

International School Hamburg

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

MORE THAN

100



GOOD BOOKS

TO READ BEFORE YOU LEAVE ISH!

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi—Purple Hibiscus

A sensitive and touching story of a child exposed too early to religious intolerance and the uglier side of the Nigerian state.

Ali, Monica—Brick Lane

A Bangladeshi woman arrives in London for an arranged marriage. Complications of a lover, family life and her religion make for a subtle, engrossing portrait of contemporary British Asian life.

Allende, Isabel—The House of Spirits

Pride, passion and magic realism. A family saga set in South America.

Ammaniti, Niccolò – I'm Not Scared

Nine-year-old Michele explores a derelict house and discovers, under moldering leaves, a horrifying secret.

Angelou, Maya—I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

In this first volume of her five books of autobiography, Maya Angelou presents the memorable events of her childhood – both joyful and disturbing - in the American south of the 1930s.

Adiga, Aravind – The White Tiger

Balam, a poor low caste Indian secures a job as a driver for the local landlord but he wants more....and perhaps some blood will have to flow. Satirical expose of globalization.

Ashworth, Andrea—Once in a House on Fire

Powerful account of a young girl's struggles to achieve academic success and independence from an almost unbearable home environment.

Atkinson, Kate—Behind the Scenes at the Museum

A family history with some dark secrets - funny and involving.

Case Histories

Set in Cambridge, a private investigator is thrown into the middle of three unsolved old cases. Brilliant.

Atwood, Margaret—Handmaid's Tale

Set in an imagined future world where gender roles have been fundamentally altered by a drastic decline in human fertility.

The Blind Assassin

Iris remembers her sister's mysterious death and so begins the compelling story of two sisters and their secrets. Memory, intrigue, betrayal.

Austen, Jane—Pride and Prejudice

Comic account of the search by four sisters for the right marriage partner.

Barrico, Alessandro—Silk

France, 1861. When an epidemic threatens to wipe out the silk trade in France, Herve Joncour, travels overland to distant Japan, out of bounds to foreigners, to smuggle out healthy silkworms but meets there a woman who mesmerizes him for the rest of his life.

Bauby, Jean-Dominique—The Diving Bell and the Butterfly

After suffering a stroke that has left him to communicate only with a blinking eye, this book is a celebration of the liberating power of imagination.

Berger, John – Ways of Seeing

Over six essays, the reader is encouraged to see the world with new eyes to allow greater understanding of the images around them, going beyond the surface of paintings, photographs and other images to see how even the tiniest details are part of the overall reading and perception of that image.

Bernieres de, Louis—Captain Corelli's Mandolin

A love story between an Italian soldier and a Greek woman set on a Greek island in the Second World War.

Bronte, Charlotte—Jane Eyre

One of literature's great love stories with a strong, courageous heroine.

Bronte, Emily—Wuthering Heights

A novel of wild, forbidden passions and desires.

Brookmyre, Christopher – Quite Ugly One Morning

Hard-partying, wisecracking investigative journalist Jack Parlabane, who is not afraid to bend the laws of the land to get to the truth, stumbles across a corpse.

Boyne, John—The Boy in the Striped Pjamas

Go on a journey with a nine-year-old boy called Bruno and sooner or later you will arrive with Bruno at a fence – a fence you should never have to cross.

Capote, Truman—In Cold Blood

A novel based on a true crime story where two young men kill an entire family in the course of a robbery and are consequently sentenced to death. An exploration of the morality of the death penalty.

Carey, Peter—Oscar and Lucinda

Made for each other, clergyman Oscar Hopkins and the heiress Lucinda Leplastrier are gamblers - one obsessive, the other compulsive - incapable of winning at the game of love.

Chang, Jung—Wild Swans

leathe 20th century.

Chevalier, Tracy—Girl with a Pearl Earring

The story of Griet, a 16-year-old Dutch girl who becomes a maid in the house of the painter Johannes Vermeer. Her calm and perceptive manner not only helps her in her household duties, but also attracts the painter's attention.

Cleave, Chris – The Other Hand

This is the story of two women whose lives collide one fateful day and one of them has to make a terrible choice...

Dickens, Charles – Great Expectations

A terrifying encounter with an escaped convict in a graveyard on the wild Kent marshes; a summons to meet the bitter, decaying Miss Havisham and her beautiful, cold-hearted ward Estella; the sudden generosity of a mysterious benefactor - these form a series of events that change the orphaned Pip's life forever.

Dovle, Roddy—The Van

*The first of a trilogy of novels based on the experiences of a large family set in Dublin. Funny and almost entirely dialogue. *The Commitments* and *The Snapper* are the other two books in the trilogy.*

Paddy Clarke Ha Ha

The story of an Irish lad named Paddy rampages through the streets of Barrytown with a pack of like-minded hooligans, playing cowboys and Indians, etching their names in wet concrete, and setting fires.

Eliot, George—Mill on the Floss

Compelling family saga, focusing on one of the great heroines of the nineteenth century, Maggie Tulliver.

Faber, Michael – The Crimson Petal and the White

A marvelous story of love, sin, familial conflicts and class prejudice.

Faulks, Sebastian—Birdsong

Powerful story of love and war set in the First World War trenches flashing forward to a modern couple.

Charlotte Gray

The 25-year-old heroine hoping to make some contribution to the war effort finds herself involved in the French Resistance.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott—The Great Gatsby

Doomed love story set in the Jazz Age, exploring both sides of the American Dream.

Flagg, Fannie—Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Café

The tale of two women--of the irrepressibly dare devilish tomboy Idgie and her friend Ruth--who back in the thirties ran a little place offering good barbecue and good coffee and all kinds of love and laughter, even an occasional murder.

Foer, Johnathan Safran—Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close

When his father is killed in the September 11th attacks, nine-year-old Oskar Schell sets out to solve the mystery of a key he discovers in his father's closet.

Fowles, John—The Collector

Psychological novel that explores the obsessive relationship between a kidnapper and his victim.

Gaarder, Jostein—Sophie's World

Sophie finds two questions in her mailbox: "Who are you?" and "Where does the world come from?" This is the start of her journey through the history of philosophy, guided by a mysterious mentor.

Greene, Graham—Brighton Rock

Atmospheric gangland thriller set in Brighton that confronts faith, violence and sexuality.

Guttererson, David—Snow Falling on Cedars

Thriller focusing on the Japanese community.

Haddon, Mark—The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time

A murder mystery like no other, this novel features Christopher Boone, a 15 year-old who suffers from Asperger's syndrome.

Hamid, Mohsin – The Reluctant Fundamentalist

Changez, a pakistani Muslim from a once wealthy family in Lahore wins a place at Princeton and goes on to experience his own version of the American Dream. However, after 9/11 he rejects this life and begins to concentrate on other fundamentals.

Hardy, Thomas—Tess of the D'Urbervilles

Tragic novel of a young working woman made pregnant by the lord of the manor, in the harsh moral and social climate of nineteenth century England.

Harris, Joanna—Chocolat

The opening of a chocolate boutique in a small village by an exotic stranger stirs religious and culinary passions that divide a community.

Heller, Joseph—Catch 22

*The novel on which M*A*S*H was based! Set in a Bomber command—funny, disturbing satire on war and hierarchy.*

Heller, Zoe

When the new teacher, Sheba, first arrives, Barbara immediately senses that this woman will be different from the rest of the staff. Foolishly, Sheba becomes involved in an illicit affair with a pupil. So when the liaison is found out and Sheba's life falls apart, Barbara is there...

Hoeg, Peter—Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow

One snowy day in Copenhagen, six-year-old Isaiah falls to his death from a city rooftop. The police pronounce it an accident. But Isaiah's neighbour, Smilla, suspects murder.

Hornby, Nick—High Fidelity

Is it possible to share your life with someone whose record collection is incompatible with your own? For Rob Fleming, thirty-five years old, a pop addict and owner of a failing record shop, these are the sort of questions that need an answer.

Slam *The story follows a teenage boy who has an imaginary friendship with skateboarding hero Tony Hawk.*

About a Boy

Will is thirty-six but acts like a teenager. Single, child-free and still feeling cool, he reads the right magazines, goes to the right clubs and knows which trainers to wear. Looking for a girlfriend, he finds an unlikely companion.

Hosseini, Khaled—The Kite Runner/ A Thousand Splendid Suns

Two motherless boys who learn to crawl and walk side-by-side are destined to destroy each other across the gulf of their tribal differences in a country of dried mulberries, sour oranges, rich pomegranates and honey.

The second novel looks at the plight of Afghani women under the Taliban. Poignant and moving.

Hurston, Zora Neale – Their Eyes Were Watching God

The novel follows the fortunes of Janie Crawford, a woman living in the black town of Eaton, Florida.

Huxley, Aldous—Brave New World

Nightmare vision of a future where people are programmed into a rigid social hierarchy and which examines what it is to be human.

Jones, Lloyd—Mister Pip

The author celebrates the resilience of the human spirit and the power of literature to transform lives.

Kayson, Susanna—Girl Interrupted

A clear-sighted account of the author's two-year stay at a psychiatric hospital at the age of eighteen.

Keneally, Thomas—Schindler's Ark

This work tells the story of Oskar Schindler, who risked his life to protect Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland and who was transformed by the war into a man with a mission.

Kesev, Ken—One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

Compelling account of the repressive regime in a mental asylum which is thrown into turmoil by the arrival of a new patient who questions those in authority.

Kidd, Sue Monk - The Secret Life of Bees

South Carolina 1964. Lily escapes from her tyrannical father and runs away from home. She is taken in by three sisters who make honey.

Kingsolver, Barbara—The Poisonwood Bible

This tale of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction, over the course of three decades in post-colonial Africa, is set against one of his story's most dramatic political parables.

Lahiri, Jhumpa—The Namesake

Examines questions of identity and culture of second generation immigrants through the story of Gogol, born of Indian parents in the USA.

Interpreter of Maladies

Some of these nine tales are set in India, others in the United States, and most concern characters of Indian heritage. Yet the situations people face, from unhappy marriages to civil war, transcend ethnicity.

Lawrence, D. H.—Sons and Lovers

A young man coming to maturity is pulled between twin influences of relationships and family.

Levi, Primo—If This Is a Man

An autobiographical account by an Italian survivor of Auschwitz showing that above all, what the Nazis did was to rob the camp inmates of their humanity.

Llosa, Mario Vargas – Aunt Julia and The Scriptwriter

The novel follows an aspiring writer (Mario) working at a radio station that broadcasts daily soap-operas who aged 19 falls in love with his uncle's estranged wife and their romance is told in alternate chapters to some of the radio station's serials.

Martel, Yann—The Life of Pi

The only survivor from the wreck of a cargo ship on the Pacific, 16 year old Pi spends 221 days on a lifeboat with a hyena, a zebra (with a broken leg), a female orang-utan and a 450-pound Royal Bengal Tiger called Richard Parker.

Mathee, Dalene—Fiela's Child

In Africa a child wanders too far into the Knysa Forest and never returns. Nine years later, two government officials think they have found the child living on the other side of the forest. They take him from stricken Fiela, who has brought him up, and give him back to his 'original' family.

Maurier du, Daphne—Rebecca

Gothic romantic mystery set in Cornwall.

McCourt, Frank—Angela's Ashes

A memoir of growing up in New York in the 1930s and in Ireland in the 1940s.

McEwan, Ian—Atonement

On the hottest day of the summer of 1935, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis sees her sister Cecilia strip off her clothes and plunge into the fountain in the garden of their country house. By the end of the day, nothing in their lives will be the same.

Enduring Love

Psychologically acute and thought-provoking novel in which a hot air ballooning accident triggers a surprising train of events involving obsessional love.

Michaels, Anne—Fugitive Pieces

This fiercely concentrated and beautifully written novel tells the story of a Polish Jew who, at the age of seven, after seeing his parents murdered by the Nazis, is resurrected by a Greek scientist, and transformed from a half-wild survivor into a scholar and translator who extracts meaning from the unfathomable horror of our time.

Morrison, Toni—The Bluest Eye

The experiences of a young black girl who sees herself as ugly because she judges herself by white standards of beauty.

O'Brien, Tim – The Things They Carried

Weapons and good-luck charms carried by U.S. soldiers in Vietnam here represent survival, lost innocence and the war's interminable legacy.

O'Farrell, Maggie – After You'd Gone

A coherent and moving portrait of a young woman's journey toward a life-threatening crisis.

The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox

Iris Lockhart, a young Scottish woman, is suddenly informed that she has the power of attorney for her great aunt, Esme Lennox—who has been locked away in a mental institution for over 60 years.

Ondaatje, Michael—The English Patient

Set during the end of World War II, this novel explores the lives of four very disparate people who find themselves holed up together in a ruined villa north of Florence as the war retreats around them.

Orwell, George—1984

Written in 1948 this is still a chilling vision of Britain ruled as a police state where all individual freedom has been taken away. The novel that gave us ideas of Big Brother and Room 101.

Pierre, D. B. C.—Vernon God Little

Riotous adventures of Vernon Gregory Little in a small town in Texas. Cutting edge satire drawing on the Columbine shootings.

Plath, Sylvia—The Bell Jar

Set in 1950s America, focusing on a young woman starting out in life after university and suffering a nervous breakdown

Proulx, Annie—The Shipping News

Central character moves from disaster in the city to find happiness amongst a Newfoundland fishing community. Comedy of life and possibility.

Rankin, Ian – Inspector Rebus series

Inspector John Rebus investigates crime in Edinburgh.

Roy, Arundhati—The God of Small Things

Lyrical account of the devastating effects of the Indian caste system on a family.

Salinger, J. D.—Catcher in the Rye

Follows three days in the life of a young man who has just left school. He wanders around the bars of New York feeling alienated from his family and society.

Schlink, Bernard—The Reader

For 15-year-old Michael Berg, a chance meeting with an older woman leads to far more than he ever imagined. Years later, as a law student, Michael realizes that the woman sitting accused is the woman he once loved deeply.

Seiffert, Rachel – The Dark Room

Three stories of Germans – a crippled photographer, the children of an SS officer and the grandson of a soldier coming to terms with the war.

Shelley, Mary—Frankenstein

Enthusiastic scientist creates new monstrous being and lives to regret it.

Shriver, Lionel—We Need to Talk About Kevin

A psychological and philosophical investigation of blame, in the context of the parent and child relationship.

Sijie, Dai—Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress

Two boys, both sons of doctors, are sent to the top of a mountain for "re-education" in Mao's China; an education that involves carting buckets of excrement up and down precipitous paths.

Smith, Zadie—White Teeth

Dealing with friendship, love, war, three cultures and three families over three generations, one brown mouse, and the tricky way the past has of coming back and biting you on the ankle.

Spiegelmann, Art—Maus

The story of Vladek Spiegelman and his wife, living and surviving in Hitler's Europe, told through cartoons.

Steinbeck, John—The Grapes of Wrath

Epic journey from Oklahoma to California of farming families escaping poverty in the American Depression.

Stout, Mira – One Thousand Chestnut Trees

The story of a young artist who lives in New York and feels lost. Knowing little about her Boston Irish father and her Korean mother, and less still about Korea, she decides to journey to Korea to try to make sense of the random jigsaw pieces of her background.

Styron, William—Sophie's Choice

Novel which follows the life of a concentration camp survivor after the war and looks at the tragic consequences of her appalling experiences.

Suskind, Patrick—Perfume

Psychological profile of a murderer, gripping and macabre.

Tan, Amy—The Joy Luck Club

This novel describes the lives of four Asian women, who fled China in the 1940s, and their contentious relationships with their four very Americanized daughters.

Tyler, Anne—The Accidental Tourist

How does a man addicted to routine cope with the chaos of everyday life? Macon attempts at ordinary life are tragically and comically undone.

Walker, Alice—The Color Purple

Moving account of a young black woman's journey from abuse and oppression to fulfillment and independence.

Waters, Sarah – The Little Stranger

A chilling ghost story.

Fingersmith

Gripping historical thriller set in Victorian England about love, crime and identity.

Wharton, Edith – Ethan Frome

Ethan Frome marries Zeena to escape loneliness but when her young cousin Mattie comes to stay on their New England farm, Ethan discovers that he has married the wrong woman.

Wells, H. G.—The War of the Worlds

Science fiction classic where the Martians invade.

Wells, Rebecca—Devine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood

Mothers, daughters and best friends.

Welsh, Irvine—Trainspotting

Frenzied novel of heroin addiction set in Edinburgh.

Wilde, Oscar—The Picture of Dorian Gray

Follows the immortal life of a beautiful, rich and talented young man whose portrait ages while he remains forever young. Style is full of wit and the ideas are thought-provoking.

Winterson, Jeanette—Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit

Funny novel which follows the female central character from childhood to maturity as she gradually rejects family and religion and discovers the truth of her sexuality.

Woolf, Virginia—Mrs. Dalloway

One day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway as she prepares for an evening party, interwoven with the story of a shell-shocked veteran of the First World War. Moving exploration of lives and relationships in the inter war years.

Yoshimoto, Banana—Kitchen

Juxtaposes two tales about mothers, trans-sexuality, kitchens, love, tragedy, and the terms they all come to in the minds of a pair of free-spirited young women in contemporary Japan.

Zusak, Marcus—The Book Thief

The story of a young German girl who steals books, her family and the Jewish boxer hidden in their basement as they struggle to survive in Nazi Germany. Narrated by Death, it's an unusual and affecting story.

