

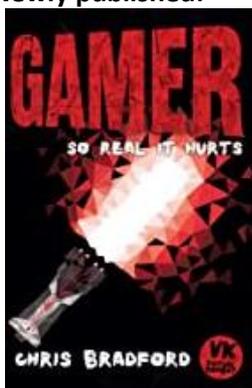
## Time to read!

*A message from, the English teams at St Andrew the Apostle School:*

At this challenging time in the real world, there has never been a better moment to curl up with a good book to escape into another reality!

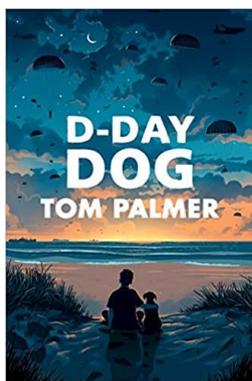
Here is 'a baker's dozen' of texts that we recommend for Key Stage 3 students. These authors have all written other novels too, so we hope these will encourage our students to read on and follow a pathway to more. A few books below, as noted, are recent publications in successful book series, so start with the first in the series and then you have lots to read afterwards! They are listed in approximate order of reading difficulty in each of the two categories - newly published and established favourites.

### Newly published:



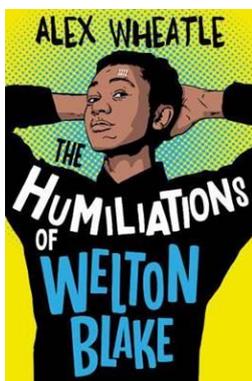
*Gamer* by Chris Bradford

Scott jumps at the chance to be a Virtual Kombat gamer and battle his way up the ranks. But then his friend Kate goes missing in the battle arena, and Scott's reality becomes a nightmare ... The first book in a dystopian trilogy. Particularly suitable for students who find reading difficult.



*D-Day Dog* by Tom Palmer

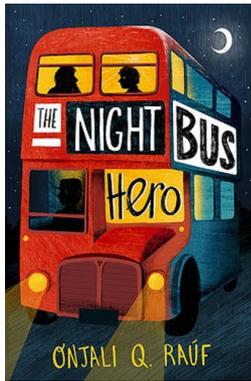
A prize-winning book about a boy who is interested in war and heroes. When his dad is called to action and things at home get chaotic, Jack starts to question his interest in war. Finding comfort only in the presence of his loyal dog, Finn, Jack finds out about true story of a particular D-Day paratrooper. On 6 June 1944, Emile Corteil parachuted into France with his dog, Glen - and Jack explores what happened to them. Published by the always excellent Barrington Stoke who produce 'super-readable books' for students who find reading more difficult, this book is accessible but addresses topics that will be of interest to Key-Stage-3-age students.



*The Humiliations of Welton Blake* by Alex Wheatle

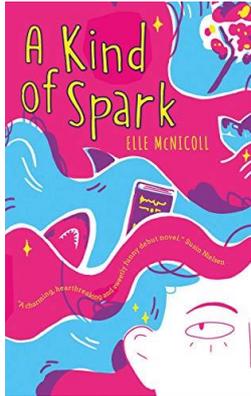
A prolific and popular author, who visited Bristol Free School last year thanks to the hard work of our English teacher Miss Ludwell. This funny book is about the trials and tribulations of teenage life. A good introduction to reading Wheatle's books, for reluctant readers, and a step on for students who like the Tom Gates series by Liz Pichon. This book might encourage students to tackle the popular South Crompton Trilogy series next, which is equally lively but a slightly more challenging read.





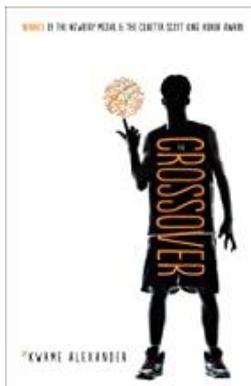
### *The Night Bus Hero* by Onjali Rauf

The third standalone book from this author, which considers what it is to have a bad reputation and how a boy who is always in trouble wants to prove he can also be a hero. A book with some comic moments and lively views about school and people, which also tackles some serious issues such as homelessness and how others see us. The opening pages will definitely encourage you to read more.



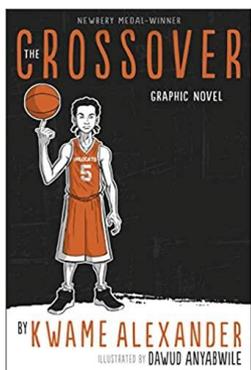
### *A Kind of Spark* by Elle McNicoll

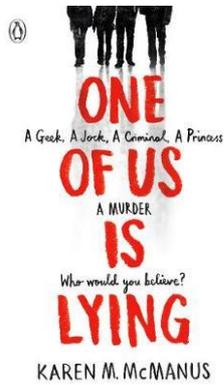
Shortlisted for the 2021 Blue Peter Book Award for fiction. This story is told by Addie, an 11 year old autistic girl, who is shocked when she learns how witches in her village were persecuted in ancient times for being different. She starts a lobby for a memorial for the many women in the history of her village who were arrested, persecuted and executed for being witches. A book about fairness, human rights, friendship and school life. Written by an author who is, herself, neurodivergent.



### *Crossover* by Kwame Alexander

For those with sport and particularly basketball in their blood, an energetic and innovative read. Written in short sections of text in a poetic style, the episodes of this text touch on relationships, sport and the rules of both games. This prize-winning book has been a popular read with the three boys I have passed it to. The graphic novel version was published last year.





*One of Us Is Lying* by Karen M McManus

Five students go to detention. Only four leave alive. A gripping whodunnit with lots of twists and turns. (I know this because I've had to stop late-night reading of this book in my own household this lockdown!) This is the first in a series of 3 exciting books with an American high school setting. Suitable for more mature KS3 students.



*Chasing the Stars* by Malorie Blackman

A dystopian novel which touches on some more mature issues of love and relationships, this is a book that will certainly transport readers to another place. As the novel opens Vee and her brother, Aidan, are the only survivors after an incurable virus wreaked havoc on their Earth research vessel, leaving their parents dead. They are trying to reach Earth, their grandparents, the familiar, when Vee as acting captain makes a split-second decision to rescue other human settlers. Suitable for older KS3 readers.

**Established favourites:**



The *Skulduggery Pleasant* Series by Derek Landy

One of the long-awaited books of last year for many Key Stage 3 students – book 13 in the series. If you've not read this series, then start with book 1, *Skulduggery Pleasant* - a blend of magic, humour and adventure probably best summed up by the images below. Book 14 in the series is released this April:

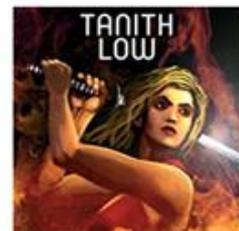
Meet the characters...



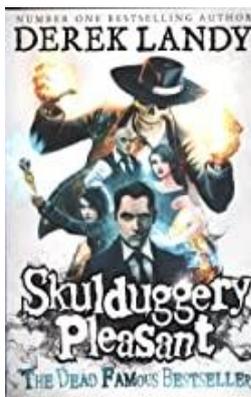
Sorcerer. Detective. Dead.  
'Embrace your inner lunatic, fun times Guaranteed.'



Warrior. Detective. Teen.  
'Don't call me sweetheart.'

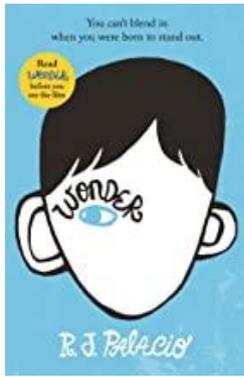


Warrior. Rogue. Sister.  
'Come and have a go if you think you're hard enough'



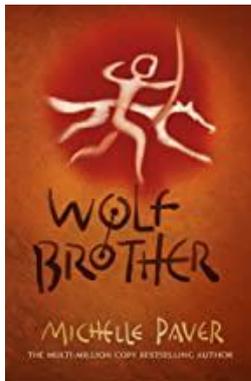
Tailor. Boxer. Friend.  
'Fashion - it's life or death'





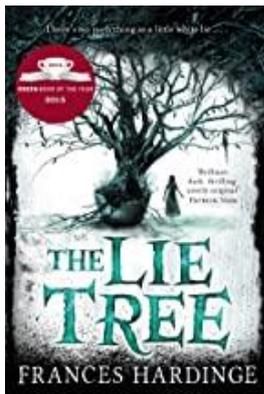
*Wonder* by R.J. Palacio

After being home-schooled for years, Auggie Pullman is about to start fifth grade, but he's worried: how will he fit into middle-school life when he looks so different from everyone else? A book about friendship, determination, and acceptance.



*Wolf Brother* by Michelle Paver

This is the first book in the *Chronicles of Ancient Darkness* series. Book 8 (*Skin Taker*) is due out this April. A great fantasy series which will transport you to past times alongside the themes of survival, magic and folklore. For adults or able older readers in the family, who might want to join in with reading some Michelle Paver, her ghostly adult novel set in the Arctic, *Dark Matter*, is a compelling read.



*The Lie Tree* by Frances Hardinge

When Faith's father dies under mysterious circumstances it is up to her to uncover the truth with the help of one of her father's plants: a tree that feeds on lies. A mysterious story which involves crime, deception, and fantasy – a dark and exciting read. A book for confident readers.



*Bodyguard* by Chris Bradford

A new thriller from Chris Bradford, bestselling author of the great *Young Samurai* series. *Bodyguard* is an action-adventure series that fans of Cherub and Alex Rider will love. This is Lee Child for younger readers – an adolescent Jason Bourne for today's teenagers.

