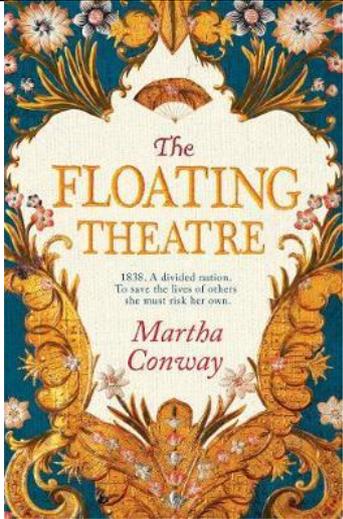
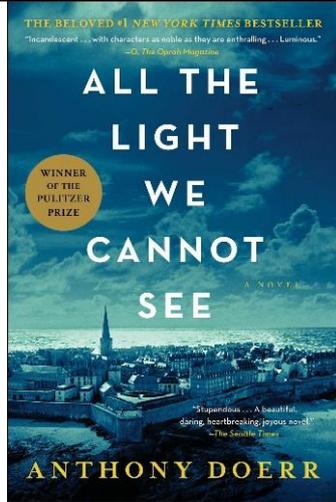


	Book Title and Author	Blurb	Reason for choice
	<p>The Floating Theatre- Martha Conway</p>	<p><i>When young seamstress May Bedloe is left alone and penniless on the shore of the Ohio, she finds work on the famous floating theatre that plies its trade along the river. Her creativity and needlework skills quickly become invaluable and she settles in to life among the colourful troupe of actors. She finds friends, and possibly the promise of more ...</i></p> <p><i>But cruising the border between the Confederate South and the 'free' North is fraught with danger.</i></p> <p><i>For the sake of a debt that must be repaid, May is compelled to transport secret passengers, under cover of darkness, across the river and on, along the underground railroad.</i></p> <p><i>But as May's secrets become harder to keep, she learns she must endanger those now dear to her.</i></p> <p><i>And to save the lives of others, she must risk her own . . .</i></p>	<p>My first lockdown book, and perhaps one of my favourite books ever. Not only can you experience life on a floating showboat, but also witness the political divide between north and south. I enjoyed reading May's journey, not just the physical one, but also her journey and development as a person, I really felt that I came to know this character as a friend, and I find that one of the greatest delights of literature.</p>



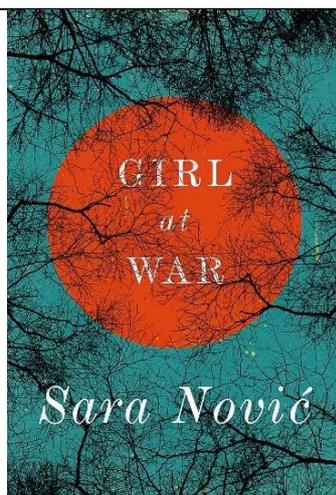
All the Light We Cannot See- Anthony Doerr

'Open your eyes and see what you can with them before they close forever.'

For Marie-Laure, blind since the age of six, the world is full of mazes. The miniature of a Paris neighbourhood, made by her father to teach her the way home. The microscopic layers within the invaluable diamond that her father guards in the Museum of Natural History. The walled city by the sea, where father and daughter take refuge when the Nazis invade Paris. And a future which draws her ever closer to Werner, a German orphan, destined to labour in the mines until a broken radio fills his life with possibility and brings him to the notice of the Hitler Youth.

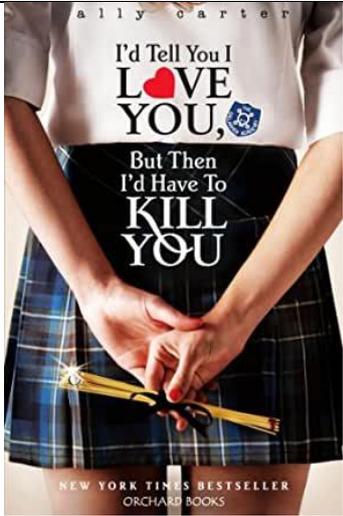
In this magnificent, deeply moving novel, the stories of Marie-Laure and Werner illuminate the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another.

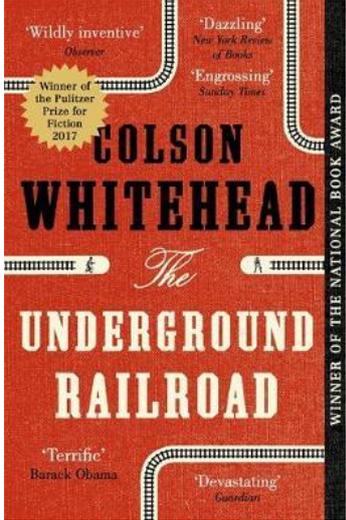
This was the second book I read through lockdown and it had me gripped from the very beginning, I loved the writing style and I was easily able to engage with the characters and I found that I couldn't wait to turn each page. Experiencing this book from two different (yet similar in so many ways) perspectives was both beautiful and sad and the ending had me both crying with sadness at the promise of what could have been, and also elated over the reality that was.

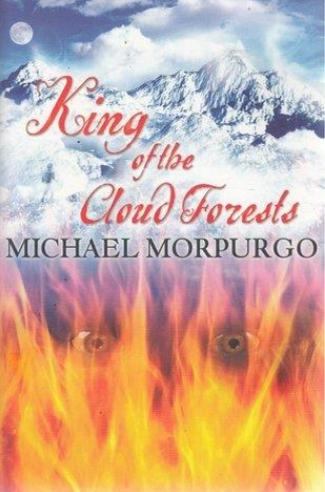
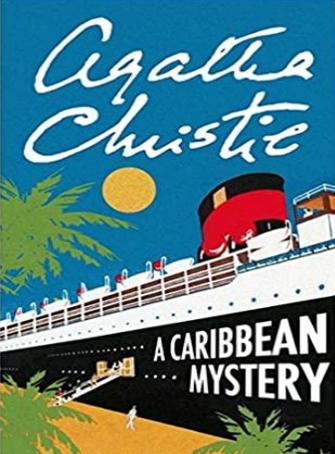


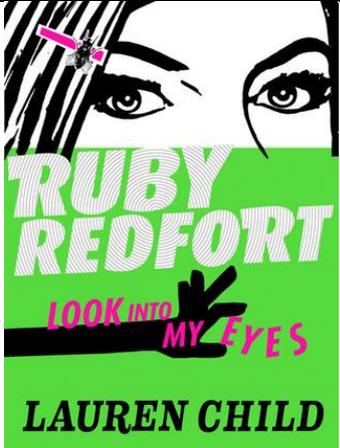
Zagreb, summer of 1991. Ten-year-old Ana Jurić is a carefree tomboy who runs the streets of Croatia's capital with her best friend, Luka, takes care of her baby sister, Rahela, and idolizes her father. But as civil war breaks out across Yugoslavia, soccer games and school lessons are supplanted by sniper fire and air raid drills. When tragedy suddenly strikes, Ana is lost to a world of guerilla warfare and child soldiers; a daring escape plan to America becomes

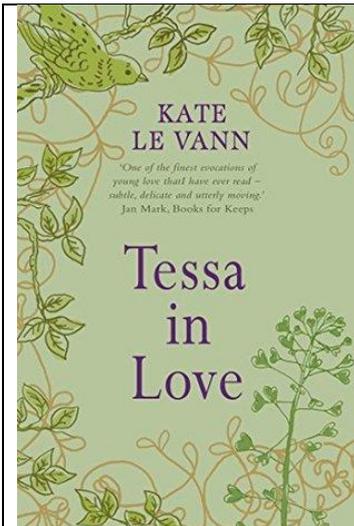
This book opened up my eyes in various ways, of a period of time in history that I had not known much about, of a young girl and how she is influenced by such traumatic events, about the very worst of humanity. This book has certainly made me appreciate my way of life a lot more, and made

		<p><i>her only chance for survival.</i></p> <p><i>Ten years later Ana is a college student in New York. She's been hiding her past from her boyfriend, her friends, and most especially herself. Haunted by the events that forever changed her family, she returns alone to Croatia, where she must rediscover the place that was once her home and search for the ghosts of those she's lost.</i></p>	<p>me feel deep sorrow for those caught up in this conflict. Deeply upsetting but a book that all should read.</p>
	<p>I'd Tell You I Love You, But Then I'd Have to Kill You Gallagher Girls Series (6 books)- Ally Carter</p>	<p><i>Cammie Morgan is a student at the Gallagher Academy for Exceptional Young Women, a fairly typical all-girls school—that is, if every school taught advanced martial arts in PE and the latest in chemical warfare in science, and students received extra credit for breaking CIA codes in computer class. The Gallagher Academy might claim to be a school for geniuses, but it's really a school for spies. Even though Cammie is fluent in fourteen languages and capable of killing a man in seven different ways, she has no idea what to do when she meets an ordinary boy who thinks she's an ordinary girl. Sure, she can tap his phone, hack into his computer, or track him through town with the skill of a real "pavement artist"—but can she manoeuvre a relationship with someone who can never know the truth about her?</i></p>	<p>I read these books when I was a teenager and I fell immediately in love with them. A perfect mix of action, adventure, humour, romance, and coming of age, all told by a girl I felt I could relate to at that time.</p>

		<p><i>Cammie Morgan may be an elite spy-in-training, but in her sophomore year, she's on her most dangerous mission—falling in love.</i></p>	
	<p>The Underground Railroad- Colson Whitehead</p>	<p><i>Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is hell for all the slaves, but especially bad for Cora; an outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is coming into womanhood—where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. Matters do not go as planned—Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted.</i></p> <p><i>In Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor—engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora and Caesar's first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. But the city's placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels. Forced to flee again, Cora embarks on a harrowing flight, state by state, seeking true freedom.</i></p>	<p>The concept of this book is very interesting, and the unrelenting horror of the reality that the characters had to face was certainly an echo of history. A sometimes painful book to read, but an important one.</p>

	<p>If I Stay- Gayle Forman</p>	<p><i>Choices. Seventeen-year-old Mia is faced with some tough ones: Stay true to her first love—music—even if it means losing her boyfriend and leaving her family and friends behind?</i></p> <p><i>Then one February morning Mia goes for a drive with her family, and in an instant, everything changes. Suddenly, all the choices are gone, except one. And it's the only one that matters.</i></p> <p><i>If I Stay is a heartachingly beautiful book about the power of love, the true meaning of family, and the choices we all make.</i></p>	<p>I couldn't put this book down when I read it, both beautiful and heart wrenching. This book made me feel so much empathy for the characters and I found it delicately paired both joy and sadness.</p>
	<p>King of the Cloud Forests- Michael Morpurgo</p>	<p><i>When Japan invaded China, Ashley and Uncle Sung are forced to flee. It is a perilous journey across the Himalayas, and they struggle to survive. Then Ashley is captured. Who are these strange creatures that revere as their king?</i></p>	<p>I find that I always fall in love with each Morpurgo book I read, but this one holds a special place in my heart. Truly a book that I can use to escape and enter a whole new world. Fantasy spun with myth and legend, a must read.</p>
	<p>A Caribbean Mystery- Agatha Christie (or any Agatha Christie book)</p>	<p><i>An exotic holiday for Miss Marple is ruined when a retired major is killed...</i></p> <p><i>As Jane Marple sat basking in the Caribbean sunshine she felt mildly discontented with life. True, the warmth eased her rheumatism, but here in paradise nothing ever happened.</i></p> <p><i>Eventually, her interest was aroused by an old soldier's yarn about a strange coincidence. Infuriatingly,</i></p>	<p>This is the first Agatha Christie book I read, while I was on holiday myself and, as expected, it was a wonderful read. How Christie managed to write such gripping, page turning mysteries is beyond me, but I'm so glad she did.</p>

		<p><i>just as he was about to show her an astonishing photograph, the Major's attention wandered. He never did finish the story...</i></p>	
	<p>Look into my Eyes, Ruby Redfort- Lauren Child (all 6 books)</p>	<p><i>Hey, buster. Normal life is a total yawn. Break out of boredom with Ruby Redfort, the super-awesome teen detective series from multi-million-copy bestseller Lauren Child.</i></p> <p><i>Want to know more. Of course you do, bozo.</i></p> <p><i>Here's the low-down on Ruby Redfort: she's a genius code-cracker, a daring detective, and a gadget-laden special agent who just happens to be a thirteen-year-old girl. She and her slick sidekick butler, Hitch, foil crimes and get into loads of scrapes with evil villains, but they're always ice-cool in a crisis.</i></p> <p><i>In this first book, we go right back to Ruby's beginnings as an agent. When an anonymous caller sets Ruby a challenge, it's not long before she finds her way into the HQ of the most secret of secret agencies – SPECTRUM. They need her help to crack a code but her desk job soon spirals into an all-out action adventure, as Ruby uncovers the dastardly plans of the formidable Fool's Gold Gang</i></p>	<p>I absolutely love these books, even now that I'm older. There's just something about the attitude and spirit of this character that makes you laugh constantly. The style in which this book is written is unique, and it instantly transports you into Ruby's world. The perfect mix of mystery, adventure and humour, and lets no forget, donuts.</p>



Tessa in Love-
Kate Le Vann

Tessa at sixteen, is pretty, but terribly shy and under-confident. Her best friend Matty is much more popular, not to mention more successful with boys. Tessa loves roaming the local parkland and often goes there for walks with the family dog. When developers threaten to destroy this, for the first time in her life Tessa decides to make a stand and joins a demonstration. There she meets Wolfie. She's seen him at school and he is well-known as a local activist. He is incredibly kind and helpful to her, and gradually as they find they have a lot in common, they fall deeply in love. Because Wolfie believes in her, Tessa's confidence grows and she finds herself supporting Matty and no longer hiding what she really feels. But just when things couldn't be working out better, tragedy strikes...

Another book I read as a teenager, but definitely one I would read again and again. A beautiful, sweet coming of age story that will pull at your heart strings.