



IAN RAMSEY CE ACADEMY

Together to learn, to grow, to serve

Reading Newsletter



this MONTH in history

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1922 William Manchester is born.	742 Charlemagne is born.	1783 Washington Irving is born.	1928 Maya Angelou is born.	1856 Booker T. Washington is born.	2005 Frank Conroy dies.	1770 William Wordsworth is born.
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1955 Barbara Kingsolver is born.	1821 Charles Baudelaire is born.	1867 George William Russell ("A.E.") is born.	1970 John O'Hara dies.	1952 Gary Soto is born.	1906 Samuel Beckett is born.	1934 Mark Strand is born.
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1843 Henry James is born.	1994 Ralph Ellison dies.	1790 Benjamin Franklin dies.	1580 Thomas Middleton is born.	1900 Richard Hughes is born.	1912 Bram Stoker dies.	1816 Charlotte Brontë is born.
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
1707 Henry Fielding is born.	1616 William Shakespeare dies.	1731 Daniel Defoe dies.	1800 William Cowper dies.	1660 Daniel Defoe is born.	1759 Mary Wollstonecraft is born.	1926 Harper Lee is born.
29	30					
2006 John Kenneth Galbraith dies.	1945 Annie Dillard is born.					

A P R I L

Welcome

Welcome to our April edition of the Reading Newsletter! We hope you enjoyed our last edition. This month's is packed with even more reading-related information. We hope you enjoy what is included, but if there is anything you want to see that isn't here yet, why not drop the Academy and email and let us know what you would like to be included?

This newsletter is a chance to find out about:

- fiction
- non-fiction
- poetry
- authors and their work
- Vocabulary
- how to help your child with their reading journey
- what's new in reading
- local libraries
- and much more...

So, sit back, grab a cuppa and enjoy our Reading Newsletter.

As always, your support is hugely appreciated,

The English Department at Ian Ramsey CE Academy



Author spotlight

This month's author: Maisie Chan



Maisie Chan is an author based in Birmingham, UK, known for her work in children's literature. Her storytelling often reflects her diverse background and aims to provide representation for underrepresented groups. Chan has written several acclaimed books, including 'Danny Chung Does Not Do Maths,' which won the Jhalak Prize and the Branford Boase Award. Her writing is characterised by its humour, heart, and relatable characters, appealing to a wide audience of young readers.

In addition to her work as an author, Chan is involved in various literary and community projects. She is a passionate advocate for diversity in children's literature and actively works to promote the voices of marginalized authors. Chan also runs the Bubble Tea Writers Network, which supports British East and Southeast Asian writers.

Overall, Maisie Chan's contributions to children's literature and her advocacy for diversity have made her a notable figure in the literary community.



Author to academy

Dear Readers,

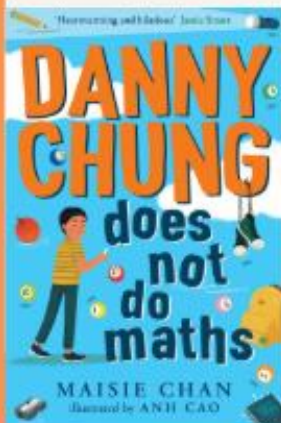
Thanks for taking the time to read this letter! I'm the author of award-winning **DANNY CHUNG DOES NOT DO MATHS** which was my first novel for children. It's illustrated by Anh Cao who drew some of Danny's doodles in the book.

Danny's gran ('Nai Nai') comes from China and moves into his bedroom. He's not very pleased about that as he has no privacy and she snores!

It's got drawing, old ladies, unconventional bowling and lots of bingo! And fruit. Lychees to be precise.

I often get asked if I like maths because Danny seems to really hate it. I have to admit that I didn't mind maths too much at school - I just liked English more! I really like observing people and so being an author seemed like a good job for me - it was either that or being a spy! But I think being a spy would be quite dangerous!

Do check out my book if you can!

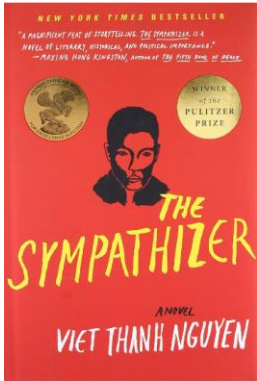


Keep reading!

MAISIE CHAN



From page to screen



"The Sympathizer" is a new mini-series based on Viet Thanh Nguyen's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. It follows a half-French, half-Vietnamese communist spy during the final days of the Vietnam War and his exile in America. The series, featuring a compelling mix of espionage, drama, and cultural identity, stars Hoa Xuande and Robert Downey Jr. in multiple roles, and is produced by HBO, premiering in April 2024.





It might seem to you like an unexpected plot twist, but part of the M6 toll road is actually built on old copies of romance novels. 2.5 million of the books were shredded and mixed into the road's surface. According to building materials suppliers Tarmac, the pulped books works to hold the materials in place and also helps to absorb sound, due to the books' absorbent qualities.

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the longest novel ever is *A la recherche du temps perdu* by Marcel Proust. The first volume of the epic work, which was published in 13 volumes, was written in 1912. It contains an estimated 9,609,000 characters and nearly 1.3 million words!

Scientists believe that Harvard University owns a book that is bound in *human skin*. The book, *Des destinees de l'ame* (Destinies of the Soul), is said to have been given by writer Arsene Houssaye to his friend Dr Ludovic Bouland.

Are you a *biblioklept*? These are people who accidentally steal books by borrowing and forgetting to return them.



2023 Reading Challenge

No. 2024

Any Bookworm

IS ENTITLED TO READ BOOKS FROM The 52 Book Club 2024 Reading Challenge

1. Locked-room mystery	27. By a neurodivergent author
2. Bibliosmia: A smelly book	28. A yellow spine
3. More than 40 chapters	29. Published in a Year of the Dragon
4. Lowercase letters on the spine	30. Picked without reading the blurb
5. Magical Realism	31. Includes a personal phobia
6. Women in STEM	32. Time frame spans a week or less
7. At least four different POV	33. An abrupt ending
8. Features the ocean	34. Set in a landlocked country
9. A character-driven novel	35. Title matches lyrics from a song
10. Told in non-chronological order	36. Has futuristic technology
11. Title starting with the letter "K"	37. Palindrome on the cover
12. Title starting with the letter "L"	38. Published by Hachette
13. An academic thriller	39. Non-fiction recommended by a friend
14. A grieving character	40. Set during a holiday you don't celebrate
15. Part of a duology	41. A sticker on the cover
16. An omniscient narrator	42. Author debut in second half of 2024
17. Nominated for The Booker Prize	43. About finding identity
18. An apostrophe in the title	44. Includes a wedding
19. A buddy read	45. Chapter headings have dates
20. A revenge story	46. Featuring Indigenous culture
21. Written by a ghostwriter	47. Self-insert by an author
22. A plot similar to another book	48. The word "secret" in the title
23. The <i>other</i> book with the similar plot	49. Set in a city starting with the letter "M"
24. A cover without people on it	50. A musical instrument on the cover
25. An author "everyone" has read except you	51. Related to the word "Wild"
26. Hybrid genre	52. Published in 2024

*Read all
the books!*

www.the52book.club

April Reading Challenge

My Reading Challenge April Calendar



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
01 An autobiography	02 A biography	03 A book about your favourite subject at school	04 Made into a movie	05 A murder mystery	06 A book recommended by a friend	07 A banned book
08 About an author you have already studied	09 About history	10 A book recommended by a teacher	11 A new release	12 About positivity	13 About a famous artist	14 A true story
15 About friendship	16 A book set in the Victorian era	17 A book set in the future	18 A local story	19 A graphic novel	20 About World War II	21 A book under 200 pages
22 A book over 500 pages	23 Set in fictional town	24 A book from the library	25 Re-read your favorite	26 A book by your favourite author	27 Set in the 70's	28 About healthy eating
29 Poems	30 A non-fiction book	31 A book you wouldn't usually read				



• **Most Favorite List:**

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• **Mediocre List:**

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• **Less Favorite List:**

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Notes:

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What's new?

Fiction:

***The Puzzle Wood* By Rosie Andrews**

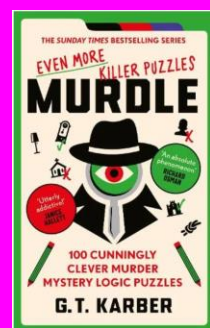
The bestselling author of *The Leviathan* delivers another exquisitely crafted slice of historical crime, as a young governess arrives at her posting on the Welsh-English border determined to learn the truth about the tragic fate of her predecessor.



Non- Fiction

***Murdle: Even More Killer Puzzles* by G.T. Karber**

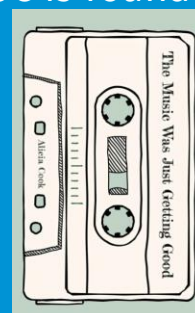
Brimming with terrifically cunning cases, this thrilling instalment of the hugely popular Murdle will put all amateur sleuths' deductive powers to a veritable test.



Poetry

***The Music Was Just Getting Good* by Alicia Cook**

The Music Was Just Getting Good is the raw yet inspiring final instalment in Alicia Cook's mixtape collection of poetry. In her signature style of poetry and prose, Alicia paints honest portraits of mental health. Each track (poem) is accompanied by a song and as you progress through the book the theme is clear: the road to recovery is never completely smooth but hope is found even in the gravel

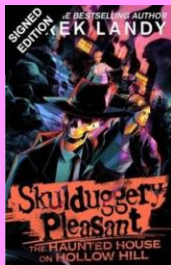


Pupil Recommendations



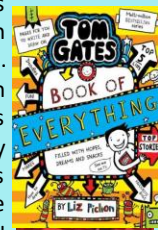
Skulduggery Pleasant by Derek Landy

Skulduggery Pleasant and Valkyrie Cain have only hours to figure out who a suspicious killer is in a hotel filled with the tortured spirits of the dead, the anguished wails of the dying, and the relentless whines of the living.



War Horse by Michael Morpurgo

In the deadly chaos of the First World War, one horse witnesses the reality of battle from both sides of the trenches. Bombarded by artillery, with bullets knocking riders from his back, Joey tells a powerful story of the truest friendships surviving in terrible times. One horse has seen the best and the worst of humanity.



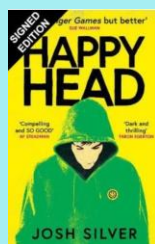
Hetty Feather by Jacqueline Wilson

Life in the countryside is sometimes hard, but with her foster brothers, Jem and Gideon, Hetty helps in the fields and plays vivid imaginary games. Together they sneak off to visit the travelling circus, and Hetty is mesmerised by the show - especially the stunning Madame Adeline and her performing horses.



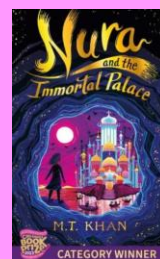
Happy Head by Josh Silver

When Seb is offered a place on a radical retreat designed to solve the national crisis of teenage unhappiness, he is determined to change how people see him and make his parents proud. But as he finds himself drawn to the enigmatic Finn, Seb starts to question the true nature of the challenges they must undergo.



Nura and the Immortal Palace by M.T. Khan

Nura has worked all her life in the mica mines, earning just enough to keep her family afloat - and enjoy the odd delicious gulab jamun from the market. Some day she's going to find the Demon's Tongue, a legendary treasure buried deep in the mines, and her family will never have to worry about money again.

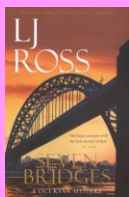


Staff Recommendations



Seven Bridges: A DCI Ryan Mystery by LJ Ross

I've taken to reading the LJ Ross DCI Ryan series of books, they are all set in the North East so it's really easy to visualise where everything is taking place. A bit of easy reading on an evening but also has a good balance of murder and suspense. The last book I read 'Seven Bridges' had a great double twist at the end.



The Satsuma Complex by Bob Mortimer

This book by comedian Bob Mortimer is a gentle stroll through a crime story. It like a cup of Bovril and a meat pie at a Boro match; warming, welcoming and fairly familiar. Gary, the main character, gets mixed up in a crime and whilst completely out of his depth, he manages to navigate his way quite well. Gary is a solicitor, as the author was before meeting Vic Reeves and changing career to TV comedian; like you do!



An Inspector Calls by J.B. Priestley

Arthur Birling, a prosperous manufacturer, is holding a family dinner party to celebrate his daughter's engagement. Into this cosy scene intrudes the harsh figure of a police inspector investigating the suicide of a young working-class woman. Under interrogation, every member of the family turns out to have a shameful secret which links them with her death.



The Only Suspect by Louise Candlish

I've been a fan of Candlish's work for a while, so this took top priority on my reading list. Chilling, mysterious and utterly unputdownable.



The Viscount Who Loved Me by Julia Quinn

The second, enchanting volume in Quinn's bestselling series, *The Viscount Who Loved Me* charts the path of Anthony, the oldest of the Bridgerton siblings, as he, tasked with securing the family lineage, finds himself in need of a wife.



Local Libraries

Free Children Stories is a fantastic website that offers a range of fictional stories for pupils as young as eight. If you are looking for a fun family story, or even looking for inspiration to write your own, this is a brilliant website to use. All stories available are completely free and will suit a range of tastes.

A former mechanical engineer, Daniel Errico left his career at an investment bank to create freechildrenstories.com. In the years since, he has produced multiple number one best-selling children's e-books with B & N and has books in stores nationwide through Sky Pony Press and Schiffer Publishing. His works have been made into books, best-selling e-books, animated films, apps, and even [plays](#). He is also the creator of the award-winning Hulu Original Series, *The Bravest Knight*. Throughout, his stories have been available online to encourage literacy and free media for kids.



Freechildrenstories.com



First liners



Can you guess the title of the book from the first line?

1. Today, I'm five.

2. All this happened, more or less.

3. Hale knew, before he had been in Brighton three hours, that they meant to murder him.

4. Life changes fast. Life changes in the instant. You sit down to dinner and life as you know it ends. The question of self-pity.

5. I still remember the day my father took me to the cemetery of Forgotten Books for the first time.

6. In a valley shaded with rhododendrons, close to the snow line, where a stream milky with meltwater splashed and where doves and linnets flew...

7. Ten days after the war ended, my sister Laura drove a car off a bridge.

8. Beyond the Indian hamlet, upon a forlorn strand, I happened on a trail of recent footprints.

9. In case you hadn't noticed, you have a mental dialogue going on inside your head that never stops. It just keeps going and going.



Word of the Month

ebullient

(Origin: Latin)

The word 'ebullient' traces its origins to the Latin verb "ebullire," meaning "to bubble out" or "to boil." First appearing in English in the late 16th century, it initially described physical bubbling or boiling. Over time, the term evolved metaphorically to depict overflowing enthusiasm or exuberance, much like water bubbling vigorously. By the 18th century, 'ebullient' was firmly established in the English language to characterize a person's lively, cheerful, and energetic disposition, capturing the spirit of someone whose emotions or vitality bubble over.



Reading for Pleasure

Reading is a huge part of our academy. Throughout our school, we have implemented a number of reading strategies that will give pupils access to a wide range of literature both inside and outside the classroom.

Our *Reading for Pleasure* lessons have been met with fantastic positivity and enthusiasm from our KS3 pupils. Texts have been specifically chosen that link not only to our curriculum, but to our Christian values as well. This year, pupils will enjoy a range of texts such as:

Year 7

The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis
Once by Morris Gleitzman

Year 8

The Shadow in the North by Philip Pullman
Then by Morris Gleitzman

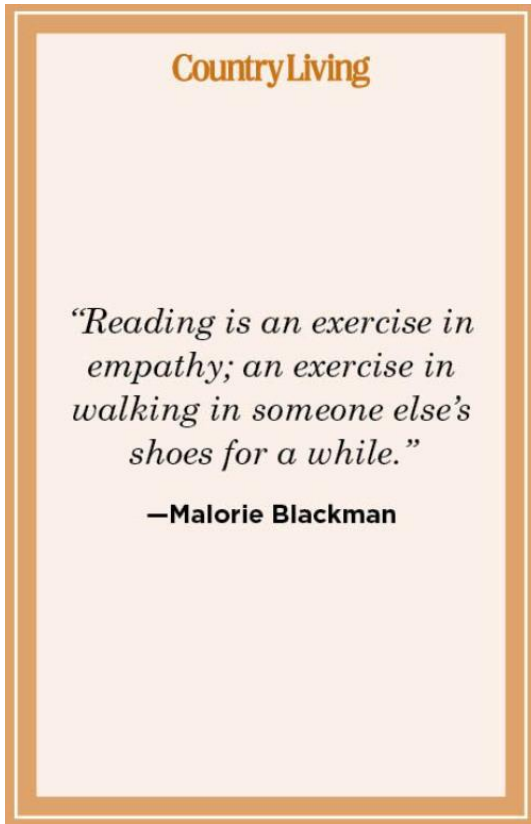
Year 9

The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q. Raúf



Final Notes

Reading is so important to our Academy. The key aim of our reading drive is to encourage reading for pleasure and to promote everything that is brilliant about reading here at the Academy. With that in mind, we leave you with this:



We hope you’ve enjoyed reading this month’s newsletter. As an Academy, we believe you should never be stuck for reading information and recommendations - visit our dedicated reading section on our website for ideas, competitions recommended lists and more. Click on ‘Curriculum’ and ‘Reading’ (or click on this link: <https://ianramsey.org.uk/curriculum/reading/>) to uncover a world of books and recommendations and challenges including:

- Book recommendations. These change every term and are thematically linked to all the topics covered by each subject that term.
- Reading challenges
- Desert Island Book lists
- Reading quotes
- Recommend a book

We hope you’ve enjoyed April’s newsletter and look forward to sending you May’s edition!

*Answers to First Lines:

1. Room by Emma Donoghue
2. Slaughterhouse Five by Kurt Vonnegut
3. Brighton Rock by Graham Greene
4. The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion
5. The Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafon
6. The Amber Spyglass by Philip Pullman
7. The Blind Assassin by Margaret Atwood
8. Cloud Atlas by Liam Callanan
9. The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself by Michael A Singer

