

Laurus Ryecroft's Y8 Academic Book List

Humanities		
Subject	Book	Form ✓
English	The Boy at the Back of the Class - Onjali Q. Raúf	
This is the story about how one ordinary nine-year-old child and three classmates are full of empathy for Ahmet, a boy that comes to their school as a refugee from Syria. It's an especially important story to hear before you look at the experiences of refugees in the English poetry scheme at the end of the year.		
Spanish	Cemetery Boys - Aiden Thomas	
When his traditional Latinx family has problems accepting his gender, Yadiel becomes determined to prove himself a real brujo. With the help of his cousin and best friend Maritza, he performs the ritual himself, and then sets out to find the ghost of his murdered cousin and set it free. This novel is written in English but unapologetically and authentically uses Spanish, too.		
Geography	Where the World Turns Wild – Nicola Penfold	
Juniper Greene lives in a walled city, a sterile existence in a city cut off from the natural world. While most people seem content to live in such a cage, she and her little brother Bear have always known about their resistance to the disease and dream of escaping into the wild. This thrilling and thought-provoking ecological adventure will also engage your thinking about the science curriculum through its topics of pathogens and disease.		
History	A Skinful of Shadows - Frances Hardinge	
A young girl at the time of the English civil war - a period of significant social change which you'll cover in History this year - fears possession by a ghost or death. Discovering that her relatives keep her alive purely as a spare vessel for the spirits, she flees to Oxford and becomes entangled in the conflict of the war herself.		
Beliefs and Values	Sophie's World - Jostein Gaarder	
This novel follows Sophie Amundsen, a Norwegian teenager who is introduced to the history of philosophy by Alberto Knox, a middle-aged philosopher.		
STEM		
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Maths	Counting by 7s – Holly Goldberg Sloan	
Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions, who finds it comforting to count by 7s. This is a great cross-curricular read as Willow's perceptions of people, her interaction and her routines, are driven by her extreme intelligence and enthusiasms for particular things, like maths, food, hygiene and the environment. It sets her apart and she likes it that way. Our librarian thinks this is an especially great read for fans of <i>Wonder</i> by R. J. Palacio.		
Computing	I, Ada – Julia Gray	
This is the story of Ada Lovelace - the world's first computer programmer - as she grows up with a strict mother and an absent but famous father. This story is steeped in history and has great links to the Feminism scheme of work which you'll look at in History next year, in year 9. We especially love Ada's characteristics and voice – it's a wonderfully witty and poignant portrayal of her young life.		
Science	How To: Absurd Scientific Advice for Common Real-World Problems – Randall Munroe	
Full of clever infographics and amusing illustrations, How To is a delightfully mind-bending way to better understand the science and technology underlying the things we do every day.		
Food and Nutrition	The Proof and the Pudding - Jim Henle	
Tantalizing math puzzles and cooking recipes that show how mathematical thinking is like the culinary arts.		
Arts		
Subject	Book	Form ✓
Performing Arts	Hag-Seed – Margaret Atwood	
Hag-Seed tells the story of Felix, a theatre director who begins teaching Shakespeare at a prison and plots his revenge against the men who betrayed him while staging a production of <i>The Tempest</i> . We've chosen this book as it is the most engaging contemporary retelling of the very Shakespeare play you'll explore in English this year.		
Creative Design	The Art of Heikala: Works and Thoughts - Heikala	
Finnish artist Heikala's artwork combines traditional watercolour painting and inks with a fresh, enchanting approach. This book features a lot of useful information on Heikala's thought processes and advice on how to build a successful career as an artist.		
Music	The Kingdom of Back - Marie Lu	
The historical fantasy novel tells the lesser-known story of Maria Anna (Nannerl) Mozart, the older sister of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. In this thrilling read, you'll discover to what dangerous lengths Nannerl will go to make history remember her - a girl who can't even compose.		
P.E	The Crossover - Kwame Alexander	
As you'll play basketball this year, we recommend that you read this novel. The main characters, Josh and JB, are basketball legends at their school. They also happen to be identical twins (but it's easy to tell them apart if you know how to look). As the boys build up to one of the most important matches of their lives, tensions grow between them and things at home and at school also add to the pressure. The only time they feel truly themselves is on the court. Although it reads like a novel, the twins' story is told through poetry in many different forms from musical rap to haiku and free verse.		