Sixth Form Reading List

25 General Good Reads

(A mix of fiction, non-fiction, science, history, and self-development)

Fiction

1. **To Kill a Mockingbird** – Harper Lee
   A profound exploration of justice, race, and empathy in the American South.
2. **1984** – George Orwell
   A chilling dystopia about authoritarianism, surveillance, and resistance.
3. **The Book Thief** – Markus Zusak
   A WWII story narrated by Death, showing the power of language and kindness.
4. **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time** – Mark Haddon
   A unique view of the world through the eyes of a neurodivergent teen.
5. **The Great Gatsby** – F. Scott Fitzgerald
   A classic tale of wealth, illusion, and the American Dream.
6. **Frankenstein** – Mary Shelley
   The original science fiction novel; explores science, ethics, and alienation.
7. **Never Let Me Go** – Kazuo Ishiguro
   A quietly dystopian and emotional story about identity, humanity, and loss.
8. **The Kite Runner** – Khaled Hosseini
   A moving story of friendship, betrayal, and redemption in Afghanistan.
9. **Of Mice and Men** – John Steinbeck
   A tale of friendship, dreams, and tragedy during the Great Depression.
10. **Life of Pi** – Yann Martel
    A philosophical survival story about belief, perception, and resilience.

Non-Fiction

11. **Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind** – Yuval Noah Harari
    A compelling look at human evolution, civilization, and the future.
12. **Factfulness** – Hans Rosling
    Eye-opening, evidence-based optimism about the state of the world.

13. **The Diary of a Young Girl** – Anne Frank
    A deeply personal, human record of life under Nazi persecution.

14. **Educated** – Tara Westover
    A memoir about breaking free from an isolated upbringing through education.

15. **Why We Sleep** – Matthew Walker
    Grounded in neuroscience, this book shows why sleep is essential for life and learning.

16. **The Power of Habit** – Charles Duhigg
    Explains how habits work and how we can change them — personally and professionally.

17. **Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking** – Susan Cain
    A powerful case for the value of introversion in a noisy world.

18. **The Social Animal** – David Brooks
    Combines social science and storytelling to explain how we become who we are.

19. **Thinking, Fast and Slow** – Daniel Kahneman
    A landmark book in psychology and decision-making theory.

20. **The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind** – William Kamkwamba
    True story of a Malawian teen who saved his village with ingenuity.

21. **The Art of Thinking Clearly** – Rolf Dobelli
    A collection of cognitive biases and logical fallacies we often fall for.

22. **The Sense of Style** – Steven Pinker
    A witty and smart guide to writing clearly and effectively.

23. **A Short History of Nearly Everything** – Bill Bryson
    A brilliant, funny journey through the history of science and discovery.

24. **Prisoners of Geography** – Tim Marshall
    How geography shapes politics, power, and global conflict.

25. **The Code Book** – Simon Singh (Optional swap/add-on)
    A fascinating history of cryptography, great for budding mathematicians or computer scientists.

Subject specific wider reading

Biology

- The Selfish Gene by Richard Dawkins
- The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot
- Life Ascending by Nick Lane
- The Gene by Siddhartha Mukherjee
- Your Inner Fish by Neil Shubin

English Literature

- How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster
- The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- Beloved by Toni Morrison
- A Room of One's Own by Virginia Woolf
- Wide Sargasso Sea by Jean Rhys

Geography

- Prisoners of Geography by Tim Marshall
- There Is No Planet B by Mike Berners-Lee
- Collapse by Jared Diamond
- Adventures in the Anthropocene by Gaia Vince

History

- Postwar by Tony Judt (Europe after 1945)
- The Cold War by Odd Arne Westad
- The Histories by Herodotus (classic)
- Guns, Germs, and Steel by Jared Diamond
- Dominion by Tom Holland

Maths

- Fermat's Last Theorem by Simon Singh
- The Music of the Primes by Marcus du Sautoy
- Alex's Adventures in Numberland by Alex Bellos
- How Not to Be Wrong by Jordan Ellenberg

Physical Education (PE) / Sports Science

- Bounce – Matthew Syed
- The Sports Gene – David Epstein
- Why We Sleep – Matthew Walker (applies to recovery and performance)

- Born to Run – Christopher McDougall
- The Champion's Mind – Jim Afremow
- Legacy – James Kerr (on leadership in sport – All Blacks rugby)
- The Talent Code – Daniel Coyle

Psychology

- The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat by Oliver Sacks
- Thinking, Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman
- The Lucifer Effect by Philip Zimbardo
- Bounce by Matthew Syed
- Behave by Robert Sapolsky

Sociology

- Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class – Owen Jones
- The Spirit Level – Richard Wilkinson & Kate Pickett
- Watching the English – Kate Fox
- No Logo – Naomi Klein
- The Sociological Imagination – C. Wright Mills
- The Establishment – Owen Jones
- Modernity and Self-Identity – Anthony Giddens

Business Studies

- Shoe Dog – Phil Knight
- The Undercover Economist – Tim Harford
- Business Adventures – John Brooks
- Start With Why – Simon Sinek
- The Tipping Point – Malcolm Gladwell
- Lean In – Sheryl Sandberg
- Thinking, Fast and Slow – Daniel Kahneman

Computer Science

- The Code Book by Simon Singh
- Algorithms to Live By by Christian & Griffiths
- The Master Algorithm by Pedro Domingos
- Code by Charles Petzold

Criminology

- The Secret Barrister – Anonymous (also under Law)
- Criminology: A Sociological Introduction – Eamonn Carrabine et al.
- Outlaws: Crime, Disorder and Protest in Early Modern England – John Walter
- The Fear of Crime – Jason Ditton
- The Jigsaw Man – Paul Britton (forensic psychology)
- Mindhunter – John E. Douglas (basis for the Netflix series)
- Inside the Mind of a Murderer – Helen Morrison

Other fields of interest

Law

- Letters to a Law Student by Nicholas McBride
- The Secret Barrister by Anonymous
- Is Eating People Wrong? by Allan Hutchinson
- In Black and White by Alexandra Wilson
- Guilty Until Proven Innocent by Clive Stafford Smith

Philosophy / Ethics

- The Pig That Wants to Be Eaten by Julian Baggini
- Think by Simon Blackburn
- Sophie's World by Jostein Gaarder
- Justice by Michael Sandel
- The Republic by Plato (for advanced readers)

Politics / International Relations

- Politics: A Very Short Introduction by Kenneth Minogue
- How Democracies Die by Levitsky & Ziblatt
- The Road to Unfreedom by Timothy Snyder
- Why Nations Fail by Acemoglu & Robinson

Economics

- Freakonomics by Levitt & Dubner
- The Undercover Economist by Tim Harford
- Doughnut Economics by Kate Raworth
- Capital by Thomas Piketty (challenging but important)

Chemistry

- The Disappearing Spoon by Sam Kean
- Napoleon's Buttons by Penny Le Couteur
- Mendeleyev's Dream by Paul Strathern
- Stuff Matters by Mark Miodownik

Physics

- Seven Brief Lessons on Physics by Carlo Rovelli
- A Brief History of Time by Stephen Hawking
- The Elegant Universe by Brian Greene
- We Have No Idea by Jorge Cham & Daniel Whiteson