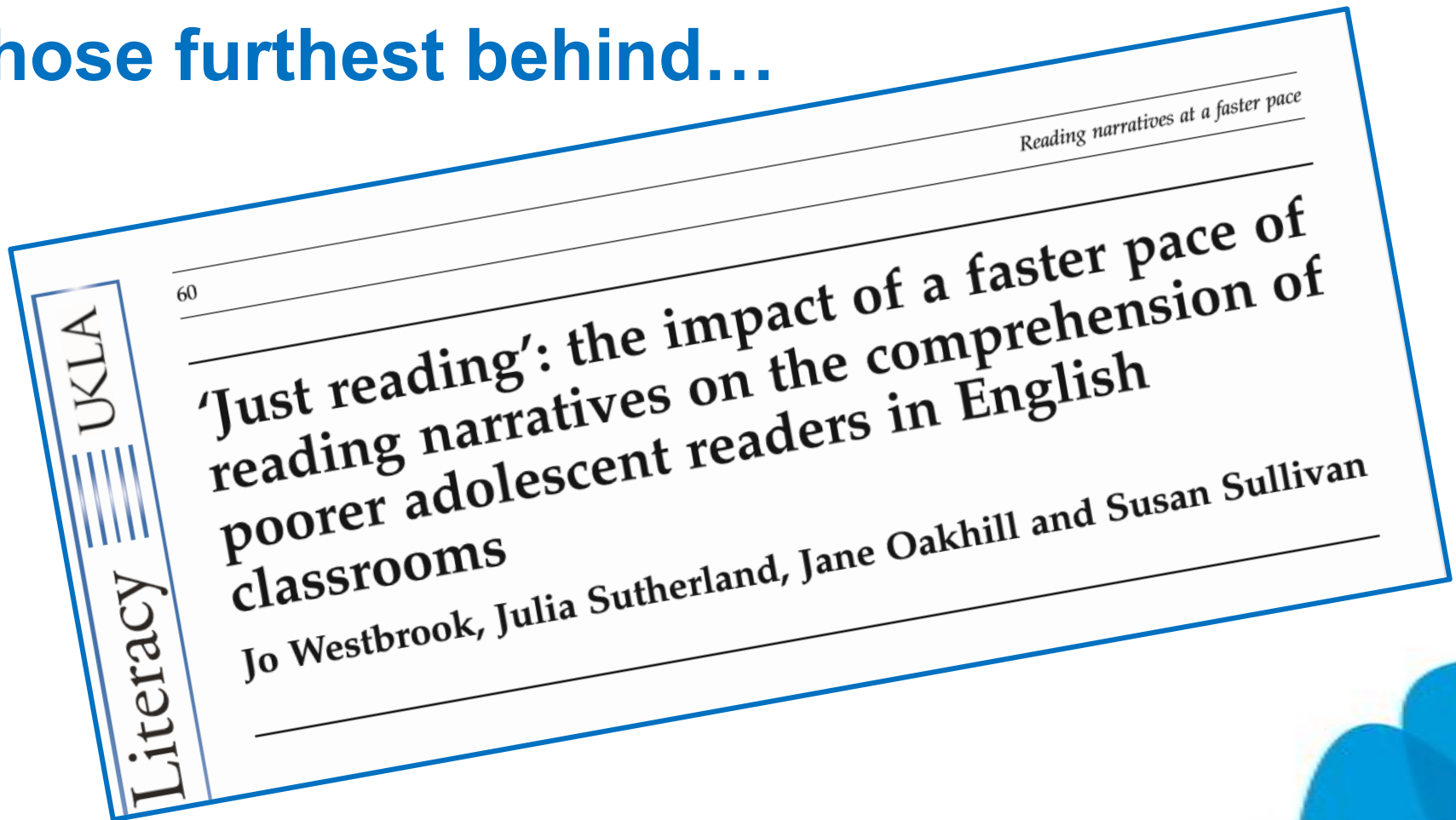


Just Reading

Summary of the University of Sussex research paper by
Westbrook, Sutherland, Oakhill and Sullivan

HIAS English Team
August 2022
Final version

Needed: pedagogy that works for all – but works best for those furthest behind...



‘Just reading’

- Research project 2015 focusing on Year 8
- Mixed attainment and lower attaining sets
- Read two challenging novels as a class, back to back, over 12 weeks
- Focus of class time on coverage of the text, plot, character and theme only – no focus on analysis
- Methods of reading in class varied – read aloud, read in groups, read silently
- Avoid interruptions to the read through



Two groups

Group FR

- Fast read of challenging texts
- No theorised training for teachers

Group FR + T

- Fast read of challenging texts
- Teachers trained in theorised knowledge of reading and associated pedagogy



Findings of the study

In the 12 weeks of the study:

- Students in both groups made **8.5 months** mean progress in reading comprehension
- Poorer readers made **16 months** mean progress in reading comprehension

“Simply reading challenging, complex novels aloud and at a fast pace in each lesson repositioned ‘poorer’ readers as ‘good’ readers, giving them a more engaged uninterrupted reading experience over a sustained period.”



Impact of the reading training for teachers

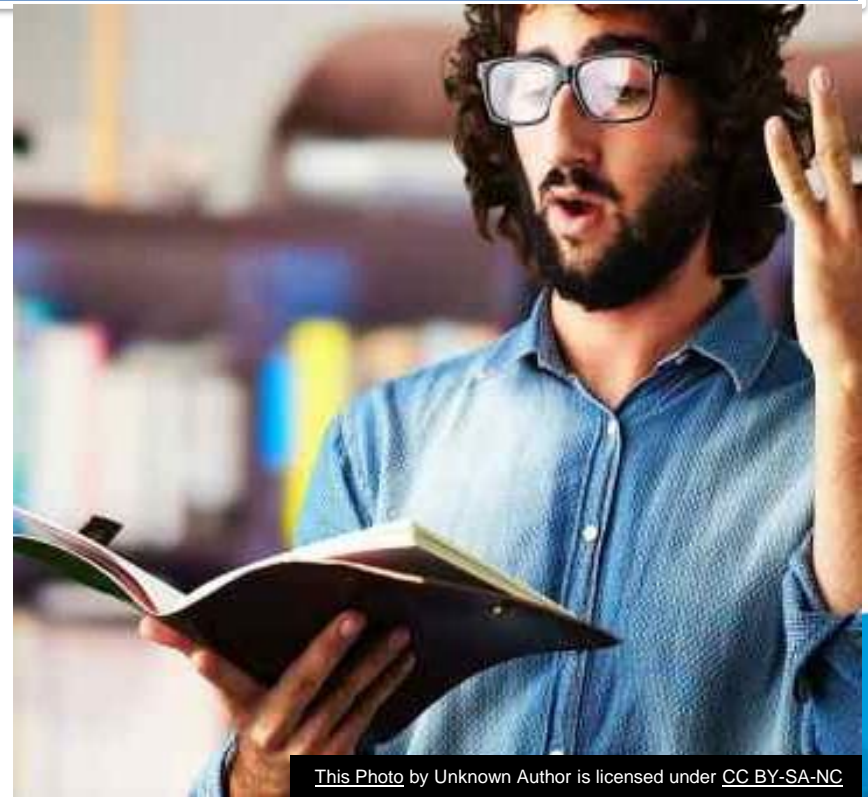
- The teacher training programme made **no difference** to the quantitative data – students
- Qualitative data shows that the teachers with the additional training *“provided a more coherent faster read and better supported poorer readers by explicitly teaching inference, diagnosed students’ ‘sticking places’ mid-text and created socially cohesive guided reading groups that further supported weaker readers and also stretched the average/good readers.”*



Pedagogic approaches and teacher knowledge associated with gains in reading development

Daily expressive reading aloud to the whole class

- Supports speed, effortlessness, autonomy and lack of conscious awareness
- Bypasses sticking points
- Creates a community of readers
- Shares the experience of the 'good' reader



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Pedagogic approaches and teacher knowledge associated with gains in reading development

Scanning the class to ensure comprehension

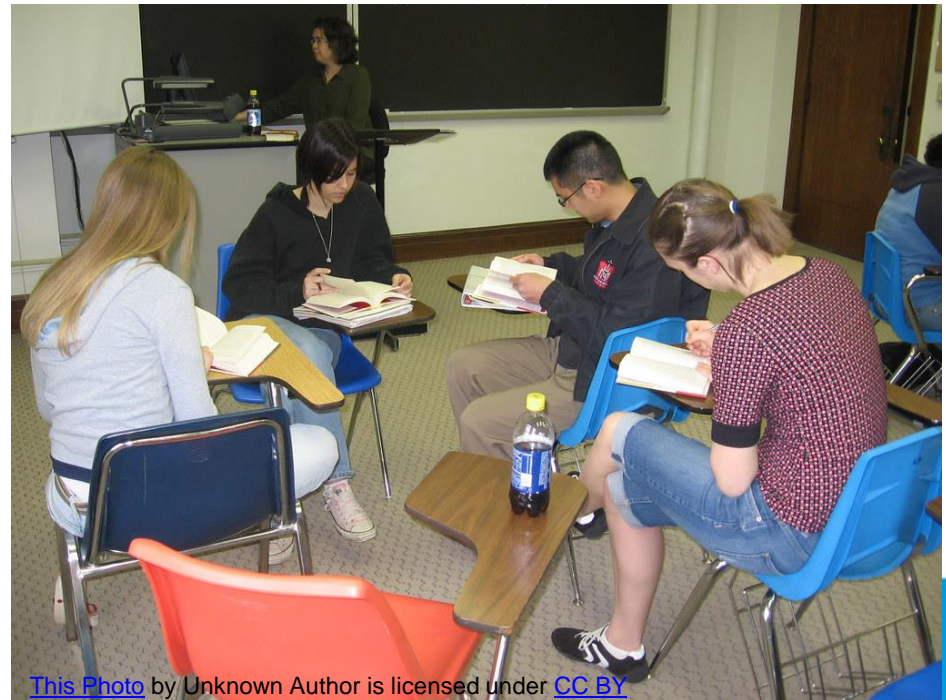
- Raise expectations of students – only pause at visible sticking points
- Ask questions eg *‘Where did you stop understanding?’* and *‘What’s happening here?’*
- Return to the point where they left off and move on
- Intervene at the point of need to support comprehension



Pedagogic approaches and teacher knowledge associated with gains in reading development

Whole class or group reading

- Avoid 'round robin' reading
- Keep focus firmly on clarifying the plot
- If students read aloud, ensure that they use strong voices
- Position reading as the core, rather than marginal, activity of the classroom



Pedagogic approaches and teacher knowledge associated with gains in reading development

Comprehension-supporting strategies

- Regular, detailed recaps to recall the previous section
- Predictions based on recaps
- Link details to larger sections or the whole story arc
- Integrate context at the point of need to illuminate the text



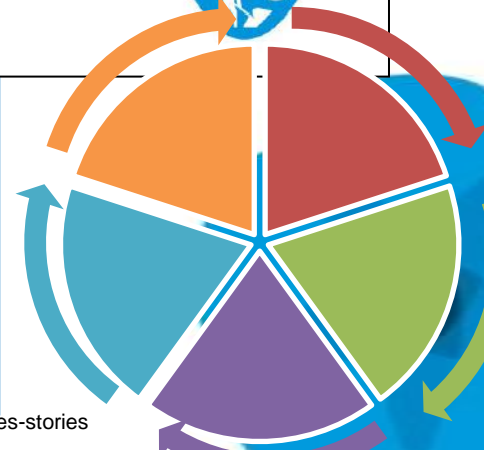
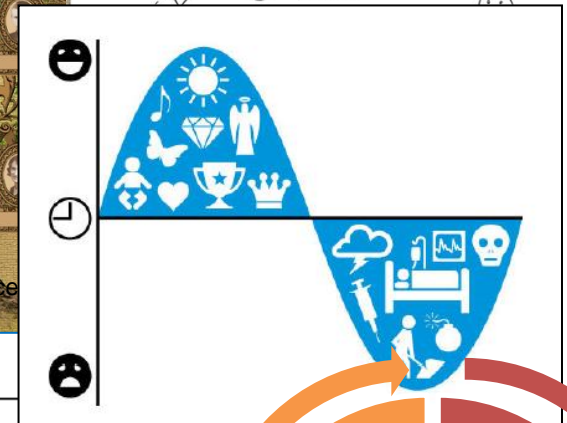
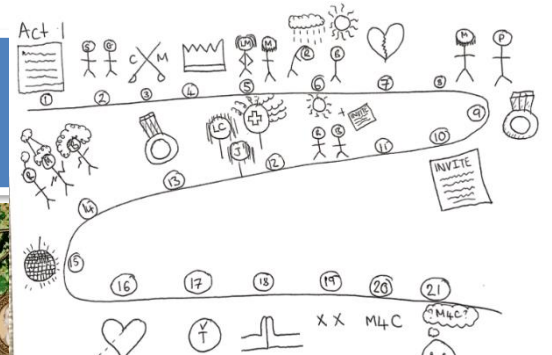
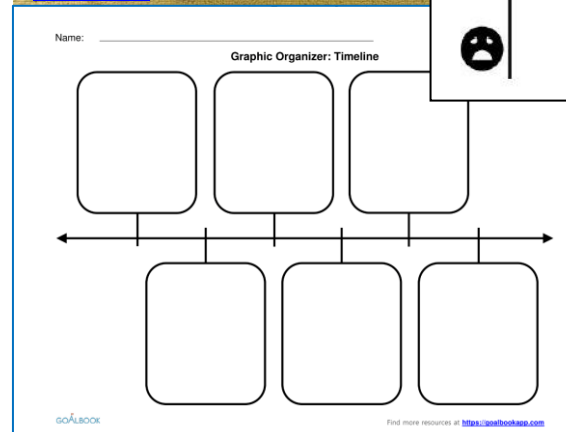
Pedagogic approaches and teacher knowledge associated with gains in reading development

Graphic organisers to visually represent the developing 'whole' text

- Regular, detailed recaps to recall the previous section
- Predictions based on recaps
- Link details to larger sections or the whole story arc
- Integrate context at the point of need to illuminate the text



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Strategies used by both groups that directly supported comprehension

Connecting to contextual knowledge	Predicting and checking
Questioning	Clarifying
Summarising	Supporting cohesive inference



Link



Question



I think



Main idea



“Put simply, students read far more in those 12 weeks than they had ever done before, and the faster read of two whole novels in effect provided a catch-up programme for poorer readers from both groups in the English classroom with their peers, not marginalised in a remedial programme.”



“Even so, average + readers did better in the FR+T classes in the short story test but not to the detriment of their less able peers”



“ “The FR+T strategies need time to be embedded in teachers’ practices over a longer time to make more of an impact, but this study has shown that the model tested has the potential to better support poorer readers to catch up and average + readers to be stretched.”



“This was direct instruction in the context of a faster read of whole texts, integrated with cooperative learning, professional development and a flexible pedagogy, all four categories seen as effective in meta-analyses of secondary reading programmes.”



Practicalities

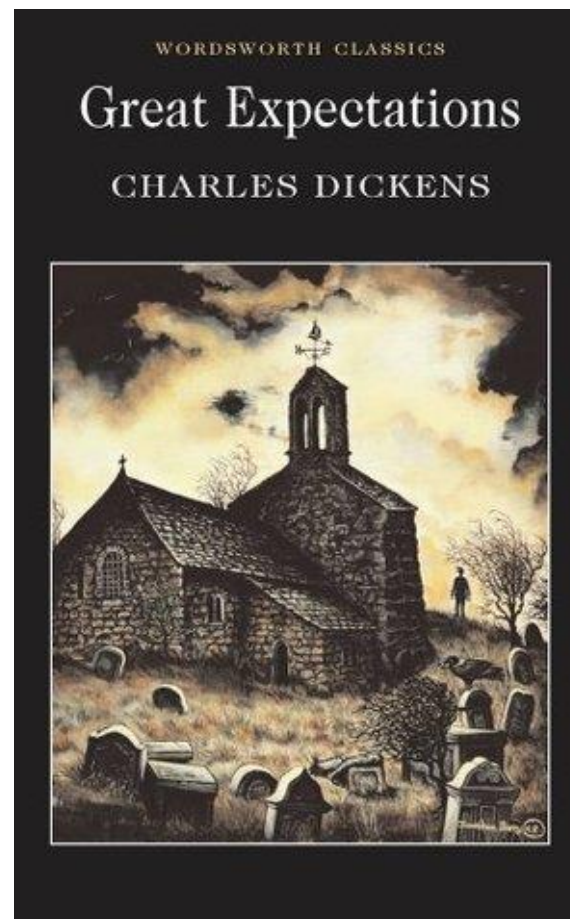
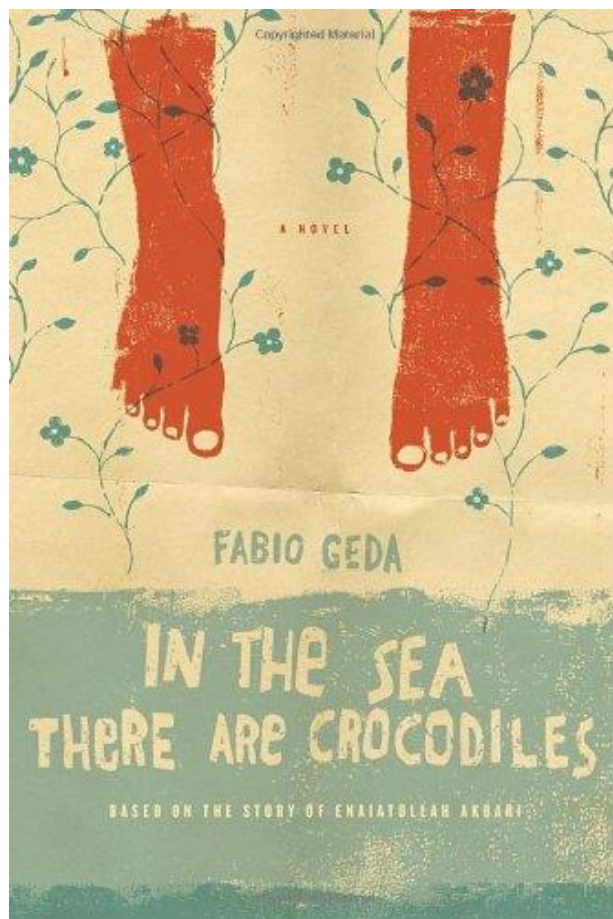
- 1 lesson = 50 mins – 1 hour
- Finish the book in 5 weeks max (if you want the two back-to-back books to be of equal length)
- Use audible website or similar to gauge the length of the read-aloud – each book should take a maximum of 12 hours to read at the very outside (8 hrs reading time or less is more manageable)
- Spend at least 25-40 minutes of each lesson reading
- Identify the pause points in the text that fit the amount of reading time in lesson coupled with the points where you will maximise student's desire to find out what happens next
- Decide how you will manage the reading – what strategies in lessons will keep students engaged?

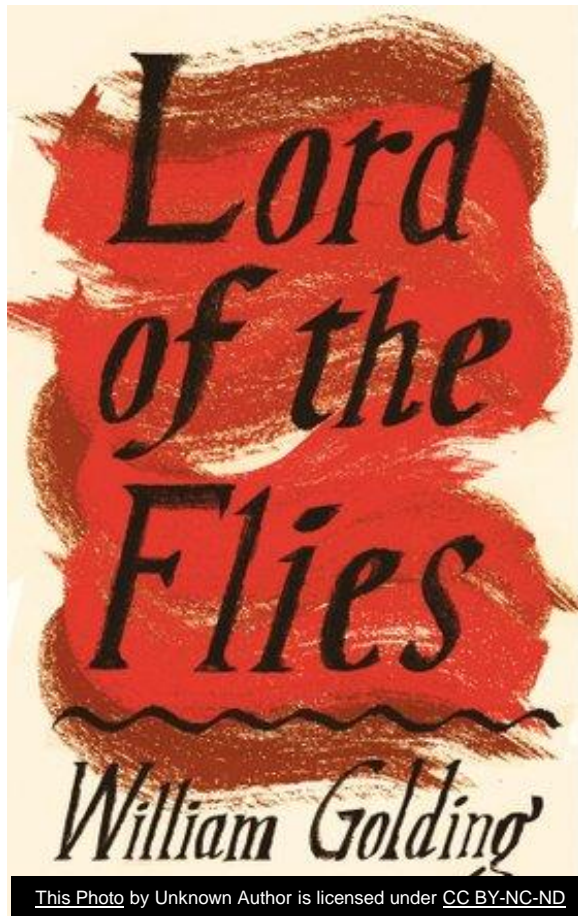
Choose novels that complement each other

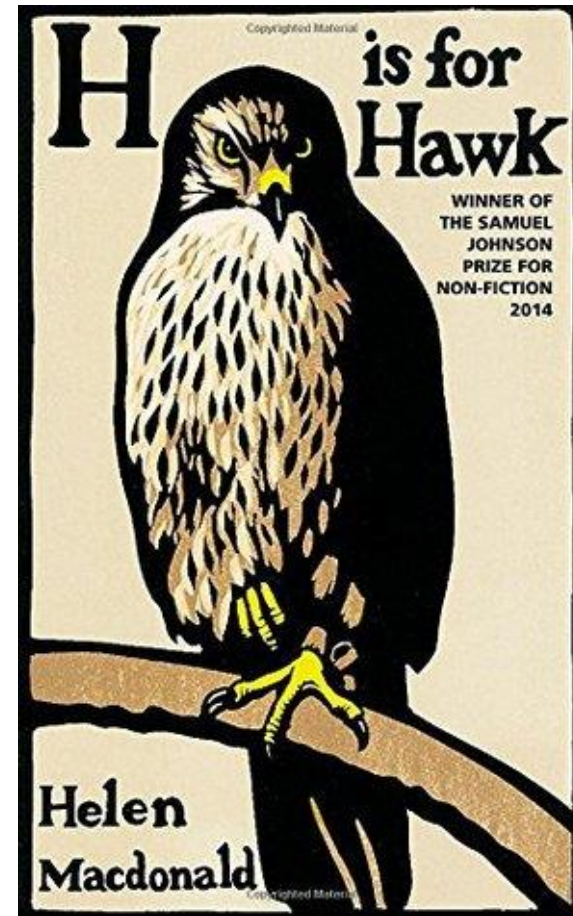
- What do you want students to connect?
 - Situation?
 - Setting?
 - Character type?
 - Genre?
 - Narrative voice?
 - Type of novel?
 - Theme?
 - Tone?

What are students learning about the way novels work?

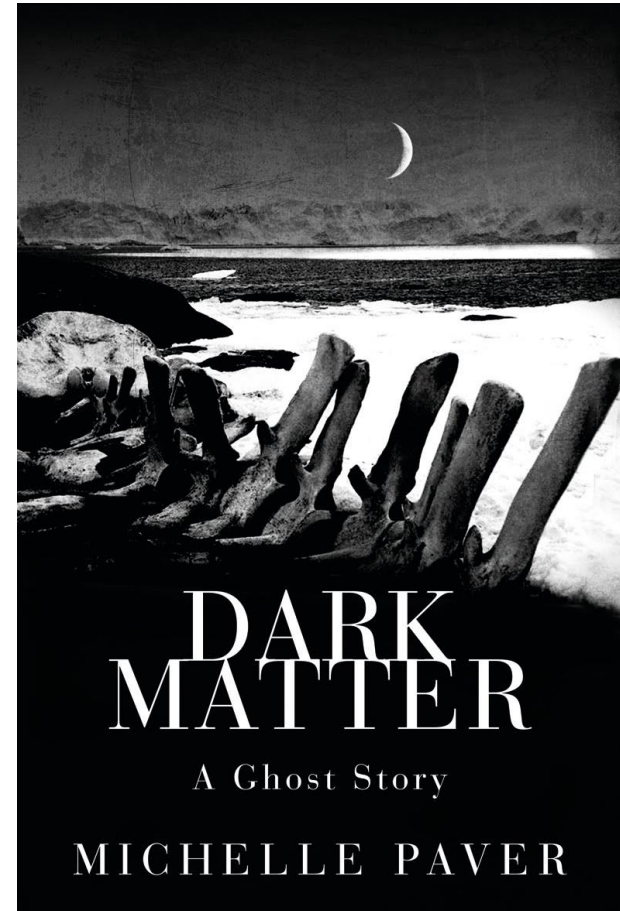
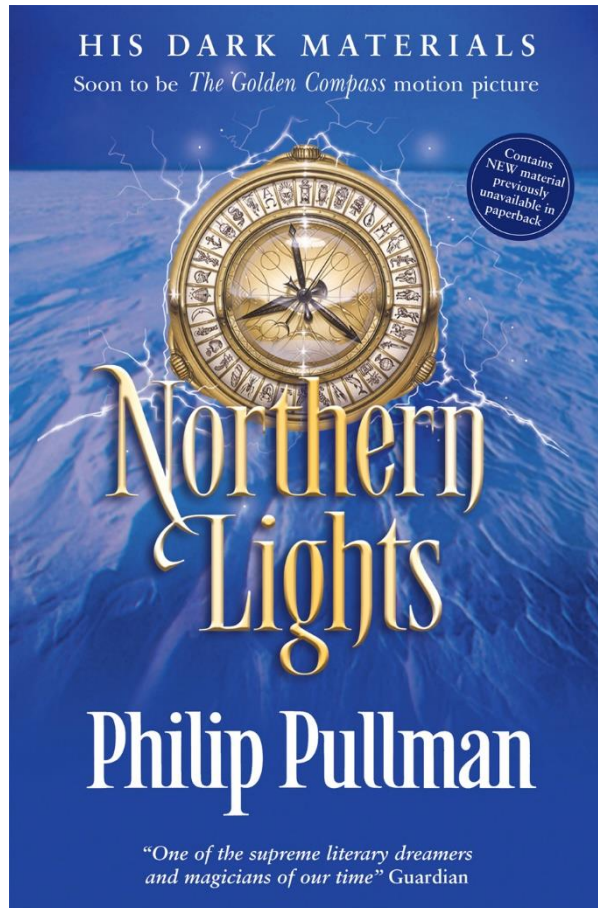


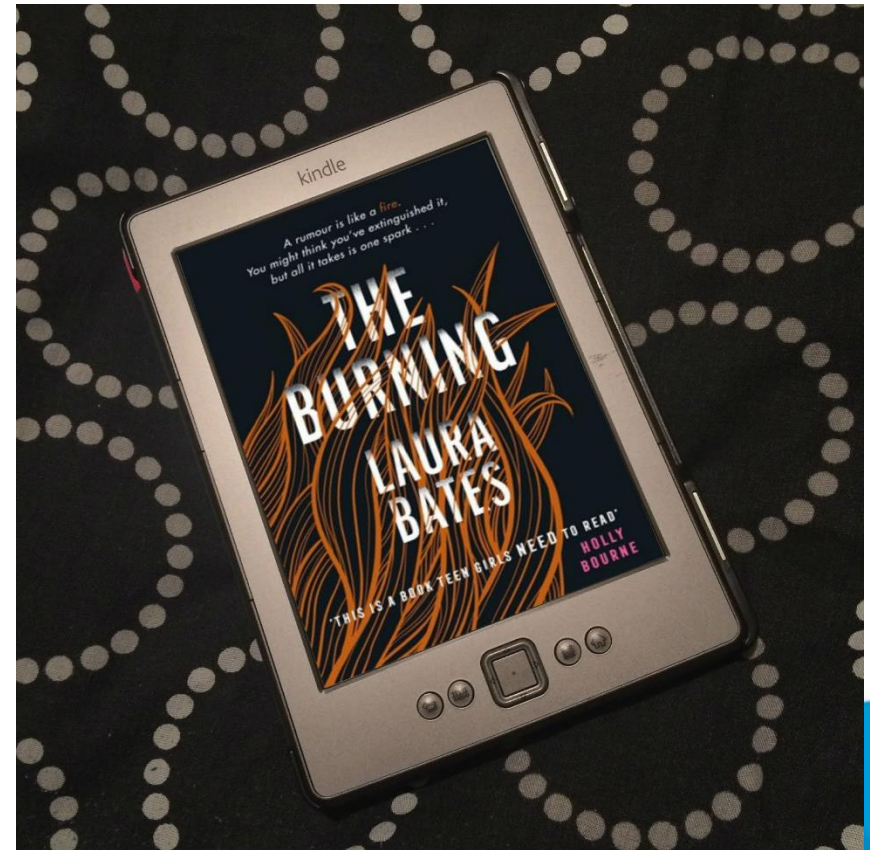
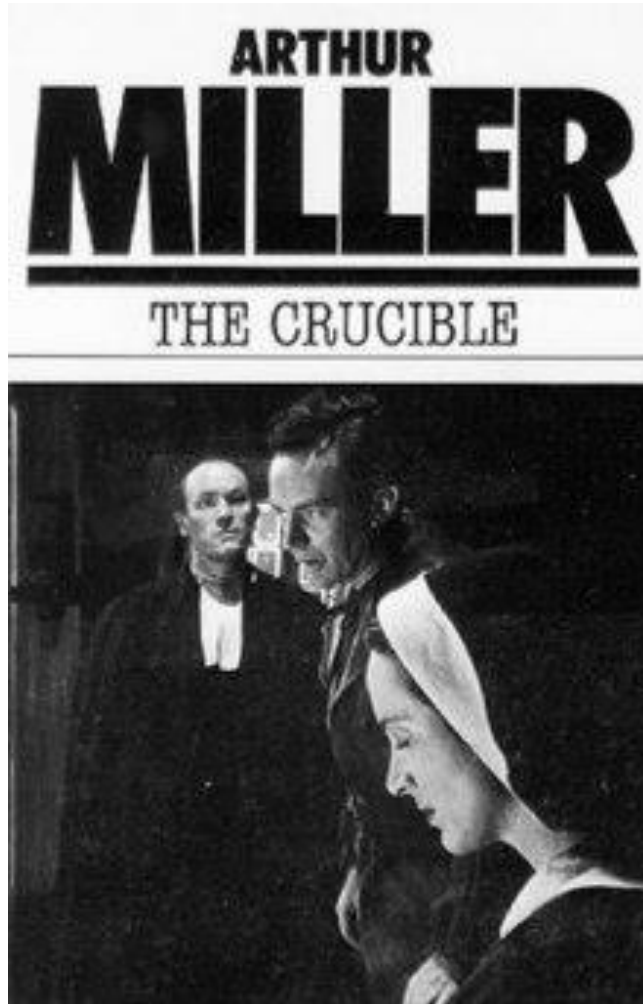






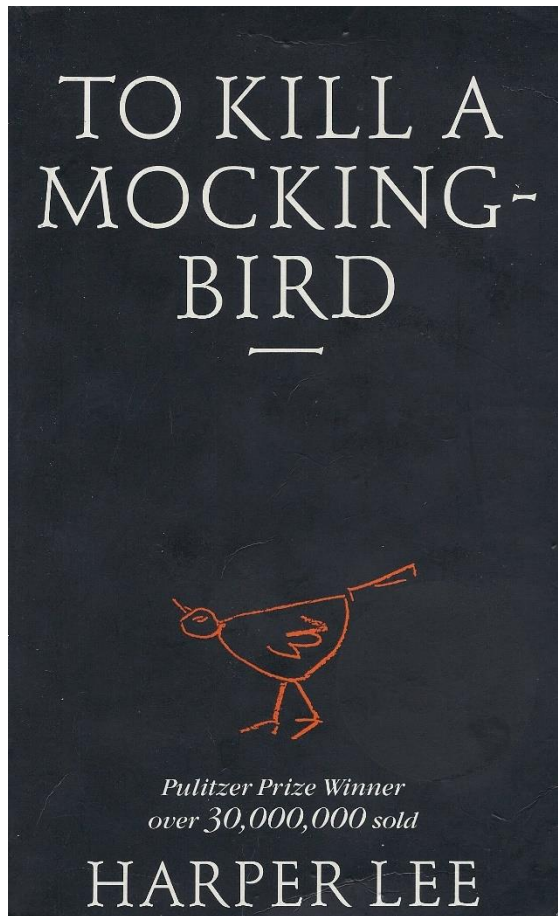
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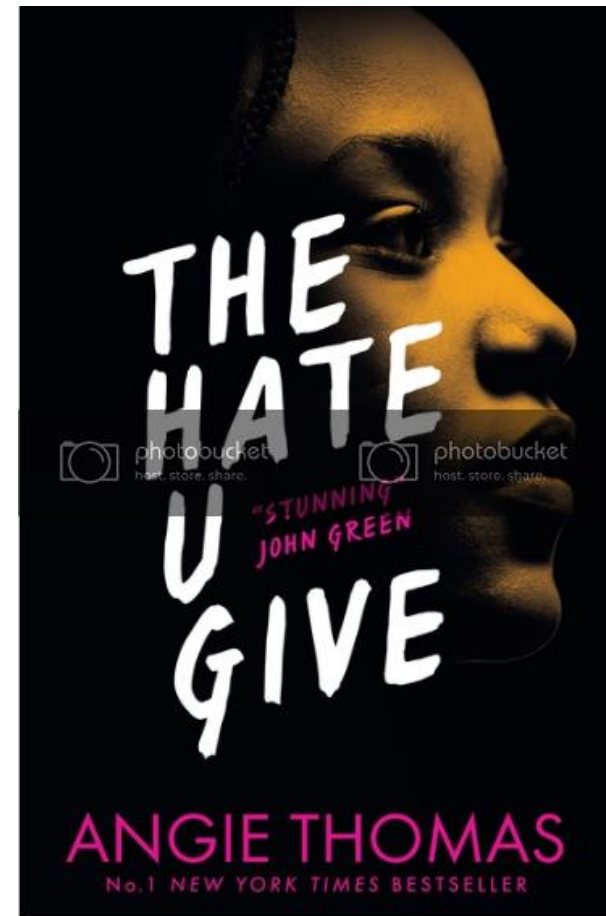


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HIAS English Team

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For further details referring to English, please contact the team leader:

- Emma Tarrant: emma.tarrant@hants.gov.uk

For secondary-specific English queries, please contact:

- Joanna Kenyon: joanna.kenyon@hants.gov.uk

For further details on the full range of services available please contact us using the following email:

htlcdev@hants.gov.uk

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