

Book Reviews

1) Ark Angel- Anthony Horowitz- Rosanna

'Ark Angel' is the sixth book in the Alex Rider series by Anthony Horowitz. It's about a boy named Alex who is fourteen and works reluctantly for MI6. He is now on an island near Barbados, as he saved an extremely rich businessman's son, Paul Drevin, from a group of eco protesters, 'Force Three'. He is just starting to enjoy himself on the island of Nikolei Drevin (Paul's father), but then he finds out a secret about Drevin that could change the course of history forever. With his life on the line and the world in his hands, Alex will have to keep his wits about him and his head on his shoulders.

I would recommend the Alex Rider Series for ages 9 to 15. It delves into the hard part about being a spy, especially a teenage one, as they have to keep up with school, homework, friendships and hobbies. I would also recommend the series to someone who likes gritty, 'real-life' novels talking about the personal struggles of the character. It's also interesting to see who Alex fights against and it's fun to predict this just from the first chapter. This book gets 5 stars from me, and I would recommend any Anthony Horowitz book to everyone.

2) Tomorrow, when the war began- John Marsden- Zyzy

The book 'Tomorrow, when the world began', by John Marsden, starts off in the humble town of Wirrawee in the Australian countryside, where our protagonist Ellie Linton has lived all her life. During the summer, she suggested that her and her friends- Fi, Connie, Kevin, Homer and Robyn- go camping for five days in Hell, a mountain range near Taylor's stitch. However, this story takes a completely unexpected direction that turned their lives upside down. On their arrival back in Wirrawee, they find themselves entangled in an enormous dilemma- their homes are abandoned, their families missing and their pets dead. All they had called home was replaced with the sound of gunshots, blood and misery.

During their battles they encountered close calls with death and doom. Nevertheless, throughout this isolation, they endured mass change in their futures, their relationships and most importantly: their identities. In the course of the book the group discover new sides of themselves, but also witness complete mutation in their friends' and lovers' personalities. As well as that, they acquire new skills, such as courage, leadership and independence.

The most intriguing thing about this book is how it is written in the 1st person, giving the reader a first-hand viewpoint from Ellie of the events that happened. This book keeps you on the edge of your seat with unexpected twists. I would recommend this book to anybody who is interested in sci-fi, action or war novels as well as people who enjoyed books similar to 'The Hunger Games'.

3) Divergent- Veronica Roth- Ellie

In this story a girl (Beatrice/Tris) has a test to decide which faction she fits into best. Instead of just one she doesn't fit into any so she has to choose. She picks Dauntless, the fearless fighting faction. Tris and Four have feelings for each other and are both divergent. Eric, a dauntless leader, starts a war on the other factions so Tris and Four have to save them.

The way that Beatrice, a prim girl who changes to Tris, the fearless dauntless, and Four, a helpful divergent, bond creates such a strong impact on the story.

4) Thief!- Malorie Blackman- Rosanna

Lydia is just trying to settle into her school, and it's not working. She tries to steal the school's sports cup to get into a gang, but she stops herself at the last second. However the cup is found in her locker. She's being chased, punched and being called a thief. Then, when her ex-friend Frankie tries to talk to her, Lydia tries to catch her when she slips in front of a moving truck. But everyone thinks she pushed Frankie. She thinks things can't get any worse... until a storm engulfs her, and she doesn't know what's happened.

But she does know in her gut. She's in the future. And her home is destroyed because of her. She has to find out what has happened, how to fix it, and how to get back to her own time. With no one she can trust, and her life on the line, her only hope is 'The Tyrant'. But does knowing too much only make you know less?

This book is quite graphic, so I think 10+ is a good age range. I would generally recommend this book to people who like emotional and adventure stories, as you have to be very tolerant to emotional strain.

Writing Responses to 'The Giver'

People in the group were given different colours to write about, in Lowry's style, as the book described experiencing colour for the first time.

Orange- Annabel

It is the colour of life, the colour of death. The colour of change. This colour defines so many things. So different to anything I'd ever seen before, so joyful, so different. But there is danger too. Knowing something I'm not supposed to. That is the reason I can never mention it to anyone else. I can never share its beauty.

Olive- Ellie

What was it? Why was it here? No mistakes, it was a plant but not like one Jonas had seen before. It was long, spiky and draped in shadow. It sparked a flicker of remembrance deep inside my memory.

White- Rosanna

White is devoid of colour, yet it is every colour. White is everywhere, in fresh snow, in thin paper, and in soft, floating clouds. White is a colour that no one can hate, but no one can love. It's just blank. Like staring into a void that nobody can get out of.

Purple- Valentine

It is the luminous colour of king and queens. It feels both empty and full. A lush colour that can melt into a void.