

You should read at least two books this year. . The titles below are only suggested readings; you are free to choose which books you want to read.

Animal Farm *George Orwell*

Animal Farm is regarded in the literary field as one of the most famous satirical allegories of Soviet totalitarianism. Orwell based major events in the book on novels from the Soviet Union during the Stalin era. Orwell, a democratic socialist, and a member of the Independent Labour Party for many years, was a critic of Stalin, and was suspicious of Moscow-directed Stalinism after his experiences in the Spanish Civil War.

The Brooklyn Follies *Paul Auster*

The 60-year-old Nathan Glass returns to Brooklyn after his wife has left him. He is recovering from lung cancer and is looking for a quiet place to die. In Brooklyn he meets his nephew, Tom, whom he has not seen in several years. Tom has seemingly given up on life and has resigned himself to a string of meaningless jobs as he waits for his life to change. They develop a close friendship, entertaining each other in their misery, as they both try to avoid taking part in life.

Angela's Ashes *Frank McCourt*

Angela's Ashes is a memoir by American author Frank McCourt, and tells the story of his childhood. It was published in 1996 and won the Pulitzer Prize for Biography or Autobiography. Life in Ireland, and specifically life in Limerick City, in the 1930s and 1940s is described in all its grittiness. The family live in a hovel on a dirt lane and share one outdoor toilet with all their neighbors. Although his father teaches the children Irish stories and songs, he is an alcoholic and seldom finds work, and so they live on unemployment ("the dole") or charity. For years the family subsists mostly on bread and tea.

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas *John Boyne*.

When nine-year-old Bruno's father is ordered by the Fury to take command of Out-With, his entire family moves along with him. Bored, and missing his three best-friends-for-life, Bruno has no one to play with but his older, and meaner sister, Gretel. Until one day, he decides to go exploring. After a while, he finds a new friend to talk to, though they cannot play together.

The Importance of Being Earnest *Oscar Wilde*

The play, now considered Wilde's masterpiece, was rapidly written in Wilde's artistic maturity in late 1894. His final play returns to the theme of switched identities that will allow the two protagonists to escape Victorian social mores.

Tales of the Unexpected *Roald Dahl*

A collection of sixteen short stories written by Roald Dahl and first published in 1979. All of the stories were earlier published in various magazines, and then in the collections *Someone Like You* and *Kiss Kiss*.

From the Cradle to the Grave Oxford Bookworms collection

These stories explore the trials of life from youth to old age: the idealism of young people, the stresses of marriage, the anxieties of parenthood, and the loneliness and fears of older people. The wide variety of writing styles includes black humour, satire, and compassionate and realistic observation of the follies and foibles of humankind.

This collection contains stories by Evelyn Waugh, Roald Dahl, Somerset Maugham, Saki, Frank Sargeson, Raymond Carver, H.E. Bates, and Susan Hill.