

## ***Books every boy should read before leaving prep school***

# The Shadow of the Wind

Carlos Ruiz Zafón

A review by Alex Cirstea, Year 8

In an age of austerity and indolence, the city of Barcelona is shut down by fear. Civil war has just ended and, under Franco's rule, the inhabitants live lives of hardship and monotony. Meanwhile, a young boy, Daniel, tries to uncover a long-lost secret of an old book – but little does he know that this will lead to something much more fascinating...

In *The Shadow of the Wind*, Zafón portrays the power of determination, and how a small person can have a huge effect when they persevere. This book will equip the reader with courage and motivation to strive towards goals, as portrayed in the characteristics of the protagonist. The more he searches to uncover the mystery surrounding the old book, the more he finds out about afflicted lives and terrible events in the past; and his will to help stands strong throughout the entire story, unbreakable by the hatred and rejection of others.

The author piles up stories within stories, with uncountable layers of interpretation embedded, and creates a nest of narratives packed together in a way that captivates the reader, bringing them into the character's world. Also, much foreshadowing is used and many hidden messages can be found, free to be interpreted by the reader and giving the book a rich texture. The author combines all these stories into one final plot, which brings a lavish, elaborate feel. Zafón mixes together numerous emotions, which further amplify this feel and draw the reader further into the world of 1940s Barcelona.

Overall, through the blend of all these factors, the author creates an original network of expression winded together – comprehensive enough to follow along, but at the same time packed with layers of imagery, emotion and intrigue. A must read for any boy about to start senior school – and beyond!

