



## Complex Issues and Mental Health

### Books to help you think, understand and empathise

#### **Amnesia/Memory/Self and Identity**

*The Memory Book* by Lara Avery  
*The One Memory of Flora Banks* by Emily Barr  
*Every Day* by David Levithan  
*The Adoration of Jenna Fox* by Mary Pearson  
*Slated* by Teri Terry  
*Before I Go to Sleep* by SJ Watson  
*Memoirs of a Teenage Amnesiac* by G Zevin

#### **Anxiety**

*A Quiet Kind of Thunder* by Sarah Barnard  
*Under Rose-Tainted Skies* by Louise Gornall  
*Worries Go Away* by Kes Gray (picture book)  
*I Was Born For This* by Alice Oseman

#### **Body image/Anorexia/Eating Disorders**

*Blubber* by Judy Blume  
*Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes* by Chris Crutcher  
*Wintergirls* by Laurie Halse Anderson  
*Elena Vanishing* by Elena & Clare Dunkle  
*Fat Boy Swim* by Catherine Forde  
*Second Start to the Right* by Deborah Hautzig  
*Nothing Tastes as Good* by Claire Hennessey  
*The Art of Starving* by Sam Miller  
*Dumplin'* by Julie Murphy  
*Gloves Off* by Louisa Reid

#### **Bullying**

*Seven Days* by Eve Ainsworth  
*Blubber* by Judy Blume  
*Inside My Head* by Jim Carrington  
*The Chocolate War* by Robert Cormier  
*Kick the Moon* by Muhammed Khan  
*Being Miss Nobody* by Tamsin Winter

#### **Captivity**

*Bunker Diary* by Kevin Brooks  
*Stolen* by Lucy Christopher  
*Guantanamo Boy* by Anna Perrera

*The Cellar* by Natasha Preston

#### **Coming of Age – various issues**

*Flying Lessons and Other Stories* - various authors  
*Booked* by Kwame Alexander  
*Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret* -J Blume  
*Open: A Toolkit for How Magic and Messed Up Life Can Be* by Gemma Cairney (NF help book)  
*Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky  
*Kick the Moon* by Muhammed Khan  
*Ten Things We Shouldn't Have Done*—S Mlynowski  
*Solitaire, Radio Silence* or *I Was Born for This* by Alice Oseman  
*What Momma Left Me* by Renee Watson

#### **Coping with family depression/mental health**

*Boy Underwater* by Adam Baron  
*See You In The Cosmos* by Jack Cheng  
*15 Days Without a Head* by Dave Cousins  
*The Boy in the Tower* by Polly Ho-Yen  
*Saving Francesca* by M. Marchetta  
*Crazy* by Han Nolan

#### **Coping with family illness**

*A Pocketful of Stars* by Aisha Bushby  
*Nest* by Esther Ehrlich  
*A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness  
*My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult  
*Drums, Girls and Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick

#### **Depression or Suicide**

*Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher  
*Kite Spirit* by Sita Brahmachari  
*We Are Young* by Cat Clarke  
*I Was Here* by Gayle Forman  
*Night Shift* by Debi Gliori (picture book)  
*Reasons to Stay Alive* by Matt Haig  
*Impulse* by Ellen Hopkins

*And The Stars Were Burning Brightly* by Danielle Jawando

*The Science of Breakable Things* by Tae Keller

*Darius The Great is Not Okay* by Adib Khorram

*Some Kind of Happiness* by Claire Legrand

*All the Bright Places* by Jennifer Niven

*All the Things We Never Said* by Yasmin Rahman

*When Reason Breaks* by Cindy Rodriguez

*The Million Pieces of Neena Gill* by Emma Smith-Barton

*The Red Tree* by Shaun Tan (picture book)

*It's Kind of a Funny Story* by Ned Vizzini

*My Heart and Other Black Holes* by J. Warga

### **Disability or Difference**

*Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper

*Check Mates* by Stuart Foster

*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon

*Fish in a Tree* by Lynda Hunt

*Whisper* by Crissie Keighery

*Accidents of Nature* by Harriet McBryde Johnson

*Red Sky in the Morning* by Elizabeth Laird

*Rain Reign* or *How to Look for a Lost Dog* by Ann Martin

*A Mango-Shaped Space* by Wendy Mass

*Miss Spitfire* by Sarah Miller

*Wonder* by RJ Palacio

*Planet Earth is Blue* by Nicole Pantelakos

*House Rules* by Jodi Piccolt

*Ghost* by Jason Reynolds

*Can you See Me* by L Scott & R Westcott

*She Is Not Invisible* by Marcus Sedgwick

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

*Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous

*Candy* by Kevin Brooks

*Junk* or *The Hit* by Melvin Burgess

*Clean* by Juno Dawson

*Other Broken Things* by C Dessir

*Nina is Not OK* by Shappi Khorsandi

*Clean* by Amy Reed

### **Dying and Living**

*Love Letters to the Dead* by Ava Dellaira

*A Story About Cancer (With a Happy Ending)* by India Desjardins

*Before I Die* by Jenny Downham

*If I Stay* and *Where I Went* by Gayle Foreman

*Fault in Our Stars* or *Looking for Alaska*- J Green

*Hannah's Choice* by Hannah and Kirsty Jones

*Ways to Live Forever* by Sally Nichols

*Before I Fall* by Lauren Olivier

*Extraordinary Means* by Robyn Schneider

*The Great Blue Yonder* by Alex Shearer

*Elsewhere* by Gabrielle Zevin

*Falling into Place* by Amy Zhang

### **Ethnicity and Identity**

*Does My Head Look Big in This?* - R Abdel-Fattah

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie (n.b. controversial)

*Starfish* by Akemi Dawn Bowman

*Blended* by Sharon Draper

*The Girl Who Fell From the Sky* by Heidi Durrow

*If I Ever Get Out of Here* by Eric Gansworth

*See No Color* by Shannon Gibney

*The Girl in the Broken Mirror* by Savita Kalhan

*Dreams From My Father* by Barack Obama

*Cuba 15* by Nancy Osa

*Mexican Whiteboy* by Matt de la Pena

*Patron Saints of Nothing* by Randy Ribay

*Anita and Me* by Myra Syal

*Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* by Isabel Quintero

*Frankly in Love* by David Yoon

### **Euthanasia**

*The Weight of a Thousand Feathers* by Brian Conaghan

*The Universe vs Alex Woods* by Gavin Extence

*Me Before You* by JoJo Moyes

*Mercy* by Jodi Piccolt

### **Families – complex or difficult**

*Running on Empty* by SE Durrant

*Heroic* or *Being Billy* by Phil Earle

*Scarlet Ibis* by Gill Lewis

*We Are All Made of Molecules, Word Nerd* or *My*

*Messed-Up Life* by Susin Nielsen

*Chinese Cinderella* by Adeline Yen Mah

*Run, Rebel* by Manjeet Mann  
*My Name is Leon* by Kit de Waal  
*A Boy Called Hope* by Lara Williamson

### **Fitting in – problems with**

*Why We Took the Car* by Wolfgang Herrndorf  
*Rose, Interrupted* by Patrice Lawrence  
*Holding up the Universe* by Jennifer Niven  
*Eleanor and Park* or *Fangirl* by Rainbow Rowell  
*Catcher in the Rye* by JD Salinger  
*Stargirl* by Jerry Spinnelli

### **Gang Culture/Violence/Identity**

*I Predict a Riot* by Catherine Bruton  
*When I Was Joe* by Keren David  
*The Outsiders* by SE Hinton  
*Pigeon English* by Stephen Kelman  
*Orangeboy* by Patrice Lawrence  
*The Knife that Killed Me* by Anthony McGowan  
*Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds  
*Liccle Bit* or *Crongton Knights* by Alex Wheatle  
*Gangsta Rap* by Benjamin Zephaniah

### **Gender Identity and Homosexuality**

*Simon vs the Homo Sapiens Agenda* -B Albertalli  
*Black Flamingo* by Dean Atta  
*One Man Guy* by Micahel Barakiva  
*Ivy Aberdeen's Letter to the World* - Ashley Blake  
*Great* by Sarah Benicasa (retelling of The Great Gatsby by F Scott Fitzgerald)  
*If You Could be Mine* by Sarah Farizan  
*None of the Above* by IW Gregorio  
*Boy Meets Boy* by David Levithan  
*If I Was Your Girl* by Meredith Russo  
*Funny Boy: A Novel in Six Stories* by S Selvadurai  
*God Loves Hair* by Vivek Shraya  
*The Art of Being Normal* by Lisa Williamson

### **Grief**

*Clap When You Land* by Elizabeth Acevedo  
*Lost* by Eve Ainsworth  
*Rebound* by Kwame Alexander  
*The Thing About Jellyfish* by Ali Benjamin  
*Tiger Eyes* by Judy Blume  
*Artichoke Hearts* by Sita Brahmachari

*A Pocketful of Stars* by Aisha Bushby  
*A Library of Lemons* by Jo Cotterill  
*The Many Worlds of Albie Bright* by C Edge  
*Mockingbird* by Kathryn Erskine (+ autism)  
*Two Weeks With the Queen* by Morris Gleitzman  
*Ostrich Boys* by Keith Gray (+coming of age)  
*Wildspark* by Vashti Hardy  
*The Heart and the Bottle* by Jeffers (picture book)  
*The Square Root of Summer* by Harriet R Hapgood  
*We Are Okay* by Nina LaCour  
*The Sky is Everywhere* by Jandi Nelson  
*Optimists Die First* by Susin Nielson  
*My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece* or *Ketchup*  
*Clouds* by Annabel Pitcher

### **HIV/Aids**

*We Are Lost and Found* by Helene Dunbar  
*Full Disclosure* by Camryn Garrett  
*Like a Love Story* by Abdi Nazemian  
*Just Between Us* by JH Trumble

### **Imprisonment or Death Penalty**

*Moonrise* by Sarah Crossan  
*Blame* by Simon Mayo  
*Lockdown* by Walter Dean Myers  
*Guantanamo Boy* by Anna Perara  
*Holes* by Louis Sachar

### **Mental Health issues/illness**

*Beautiful Broken Things* by Sara Barnard  
*Game Changer* by Tim Bowler (phobias)  
*Am I Normal Yet?* or *All We All Lemmings and Snowflakes* by Holly Bourne  
*The Surprising Power of a Good Dumpling* by Wai Chim  
*Mind Your Head* by Juno Dawson (NF help book)  
*Shock of the Fall* by Nathan Filer  
*Truth Pixie* by Matt Haig (picture book)  
*Don't Call Me Crazy* ed by Kelly Jensen  
*When We Collided* by Emery Lord  
*Panther* by David Owen  
*On a Scale of 1 to 10* by Ceylan Scott (BPD)  
*Wild Awake* by Hilary Smith  
*Words on Bathroom Walls* by Julia Walton

## **Misogyny**

*The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood

*The Gender Game* by Bella Forrest

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khalid Hosseini

*Only Ever Yours* by Louise O'Neill

*Maresi* by Maria Turtschaninoff

*I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai

## **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder**

*All The Things That Could Go Wrong* by S. Foster

*Turtles All The Way Down* by John Green

*OCDaniel* by Wesley King

*The Goldfish Boy* by Lisa Thompson

## **Poverty and Homelessness**

*Lottery Boy* by Michael Byrne

*Toffee* by Sarah Crossan

*Sleeping in My Jeans* by Connie K Leonard

*No Fixed Address* by Susin Nielson

*Where I Live* by Brenda Rufener

*Stone Cold* by Robert Swindells

*Homecoming* by Cynthia Voigt

## **Racism**

*The Hypnotist* by Laurence Anholt

*Noughts and Crosses* by Malorie Blackman

*Claudette Colvin: Twice Towards Justice* -Hoose

*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

*The Rock and the River* by Kekla Magoon

*Coming of Age in Mississippi* by Anne Moody

*The Bluest Eye* or *Beloved* by Toni Morrison

*Small Great Things* by Jodi Picoult

*All American Boys* by J. Reynolds and B. Kelly

*I Am Thunder* by Muhammed Khan

*Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes

*The Boxer* by Nikesh Shukla

*Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli

*Lies We Tell Ourselves* by Robin Talley

*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Taylor

*The Hate U Give* or *On the Come Up* by Angie Thomas

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by M Twain

*Crow* by Barbara Wright

*Black Boy* by Richard Wright

*Front Desk* by Kelly Yang

## **Redemption, Injustice or Regret**

*Heart-shaped Bruise* by Tanya Byrne

*Looking for JJ* by Anne Cassidy

*Whirligig* by Paul Fleischman

*We Were Liars* by Emily Lockhart

*Monster* by Walter Dean Myers

*The Storyteller* by Jodi Picoult

## **Refugee experience**

*Give Me Shelter: An Asylum Seeker Anthology*

*The Unforgotten Coat* by Frank Cottrell Boyce

*No Ballet Shoes in Syria* by Catherine Bruton

*Abela: The Girl Who Saw Lions* by Bernie Doherty

*Don't Stop Thinking about Tomorrow* - S Curham

*Boy 87* by Ele Fountain

*The Bone Sparrow* by Zana Fraillion

*In the Sea there are Crocodiles* by Fabio Geda

*Boy Overboard* and *Girl Underground* by Morris Gleitzman

*Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai

*A Story Like the Wind* by Gill Lewis

*Shadow* by Michael Morpurgo

*The Other Side of Truth* by Beverly Naidoo

*A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park

*The Boy at the Back of the Class* by Onjali Rauf

*Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys

*The Arrival* by Shaun Tan

*The Fox Girl and the White Gazelle* by Victoria Williamson

*Refugee Boy* by Benjamin Zephaniah

## **Relationships**

*Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist*-Cohn & Levithan

*An Abundance of Katherines* by John Green

*To All the Boys I've Loved Before* by Jenny Han

*Why We Broke Up* by Daniel Handler

*Hold Back the Stars* by Katie Khan

*Across the Barricades* by Joan Lingard

*I'll Give You the Sun* by Jandi Nelson

*One Day* by David Nicholls

*Big Mouth and Ugly Girl* by Joyce Carol Oates

*Rani and Sukh* by Bali Rai

*How I Live Now* by Meg Rosoff

*Written in the Stars* by Aisha Saeed

*Our Chemical Hearts* by Krystal Sutherland  
*If You Come Softly* by Jacqueline Woodson  
*Everything, Everything or The Sun is Also a Star* by Nicola Yoon

### **Self-Harming**

*Damage* by Eve Ainsworth  
*Saving Daisy* by Phil Earle  
*Girl in Pieces* by Kathleen Glasgow  
*Red Tears* by Joanna Kenrick  
*Scars* by Cheryl Rainfield

### **Sexuality**

*Forever* by Judy Blume  
*Lobsters* by Tom Ellen and Lucy iVison  
*Release* by Patrick Ness

### **Sexual Assault and Physical or Sexual Abuse**

*Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Adichie  
*Shout or Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson  
*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou  
*No Shame or No Virgin* by Anne Cassidy  
*Toffee* by Sarah Crossan  
*You Against Me* by Jenny Downham  
*Learning to Scream* by Beate Teresa Hanike  
*The Kite Runner* by Khalid Hosseini  
*Outside* by Sarah Ann Juckes  
*Lucky* by Alice Sebold

### **Slavery**

*Copper Sun* by Sharon Draper  
*Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis  
*Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi  
*Day of Tears* by Julius Lester  
*Sold* by Patricia McCormick  
*Never Forgotten* by Patricia McKissack  
*The Glory Field* by Walter Dean Myers  
*Nightjohn* by Gary Paulsen

### **Social Justice**

*Change is Gonna Come* – various BAME authors  
*Here I Stand: Stories that Speak for Freedom*  
*Protest: Stories of Resistance* -various authors

*Terror Kid* by Benjamin Zephaniah

### **Social Media/Surveillance—hooked on/dangers**

*Feed* by MT Anderson  
*Need* by Joelle Charbonneau  
*Little Brother* by Cory Doctorow  
*Notes on a Nervous Planet* by Matt Haig  
*Queen of Likes* by Hillary Homzie  
*Unfriended* by Rachel Vail

### **Teen Pregnancy**

*Boys Don't Cry* by Malorie Blackman  
*Someone Like You* by Sarah Dessen  
*Dear Nobody* by Berlie Doherty  
*A Pure Swift Cry* by Siobhan Dowd  
*Megan* by Mary Hooper  
*Trouble* by Non Pratt  
*How to Save a Life* by Sara Zarr

### **Transplants**

*Pig Heart Boy* by Malorie Blackman  
*Eva* by Peter Dickinson  
*Out of Heart* by Irfan Master  
*Cold Hands, Warm Heart* by Jill Wolfson

### **Young Carers**

*Tender* by Eve Ainsworth  
*The Weight of a Thousand Feathers* by Brian Conaghan  
*The Outsiders* by SE Hinton  
*This Raging Light* by Estelle Laure  
*Broken Soup* by Jenny Valentine

Please note: some themes and books in this list are written for young adult readers, this means there will be some content that could be extremely sensitive and upsetting. Parents and students know what is best for them but if you have any queries about suitability, please check online reviews or get in contact with Mrs Hill who is the Reading Lead.