



Year 8 English – Reading List

Summer – ‘Characters and Voices’

In our final Year 8 unit we will be exploring different characters and voices across a range of classic and contemporary literature.

Firstly, we will be studying some modern poetry. This work will involve exploring the experiences of ‘minority voices.’ We will consider ideas surrounding identity, with a focus on issues concerning poverty, the experiences of women and alternative cultural experiences.

Alongside poetry, we will be exploring some of Charles Dickens’ most famous characters from the Victorian period.

Poetry

Widen your exposure to poetry by accessing some of the recommendations below.

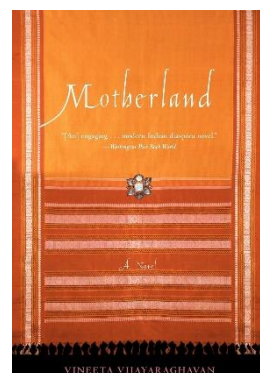
- Access a diverse range of poetry here:
 - <https://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk/>
 - <https://poets.org/>
 - <http://www.lgbtpoetlaureate.org.uk/>
 - <https://www.desiblitiz.com/content/exciting-british-asian-female-spoken-word-poets>
 - <https://www.friendtothehomeless.org/homeless-poetry.html>
 - <https://www.georgethepoet.com/>
- Try collections of poems by the following poets – these can be found in the school library:
 - **Simon Armitage**
 - **John Agard**
 - **Carol Ann Duffy**
 - **Daljit Nagra**
 - **Dylan Thomas**
 - **Benjamin Zephaniah**



Diversity

Having studied poetry from 'minority voices', you might be interested in reading books about different cultures. The list below includes a diverse range of alternative cultural experiences.

- ***Little Soldier*** by Bernard Ashley. A story dealing with the themes of bullying, family and racism.
- ***Under the Persimmon Tree*** by Suzanne Fisher-Staples. A book exploring what Afghanistan was like under the Taliban
- ***The Other Side of Truth*** by Beverley Naidoo. After the murder of their mother, twelve-year-old Sade and her younger brother are smuggled out of Nigeria by their journalist father to escape the corrupt military government and growing violence. They are sent to their uncle in London, but when they arrive, he is missing.
- ***The Wheel of Surya*** by Jamila Gavin. The first in a trilogy about a life between India and the UK and the conflicting cultures (*The Eye of the Horse & Track of the Wind*).
- ***The Garbage King*** by Elizabeth Laird. Street children in South Africa.
- ***Out of Bounds*** by Beverley Naidoo - a collection of short stories. One from each decade of Apartheid, showing the gradual process of change in South Africa.
- ***Face*** by Benjamin Zephaniah – a teenage boy is forced to adapt to life after an accident which leaves him disfigured.



Dickens

The school library is stocked with a range of classic from Dickens. However, alongside this reading, you can access some of the following materials:

- **Illustrated Stories From Dickens.** A beautifully illustrated collection of five best-loved classics from Charles Dickens. It includes "Oliver Twist", "Bleak House", "Great Expectations", "A Tale of Two Cities" and "David Copperfield", as well as a short biography of the great author himself.
- **Graphic novel versions of Dickens.** The school library holds copies of a number of Dickens' classics in the form of a graphic novel.
- **Dickens autobiographies.** Some can be very long, but the school library stocks far shorter versions.
- **Dickens Study Guide: Who the characters are and what they did** by Lee Fisher Gray.
- Dickens' inspirations for some of his most famous characters:
 - <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/feb/01/charles-dickens-real-character-names>

