HURSTMERE SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS STUDIES RECOMMENDED READING

KEY STAGE 3 • YEARS 7–9 | Explore beliefs, morality and big questions

The Boy at the Back of the Class

Years 7–8 • Accessible

Onjali Q. Raúf

A moving story about friendship, refugees, kindness and challenging prejudice.

RS links: Compassion, human rights, ethics

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

Years 7–8 • Accessible

C. S. Lewis

A fantasy story with themes of sacrifice, forgiveness, good and evil, and Christian symbolism.

RS links: Christianity, sacrifice, salvation

Buddha at Bedtime

Years 7–8 • Accessible

Dharmachari Nagaraja

Buddhist-inspired stories exploring kindness, patience, mindfulness and wisdom.

RS links: Buddhism, morality, compassion

Wonder

Years 7–9 • Accessible

R. J. Palacio

A story about difference, belonging, dignity and the importance of treating others fairly.

RS links: Equality, prejudice, human dignity

The Philosophy Files

Years 8–9 • Intermediate

Stephen Law

An engaging introduction to questions about God, truth, right and wrong.

RS links: Philosophy, arguments, ethics

The Diary of a Young Girl

Years 8–9 • Intermediate

Anne Frank

A first-hand diary that opens discussion of the Holocaust, religious persecution and hope.

RS links: Judaism, discrimination, human rights

CHOOSE • READ • REFLECT

What did this book teach you about beliefs or morality? Did it change your opinion? What would you ask its author?

RELIGIOUS STUDIES RECOMMENDED READING

KEY STAGE 4 • YEARS 10–11 | Extend your AQA GCSE Religious Studies learning

The Art of Happiness

Intermediate

Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler

Explores Buddhist perspectives on suffering, compassion, happiness and the mind.

RS links: Buddhist beliefs and practices

The Case for Christ

Challenging

Lee Strobel

Presents arguments supporting Christian claims about Jesus and the resurrection; read critically as a Christian apologetic viewpoint.

RS links: Christian beliefs, resurrection, faith

The Pig That Wants to Be Eaten

Intermediate–Challenging

Julian Baggini

Thought experiments that invite debate about identity, freedom, moral choices and responsibility.

RS links: Themes B and E, ethical evaluation

The Book Thief

Intermediate

Markus Zusak

A novel set in Nazi Germany exploring war, humanity, death and moral courage.

RS links: Themes D and F, peace, human rights

The Screwtape Letters

Challenging

C. S. Lewis

A satirical story examining temptation, sin and Christian ideas about human behaviour.

RS links: Christian beliefs, sin, good and evil

The Story of Philosophy

Challenging

Bryan Magee

An illustrated introduction to important philosophers and their arguments.

RS links: Philosophy, critical thinking, evaluation

GO FURTHER: SACRED TEXTS

Christianity: The Bible — Genesis 1–3; Matthew 5–7; Luke 10. **Buddhism:** The Dhammapada — teachings on compassion, wisdom and suffering.

GCSE themes: B Religion and Life • D Peace and Conflict • E Crime and Punishment • F Human Rights and Social Justice

Some books address war, persecution, death or other mature themes. Students and families should choose titles appropriate to individual readiness. Reading levels are indicative.