



FBA Reading Radar

OCTOBER 2025



WELCOME TO OUR LATEST NEWSLETTER!

Welcome to October!

The nights are getting darker, the air a little crisper - perfect reading weather!

This month's edition is packed with spooky stories and books to celebrate Black History Month. Whether you're KS3, KS4 or KS5, we've got something for you.

We also love to include student book reviews! If you have read something amazing recently, email Miss Richardson (rrichardson@fbaok.co.uk) and tell her all about it. Then we can feature your review in the newsletter!

Happy Reading!

Miss Richardson

Reading Tips for October

- ✓ **Create a Cosy Reading Space:** Grab a blanket, a hot chocolate and make yourself a comfy corner to enjoy your book.
- ✓ **Try a New Genre:** October is perfect for spooky or mysterious reads - step outside your comfort zone and try something new.
- ✓ **Read with Someone:** Share a story with a friend or family member, or take turns reading aloud - it makes books even more fun.

OCTOBER'S AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT



Tiffany D. Jackson is an award-winning American author celebrated for her gripping, twist-filled stories that blend real-world issues with spine-tingling suspense. Her books explore race, justice, friendship and fear - perfect for readers who love something dark, thought-provoking and impossible to put down.

Her bestselling novel *Monday's Not Coming* follows a girl whose best friend disappears - and no one seems to care.

In *White Smoke*, dubbed "The Haunting of Hill House meets *Get Out*" Jackson turns her pen to horror, mixing ghost stories with social tension and psychological thrills.

Tiffany's writing has a strong focus on:

- Black identity, justice and representation
- Secrets, suspense and psychological twists
- Empathy, resilience and truth-telling

Why We Love Her at FBA:

Tiffany proves that horror and mystery can have real heart. Her books aren't just scary - they make you think. If you loved *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder* or *One of Us Is Lying*, her stories are your next must reads.

Have a Recommendation?

Email Miss Richardson!
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KEY STAGE 3 RECOMMENDED READS



THE HAUNTING OF AVELINE JONES

– PHIL HICKES

Aveline Jones loves reading ghost stories, so a dreary half-term becomes much more exciting when she discovers a spooky old book. Not only are the stories spine-tingling, but it once belonged to Primrose Penberthy, who vanished mysteriously, never to be seen again. Intrigued, Aveline decides to investigate Primrose's disappearance.

Now someone... or something, is stirring. And it is looking for Aveline.

This is the first in a series of three novels!



PUMPKIN HEADS

– RAINBOW ROWELL AND FAITH ERIN HICKS

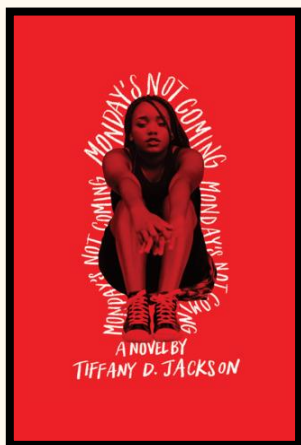
Deja and Josiah are seasonal best friends.

Every autumn, all through high school, they've worked together at the best pumpkin patch in the whole wide world. They say goodbye every Halloween, and they're reunited every September 1st.

But this Halloween is different - Josiah and Deja are finally seniors, and this is their last season at the pumpkin patch. Their last shift together. Their last goodbye.

Josiah's ready to spend the whole night feeling melancholy about it. Deja isn't ready to let him. What if their last shift was an adventure?

KEY STAGE 4 RECOMMENDED READS

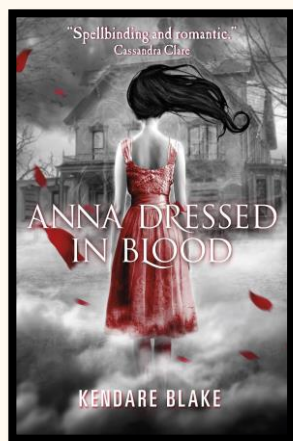


MONDAY'S NOT COMING

– TIFFANY D. JACKSON

Monday Charles is missing, and only Claudia seems to notice. Claudia and Monday have always been inseparable - more sisters than friends. So when Monday doesn't turn up for the first day of school, Claudia's worried. When she doesn't show for the second day, or second week, Claudia knows that something is wrong. Monday wouldn't just leave her to endure tests and bullies alone. Not after last year's rumours and not with her grades on the line. Now Claudia needs her best (and only) friend more than ever. But Monday's mother refuses to give Claudia a straight answer...

As Claudia digs deeper into her friend's disappearance, she discovers that no one seems to remember the last time they saw Monday. How can a teenage girl just vanish without anyone noticing that she's gone?



ANNA DRESSED IN BLOOD

– KENDARE BLAKE

Cas Lowood is no ordinary guy - he hunts dead people.

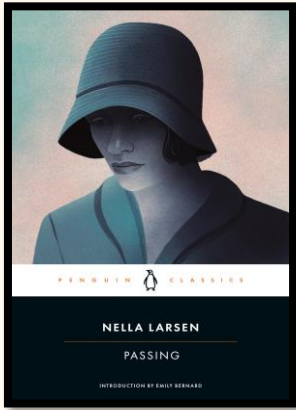
People like Anna. Anna Dressed in Blood. A beautiful, murderous ghost entangled in curses and rage. Cas knows he must destroy her, but as her tragic past is revealed, he starts to understand why Anna has killed everyone who's ever dared to enter her spooky home.

Everyone, that is, except Cas...

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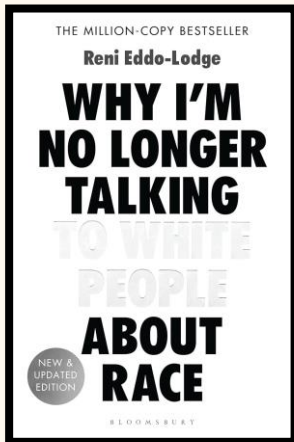
KEY STAGE 5 RECOMMENDED READS



PASSING

– NELLA LARSEN

Set in 1920s Harlem, this short but powerful classic explores race, identity and belonging through the lives of two childhood friends, Clare and Irene. When Clare begins to “pass” as white to move through a racist society, her secret choice threatens to unravel both of their lives. Beautifully written and emotionally charged, *Passing* raises timeless questions about how far we go to fit in and what it costs to hide who we are.



WHY I'M NO LONGER TALKING TO WHITE PEOPLE ABOUT RACE

– RENI EDDO-LODGE

Reni Eddo-Lodge's ground breaking book began as a viral blog post and became one of the most influential non-fiction works of the last decade. Combining history, personal experience and social analysis, it examines systemic racism in Britain - from education and feminism to class and privilege. It's an essential read for anyone who wants to understand race and inequality in modern society, and a perfect starting point for Sixth Formers who want to join meaningful conversations about change.

WIDER READING PICK: PSYCHOLOGY

THE LUCIFER EFFECT: UNDERSTANDING HOW GOOD PEOPLE TURN EVIL

PHILIP ZIMBARDO

Written by the psychologist behind the famous Stanford Prison Experiment, this fascinating book explores the psychology of power, authority and morality. Zimbardo asks how ordinary people can commit extraordinary acts of cruelty when placed in certain situations - a must-read for Psychology students and anyone interested in human behaviour, ethics and the darker side of social influence.

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BOOK OF THE MONTH!

This October we're diving into *White Smoke* by Tiffany D. Jackson – a chilling psychological horror often described as "The Haunting of Hill House meets Get Out." If you love slow burn suspense, family secrets and haunted houses that might not be the only thing hiding evil inside... this one's for you!

Marigold and her family are starting over. After a messy past and her mum's new job, they've moved into a renovated house in a picture-perfect neighbourhood - but perfection never lasts. Shadows move where they shouldn't, strange smells linger in the air, and whispers creep through the walls. As Marigold digs deeper into the house's history, she begins to realise that something sinister is watching... and it's not just the ghosts of the past.

Why This Book?

- **A Modern Gothic Tale:** *White Smoke* captures the eerie atmosphere of classic haunted house stories, reimagined for a new generation.
- **Twisted Tensions:** Jackson mixes supernatural chills with social commentary, exploring addiction, gentrification and mental health.
- **Page-Turning Suspense:** Every chapter tightens the tension - just when you think you've got it figured out, she flips everything upside down.

Perfect for Fans of:

- *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder* or *One of Us Is Lying*
- Haunted house mysteries with deeper meanings
- Writers like Karen McManus or Dawn Kurtagich



"Buddy growls, and I quickly grip his mouth to keep him quiet. But it's too late. The house stills. The house heard us."

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