



Newlands Girls' School Library

Books of the Month

Book of the Month – December 2021

Romeo and Juliet

A play by William Shakespeare

It is universally agreed that Shakespeare is one of the greatest writers of all time. His vocabulary was truly admirable and a countless number of words were coined by him. One of his most popular plays is *Romeo and Juliet*. First published in 1597, it is one of his most frequently performed plays, along with *Hamlet*.

The play starts when the people who work for the Montagues and the Capulets meet each other in the streets of Verona and they start arguing. A fight breaks out between Capulet and Montague servants. Later, Paris asks for Juliet's hand in marriage. Romeo sneaks into a party at the Capulets' house and he falls in love with Juliet. They get married in secret. Tybalt, who is angry with Romeo for sneaking in to the party, challenges him to fight. These events lead to a terrible tragedy.

This is a great read if you want to improve your knowledge of English. It will help you in exams, or if you wish to study English at a higher level. The language used can improve your writing as well. It gives you an insight in to life at the time and how it was quite different to the world we know now. Shakespeare helped to create the language we know today.

By Srilakshmi Seshadri and Lillia Mohazab

Book of the Month – October 2021

The Selection Series

By Kiera Cass

The Selection is a series of three books, all of which follow the story of a young girl named America. In the first book, *The Selection*, America gets an invitation to the palace to compete for the prince's heart. The struggle she faces is much greater than expected, as her heart already belongs to somebody else. America not only has to compete with 30 other girls in the competition, but she also has to understand who she is and what she wants, under the view of the whole kingdom. Read *The Selection* for a rollercoaster of emotions, varying from laughter, happiness and romance to shock. Experience love, as well as friendship, with the people America meets on her journey to find true love. If this captures your attention then you will definitely enjoy this series!

By Chelsey Harris and Lois Razzell

Book of the Month – July 2021

Run, Rebel

By Manjeet Mann

Run, Rebel is a book about a girl called Amber Rai, a teenager dealing with domestic abuse. In this book, you can see how the abuse affects her life in ways that we would not think of. She has dreams and aspirations, and a strong, defiant character which rebels against her father. This book talks about how her mother slowly regains her confidence after years of repression. Both parents are illiterate, and her father refuses to let her mother to learn how to read and write. However, this will not stop her mother from trying to learn.

This an amazing verse novel, and takes less time to read than it looks! I read the whole book in 3 days! It really is a gripping novel and shows the difficulties of Amber's life. It gets to the point, and portrays the story in a no-nonsense way, showing her emotions very clearly. Throughout the book (and this is what I love the most) it doesn't just show the story from Amber's perspective. In the middle of the book, it also tells the story of Amber's mother and her sister.

Overall, I find this book an absolutely fantastic read, highlighting problems in society today. I feel that it shows the stages of rebellion extremely well. It splits the book into stages of rebellion, just like in the History textbook Amber was reading. From not knowing where to start, it shows how she grows mentally and is determined to not put up with this any longer. Will Amber lead a successful mutiny, or will she be suppressed again after a failed attempt? Read *Run, Rebel* and find out!

By Srilakshmi Seshadri

Book of the Month – June

Dork Diaries: Dear Dork

By Rachel Renée Russell

Dear Dork by Rachel Renée Russell is a great book. It is very interesting, very funny and most importantly a fantastic read! This book is the fifth book in a long series called *Dork Diaries*. Nikki is the main character and this book is about what happens to her and her friends during the school year.

The blurb on the back of the book says “The mean-girl Mackenzie is planning to use the school newspaper column to spread rumours about Brandon, so Nikki decides to join the paper to keep an eye on her!” Nikki wants to make sure she doesn't say anything horrible. If you enjoy this book, try another one from the series!

By Emily Heath and Aimee Gbaja-Biamila

Book of the Month – May 2021

My Story: The Great Plague

By Pamela Oldfield

The Great Plague is about a girl called Alice Paynton, who lives through the plague and the Great Fire of London. Her Aunt Nell catches the plague, and then her father becomes ill. At the end of the story, half the city burns down. This helps to stop the plague because the houses are rebuilt with bricks instead of wood, meaning that the rats cannot go inside anymore. The plague was caused by flea-infested vermin who carried around the disease, helping it to spread more easily.

This book is from the series My Story, which includes tales like Bloody Tower, Mill Girl and The Hunger. These stories describe history through the eyes of girls, with the books written as diaries. There is another series called My Royal Story, which is similar, except it is history through the eyes of royalty. Some titles include Elizabeth, Egyptian Princess and Marie Antoinette.

By Lillia Mohazab

Book of the Month – April 2021

Head Kid

By David Baddiel

This book is super funny! It is about Ryan Ward who is a trickster. He wrote on his teacher's hand in mirror writing, then he tickled the teacher's forehead. When the teacher woke up, he bumped his head so the writing was on his hand and his forehead.

The school then appoints a new Headteacher who is very strict. When Ryan Ward was called to his office there was a strange music box playing and then suddenly, they swapped bodies! Ryan Ward became extremely polite and the Headteacher was funny and changed all the rules.

Please read Head Kid to find out more!

By Sian

Book of the Month – March 2021

Pride and Prejudice

By Jane Austen

Please don't be put off by the fact that this book was written in the 19th century; the themes within it are still very relevant today. It's got silly girls, squabbling siblings, love and marriage as well as pushy parents!

Reading this book will make you understand what the life of the Georgians was really like. I recommend getting the Penguin Classic version of the book because it comes with some notes at the back which make it more enjoyable to read.

Lots of people have heard of this book and know that it involves love and romance, but not very many people know about the characters. The novel is about a young girl called Elizabeth Bennet and her family. Lizzy has a kind, older sister who is pretty and loved by all, a bookish middle sister who gets teased by her youngest siblings, and two spoilt teenage sisters who are very silly indeed.

I think that this story is great and deserves a place on everyone's bookshelf. It is also part of the Library Classics Challenge so reading it will get you one step closer to having your name engraved on a plaque. I hope you enjoy reading this book!

By Annabel Rozier

Book of the Month – February 2021

The Adventurous Four

By Enid Blyton

Everyone reading this article has probably heard of at least one book by Enid Blyton. It could be *The Famous Five*, *The Secret Seven*, or *Malory Towers*. Her books are guaranteed to be a great read for all ages. One such example is *The Adventurous Four*. I strongly recommend it.

The Adventurous Four is about four children, Tom, Mary, Jill, and Andy, who plan to go to an island for a delightful holiday. However, they find out that the island and its neighbours have a dark secret, just waiting to be discovered...It has many twists and turns, moments of suspense and joy, and there are problems sorted with the most ingenious of solutions. It may not be one of Enid Blyton's most popular books, but (in my opinion), it is one of her best.

It is for these reasons that I recommend *The Adventurous Four* as the Book of the Month for February. Since we are all stuck at home, and long for sandy beaches and bright sunshine, or indeed any sort of excitement, this book is guaranteed to satisfy your desires!

By Srilakshmi Seshadri

Book of the Month – January 2021

Harley Merlin series

By Bella Forrest

The *Harley Merlin* series starts with *Harley Merlin and the Secret Coven*. This is about a girl with unusual abilities who discovers that there are secret covens throughout the world, filled with people like her – magicals. These books follow Harley and her friends through romance, strange family reunions and adventure. Strange, fantastical creatures power the covens. In the first story, gargoyles escape which then risks the magical world being seen by ordinary humans.

Throughout the series, Harley and the Rag Team embark on many dangerous quests in order to stop the Shiptons taking over the world. You get to know each character personally and see their particular view on each of these missions. This is a good series for Years 9 and above.

By Aavishi Krishnatrya and Isabelle Gorf

Book of the Month - December 2020

The Children of Blood and Bone

By Tomi Adeyemi

The Children of Blood and Bone is about a young teenager blessed with a magical power but who is forbidden to use it. She teams up with a princess to summon the gods. In this adventure, the character experiences love and death, but one thing she did not see coming was a harsh betrayal. Can the teen complete the mission or will she be put to death like many before her?

By Juliana Hoonhorst

Book of the Month - November 2020

Life of Pi

By Yann Martel

What is the book about?

A 16-year-old Indian boy's passage to a new life in America on board a freighter ends in a shipwreck in the Pacific. He is left to fend for himself on a life raft with an orangutan, a zebra, a hyena, and a Bengal tiger. Early in the book, Pi describes the behaviour of the zoo animals, and the story goes on to include acts of murder and cannibalism. Pi, whose real name is Piscine (the French word for swimming pool), is teased by other children.

Why have I chosen this book?

Life of Pi is a fascinating and original story of survival and identity. Martel creates a wonderfully realized, clever character in Pi, and a unique world of home, zoo, school and the houses of various gods. The bit where all three religious figures realize that Pi has joined their faith is quite funny, and so wise.

Why is this book so fascinating?

In Life of Pi, the author, Yann Martel, depicts a beautiful story of what a person must do when exposed to their imminent fate. Pi, a young Indian boy trapped on a lifeboat at sea with the most dangerous animals, must learn to survive under the given circumstances. This involves manipulating his beliefs, creating security from the animals and establishing dominance over them. Piscine has no choice but to sacrifice the principles he lives by in order to stay alive. A fantastic read!

By Anahita Basu

Book of the Month - October 2020

The Little White Horse

By Elizabeth Goudge

Genre: Fantasy

Storyline: Following her father's death, Maria Merryweather and her governess, Miss Heliotrope, go to live with Maria's nearest living relation, Sir Benjamin Merryweather. He lives in the grand castle of Moonacre, in the enchanting village of Silverydew. But problems are afoot. Maria sets out to discover the mystery of the lost Moon Princess, and to restore peace to the men from the Dark Woods. Can Maria and her unusual friends put the village to rights?

Main Character: Our young heroine is 13 years old, and is a curious, joyful girl. She has red hair and mystical grey eyes. She has a feisty character, which she often shows. A likeable and understandable student, second cousin, leader and friend, Maria Merryweather is the perfect fit for a girl in such a beautiful novel.

Themes: The book is innocent and sweet, with a happy ending that makes everyone smile. Love is an important theme, as shown at the end of the book, when many happy couples say "I do." However, throughout the main story, magic and faith are the leading themes, with the mysterious "legend" of the moon princess, and Maria's beautiful relationship with everyone in Silverydew - even the hares are her friends.

I loved reading this book - it is so pure and delightful, and it brings a smile to my face every time I think about it. The language used to describe the characters and scenery is beautiful and it creates stunning pictures in your mind. When I finished the final chapter, I was smiling and it put me in a good mood for the rest of the day.

By Rebecca Miller

Book of the Month - September 2020

The Kite Runner

By Khaled Hosseini

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini is a story about how Amir copes with the guilt of an event that occurred during his childhood. The book is set in both Afghanistan and the United States of America, between the 1960's and the 2000s, during the Soviet military intervention. It is about the friendship between him and the son of his father's servant Hassan. I liked this book because it was very different to anything I had read before, and I was able to learn a lot from this book.

By Aminah Ghafoor

Book of the Month - July 2020

School for Good and Evil series

By Soman Chainani

As a series of 6 books, the School for Good and Evil takes every fairy-tale cliché and twists it, pushing the boundaries and changing the meaning of good and evil. This series is full of great, complex and intriguing characters with a brilliant plot. Each book feels packed with action, and the amount of development you get within just one book is astounding.

By Niamh Fitzgerald

Book of the Month - June 2020

Evermore

By Alison Noël

A 16-year-old girl is the sole survivor of a car crash that killed her whole family. She lives with her aunt in Southern California. She discovers she can read the thoughts of those around her, and she is haunted by her dead sister Riley. She hates her life because she can only see aura (different colours that represents your feelings) until she finds someone different.

By Lavanya Gaur

Book of the Month - May 2020

Once, Then, Now, After, Soon and Maybe – book series

By Morris Gleitzman

This book series consists of six books - Once, Then, Now, After, Soon and Maybe. They follow the life of a young Jewish boy called Felix on the run from the Nazis in Poland. He faces many challenges that touch on this in a way that reflects what it was like for children like this at the time. The journey the main character Felix goes through, as he suffers losses and feels terror, worry and fear but never losing hope, is what is inspiring about this series and is why it is a great book that shows the horror of the past through the eyes of a character caught in the Second World War.

By Sophie Richardson

Book of the Month - April 2020

Journey to the River Sea

By Eva Ibbotson

This book portrays the themes of discovery and adventure. A girl in her youth goes through a series of unexpected events when she moves to live with her distant relatives in the Amazon. Little did she know that her family wasn't what she had hoped for. Her life begins to change when she meets a boy called Finn (which she was also not expecting), and he gives her hope as well as more amazing facts about the jungle. This book is sure to engulf you in the magical world of the Amazon.

By Husaina Lokhandwala