

Hodder Headline Australia Recommendations for English class set titles Years 7-10

YEARS 7 & 8

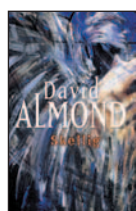
Skellig

David Almond

0340716002 \$16.95

This is one of the rare children's titles that will become classics. It works best with good readers in Years 7 and 8. It can be very difficult finding titles for such readers: it is likely that many of them will have already read any suitable Australian title and it is hard to find titles challenging enough to satisfy them that are still suitable for the age group. Although *Skellig* has had huge exposure within the children's book world, it is still unknown by many English teachers and is well worth recommending strongly.

- Teacher's notes available from www.hha.com.au



Murkmere

Patricia Elliott

0340877901 \$17.95

This is a superb fantasy, likely to appeal strongly to girls. It is a fairly demanding read—best for good readers. It would be possible to persuade boys who are fantasy readers to get involved, despite the female protagonist. As a class set, it would probably only work with a girls' only class of good readers in about year 8.



Tread Softly

Kate Pennington

0340873434 \$17.95

This excellent historical novel will only appeal to girls, who will be engrossed by the story of the young seamstress in Elizabeth I's court. It would work very well indeed in Years 7 or 8 with a class of girls who are good readers. Because the dialogue reflects the speech of the period ('What ails you, Mary?') it could be a little difficult for mixed ability classes.



Under the Cat's Eye

Gillian Rubinstein

0733616976 \$16.95

For Years 7-9, this is for fairly competent readers who can cope with the narrative movement between different worlds. It is an excellent example of an author's deliberate mixing of genres.



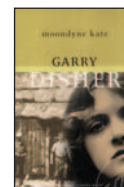
Moondyne Kate

Garry Disher

0733615872 \$16.95

Like the other Disher novels, this is good for older less confident readers.

- Disher Teacher's notes available from www.hha.com.au



YEARS 8 & 9

Dangerous Places

Ann Charlton

073361826X \$16.95

This has considerable potential for class sets—best for mixed ability, mixed sex classes in Years 8 or 9 or for classes of boys in those years.

There is very little good Australian historical fiction around. The fast pace of the adventure story will appeal especially to boys, as will the portrayal of the brutality of shipboard life and of the violence of the early colony. The story of the friendship between Will and the strange mute boy Runt gives the story a depth that fits it for whole class study. It could be used alongside the non-fiction title from black dog books *Fly a Rebel Flag* (a retelling of the Eureka story).



Fleshmarket

Nicola Morgan

0340855576 \$17.95

This is a very fine novel and will also appeal very much to boys, with its exposure of the horrors of early nineteenth century surgery, including the practice of grave robbing to provide corpses for anatomical study. Like *Dangerous Places* it is fast-paced and dramatic. Again, it would be an excellent choice in Years 8 and 9. It would work particularly well in boys' schools.

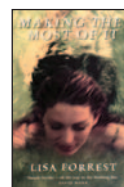


Making the Most of It

Lisa Forrest

0733607942 \$16.95

This rite of passage novel is most successful with girls and is especially suited to a mixed ability class of girls in Year 9. Girl readers empathise strongly with the main character as she struggles to cope with sudden celebrity and mounting pressure. This is especially useful because titles for girls with a sporting theme are rare.



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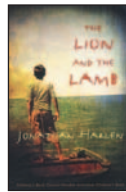
HODDER HEADLINE AUSTRALIA

The Lion and the Lamb

Jonathan Harlen

0733616518 \$14.95

This is an excellent choice for older, less confident readers. It is short and easy enough not to be too daunting but it deals with issues that teenage readers can respond to.



Stick Figure

Lori Gottlieb

073361423X \$21.95

This autobiographical novel with its exploration of issues to do with body image deserves to be widely known. It would be an enormous success with bright girls in Years 8-11.



Blue Feather

Gary Crew

0733610757 \$18.95

This is much easier than *Strange Objects*. It is a good mixed ability mixed sex class novel for years 8 and 9.



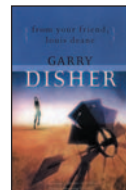
YEARS 10+

From Your Friend, Louis Deane

Garry Disher

0733605273 \$16.95

This is suitable for the same kind of audience as *The Divine Wind*. The theme is social ostracism rather than racial prejudice. Again, it is a love story from the boy's point of view.



Across the Nightingale Floor:

Tales of the Otori Book 1

Lian Hearn

0733615651 \$19.95

This is an excellent title to use with a class who may be prejudiced against fantasy. Girls, in particular, can regard fantasy as a male domain, but they will be immediately attracted by the romance of this novel. However, because the sex is fairly explicit and the violence is quite graphic, it is unlikely to be suitable with students younger than Years 10 or 11 and may be unacceptable in some schools.



- Disher Teacher's notes available from www.hha.com.au

YEARS 9&10

Acceleration

Graham McNamee

0340882204 \$17.95

This Canadian novel would be a great choice for less academic Year 9 and 10 students—again, especially for boys. There is strong plot, lots of excitement and plenty of humour, at a reasonably easy reading level. It will be of particular interest in large comprehensive schools where books that appeal to lower stream older classes are hard to find.



It is a bonus that this is book 1 in a trilogy. The fact that this has been on the bestseller list is not a reason to avoid it as a possible class set title. Even bestseller status means that a title has only been read by a very small proportion of the school population.

- Teacher's notes available from www.hha.com.au

Willow Tree and Olive

Irini Savvides

0733613063 \$16.95

This is very popular with older girls. It would not work in a mixed sex class. It meets the need of teachers for texts which reflect Australia's ethnic heritage. Some teachers are uncomfortable with the issue of repressed memory.

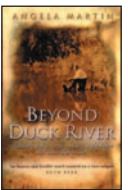


Beyond Duck River

Angela Martin

073361325X \$21.95

This has a rare combination of qualities: adult content suitable for older teenage readers presented in a very readable text. It gives students insights into recent Australian history, into the lives of indigenous women and into the realities of living with poverty. Sadly, it will be difficult to get boys to read it. It is, however, a very successful class set book for girls in Years 9-11.



- Teacher's notes available from www.hha.com.au

Strange Objects

Gary Crew

0733617948 \$17.95

This is an enormously successful class novel for mixed ability classes at Year 10 level or very good readers in years 8 and 9.



Titles for this list have been recommended and annotated by Helen Sykes in conjunction with Hodder Headline Australia June 2004