

TERMS ONE AND TWO – SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

YEAR 8 NEWSLETTER



We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your son back to Northampton School for Boys. We hope you had a restful summer break.

As a school, we believe that the study of English empowers and inspires our students. Our curriculum centres around challenging and thought-provoking texts encompassing different times and cultures, encouraging students to make connections with a variety of voices and perspectives.

As such, our Key Stage 3 Curriculum is structured chronologically with Y7 focussing on Old English (Beowulf) in

the Autumn term, Middle English (Arthurian Legends and Chaucer) in the Spring term and Early-Modern English (Shakespeare) in the Summer term. In Year 8, we turn our attention to 19th – 21st century literature.

Every full term, we will release an English Department newsletter with information on:

- The knowledge and skills being covered in lessons
- Guidance on home learning
- Advice on complementary reading

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant member of staff using the contact details provided to the left.

We wish you and your son the very best wishes for a successful Autumn term at NSB.

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The English Team

WHAT WILL STUDENTS BE LEARNING THIS TERM?

All students will be studying Michael Morpurgo's 'Private Peaceful' alongside World War One poetry and short stories. Students will focus on the following reading skills:

- Making clear points about a text to build an argument.
- Using references to the text or quotations to support ideas.
- Deducing, inferring, or interpreting information, events, or ideas from texts.
- Explaining and commenting on writers' use of language and literary features.
- Identifying and commenting on the structure and organisation of texts.



HOME LEARNING

In Term 1, to compliment their study of World War One literature, students will be asked to read extracts from war fiction, including extracts from 'Black Poppies' and 'Over the Line'. In Term 2, students will be given non-fiction extracts about Northamptonshire's role in the war. After reading each text, students will be asked to answer a set of comprehension questions on Microsoft Teams, our home learning platform.



HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILD AT HOME?

DISCUSSIONS

One way to support students in recalling their learning and developing their understanding is to discuss their learning with them, asking them questions or asking them to teach you about the topic. By the end of the Autumn term, students should be able to discuss:

1. What is propaganda, and how was it used to shape views of WWI in the texts you have studied?
2. What is trench warfare, and how is it used to show the horrors of WWI in the texts you have studied?
3. What is PTSD, and how is trauma used to reflect soldiers' mental health in the texts you have studied?
4. What is shell shock, and how is it used to show soldiers' vulnerability in the texts you have studied?
5. How was discipline used by the British Army to punish disobedience in the texts you have studied?



RESEARCH PROJECTS

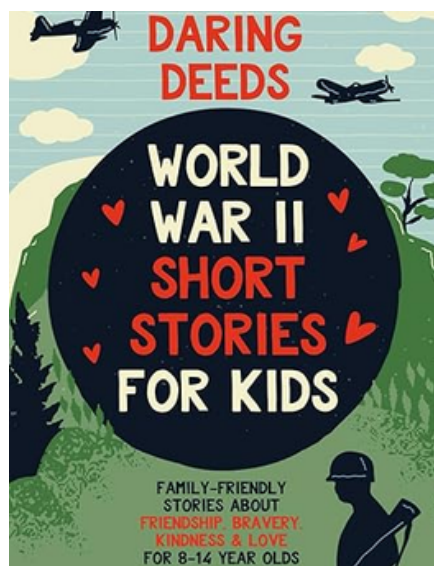
Why not engage in a research project with your child? BBC Bitesize offers a collection of fantastic short videos and interviews on their website that you could watch together. These include:

1. World War One with historian Dan Snow
2. I Was There: The Great War Interviews
3. Kate Adie's Women of World War One
4. Teenage Tommies

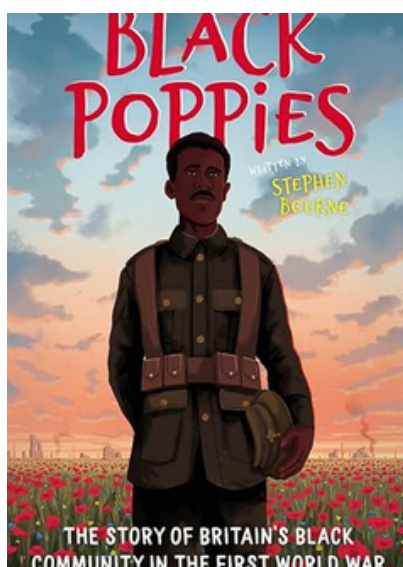
ENCOURAGING AND DISCUSSING READING

Research shows that students who read frequently make the most academic progress. Whether it's a novel, an audiobook or a newspaper, we advise that students read for a minimum of 20 minutes, 3 times per week.

Students would benefit from reading war fiction this term. Our top 6 recommendations can be found on the next page.



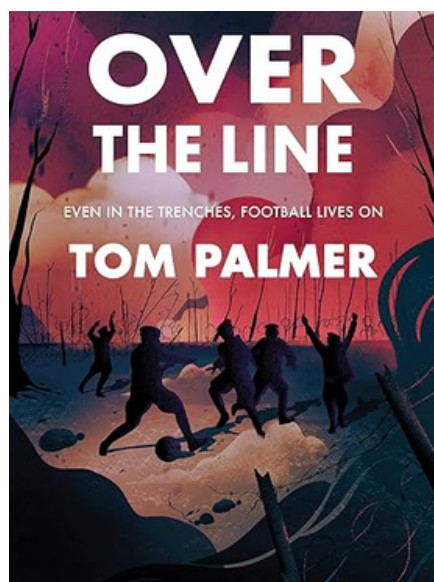
Love learning about World War II? Dive into over 20 exciting short stories full of bravery, kindness, and amazing true events you've never heard before! From secret missions to acts of courage, this book brings history to life—without the boring bits!



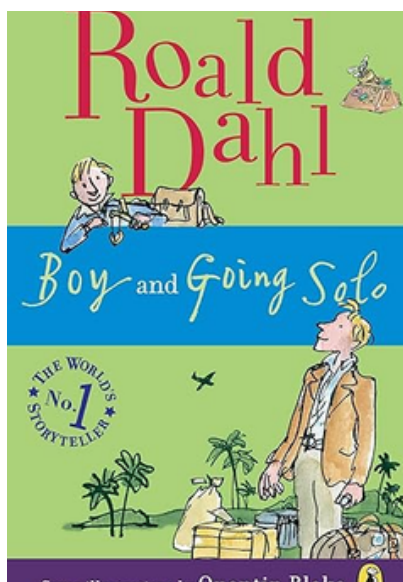
Meet Walter Tull, the footballer who became a brave officer leading troops in battle. Discover how Alhaji Grunshi fired the very first shot of the war. In *Black Poppies* (Young Readers' Edition), Stephen Bourne shares the inspiring true stories of Black heroes who helped Britain in WWI—on the front lines and at home.



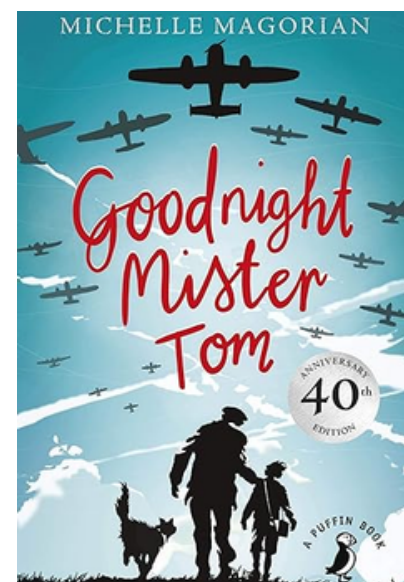
The first button they found. The second they stole... Twelve-year-old Patryk's quiet Polish village is shaken by war. As bullets fly and empires clash, he and his friends start their own battle—to collect the best military button. But in a world torn by war, how far will a game go?



It's 1914, and Jack's dream of playing football for his country is finally within reach. But as war breaks out, he's pressured to prove his courage—not on the pitch, but on the battlefield. Joining the Footballers' Battalion, Jack must survive the trenches before he can chase glory again.



Ever wondered where Roald Dahl got his wild ideas? From his own life! *Boy* shares funny (and sometimes gross!) tales of childhood pranks, sweetshops, and schooldays. *Going Solo* follows him to Africa and into the skies with the RAF. True stories—just as exciting as his books!



In 1940, war tears through Britain, and shy eight-year-old Willie is sent from the city to the mysterious countryside. Tough but kind Tom Oakley isn't prepared for the scared boy he meets—together, they face hardships, secrets, and danger, forging a powerful friendship that will change everything.