

Reading Recommendations Newsletter



Christmas 2024



Welcome to our reading recommendations newsletter!

Each term, we will share with you reviews and information about books our pupils are currently enjoying.

We encourage our pupils and their families to look through these to see if any may be of interest to them. In addition, we have reading lists by year group and genre on our website.

Happy reading!
The BVS Book Group

Book Group Recommendations

All book group members are provided with free copies of the books we read!

Newer members of the BVS Book Group will be reading **'A Christmas Carol'** by **Charles Dickens** over the Christmas break, as other members have read it in previous years. Lucy's recommendation, when she finished it in her first year of Book Group, was as follows:

"This is a touching story filled with generosity and change ... the perfect book to fill you with the Christmas spirit! It's a story with a message that everyone can enjoy!"

The Book Group also recommend **'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe'** by **CS Lewis** and they claim that murder mysteries are also festive ...

For those looking for something with a traditional feel. **John Masefield's 'The Box of Delights'** is a magical story, and the serialisation first aired forty years ago is on the BBC this Christmas and available on iPlayer.

Listen In!

It's always great to have the opportunity to listen to a story, and even more so when it's read by voices we're familiar with! Older pupils may remember the reading of **'The Hobbit'** begun by Michael Sheen for us and continued by BVS staff (see the last newsletter for details!).

Continuing in the same vein, we are delighted to let you know of some more listening opportunities that we have put together especially for you!

Staff have narrated the wonderful story, set in Swansea, of **'A Child's Christmas in Wales'** by **Dylan Thomas**, where he reminisces about his childhood Christmases in our city! See if you can identify the voices!

Book Group pupils have read the beautiful and much-loved poem **'T'was the Night Before Christmas'** for you, read traditionally on Christmas Eve.

For those who enjoy reading or listening to poems, the poem which we heard in the carol service, **'Christmas'** by **John Betjeman**, is read by the poet here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyZL9_To0_A

and Mrs. Pole has also recorded it online.

Further members of our school community, including Governors, have also recorded some readings for you. Visit our website to learn more and to listen in!

<https://www.bishopvaughan.co.uk/library-and-wider-reading>

We hope you enjoy these festive items!

BVS Book Group

When?
Wednesday lunchtimes

Where?
Headteacher's Office

What?
We meet each week to discuss the book we're reading together, to recommend books to one another and to plan reading-related activities.

Currently Reading:
'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens
You are welcome to bring your lunch with you. All welcome!

A range of Christmas short stories can be found free online here:
<https://teaandinksociety.com/classic-christmas-short-stories-read-online/>

Particular recommendations include those by Louisa May Alcott and, of course, Dylan Thomas's **'A Child's Christmas in Wales'**, which has also been narrated and recorded by staff, as described previously.

Why not catch up on some Christmas films in the holiday too?

Our favourites include:

'Home Alone' (1 and 2, with much debate over which is best!), **'The Man Who Invented Christmas'**, **'Scrooge'**, **'A Muppet's Christmas Carol'**, **'The Polar Express'**, **'Elf'**, **'Get Santa'**, **'The Christmas Chronicles'**, **'The Snowman'**, **'Miracle on 34th Street'**, **'It's a Wonderful Life'**, **'The Nightmare Before Christmas'** and even the occasional Hallmark movie!

Staff Favourites:

Mr. Williams (Welsh):
'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone'
J.K. Rowling

"I really enjoyed this and have happy memories of first reading it!"

Mr. Smith (Head of English):
'The Catcher in the Rye' **JD Salinger**
"Set during the last week of term before the Christmas break, this story follows the rebellious Holden Caulfield during a lost weekend in New York. It's a coming-of-age novel dealing with issue of identity and loss: a must read for any teenager finding out who they are. As a pupil, I remember reading The Catcher in the Rye by J.D Salinger in Year 10. Like many teenagers who have read it, I was amazed to hear a character that so clearly articulated how I felt at the time. Suitable for Year 11 upwards."

Mrs. Church (Finance Manager):
'Little Women' **Louisa May Alcott**
"Every girl wanted to be Jo March! I also loved 'What Katy Did'!"

Mrs. Stewart (Receptionist):
'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe', **CS Lewis**
"Magical and mystical: this really opened me up to the world of reading!"

Wise Words:

"I love the way that each book — any book — is its own journey. You open it, and off you go..."

Sharon Creech

