

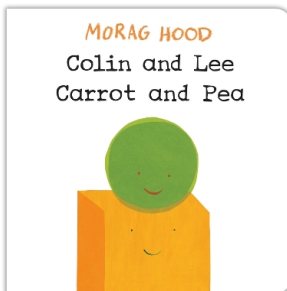
Our selection of books to read aloud to Reception children - poetry, fun stories and colourful characters illustrations to draw young listeners in.



The Big Bad Bug

Author: Kate Read **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 09/03/2023

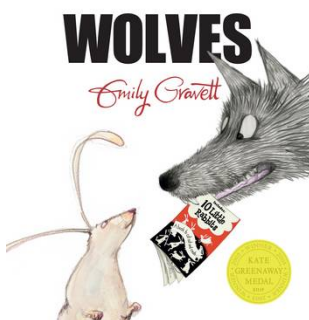
A richly colourful minibeast drama from the multi-award-winning creator of One Fox: A Counting Book Thriller. The Big Bad Bug, a self-proclaimed 'very rare species' is used to getting his own way, but claiming a giant berry all for himself is a step too far . . . Will he ever learn to share, and mend his bullying ways? This bug's eye view from the bottom of the garden will entrance any young child and show them the value of kindness and community. The Big Bad Bug is the perfect picture book for minibeast fans.



Colin and Lee, Carrot and Pea

Author: Morag Hood **Format:** Board book **Release Date:** 26/01/2017

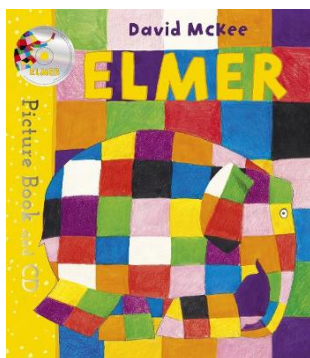
Simplicity is the charm of this picture book story of the unlikely friendship between very different vegetables. Lee is a very green pea and so are all of his friends except for Colin who is a very orange carrot. Colin can't do all the things that the pea-friends can do such as roll or bounce. Nonetheless, it turns out that they can all be very good friends. Julia Eccleshare's Picks for January 2019: Lark by Anthony McGowan Colin and Lee, Carrot and Pea by Morag Hood Dear Zoo Snuggle Book by Rod Campbell Whatever Next! by Jill Murphy Billy and the Minpins by Roald Dahl Badger's Parting Gifts by Susan Varley We're Going on a Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen The Skylarks' War by Hilary McKay



Wolves

Author: Emily Gravett **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/11/2016

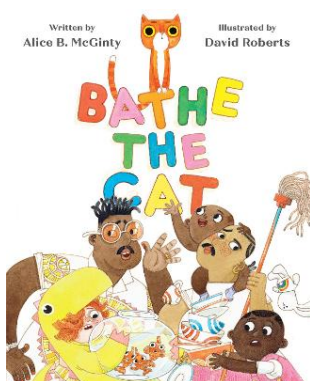
One of our Books of the Year 2016 | Celebrating 10th Anniversary of Wolves! Rabbit borrows a book about wolves from the library. He can't put it down! But soon a sinister figure with sharp claws and a bushy tail starts to creep right off the pages. You won't believe your eyes - but if you're a rabbit, you probably should. Brilliantly witty, ingeniously constructed, and with amazing artwork throughout, Wolves was first published in 2005 and thrilled critics and booksellers alike. Winner of the Kate Greenaway Medal 2006. The judges said: A real page-turner of a book. The style is spare, but at the same time there is so much in it, and the device whereby the book becomes the book within it is brilliantly employed. The illustrator's style is totally unique, and the love and attention to detail here is obvious, even down to her having chewed the book herself to get the right effect.



Elmer

Author: David McKee **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/05/2017

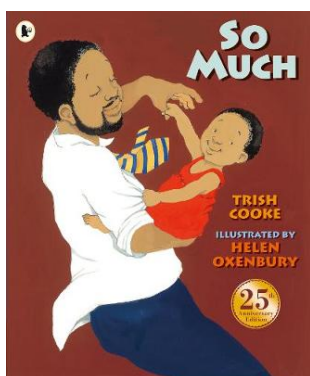
Elmer the colourful patchwork elephant has been a nursery favourite since this first book was published in 1989. A modern classic, this picture book is known to millions, and continues to be one of the biggest selling picture books ever, having sold over 2 million copies around the world. The subtle message is that it is OK to be different, and combined with the vibrant colour and cheeky humour of the main character, it's an essential bedtime story. To see other Elmer titles [click here](#).



Bathe the Cat

Author: Alice B. McGinty **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 11/11/2021

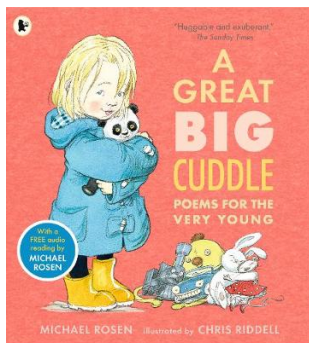
December 2021 Book of the Month Grandma is coming to visit so it's all hands on deck! Dad posts instructions on the fridge, spelled out in those lovely bright magnetic letters: Bobby has to mop the floor, Dad is to scrub the dishes (this is a two dad family), Sarah needs to feed the fishes, and 'I'll bathe the cat'. It's at this point, that the cat takes over - anything to avoid a bath - and, with a swish of its paw, rearranges the letters. As the family follow increasingly silly instructions, with very funny results, the chaotic scenes are illustrated by David Roberts in the brightest, most stylish oranges and pinks. Fortunately, by the time Grandma rings the bell, everything is somehow clean and tidy. For all the silliness, this is a joyful depiction of family life and will be an absolute delight to share with little children.



So Much

Author: Trish Cooke **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/09/2019

A special 25th anniversary edition of a modern classic, this is a tender, exuberant celebration of modern family life. A glorious celebration of the love that a baby in the family generates is beautifully captured in Trish Cooke's words and Helen Oxenbury's pictures. There's a ring at the door. Ding! Dong! One after another all the family come to visit and everyone of them wants to kiss and hug and squeeze that dear little baby because they all love him So Much. A classic that continues to delight now as much as it did when it was first published.

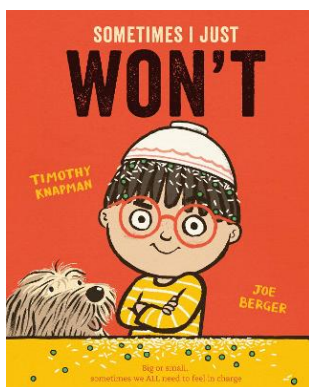


A Great Big Cuddle

Author: Michael Rosen **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/10/2017

Shortlisted for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2017 | Joint Winner of the CLIPPA 2016 (CLPE Children's Poetry Award).

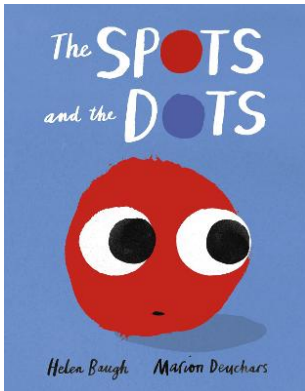
Children's Laureates Chris Riddell and Michael Rosen combine here to create a beautiful collection of ebullient poems for the very young. Michael Rosen's close and affectionate observation of small children and the way they think is brilliantly captured in poems such as You Can't See Me and Let Me Do It. There are also plenty of opportunities for the very young to join in with poems such as Tippy-Tappy and The Button Bop which they are guaranteed to want to hear again and again! Chris Riddell's illustrations created an equally warm-hearted view of the early years and capture the spirit of the poems perfectly.



Sometimes I Just WON'T

Author: Timothy Knapman **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 18/08/2022

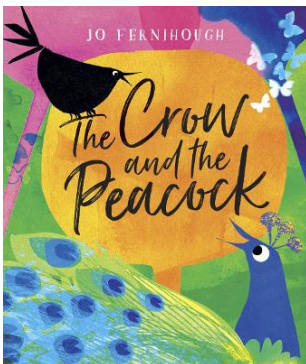
Sometimes I Just WON'T is a hilarious and helpful book about the ever-changing moods of small children, from top picture book pairing, Timothy Knapman and Joe Berger. Being a toddler is an emotional rollercoaster. Some days you want to put your coat on, you don't mind sharing and you can't wait to have your bath. There are days when you're the first to slide down the biggest slide, or join in with everyone else. But some days, you just WON'T! And sometimes that's OK. But, with a little kindness and encouragement, you might find that something you don't want to do can become something you love to do! A comic look at child autonomy and how to navigate strong emotions. An essential read for all young children - and their adults because, big or small, sometimes we ALL need to feel in charge. With bouncing rhythmic text and lively, graphic illustrations this is a brilliant follow up to Sometimes I am Furious, a Sunday Times Book of the Year 2021!



The Spots and the Dots

Author: Helen Baugh **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/10/2021

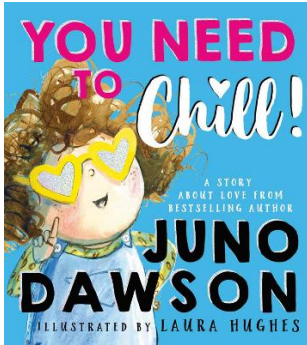
Big, bold and bright, this picture book tells the tale of the red Spots, who live on one side of the hill and avoid at all costs the scary blue Dots who live on the other side of the hill. Wait a minute though, turn it round and it's actually the tale of the blue Dots, who live on one side of the hill and avoid at all costs the scary red Spots who live on the other side of the hill... Both stories meet in the middle when two babies - a Spot and a Dot - get lost and meet up, only to discover that everything their parents and grandparents believe is wrong. Layout, illustrations and the deliciously clever structure of the story as it proceeds from two different starting points - and two different ends of the book - to reach exactly the same place, serve to point out the absurdity of the Dots' and Spots' position. Even the youngest readers will understand exactly what the moral of it all is (once they've stopped laughing). Helen Baugh's rhyming text is perfect in its conciseness and Marion Deuchars' illustrations a triumph, each spot and dot a character of its own. This is one to shelve with other ingenious picture books that entertain and delight while imparting wisdom such as Jon Agee's *The Wall in the Middle of the Book*, Smriti Prasadam-Halls' *The Little Island* and David McKee's *Tusk Tusk*.



The Crow and the Peacock

Author: Johanna Fernihough **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/04/2020

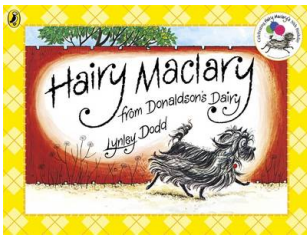
May 2020 Debut of the Month There have been many versions of the moral tale of the crow and the peacock and this one from debut picture-book artist Jo Fernihough is particularly attractive. The vibrant mixed media and collage images are full of movement and expression and immediately catch the reader's attention. Crow is living happily and contentedly until he starts to compare his feathers and his song with other birds. From the dove to the nightingale, to the cockerel to the swan, each bird seems more magnificent than the last and crow is sure each one must be the happiest bird alive, but each in turn direct him to a bird they are envious of. But when he finally reaches the magnificent peacock he learns that he himself is the subject of envy. He is free to sing and fly free compared to the caged peacock. Crow and the reader learn the lesson about what is really important in life and that one must count your own blessings. A strong message for the current situation and beautifully conveyed in nicely repetitive text and imaginative use of typography as well glorious colour. A really worthwhile addition to the library.



You Need to Chill

Author: Juno Dawson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/09/2022

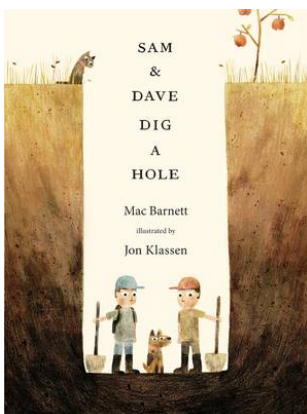
September 2022 Book of the Month Juno Dawson has written her first picture book in joyful bouncing rhyme. It is great to read together and is illustrated with bright, busy and joyful characters from Laura Hughes. Everyone is asking what has happened to older brother Bill – and the children are imagining all sorts of varied, wild, exciting things that might have happened. The answer every time is “Hun, you need to chill” – the repetition and the rhymes making this so easy to read and such fun. But the underlying message is that we all need acceptance, that families are different – and Bill is now older sister Lucy. She’s still clever and funny And kind and cool She’s really rather brill... And if people have a problem we shout... Hun, you need to chill! What a joyful, funny book about identity, acceptance, love and loyalty. Usefully, at the end, there is a brief paragraph about the Mermaids charity – who support families with transgender, non-binary or gender-diverse kids, plus helping the kids themselves. A book that should be in lots of schools and classrooms to promote acceptance and love.



Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy

Author: Lynley Dodd **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 29/08/1985

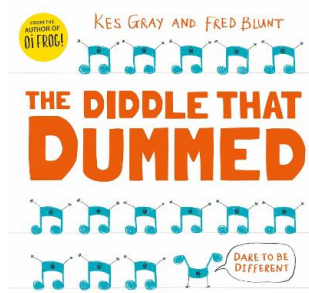
First published in 1983 and still as good today. Written by Lynley Dodd, who is a New Zealander, this is the first in a series of books about the adventures of a scruffy dog ‘Hairy McClary’. Rhyming, catchy and comical with brilliant characters and plots. And just so you know a ‘dairy’ in New Zealand is a corner shop.



Sam and Dave Dig a Hole

Author: Mac Barnett **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 01/10/2014

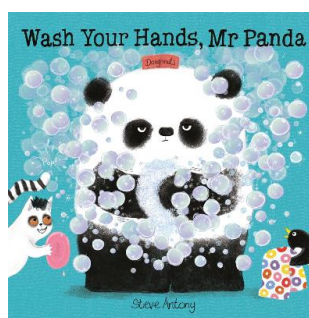
One of our Books of the Year 2014 Award-winning illustrator Jon Klassen has created a second delightful and surprising picture book with Mac Barnett, author of The Dark. Here two boys dig a hole. It doesn’t seem to take them far so they try digging a bit on their own. They still make little progress. So they take a rest...What happens while they are asleep turns out to be most surprising of all! In simple illustrations, Sam and Dave Dig a Hole gives a host of opportunities for imagining and dreaming.



The Diddle That Dumbled

Author: Kes Gray **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 25/06/2020

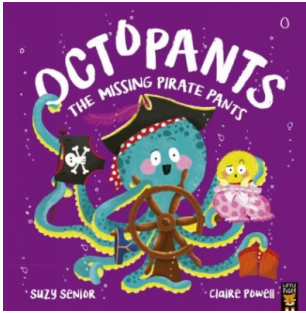
The Diddle that Dumbled is like your favourite pantomime distilled into 32 pages. Fiddler Flinty Bo Diddle is writing a tune for his fiddle – diddle diddle diddle diddle ... all is going well until – dum! Which diddle went dum? The culprit steps forward, shrugging: ‘I’m not like the other diddles. Sometimes I like to go dum.’ Flinty is beside himself, he wants all his diddles to diddle. They try again, and again – they try with the defiant diddle at the beginning and at the end, but every time the diddle goes dum. They swap things round, and try a dum dum dum sequence for Flinty’s drum – you can probably guess what happens. By this point, everyone will be laughing out loud at the sheer silliness of it all, at the diddle’s cheekiness, at Flinty’s furious indignation – and then it gets sillier and more comic still. What seems a simple idea is full of surprises and cleverness and every one of us knows a diddle that dums. Sheer picture book brilliance.



Wash Your Hands, Mr Panda

Author: Steve Antony **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 11/11/2021

Lovely, lugubrious Mr Panda is back, loaded up with doughnuts and ready to dispense advice on the best ways to behave. He’s already addressed politeness and good manners, in this story he has one question for the animals queuing up for a delicious doughnut, ‘Have you washed your hands?’ Not one of them has, though Lemur’s tail is clean, and Hippo’s bottom. After Mr Panda has explained why it’s important to have clean hands too, everyone gets together for a marvellous rub-a-dub-dub, soap bubbles sparkling everywhere and there’s one final joke before they get their sticky treats. As ever, the story is beautifully simple, yet will stand repeated readings. Mr Panda cuts a wonderfully bulky figure against a sea-green background and every page is a visual delight.



Octopants: The Missing Pirate Pants

Author: Suzy Senior **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/02/2022

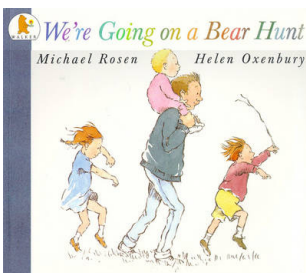
February 2022 Book of the Month Everyone loves a good pants story, especially those of us who are under the age of seven, and this is a great one. Octopants' friend Pufferfish has lost his favourite pair of pants, the pirate ones. The friends set off to find them with Turtle too and end up at – ulp! – the wreck! What a jolly surprise to find it's full of friendly pirates, not to mention the missing undies (and you'll never guess exactly where they are). Like the first in this series, the story is full of fun and silliness, though it also sneaks in a gentle message about friendship and not judging by appearances. With a bouncy rhyming text, it's great to read aloud and the pictures are pant-tastic too.



Small's Big Dream

Author: Manjeet Mann **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 31/03/2022

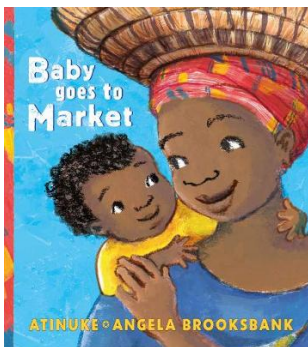
April 2022 Book of the Month | A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month April 2022 | Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2023 ages 3-6 Full of hope and joy, this is an inspiring picture book with beautiful illustrations that will encourage all children to believe that their biggest and boldest dreams can come true. Small is a small child living in a small house, sleeping on a small bed. But being small has never stopped her from having BIG dreams...Small knows that the world is huge and exciting and full of opportunities. In her dreams she believes that she can be part of that world but she also knows that everyone will try to stop her so she sits on them, stamps on them and swallows them. But one day the dreams get too big...They escape and soon Small is the amazing explorer she has always hoped to be.



We're Going on a Bear Hunt

Author: Michael Rosen **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 16/09/1993

Fantastic, cumulative adventure as a family cheerfully sets out on a brave hunt to find the bear. It could be frightening but they're not scared. They're full of confidence in what they are doing. Caves, mud, rivers, forest ... whatever obstacles the family encounters, they resolutely overcome them happily repeating the chorus: "We can't go over it", "We can't go under it", "Oh no! We've got to go through it". But when they find the bear it's a lot more scary than they had thought and they hurtle home repeating all the noises as they go.



Baby Goes to Market

Author: Atinuke **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/07/2018

UKLA Longlist Book Awards - 2019 You can feel the love that the author and illustrator of *Baby Goes to Market* have for West Africa, both of whom grew up there. The vibrant market place leaps out of the page, you can almost smell the fruit for sale and hear the shouts from the market traders. Baby is snugly wrapped in a papoose on Mama's back and is enjoying the trip to the market, especially when the market traders start giving Baby presents. First bananas, then juicy oranges, then biscuits. Baby eats a little of each and adds the remainder to the shopping basket that Mama carries on her head. Mama must be very strong! After all those treats Baby has a nap and Mama gets a well-deserved taxi ride home. Each page is gloriously filled with tantalising pictures of delicious things to eat and colourful things to buy, and there's a gentle introduction to simple counting too.



Shh! We Have a Plan

Author: Chris Haughton **Format:** Board book **Release Date:** 03/09/2015

Longlisted for the 2015 CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal - Shortlisted for the Little Rebels Book Award 2015 Awarding-winning Chris Haughton tells a big story in stunning illustrations in his near-wordless picture board book. The huntsmen are determined to capture the bird. Armed with nets they creep up on their prey...but they haven't got every angle covered! How the littlest repeatedly sabotages the huntsmen's plans is a wittily told story with a strong message about communication.

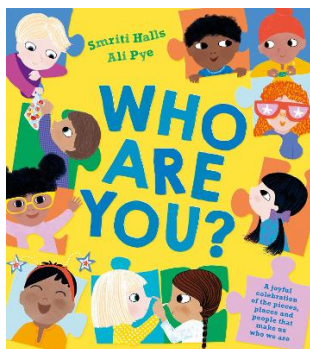


Octopus Shocktopus!

Author: Peter Bently **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/07/2020

Shortlisted for the Books for Younger Children category, Children's Book Awards 2022 'One day, we found an octopus had come to live on top of us.' Those are the opening lines of this glorious picture book – how could you not want to know what happens next? The octopus itself is unmissable – huge and an eye-catching fluorescent orange colour – slightly non-plussed looking perched atop of a very neat little house. Some of the neighbours are not too welcoming, calling the fire brigade to try and force it off, fortunately with little success because once the children of the house and their friends start playing with the octopus, barriers are broken and the advantages of having an eight-legged chum become clear. Illustrator Steven Lenton rises brilliantly to all the challenges set by Peter Bently's ingenious rhymes depicting the various

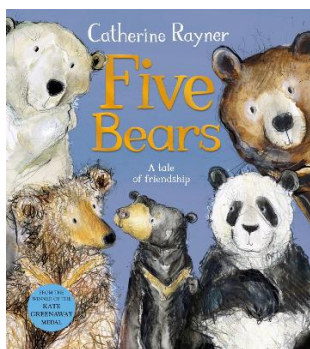
ways in which the octopus helps around the house – often eight different activities at a time, plus one very special octo-tastic Christmas tree. Making friends has never been so much fun and it all comes to a wonderfully octopussy conclusion too. Fabulous!



Who Are You?

Author: Smriti Halls **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 16/09/2021

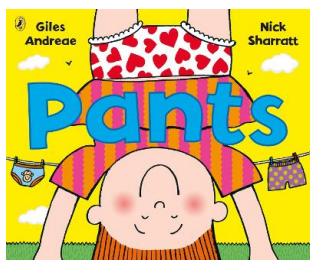
Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2023 ages 3-6 Who Do You Think You Are? meets You Choose! in this inclusive picture book that opens up discussions about what makes us who we are. Perfect for ages 3+, this is a joyful celebration of all the pieces, places and people that make us who we are. It is a wonderful way to get children thinking about and learning about their own families, and also opening up discussions about all of the other pieces that come together to make us all unique: from our friends and food we eat, to activities we get up to and the places we go.



Five Bears

Author: Catherine Rayner **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 23/06/2022

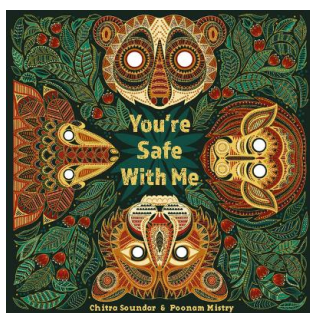
A new book from Greenaway winner Catherine Rayner is always going to be a visual treat and the luminous watercolour and inked images are a delight. As one bear meets another the initial reaction is defensive and even hostile, but Other Bear defuses the situation with calm friendliness and they go on together; each thinking their own thoughts but now moving in the same direction. Grunty Bear is a bit embarrassed by his first negative reaction to them and follows along. Very Big Bear is even more direct: “Go Away” he says and when asked why, says “ Because I don’t know you” Again he is disarmed by calm friendliness and again he follows along and we are told the four of them are beginning to think alike: that it is pleasant to be with other bears. Then they find Stuck Bear up a tree who insists he is fine: “But a Stuck Bear clearly needs help” and they all cooperate to help. So, in a gentle and non-dogmatic fashion, important points are made. There can be a tendency in humans to be wary of difference, but this is a lovely way to demonstrate empathy and will generate lots of discussion and could perhaps help to make a difference to our future generations' attitude toward helping 'stuck bears' all over the world.



Pants

Author: Giles Andreae **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/01/2019

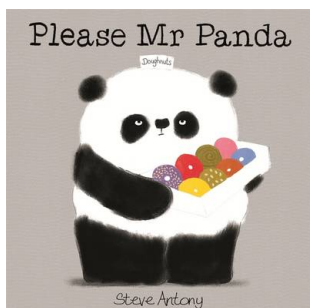
This book will have you singing, dancing and waving your knickers in the air! Pants is a picture book with a brilliant rhyming text by Giles Andreae and lots of hilarious pictures by Nick Sharratt. As we go through the book we meet lots of different animals, people and sometimes objects each wearing a different kind of pants - every shape, pattern, colour, size and style that you can think of - and lots more besides! This is a book children will ask for again and again. PANTS - which ones are your favourite?



You're Safe With Me

Author: Chitra Soundar **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 01/04/2018

Shortlisted for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2018 A wonderfully lyrical call and response text and an intricate, beautifully detailed and different illustrative style combine to great effect in this reassuring tale.



Please Mr Panda

Author: Steve Antony **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/09/2015

A humorous lesson in manners from the most endearingly grumpy panda. Likely to become a class catchphrase!



Well Done, Mummy Penguin

Author: Chris Haughton **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 06/10/2022

Award-winning artist/author Chris Haughton perfectly captures the anxiety Little Penguin feels when mum goes off fishing for his dinner. And the pride he feels when she bravely comes back having overcome all kinds of obstacles with a big fish for the family to share. Chris Haughton's strikingly coloured and delightfully boldly drawn Little Penguin is a character that appeals to all readers and his plight - anxiety about his mum being away even though he is being safely looked after by his dad - will touch a chord with everyone. A book to love on every level - and it may be helpful, too.



Blue Badger

Author: Huw Lewis Jones **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/03/2022

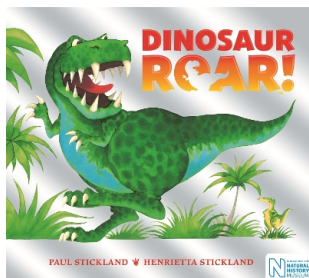
April 2022 Book of the Month The first in a series, Blue Badger's glowing wisdom brings Jon Klassen's sophisticated picture books to mind. Exploring identity and feeling out-of-sorts in a gentle, relatable way, it's sure to spark comforting conversations when shared aloud with a toddler. With an elegant palette, Ben Sanders' elegant illustrations (think emotive colour contrasts and expressive characters) are the perfect partner to Huw Lewis Jones' perfectly-pitched, perfectly-paced text. "White and black/ Day and night/ Badger doesn't feel quite right/Who am I?" So begins Blue Badger's existential quest to understand who he is. Not sure whether he's white and black, or black and white, Badger seeks advice from a host of animals. To make matters even more confusing, he's somehow ended up with a blue bottom. While none of the animals can quite answer his question — not Bird, Dog, Cow, Skunk, Zebra, Panda, Whale nor Penguin — Badger discovers that it doesn't actually matter, because being kind is the "best thing of all". Moreover, "You can be whatever you want to be!"



The Missing Piece

Author: Jordan Stephens **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 18/08/2022

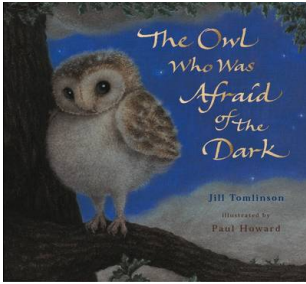
November 2022 Debut of the Month There are lots of things that makes us feel whole. Little Sunny says finishing a jigsaw, slotting in the final piece, is what gives her the most happiness, though her much-loved Gran wonders if that's really true. Gran gives her a 1000 piece jigsaw to complete and Sunny fits it together carefully until disaster! The final piece is missing. Sent out by Gran to the neighbours who borrowed the puzzle, Sunny makes new friends, one after another, and they dance home together as evening comes in. Searching for something is as important as finding it, and Sunny has discovered new forms of completeness and happiness. Sunny's journey is beautifully depicted in Beth Suzanna's bold, bright illustrations, the scene in which the new friends run home under the evening sky is particularly striking, and the story has much to tell us about friends, family and learning new truths about ourselves.



Dinosaur Roar! 25th Anniversary Edition

Author: Henrietta Stickland **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 10/01/2019

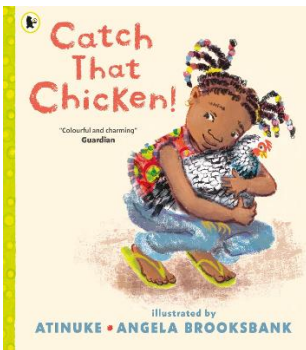
Dinosaur roar, dinosaur squeak! This fabulous rhyming book of opposites is deservedly recognised as a classic, celebrating its 25th anniversary. A herd of dinosaurs of all shapes, sizes and temperaments race or lounge across the pages, described in satisfying text that is just perfect for reading aloud, even over and over again. The dinosaurs are brighter and more eye-catching than ever in this new edition produced from rescanned artwork, and a rampant T-Rex is resplendent on the cover with tactile, shiny scales, teeth and claws. One to be gobbled up with a munch, munch, scrunch! Roar!



The Owl Who Was Afraid Of The Dark Picture Book

Author: Jill Tomlinson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/09/2002

Plop is a baby owl. Perfect in every way - except for one. He's afraid of the dark! But he soon discovers, through a variety of new friends, that dark can be fun and exciting and magical! This is a story for very young readers. The Lovereading Comment: This is one of the all time classics of 20th Century children's fiction, which has now been beautifully brought together into a picture book for the nursery complete with the story, games and songs on CD by the wonderful Bill Oddie. If your child is at all fearful of something, then this is the perfect book to allay those fears for The owl who was afraid of the dark has a wonderful uplifting finish.



Catch That Chicken!

Author: Atinuke **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/07/2021

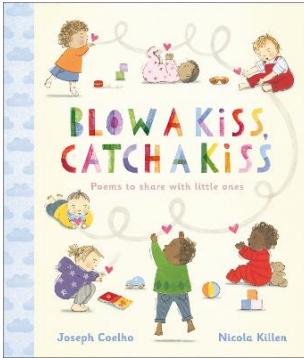
Told with great humour by Nigerian storyteller, Atinuke, this story of the headstrong, impetuous Lami will strike a chord with all children. The gentle message - to use quick thinking not just quick running - gives an incredibly satisfying ending, while Angela Brooksbank's beautiful artwork captures the energy and the beauty of the West African setting perfectly.



I Want My Hat Back

Author: Jon Klassen **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 01/11/2018

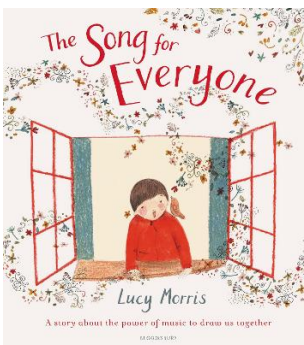
Shortlisted for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2013 A simply told story with a delicious and irresistible mischievous twist in its ending. Poor Bear! He has lost his hat. He asks everyone if they have seen it but no one can help. Where can it be? Just when Bear has given up all hope he spies it. And someone else is wearing it. Poor Rabbit! Where is he once Bear has his hat back? With its spare, building text and beautifully simple illustrations this tells its tale wittily.



Blow a Kiss, Catch a Kiss

Author: Joseph Coelho **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 06/10/2022

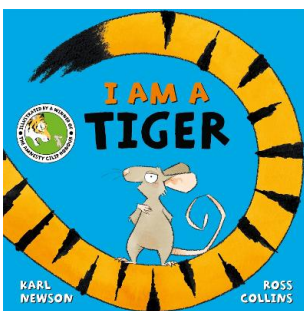
Shortlisted for the CLIPPA 2023 Children's Laureate Joseph Coelho's warm, elegant and meaningful poems capture both how pre-schoolers experience everyday things like going shopping and the complexities of feelings as they are felt and expressed by the very youngest listeners. Carefully grouped under headings including All About Me, What do I Feel, and At Home these poems highlight moments familiar to all children and extend them in eloquent words that make them exciting and also safe. Nicola Killen's illustrations match the words perfectly.



The Song for Everyone

Author: Lucy Morris **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/02/2022

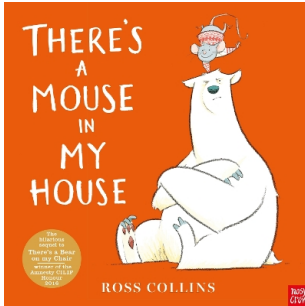
Longlisted for the Klaus Flugge Prize 2022 | The lives of the inhabitants of a small town are transformed by music in this elegant picture book. The music pours out of a small window high up in the eaves of a house - readers can see it, a stream of flowers, blossom and delicate leaves. The melody banishes a young boy's loneliness, makes an old lady feel lively and full of joy, gives everyone the thing they are missing and prompts kindness and generosity. When the music suddenly stops, the townspeople work together to help the musician, whose identity will surprise everyone. This gentle story celebrates the power of music in all our lives, as well as the importance of community and love. The illustrations come as close as you can get to a visual representation of music and are full of warmth and fellowship.



I am a Tiger

Author: Karl Newson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 16/05/2019

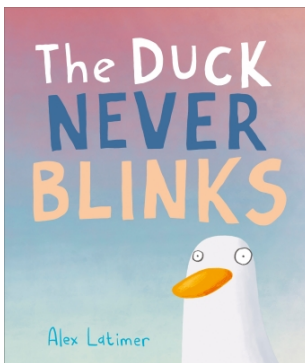
A deliciously playful fantasy tells how an audacious and ebullient mouse identifies himself as being something very much more than he is. Especially he dreams of being a tiger! But can he convince anyone else? Sadly for mouse, his lack of stripes, size and GRRR! make it pretty clear that he is certainly not a tiger. And, when a real tiger turns up, Mouse knows for sure that he won't ever be a tiger. Can he be something else? Karl Newson and Ross Collins capture imaginative play perfectly.



There's a Mouse in My House

Author: Ross Collins **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 16/09/2021

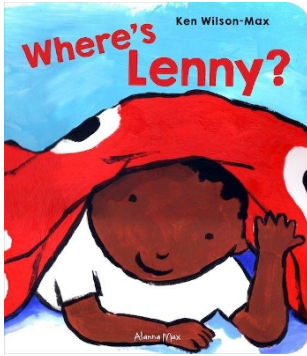
From the inventive author-illustrator of the award-winning *There's a Bear on My Chair* comes this smart sequel, and boy has Ross Collins delivered again. It's a rollicking, rhyming, visually-pleasing treat in which it turns out that Bear isn't terribly keen on getting a taste of his own medicine (to begin with, at least). The cause of Bear's irritation is the presence of Mouse in his house (yes, the very same Mouse on whose chair Bear presumptuously sat in the first book). In Bear's outraged words, "That rodent can't live here, oh no! I'll tell him that he has to go." Of course, Mouse refuses to leave and proceeds to cause chaos in Bear's house, before a mob of partying mice turn up. But then - the twist! - when Bear realises "Hey! These mice are nice!" With wonderful interplay between text, illustration and design, this is excellent for reading aloud - the kind of book that will have toddlers urging for it to be read again, and again (and again) while completing the rhymes before adults have chance to read them.



The Duck Never Blinks

Author: Alex Latimer **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 06/07/2023

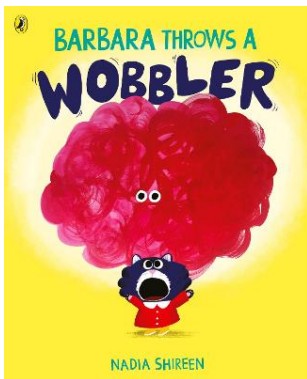
Jeanne Willis Guest Editor Book of the Month July 2023 *The Duck Never Blinks* by Alex Latimer is the best read-aloud book in decades. If I was a kid, I'd demand to hear it again and again...and again! Shudder not, parents, teachers and carers, this one is as rewarding to read and perform as it is to listen to. Destined to be a classic, the illustrations are beautifully simple, the words are simply hilarious and as the suspense builds, it's like playing the best interactive party game. Young or not so young, we all need a good laugh and this book is really blinking funny. - Jeanne Willis. You can find more book recommendations from Jeanne Willis here! Readers are drawn into this story directly and from the first page: 'You see that DUCK over there?' asks the narrator (we do). 'I've been watching that duck all day and it hasn't blinked. Not. Once.' From then on it's a combined effort to get the duck to blink - shouting, telling a sad story, cracking a joke - nothing works! Does the duck even have eyelids, wonders the narrator. A close up proves yes, it does. Through all of this, the duck stares back at us, beady eyes unblinking. Eventually, the narrator gives up and goes home and then... does duck blink? Read the book to find out, but it's certainly winking on the final spread! The duck features on every single page, against different coloured backgrounds, eyes gazing out and pulling us into the story. It's one of the funniest, most engaging books you'll read this year and young readers will love it, the final pay off guaranteed to have them laughing aloud every time.



Where's Lenny?

Author: Ken Wilson-Max **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 10/08/2020

Lenny plays hide and seek with his dad...Is he in the cupboard? No. Or in the sitting room? No, it's only the dog. He's not in the kitchen either. What about on the stairs? No, just blobs of jam. At last Dad and Mum see a little giggly lump under the bedclothes in Lenny's bedroom. Here's Lenny, ready for a tickle and a hug!



Barbara Throws a Wobbler

Author: Nadia Shireen **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 15/04/2021

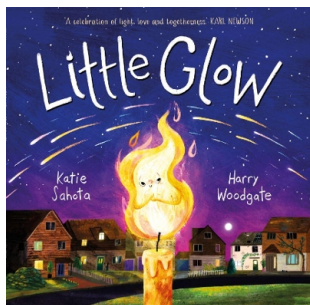
Shortlisted for the Books for Younger Children category, Children's Book Awards 2022 | Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Award ages 3-6 A brilliantly funny and sensitive way to understand and deal with tantrums.



I want a dog

Author: Jon Agee **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/09/2023

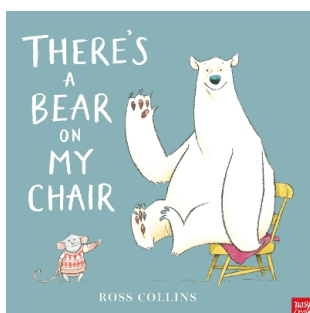
A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month September 2023 The deliciously light touch of author/illustrator Jon Agee deadpan humour makes a good joke out of a girl's determination to get a dog. Assuming it will be easy so she visits an animal shelter to choose the exact one she wants. So sure is she of her purchase that she even takes a cart so that she can easily get it home. But things don't go according to plan. The man in the animal shelter offers her an anteater, a baboon and a python adding all kinds of suggestions as to their possible dog-like characteristics. None will serve. Can they come to a compromise? They can! And readers will learn that pets are not always what you think they will be... A simple text and warm-hearted, soft focus illustrations make this a delight.



Little Glow

Author: Katie Sahota **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/10/2021

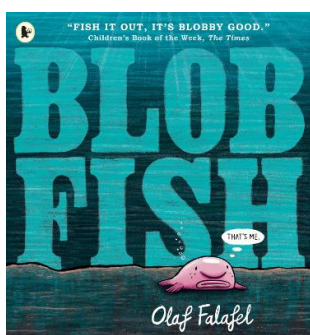
November 2021 Debut of the Month From the window of a cosy house in a seaside town, a little candle looks out onto the world. As the seasons roll by, she observes families celebrating, lighting up dark nights with love for Chinese New Year, Diwali, Hannukah, Ramadan and Christmas. It makes Little Glow wish to be bigger, until the realisation comes that small moments and the smallest lights are just as important as big ones. Revelling in comfort and light, this story was made to be shared in the winter nights while its message of hope and togetherness will warm hearts all year round.



There's a Bear on My Chair

Author: Ross Collins **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/09/2016

Winner of the UKLA 2017 Book Award | One of our Books of the Year 2016 | Shortlisted for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2016 | Shortlisted for the Bookbug Picture Book Prize 2016 Text, illustration and design all combine to make this an outstanding picture book. Mouse is cross, there's a bear – a polar bear – on his chair, he won't move and 'There isn't any room to spare. We do not make a happy pair'. The bear is apparently oblivious to Mouse and his growing rage, though readers will notice him take an occasional sly peek at his companion, deftly illustrated in just one line of eyebrow. Collins's illustrations also brilliantly capture Mouse's changing moods, from anger through to resignation. The text is a joy to read, a series of funny statements constructed – Dr Seuss-like – around words that rhyme with chair. A sequel – There's a Mouse in My House – must follow. This superb picture book is set to become a classic.



Blobfish

Author: Olaf Falafel **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/06/2023

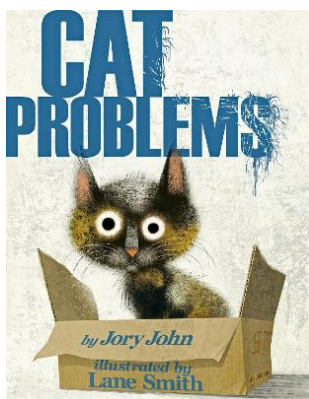
A heartfelt and humorous adventure from the bottom of the sea and beyond, following one fish on an epic journey. Deep, deep, deep under the sea ... lives Blobfish! Blobfish loves telling jokes, although he has no one to share them with, so he sets off on an adventure to find a friend. But sometimes friends turn up in the most unexpected places, even at the bottom of the ocean. This heartfelt and humorous story gently introduces children to themes of friendship, belonging and the issue of plastics in our oceans.



Good Morning, My Deer!

Author: Melanie Amon **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/09/2023

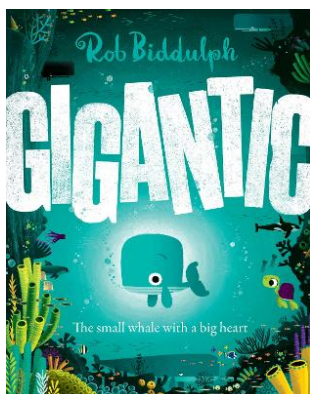
September 2023 Debut of the Month Banjo and his mum are having what at first appears to be a normal type of day – they get up, have breakfast, shop, do some chores, eat dinner, and go to bed. Their normal day is soon interrupted by witty word play though, creating some hilarious scenarios. Soon Banjo is brushing his hare rather than hair, and picking flours not flowers! A delightfully clever and engaging book for young readers. Inventive use of homophones is wonderfully employed to create both a fun reading experience and a solid learning opportunity. Bright, bold and colourful illustrations are integral to the story, inviting young readers in to identify and share the linguistic jokes. Excellent use of endpapers is made, with the front hinting at the coming wordplay and the back clarifying the homophones used and suggesting more. This will be a lovely book to share and explore together. Lots of fun and highly recommended.



Cat Problems

Author: Jory John **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 04/11/2021

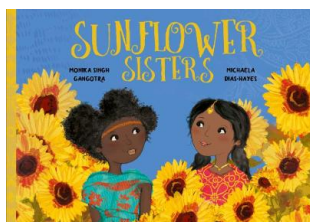
Following in the witty footsteps of Penguin Problems and Giraffe Problems, this masterful picturebook partnership have now produced stream of consciousness grumbles from a cat, which will seem all too familiar to any family owned by a cat. This unabashed malcontent complains about a sunbeam moving, about the Hoover monster, about another cat daring to sit in their spot, about the food service (after persistent yowling can you believe they only produce DRY food?) and of course the boredom (when not playing with tinfoil balls, sniffing shoes, eating plants and destroying sofas) The not-getting-outside might have pandemic resonance for small children who might be tempted to sympathise with this feline tyrant but a page long rant about counting your blessings from a squirrel on the other side of the window, which is greeted with "How can I eat this very talkative squirrel?" should bring them to their senses! The gloriously expressive, textured illustrations, with the page layout, font variety and pacing complimenting the humorous text, are just perfectly executed. A delightful picturebook that will be as popular with adult cat fans as eager young readers.



Gigantic

Author: Rob Biddulph **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 14/09/2023

Nobody can do colour quite like the award-winning creator of the Draw with Rob lockdown phenomenon, and this watery tale is stunningly illustrated. The intense aquamarine waters contrasting with dark purple stormy skies are spectacular and they are the perfect backdrop for the vivid technicolour underwater inhabitants. The clever design using a variety of layouts, from small vignettes against a white background to full colour pages really engage the reader and sweep the story along. Gigantic is a tiny blue whale having difficulty in living up to his name and his brother Titan never lets him forget it with his cruel taunts. Titan cannot even accept that Gigantic has his own talents and gets jealous when his friends admire his siblings athletic diving and dancing with his tiny pals. Trying to prove he is better leads to a disastrous beaching and only the little whale and his friends working together can help rescue Titan, proving that the only size that matters is the size of your heart. A lovely positive message told in lively rhyming text that flows as effortlessly as Gigantic's leaps and dives and makes a perfect read aloud.



Sunflower Sisters

Author: Monika Singh Gangotra **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/07/2021

Longlisted for the Klaus Flugge Prize 2022 | August 2021 Debut of the Month Two friends, one of Indian descent and one of African descent, have weddings to celebrate in their families. As the families gather for the occasion Amrita is exposed to old fashioned attitudes of colourism from older relatives. The idea that eating or drinking certain foods may make your skin darker is treated with a sure touch by Gangotra - but the strong message that people should celebrate their own skin colour and be happy with who they are comes across loud and clear. This is explored by the way Amrita wants to dress in a bright sunflower yellow dress (a colour thought to emphasize darkness of skin) but Mum is there to support Amrita in her choices and feel safe within herself. The title derives from both girls dressing brightly and beautifully for their family weddings. They then go on to promise each other they will live as 'Sunflower Sisters' always - with the joyful outcome that they open a shop selling colourful clothes for everyone. The deftness of touch in this story means no-one is belittled for their ideas, though the message comes through very clearly that colourism is not acceptable. Dias-Hayes background in fashion and textile design shines through the wonderful illustrations of clothes. Beautifully executed with a very sunny palette of colours this book is beautiful to look at, as well as powerful to read. Author, Monika Singh Gangotra shares the inspiration behind her debut picture book.