



Villiers School

Celebrating 200 Years

Summer Reading List 2023

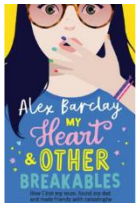
Fiction

Junior Cycle



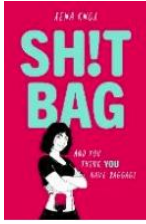
Promise Boys, by **Nick Brooks** – J.B., Ramon and Trey attend a strict prep school that vows to turn boys like them into men and ‘save lives’ according to principal Moore. When Moore is found murdered, the three boys quickly become prime suspects. They team up to try and find the culprit and clear their names. Or is the killer among them? **Race. Prejudice. Thriller.**

Influential, by **Amara Sage** – Almond has grown up in the glare of social media, even when she was still in her mother’s womb. She’s used to all the advantages it can offer. It has also made her anxious and insecure. As the darker side of the Internet takes a stronger hold on her life, Almond worries that she’s going to lose everything. Will she be able to recognise what she has in real life to save herself? **Social Media. Anxiety. Growing Up.**



My Heart and Other Breakables, by **Alex Barclay** – Ellery's mother, a bestselling American writer, has just died. Now living in Cork, Ellery tries to come to terms with her loss, and part of this journey is to try and discover who her father is, a secret her mother never revealed. With the help of her bookish friend Meg, she narrowed it down to 3 famous authors and is determined to find out the truth. **Grief. Identity. Humour.**

Freya Harte is not a Puzzle, by **Meabh Collins** - Freya has a list of things she wants to be / not be in college. Freya is trying to be more like the others even though she’s always felt different, and she doesn’t want anybody to know that she has autism. Will she manage to change herself or will she find friends who can accept her for who she is? **Neurodivergence. Growing up. Friendship.**



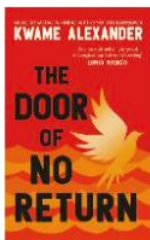
***Sh!t Bag*, by Xena Knox** – Summertime has finally arrived, and Freya expects to spend it with her friends in the sun. Until she collapses, wakes up with an ileostomy bag on her stomach, and is sent off to ‘Poo Camp’, a place for kids with bowel disease. Will Freya bond with the other kids in the camp, including Chris who seems to understand her; or will she end up enraged and alone, with only her bag for company? **Taboo-breaking. Bowel Disease. Humour.**

***What Walks these Halls*, by Amy Clarkin** – Three characters, paranormal phenomena, and secrets which all lead to the same place: Hyacinth House. Raven’s dad died during a paranormal investigation there and she has the nagging feeling that she had something to do with it. Her brother, Archer, goes back to track the supposed ghost of the house. And Eabha, who sees and hears things no one else can, wants to find out more about this strange place. Will they find what they were looking for? **Paranormal. Gothic. Family.**



***Big Bad Me*, by Aislinn O’Loughlin** - A story for amateurs of werewolves and vampires. Evie just found out that she’s a werewolf and goes into hiding with her sister. Meanwhile, teenagers keep disappearing and animal attacks are increasing. Evie has to navigate her new identity while a supernatural showdown seems to take shape around her. **Supernatural. Family. Horror.**

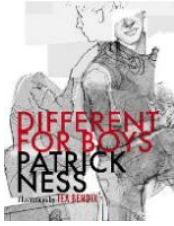
***Unraveller*, by Frances Hardinge** – The master of world-building enchants us again with this novel, set in another beautifully crafted world. Raddith is a country suffused with dark magic, which Kellen and Nettle have experienced first-hand. Together, they travel the country to rid it of deep hatred but sometimes forget to examine the consequences of their work, until they are, one day, forced to do so. **Magic. Friendship. Mystery.**



***The Door of No Return*, by Kwame Alexander** – The first installment in a trilogy, steeped in African tradition and mythology. 11-year-old Kofi loves many things, and above all: his family, the tales of his grandfather and swimming. But when a death occurs and shatters his reality, Kofi ends up fighting for his life. An epic journey across land and sea ensues, taking him far away from everything he knew and loved. **Coming-of-age. Lyrical. West African mythology.**

***Game Over: Rise of the Raid Mob*, by M.J. Sullivan** – Four lifelong friends, obsessing over the same things, and secretly the best gamers in the world. Code name: the Raid Mob. Their favourite game: Distant Dawn. But with the release of radical VR technology, their precious anonymity is compromised. They are now at the centre of way too much attention. Will they find their way out of this virtual chaos? **Online Gaming. Friendship. Privacy.**

Senior Cycle



***Different for Boys*, by Patrick Ness and Tea Bendix** – From the author of the *Chaos Walking* trilogy, this LGBT+ story explores the topics of sexuality and masculinity with humour and sensitivity. Ant Stevenson has many questions about being a boy who likes boys. Will his relationship with his three very different friends help him figure it all out? **Friendship. Sexuality. Masculinity.**

***Imogen, Obviously*, by Becky Albertalli** – The author of *Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda* brings out another heartwarming and inclusive romantic comedy. Meet Imogen: ally to the LGBT+ community and heterosexual. That is until she visits her best friend in college and meets her squad of queer college friends, including the charming Tessa, who makes Imogen start questioning her lifestyle choices. **Friendship. Identity. Inclusivity.**



***I Kissed Shara Wheeler*, by Casey McQuiston** – Chloe Green has one objective, and one rival standing in her way, Shara Wheeler, seemingly perfect it-girl and the principal's daughter. One month before prom, Shara kisses her then mysteriously vanishes, leaving very cryptic clues behind. With the help of other people Shara kissed, Chloe is going to try and find what happened to her. **Romance. Friendship. Mystery.**

***Cuts Both Ways*, by Candice Braithwaite** – As if a traumatic incident wasn't enough, Cynthia also has to be uprooted from her beloved London to a sleepy town by her parents. Going to a private school is yet another culture shock, especially as Cynthia is the only one of two black students in her year. Enter the sweet and goofy Thomas, and the aloof and mysterious Isaac. Two very different boys, who both seem to hide secrets from her. **Race. Class. Growing up.**



***Let Down Your Hair*, by Bryony Gordon** – What do you do when your popularity relies on your beautiful, shiny hair, and you discover you have alopecia? Barb is a successful influencer, not so happy in real life. She just wants to have friends and a normal life. When her diagnostic falls, she's going to have to learn to love herself, with or without hair. **Social Media. Teen Pressure. Self-esteem.**

***The First Move*, by Jenny Ireland** – Juliet is not a teenager like everyone else. She has arthritis, she can't go to parties and people generally only see her crutches. Online chess is the only place she can be herself. Ronan is the new, smart, good-looking, cool kid who escapes his feeling of guilt by playing chess. Their paths would never cross in real life and yet, they've already met online and have lots in common. **Friendship. Appearances. Belonging.**



***You're Not Supposed to Die Tonight*, by Kalynn Bayron** – From the author of *Cinderella is Dead*, this is the Hollywood-inspired slasher of the summer. Charity thinks she got her dream job playing the ‘final girl’ at a live-action terror game, until her colleagues start disappearing or worse. Fiction soon becomes all too real and Charity is going to have to find out what the killer wants if she’s going to survive the night. **Summer camp. Thriller. Mystery.**

***Five Survive*, by Holly Jackson** – All starts well for this group of six friends on the way to the beach for Spring Break. Until the car breaks down in the middle of nowhere and the tyres are shot one by one. This is clearly no accident. A sniper is out there, and he's after one of the friends whose secret can't stay hidden for much longer. **Secrets. Thriller. Cat-and-mouse.**



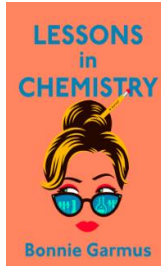
***A Game of Life or Death*, by Triona Campbell** – Desperate to find answers after the death of her sister, Asha turns to her hacker friends for help. Her search leads her to Zu Tech, the games studio where her sister worked. She decides to infiltrate the company which is about to launch a revolutionary Virtual Reality game her sister was working on and which hides a monstrous secret. **Grief. Thriller. Technology.**

***The Stranded*, by Sarah Daniels** – Set in the not-too-distant future on the Arcadia - a once luxury cruise ship now a ruthless home for the stranded, punished by a country they can see but not get to. Esther is a loyal citizen hoping to make it to land one day. Nik is a rebel who wants to bring the Arcadia to an end. Together, they join forces for a common goal: the fight for freedom. **Dystopia. Friendship. Belonging.**



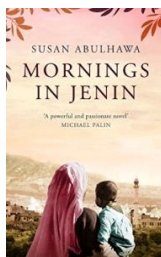
***Small Great Things*, by Jodi Picoult** – Ruth Jefferson is a labor and delivery nurse at a Connecticut hospital with more than twenty years' experience. During her shift, Ruth begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The hospital complies with their request, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders or does she intervene? **Race. Privilege. Justice.**

***The Marriage Portrait*, by Maggie O'Farrell** - In the 1560s, where Maggie O'Farrell's novel is set, 16-year-old Lucrezia de' Medici would have been bewildered by the concept of being “asked” to agree to her marriage. Decisions about marriage were the business of men, and daughters were commodities to be traded on the international market like bullion turned flesh and blood. **Rights. Thriller. History**



Lessons in Chemistry, by Bonnie Garmus - It's the early 1960s and an almost exclusively all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with Elizabeth Zott, for her mind, of all things!. True chemistry results. **Feminism. History. Romance.**

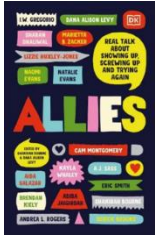
Old God's Time, by Sebastian Barry - After two books set in 19th-century America, Barry returns to Ireland for the story of a retired policeman pulled back into the past. **Fiction. Ireland. Mystery.**



Mornings in Jenin, by Susan Abulhawa - A story of love and loss, of childhood, marriage and parenthood, and finally the need to share the author's history with her daughter, to preserve the greatest love she has. This title helps us to take a fresh look at one of the defining political conflicts of our time, through six decades of Palestinian-Israeli tension.

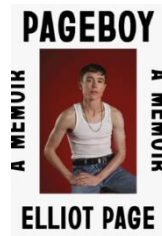
A Ghost in the Throat, by Doireann Ní Ghríofa. In this novel, Ní Ghríofa weaves two stories together. In the 1700s, an Irish noblewoman, on discovering her husband has been murdered, drinks handfuls of his blood and composes an extraordinary poem that reaches across the centuries to another poet. In the present day, a young mother narrowly avoids tragedy in her own life. On encountering the poem, she becomes obsessed with finding out the rest of the story. **History. Literature. Parenting. Romance.**

Non-Fiction



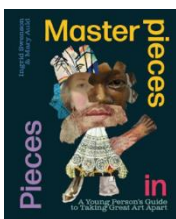
***Allies: Real Talk About Showing Up, Screwing Up, And Trying Again*, by Shakirah Bourne and Dana Alison Levy** – A powerful collection of testimonies from 17 bestselling YA authors, who share their stories, hopes and fears about being an ally and needing an ally. At times raw, at times inspiring, this book will challenge you and make you think about your own experiences and choices, and how to be a better ally.

***Failosophy for teens*, by Elizabeth Day** – With the constant emphasis on academic or extracurricular successes and achievements, it can be hard to remember that it's ok to fail sometimes. This book aims to remind us that with failure comes great learning, and demonstrates how to turn failure into success, how to become more resilient and how to reframe negative thoughts about ourselves.



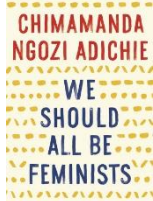
***Pageboy: A Memoir*, by Elliot Page** – Page, who came out as trans in 2020, rose to fame for his roles in Juno or Inception. This memoir is a moving account of the long journey to transitioning, going through gender dysphoria, to finally arrive to a place of self-acceptance.

***Choose Love*, by Nicola Davies** – A collection of short poems based on the real stories of people forced to become refugees. A poignant read to understand the causes and consequences of forced migration.



***Masterpieces In Pieces*, by Ingrid Swenson** - The title says it all: if you want to know more about famous and less famous works of art, and the surprising link that might exist between some of them, look no further. This book explores works from all time periods and all geographical locations. A must-read for Art students!

***The Faraway Brothers (Adapted for Young Adults)*, by Lauren Markham** - A remarkable story of brotherhood, immigration, and finding home, *The Faraway Brothers* follows the lives of 17-year-old twins Ernesto and Raúl Flores, who are forced to flee El Salvador for America after being targeted by a local gang. While the journey itself is harrowing, so too are their lives as undocumented migrants. Ernesto and Raúl must adapt to all-new surroundings and anxiously await their immigration court hearing, all while experiencing the typical trials of adolescence.



***We Should All Be Feminists*, by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** - Adapted from Adichie's award-winning TEDx Talk of the same name (which blew up after Beyoncé sampled it), the book is a great stepping stone for discussions on gender roles and equity. Drawing from Adichie's own experiences, it's a key read for young women and men as they navigate the future together.

***Butterfly*, by Yusra Mardini** – The inspiring story of how one woman saved fellow refugees from drowning--and how she went on to become an Olympic swimmer. *Butterfly* tells the story of Yusra Mardini, from Syria to the Olympics to her current work with the UN as a Goodwill Ambassador. Mardini is eager to tell her story in the hopes that readers will remember that refugees are ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances, chased from their homes by a devastating war. In today's political climate, this story is guaranteed to inspire and educate readers from every background.