, I loved the main character. He was perfectly written. And a great representation of being lost to the darkness of one's grief. My heart truly ached for him. I also have to mention the beautiful dedication at the beginning of the book. Although not relevant to the story, it gives a lovely insight into the author.



Rhea Nathan rated it ★★★★★

Oct 27, 2022

This book was brilliant, and it would make an excellent teen horror movie if it was ever adapted.

The horror in this book is two pronged, first the actual boogeyman and supernatural happenings that take place (the use of insects is particularly unsettling), and secondly the grief that Ty is feeling over his dad's death and the chasm it creates between him and his family.

The use of patois and Jamaican supernatural lore is both interesting and educational, it doesn't matter if like me you know nothing about these things as the book makes it accessible for everyone and I came away wanting to learn more about the subjects.



Holly Race rated it ★★★★★

Oct 06, 2022

An incredibly moving story of ghosts, possessions and the darkness of grief, set in the heat and humidity of Jamaica's hurricane season. Perfect for fans of *The Babadook*. ([less](#))



Evangeline rated it ★★★★★

Oct 06, 2022

Thank you to Andersen Press and NetGalley for giving me a copy of *The Haunting of Tyrese Walker* by JP Rose in exchange for an honest review.

I was chilled to the bone, this was so fantastically creepy.

Grieving the loss of his father, Tyrese Walker goes on a trip to visit his family in Jamaica where everything starts to get a bit eerie. He starts to hear voices and see things and it might not just be his mind playing tricks on him.



Carlie rated it ★★★★★

Oct 09, 2022

What a great read to start the spooky season. I'd definitely put this read in the YA supernatural category, as we follow 3 teenagers on a spooky quest to save one of them from Shadow Man.

The characters in this book are very likeable and each unique. Tyrese is not only on a spooky journey but also a personal journey, having to deal with the grief from the loss of a parent. The paths coincide as Tyrese battles with his emotions and how to handle them for himself as well as his family.

August  
Jamaica

Burning  
slowly.  
Smoke but  
no flame.

'How much longer *now*?'

Tyrese let out a long, loud sigh, making certain his mum heard. He didn't want to be here. Here, underneath the beating sun. Here in the middle of nowhere. And here because his mum hadn't given him *any* other choice. That thought twisted inside him and his gaze prowled angrily along the landscape. 'Mum! *How long*?'

He flicked a glance at her. Having never been the most confident of drivers, she kept her eyes **pasted** to the narrow, uneven road. 'I'm not sure, honey, it's further than I remember – but we should be there quite soon.'

'You said that, like, forty minutes ago!' Tyrese turned his head away, continuing to watch the outside world go by.

He dangled his hand out of the car window, tracing invisible circles with the tips of his fingers on the hot metal door of the Jeep. They'd been driving for over three hours – his mum getting lost and going too slowly – travelling away from Kingston up the steep winding roads where the clouds wrapped around the mountains like a thick white ribbon. There they'd been greeted by **a vivid** blue sky and it had felt to Tyrese as if he'd entered a secret land above the earth. A

Bright

Stuck

**smouldering**, scorching earth, the heat gluing itself to him, making him feel uncomfortable as it clasped around like a snake strangling its prey.

He'd given up wiping the trickling sweat off his face which tasted of salt. It was supposed to get cooler up the mountains, though the further they drove through the rainforest, the hotter and more **humid** it seemed to get. The breeze only teased him, bringing nothing but billows of warm air.

Even the cold can of Coke they'd bought at the airport had quickly turned warm; the ice cream he'd been so looking forward to had within minutes melted all over his hands, down his favourite T-shirt, running on to the car seat to leave a gooey mess everywhere. Now the whole car smelled of strawberry swirl and butterscotch ripple.

There'd been nothing good since he'd stepped off the plane, though there'd been nothing good *before* he'd got on the plane... nothing good for a *long time*. He just hated it all.

A sudden flutter cut through the line of Tyrese's faraway gaze and his stare followed a huge red bug with spindly black legs land and hitch a ride on the door. He quickly drew his hand back in at the same time as the Jeep swerved sharply, sending Tyrese sideward.

'Sorry about that, Ty,' his mum apologised chirpily, only just avoiding the large goat darting across the track.

More used to seeing her avoid buses and trams, Tyrese watched it disappear behind a bush. He suddenly felt more homesick than ever.

The Jeep slowed and his mum pulled up by a grove of

Air  
that's  
full of  
water  
vapour

trees. Smiling, she turned to look at him. 'We're here! And can you smell that, Ty? That's ginger lilies. Oh, I love that smell.'

Tyrese's nose filled with the strong, sweet scent. He stared out at the twisting stretch of shrubs and plants which made the whole place feel like it was surrounded by a thick, towering green prison wall. He could hardly get his words out. 'Here? *This* is it?'

'Yes, it's gorgeous, isn't it? To be this far up in the mountains, is so lovely.'

'Where's Grammy's house?'

'Just there, through those trees . . . See it?'

Swivelling around in his seat, Tyrese felt some trapped sweat squishing round the top of his legs and between his butt cheeks. He took off his glasses and wiped away the smears with the bottom of his T-shirt.

Running his fingers through his light-brown Afro, he bit down on his lip. It was worse than he thought it was going to be. How could his mum think *this* was lovely? There was nothing. Just trees and more trees. Why weren't they staying near a town or village, or even near some of the brightly painted coloured houses he'd seen perched on the slopes of the hillsides when they'd passed the coffee plantation? Why would she bring him here, up in the mountains by a forest, miles from anywhere?

Fighting back his tears, feeling them catch at his throat, Tyrese glanced down at the no signal bar on his phone. 'I don't even know why we had to come.'

'You know why, sweetheart. We need a break, don't we?'

His mum smiled, tilting her head. Her cheeks were pinched red, her face shiny as if it'd been glazed in cooking oil and her hair seemed like it was trying to escape from the clutches of its messy bun.

Tyrese knew she wanted an answer, but he stayed silent, watching yet another bug land on the Jeep. All he wanted was to be at home. Back in his bedroom on his own, just the way he liked it.

'And besides, Ty,' his mum continued, smiling again, 'Grammy and your cousin are really looking forward to seeing you. It'll be fun . . . Come on, there she is! This is going to be wonderful.'

The familiar knot in Tyrese's stomach told him otherwise, and memories like distant voices called on the wind.

Would you like to read the rest of 'The Haunting of Tyrece Walker' by J.P. Rose? We have some signed copies waiting for you to borrow at QB library 😊

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**Challenge 5: Watch a film based on a book.**

The Book Thief

Alice in Wonderland

The Wizard of Oz

Charlie and the chocolate factory

Little Women

Harry Potter

The witches

Matilda

The BFG

Golden Compass

The Lord of the Rings

Jumanji



Film Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your favourite scene: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your favourite character: \_\_\_\_\_

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# 30 DAY READING CHALLENGE

**goal:** READ WITH SOMEONE AT HOME FOR 20 MINUTES A DAY

**start date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**reward:** \_\_\_\_\_

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30

**We know that reading regularly can**

- Boost your mental health
- Improve your grades in all subjects
- Reduce feelings of loneliness
- And increase feelings of satisfaction with your life!

(Research from 'The Reading Agency')



# Reading Recommendations



## Like a scary read? Try:

*Crater Lake* - Jennifer Killick

When Lance and the rest of Year Six arrive at the brand new Crater Lake activity centre, there's no one there to greet them. But this is just the beginning of the school trip from hell; a fight for survival that sees five pupils band together to save their classmates from an alien fate far worse than death. But whatever happens, they must Never. Ever. Fall asleep!

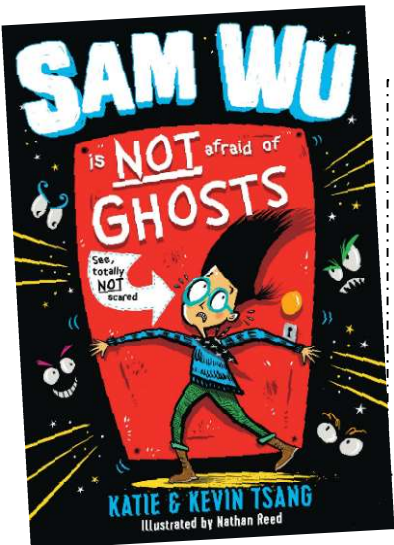
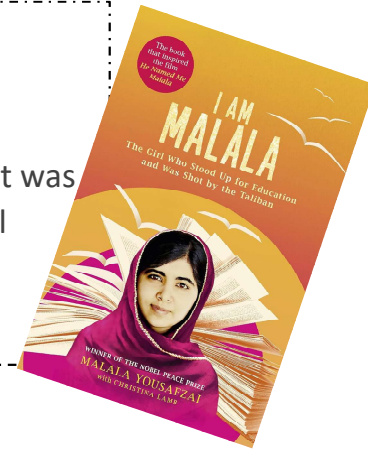


## Fancy a challenge? Try:

*I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai

*I Am Malala* tells the true story of a brave girl from Pakistan who stood up for her right to go to school—even when it was dangerous. Malala Yousafzai was just 15 when she was attacked by the Taliban, but she survived and became a global voice for education and peace.

Told through the eyes of a young teenager, this story for young adults will touch the heart of any reader.



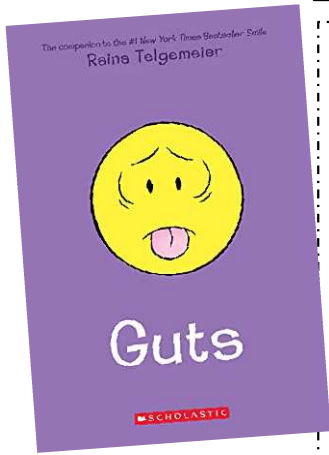
## Loved Diary of Wimpy Kid? Try:

*Sam Wu is Not Afraid of Ghosts* by Katie & Kevin Tsang

Sam Wu is NOT a scaredy-cat (except he is). When a trip to the Space Museum goes terrifyingly wrong, Sam begins a mission to prove to the school bully, and all of his friends, that he is a fearless space adventurer.

A truly laugh-out-loud story, perfect for fans of Tom Gates, Wilf the Mighty Worrier and Barry Loser, and readers aged six plus.

# Reading Recommendations



## Love graphic novels? Try:

*Guts* by Raina Telgemeier

Raina wakes up one night with a terrible upset stomach. Her mom has one, too, so it's probably just a bug. Raina eventually returns to school, where she's dealing with the usual highs and lows: friends, not-friends, and classmates who think the school year is just one long gross-out session. It soon becomes clear that Raina's tummy trouble isn't going away... and it coincides with her worries about food, school, and changing friendships. What's going on?

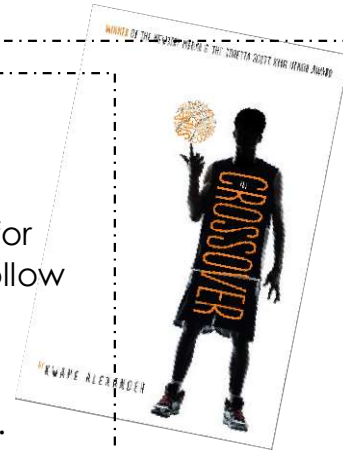
A thoughtful, charming, and funny true story about growing up and gathering the courage to face -- and conquer -- her fears.

## For the sports fans:

*The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander

12-year-old Josh and his twin Jordan have basketball in their blood. They're kings of the court, star players for their school team. Their father used to be a champion player and they each want nothing more than to follow in his footsteps.

Both on and off the court, there is conflict and hardship which will test Josh's bond with his brother. In this heartfelt novel in verse, the boys find that life doesn't come with a play-book and it's not all about winning.



## If you're feeling nervous about joining your new school:

*You are awesome* by Matthew Syed; illustrated by Toby Triumph

**No Worries is the ultimate secondary school survival guide, with tips, quizzes and jokes to help children prepare.**

What if I've got the wrong stuff? What if I don't fit in? What if the older kids are horrible to me?

Starting secondary school is a bit like going on a safari it's a great adventure but sometimes, before you go, you can get a touch of the 'what ifs'. You may be feeling anxious or stressed about leaving primary school. *No Worries* is full of information about going up from primary to secondary school and covers all of the big worries and anxieties.

With practical hints and tips, jokes and quizzes for finding your way around, making new friends, social media and staying on top of homework, this fully-revised edition of *Going Up!* is the essential no-worries guide to starting secondary school.

