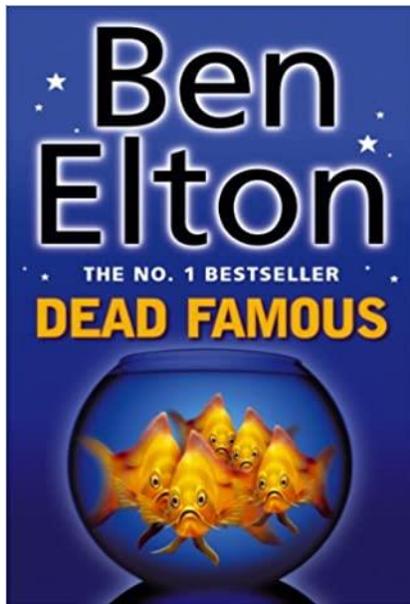


Book recommendations by XV. gimnazija Book club

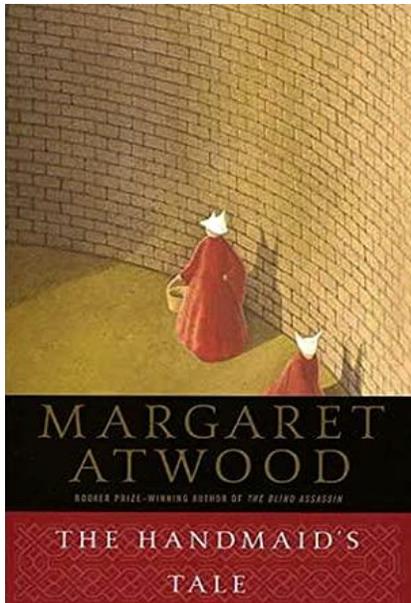
Written by Marta Petraković (2M)

At the beginning of this school year Book club led by Ms Darija Kos was set up and the novels *Dead Famous* by Ben Elton and **The Handmaid's Tale** by Margaret Atwood were assigned to read. If you like reading, especially mystery novels and dystopian novels, here are their brief recommendations.



Ben Elton's mystery novel *Dead Famous* (2001) follows a reality TV show in which a housemate is murdered – making ratings for the TV show soar. What is peculiar in the novel, and different from others in the same

genre, is that the murder victim isn't revealed to the reader until about halfway into the book. The entire novel is written in a witty manner, making it an even more enthralling experience for the reader. The characters are round and realistic: they are depicted as greedy and materialistic, which adds to the complexity of the plot. Their interactions are what keeps the plot going, as they are deeper than what we see on the surface. The language used is colloquial, even slang, which adds to its appeal. The only criticism the Book club has is that the novel was a bit challenging to follow in the beginning. Elton provides an atypical but very essential social commentary on today's society by revealing the killer in the end. However, to find out who the killer is, you will have to read the novel, which the entire Book club highly recommends.



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Margaret Atwood's dystopian novel, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) also provides a social commentary, but takes a more serious

approach. It tells the story of Offred, a handmaid living in the totalitarian society of Gilead, where women are made birth givers, as the aftermath of an environmental disaster that decreased birth rates. The novel provides a comment on the position of women in today's society, by representing them as nothing more but slaves to the men in power. The plot of this novel was easier to follow, and slightly more intriguing. The book club agreed that the protagonist of the novel was incredibly well written, having depth and standing out from the rest of the society. The protagonist, even though she is in quite a different position than many of us, is genuinely relatable because of her emotions and actions.

Although both novels are truly odd and captivating, *The Handmaid's Tale* is our favorite of the two. The theme is more gripping for us, mainly because of the main character and the social commentary the novel provides. The plot is slightly easier to follow, even though it is more complex. Atwood manages to build borders between complexity and a plot line that is difficult to follow. The book club sincerely recommends you read both novels. We assure you, you won't regret it!