



# Good Reads: Great Cornard Upper School

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Reviews from pupils of **Great Cornard Upper School**, Suffolk.

Chosen by Year 9 and 10 (13-15 year old) pupils from Great Cornard Upper School, Suffolk.<!--break-->

*Thanks to Bridget McMillan, Community Library Manager.*

## **The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13¾**

Sue Townsend, Mandarin, 0 7493 0138 4, £5.99 pbk

I chose to read this book because I was recommended it; I was told that it was funny and that I would enjoy it. I did enjoy it because it was very funny and it was simply a typical teenager's life, which I could relate to.

**The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole** is written in the first person all the way through the book. There aren't any metaphors or similes, as it is written like a diary by Adrian, who falls in love with a new girl, Pandora, but his best friend ends up going out with her instead. Adrian believes he is an undiscovered intellectual, yet he is a spot prone worrier taking all the strain of the cracks in his parents' marriage. Adrian constantly focuses on the worst things in his life, which aren't all bad but being thirteen, he exaggerates everything. His father George is an alcoholic and smokes a lot, but he has an extremely caring, yet strict Grandmother. Their neighbours Mr and Mrs Lucas don't get along too well and Mr Lucas has a little crush on Adrian's mother Pauline. Then his father discovers that Mr Lucas' crush is not so 'little' and that he and his wife have been having an affair for quite some time, almost four months. Adrian's mother and Mr Lucas leave their partners and go to Sheffield together to get away from everything that had happened. This has dramatic effects on Adrian's father, whose alcohol and tobacco addiction continued to get worse but deep inside George has faith that Pauline will return to him. Eventually Adrian's mother returns home with Mr Lucas and Adrian refers to this as being back to normal with everybody shouting at once. Adrian's stresses and strains of teenage life are funny and in the last line of the book he concludes that love is the only thing that keeps him sane.

*Kim Payne*

## **The Forest Dwellers**

Stella Brewer, Collins, o/p

This is a fascinating account of Stella Brewer's life in Africa with a group of chimpanzees. She has written it so it sounds like the chimps are people. The main characters are William, Abuko, Boba and Hoba. When she talks about them, she talks about their daily life, what they have done. It is like a diary. She writes about what happened at certain

times of the day. I liked the first account of William because he got up to loads of mischief. She also writes about her daily life with the chimpanzees. She comments on which chimps she liked the best but she loves them all the same. I like the way she describes the environment and the weather. You could picture it perfectly in your mind, it was as if you were there. Stella added her actual notes she wrote when she was observing them. I found them especially interesting. I got recommended this book by my mum because my grandparents used to go to stay with Stella and her chimpanzees because of this book. I enjoyed her description of their environment and the chapter on William. I would give this book seven out of ten.

*Joe Daniels*

## **Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone**

J K Rowling, Bloomsbury, 0 7475 3274 5, £5.99 pbk

The book is about a boy called Harry Potter. When he was very young a person called Lord Voldemort, a very powerful dark wizard, killed Harry's parents. Then he tried to kill Harry with a curse but Harry touched him and absorbed his powers and he went into hiding.

With his parents dead his only other relations are his Aunt and Uncle, the Dursleys. We come back into the story when Harry is twelve and his Aunt and Uncle hate him. One day he starts to get letters from Hogwarts but he is not allowed to read them. He keeps getting more and more so they move to a house on a little island. One night a very tall person called Hagrid breaks down the door and walks over to Harry and tells him he is a wizard. He takes Harry to Diagon Alley to get his school things, then Harry has to go to Platform 9¾ to get to school by the Hogwarts Express. At school he learns magic but near the end of term Harry sees his archenemy for the first time since he killed his parents.

I thought the characters were explained very well. I found that Hermione was very unusual compared to the others mainly because she was very intelligent, she put her hand up nearly all the time to answer the questions.

The story was written in the third person. The story was quite good because you never knew what was going to happen next. My favourite point of the book was when Harry, Hermione and Ron first saw Fluffy (Hagrid's three-headed dog) because it was quite funny how they found out about the dog being there. I would definitely recommend this book to adults and children.

My overall judgement on this book is that it has funny parts, dramatic parts and sad parts.

*Michael Goodeham*

## **The Amber Spyglass**

Philip Pullman, Scholastic, 0 439 99358 X, £6.99 pbk

This is the third book in a fantastic trilogy by the fantastic children's writer Philip Pullman.

It is quite a complicated book about a young boy called Will who is on a long journey to find his friend Lyra. Lyra went missing at the end of the previous book (**The Subtle Knife**). To help him find his friend he has two angels that he can only just see at dawn and dusk. He also has the help of the Subtle Knife which he found in the previous book. This helps him cut through the air to different worlds which proves to be a big help.

His friend Lyra is actually hidden in a cave in another world, because she has been drugged by her mother. She is looked after, or is it guarded, by her mum who doesn't ever go out and gets another young girl to get everything she needs.

I thought that this book was very good and exciting in a lot of parts but it started to get boring towards the end.

I recommend this book for ages 12-15 but it is quite complicated. I would also recommend that you read the other books in the trilogy (**Northern Lights** and **The Subtle Knife**) first.

*Richard Smith*

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