



SPRING

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Happy reading! – Miss Mullins, Miss Walker, and Miss Henry

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Orpington Library's Younger Teens Reading Group

Do you enjoy reading?
Enjoy talking about books?



Would you like to join the
Younger Teens Reading
Group at Orpington Library?

If you would like to join, please contact us by
email: orpington.library@gll.org

Meetings are once a month on a Monday from
5:30-6:30pm, during term time, for ages 11-
14 years

We look forward to seeing you!

Museum Selfie Day, 21st January

Museum Selfie Day is a worldwide trend started by London blogger Mar Dixon that encourages people to take creative selfies in museums and share them on social media to increase interest and engagement with museums. Traditionally, museums were slow to allow photography because flash cameras could damage valuable artworks, which is why "no photography" signs were common. However, as smartphone cameras improved and no longer required flash, many museums began relaxing their rules to connect better with modern audiences. Celebrated each

year on January 21, Museum Selfie Day invites people to explore museums in fun and creative ways, especially those they may not normally visit, highlighting the huge growth of museums in the United States over recent decades. The trend also connects to the history of selfies, from the first self-portrait taken in 1839 to the introduction of front-facing cameras on phones in the early 2000s. On this day, visitors are encouraged to take thoughtful, well-lit selfies with museum exhibits, share them online using hashtags, and view selfies from museums around the world, some of which even gain attention from major media. Overall, Museum Selfie Day blends art, history, and modern technology to make museums feel more accessible, interactive, and relevant to younger generations. Why not spend the weekend exploring different museums across London and see what new favourites you can find!



On This Day... Edgar Allan Poe was Born 19th January 1949

Edgar Allan Poe was a famous American writer and poet known for his dark and mysterious stories and poems that still fascinate readers today. He was born on January 19, 1809, in Boston, Massachusetts, and had an older brother and a younger sister, but his early life was very difficult because his father left the family and his mother died soon after, leaving the children orphaned. Poe was taken in by John and Frances Allan in Richmond, although he was never officially adopted. Poe was well educated but later cut out of Allan's will, forcing him to support himself. He attended the University of Virginia in 1826, where gambling debts damaged his relationship with Allan even more, and he later joined the U.S. Army, publishing his first book of poems, *Tamerlane and Other Poems*, in 1827. Determined to be a writer, Poe worked hard and gained recognition through editing jobs and writing for magazines, including the *Southern Literary Messenger*, *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, and *Graham's*



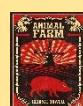
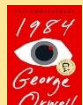
Magazine. Poe became famous in 1845 after publishing "The Raven," and he also helped create the detective fiction genre with stories like "The Purloined Letter." Despite his success, Poe's life was filled with hardship, and in 1849 he was found unconscious in Baltimore and died a few days later under mysterious circumstances, leaving behind a powerful literary legacy that continues to influence writers today.

Tales of Mystery and Imagination by Edgar Allan Poe
Spiral into a dimly lit world, down streets lined with madmen and their black deeds, through the cold twists of the catacombs, and into rooms where secrets dwell.
Tales of Terror and Fantasy by Edgar Allan Poe
The best of Edgar Allan Poe's stories hold a unique place in literature. Not only was he one of the few great masters of the difficult art of the short story; he was also a truly astonishing originator of styles of fiction which have since developed and become important branches of literature.



On This Day... George Orwell Passed Away on 21st January 1950

George Orwell was a British writer and journalist born as Eric Arthur Blair on June 25, 1903, in India, which was then part of the British Empire, and he grew up between India and England. He was educated at elite schools in England but became very aware of class differences and social inequality, which later influenced his writing. After school, Orwell worked as a police officer in Burma, where he witnessed the harsh realities of British imperial rule, leading him to strongly oppose imperialism and eventually leave the job. Wanting to understand the lives of ordinary people, he lived among the poor in England and Europe, experiences he later described in his book *Down and Out in Paris and London*. Orwell also fought in the Spanish Civil War, where he was wounded in the neck and became deeply disillusioned after seeing political betrayal and propaganda on all sides, shaping his lifelong hatred of totalitarianism. These experiences inspired his most famous works, *Animal Farm*, an allegory about the Russian Revolution, and *1984*, a dystopian novel warning about government surveillance, censorship, and loss of freedom. Throughout his life, Orwell suffered from poor health, especially tuberculosis, but continued writing despite his illness. He died on January 21, 1950, at the age of 46, shortly after *1984* was published, leaving behind a lasting legacy as one of the most important writers of the 20th century, whose ideas about power, truth, and freedom remain relevant today.



1984 by George Orwell (recommended for older readers)

Winston Smith rewrites history. It's his job. Hidden away in the Record Department of the sprawling Ministry of Truth, he helps the Party, and the omnipresent Big Brother, control the people of Oceania. The new notebook he's begun to write in is against the rules -- in fact, the Thought Police could arrest him simply for having it. Yet, as Winston begins to write his own history, a seed of rebellion begins to grow in his heart -- one that could have devastating consequences.

Animal Farm by George Orwell (recommended for older readers)

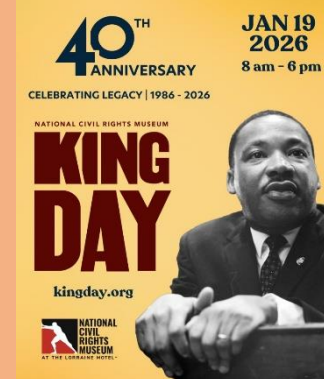
The animals at Manor Farm have had enough of Farmer Jones -- he's drunk, he's reckless and he cares little for the welfare of his animals. When Old Major, the old boar, calls a meeting, the animals are enthralled by his revolutionary plans, convinced that with the despot Jones overthrown, they can thrive on their own. However, soon after the farmer is banished from Manor Farm, the pigs begin to vie for control amongst themselves; the promised comforts never appear, no matter how hard they work; and their leaders begin to bear an uncanny resemblance to the very men they said they despised.

Life and Times: Orwell by Scott Lucas

In this controversial new biography, Scott Lucas argues that we now need to be rescued from Orwell. Orwell was never really a socialist, Lucas argues, and, in spite of his interest in "clear writing", he remained as confused in his politics as he was talented and prolific in prose. Most strikingly, soon after the publication of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell passed a list of 'suspect' individuals, from Charlie Chaplin to Michael Redgrave, to British Intelligence. Since his death, Lucas suggests, Orwell has become a talisman for the neoliberal right, for "little England", and even for an American-led world.

Civil Rights Day, 19th January

Before Europeans arrived, the Americas were home to advanced civilisations such as the Aztecs, Mayans, and Incas, but European explorers searching for spices instead found gold and silver and decided to conquer the land, often committing violence and genocide against Native peoples. As European empires grew, millions of Africans were forcibly brought to America and sold into slavery to provide labour, creating a system that lasted centuries. Slavery reached its height before and during the American Civil War and ended in 1865, followed by the 13th-15th Amendments, which abolished slavery and granted African Americans citizenship and voting rights. However, despite these laws, people of colour continued to face severe discrimination and inequality. Nearly 100 years later, the Civil Rights Movement began, led by Martin Luther King Jr., who fought peacefully against segregation and injustice starting in 1954. Over 14 years, the movement gained widespread support and led to major changes, including new federal laws and the 24th Amendment, which banned poll taxes. King was assassinated on April 4, 1968, while planning a campaign to fight poverty, leading to nationwide mourning. His legacy lives on through Civil Rights Day, now known as Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and through ongoing efforts to promote equality, such as scholarships and programs that support Black students and minorities in education and professional fields.



The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Malcolm X and Alex Haley

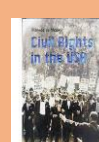
Vilified by his critics as an anti-white demagogue, Malcolm X gave a voice to unheard African-Americans, bringing them pride, hope and fearlessness, and remains an inspirational and controversial figure.

Civil Rights in the USA by Brendan January

Primary source accounts of history add an unmatched authenticity to this series. Each book introduces the period and the available sources, justifying why we can rely on them, who produced them, or why they have survived. The text also gives historical background and explores what can be learned from the source.

Hidden Figures by Margot Lee Shetterly

Moving from World War II through NASA's golden age, touching on the civil rights era, the Space Race, the Cold War, and the women's rights movement, *Hidden Figures* interweaves a rich history of mankind's greatest adventure with the intimate stories of five courageous women whose work forever changed the world.



Let's Celebrate... Just Do It Day on the 24th January

"Just Do It" Day is celebrated on January 24 and is meant to inspire people to stop procrastinating and finally take action on things they have been putting off, whether it is trying something new, starting a goal, or completing a small but important task. First celebrated in 2015, the day encourages the idea that even one small step—like sending an email, cleaning a space, or reaching out to a loved one—can lead to positive change. The phrase "Just Do It" is famously known as Nike's slogan, first introduced in 1988 by advertiser Dan Wieden and inspired by the final words of Gary Gilmore, "Let's do it." Over time, the slogan has come to represent motivation, focus, and success, and it reflects a mindset often associated with American culture: taking initiative and acting on ideas.



Because of this meaning, the slogan fits perfectly with the purpose of the day, which is about overcoming fear, hesitation, or laziness and choosing action instead. "Just Do It" Day reminds people that waiting for the perfect moment often holds them back, and that taking action—no matter how small—can help them grow, gain confidence, and move closer to becoming their best selves.

Feel Good Club: A Guide to Feeling Good and Being Okay when You're Not by Aimie Lawlor-Skinner

Successful entrepreneurs Aimie and Kiera share their trademark of inspiring quotes alongside the wisdom that enabled them to overcome tough moments. Continuing their mission of wanting to make people feel good through positivity, love and normalising the way that we share how we feel. They want to make people feel good in a positive way, and also help us all open about how we're truly feeling.

Fearless! How to be Your True, Confident Self! By Liam Hackett

In *Fearless*, Liam Hackett aims to help young people be themselves, explaining how they can break free from labels and stereotypes to fear less and truly realize their full potential. Includes interviews with inspirational people who defy stereotypes, such as female politicians and male dancers. Plus, activities to get young people thinking outside the box.

