

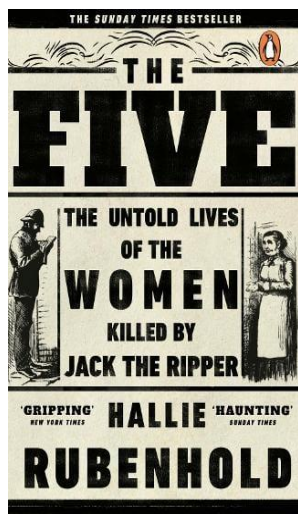


Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Families,

RSA Recommended Reading

Reading is essential for adolescents because it strengthens their ability to think critically, express themselves, and understand the world around them. It helps build vocabulary and comprehension skills, crucial for academic success and effective communication. Beyond school, reading fosters empathy by exposing young people to diverse perspectives and experiences. Ultimately, it empowers them to become informed, thoughtful individuals who can navigate life's complexities with confidence



Expectations Assemblies: Mr. Cleary's Featured Book

Last week, I had the opportunity to welcome students back following the Easter break and remind them of our school values and expectations: **Respect, Succeed, and Aspire.**

Hallie Rubenhold's *The Five* is a recommended text for students because it challenges long-held assumptions about the victims of the Jack the Ripper killings, restoring their humanity and dignity. Focusing on their lives rather than their deaths, the book encourages empathy and critical thinking, aligning with our commitment to respect and understanding. It teaches students to question historical narratives and recognise the importance of treating all individuals fairly and compassionately. Crucially, the book serves as an antidote to stereotypes. **Copies will be available to loan from the school library.**

Writing floats on a sea of reading

Whilst *The Five* is a great text, we recognise that this might not be accessible for or appeal to the interests of all students. We strongly encourage students to continue to invest in reading widely, as this is one of the key determinants of success in the future. For example, the quality of writing children produce is directly influenced by how much they engage with regular, challenging reading.

Where can I go to find reading inspiration for my child?

The RSA reading list is an excellent way for parents to find the right books, help build a strong reading habit, and encourage less time spent (and too often wasted) on mobile phones:

<https://www.robertsmyth.tgacademy.org.uk/files/2024/08/RSA-Reading-List.pdf>

I hope this is useful for all families and encourages students to continue to enjoy reading. Finally, my sincere best wishes to Year 13, who will begin their Examination Leave, and to Year 11, on Monday morning, for their final approach to GCSE English Literature. We are all in your corner!

Yours sincerely,

D Cleary
Principal