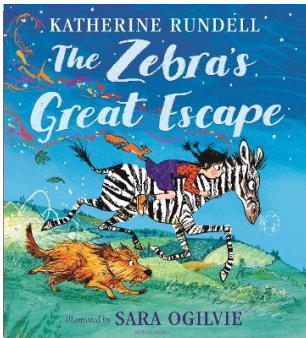


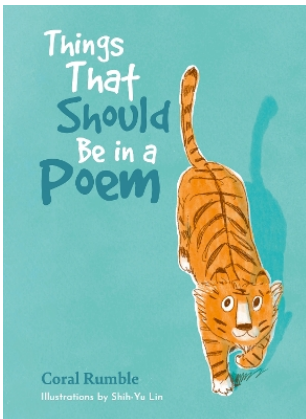
A selection of novels with short chapters and snappy storylines, suitable for Key Stage 2 children, that will leave listeners looking forward to storytime.



The Zebra's Great Escape

Author: Katherine Rundell **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 01/09/2022

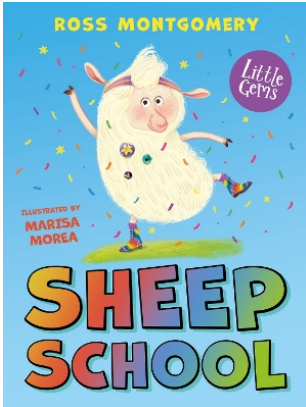
Mink likes doing things fast and wild, and, like the creature she's named herself for, is also fiercely loyal and not afraid to bite. When a lost little zebra comes looking for help, of course Mink volunteers and with the help of grouchy dog Rainbow and her new-found ability to understand what animals are saying, tracks down the missing zebra parents. They've been taken captive by the wicked Mr Spit, neatly completing his alphabetically organised wild animal collection. Nasty as Spit is, he's no match for Mink, especially when she's backed up by furious animals with newly found fire inside them. (Mink's dad thinks being asked for help gives us the chance to change the world, lighting up a fire inside us). With her plaits, her resourcefulness and courage, there's definitely something of Pippi Longstocking about Mink, and the story moves as fast as she could wish for, driven by a sense of justice and of all the possibilities open to children. Sara Ogilvie's illustrations are gorgeous, full of energy one minute, tenderness the next.



Things That Should be in a Poem

Author: Coral Rumble **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/09/2022

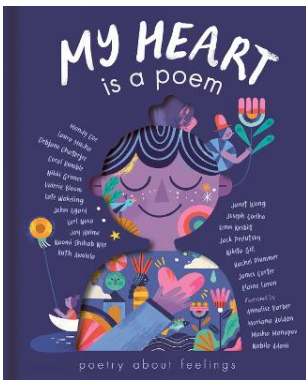
'Did you know, you can bump into a poem anywhere? You find them in houses, fields, oceans, cities, trees...the list is endless! I've even found poems in people's faces, when they laugh or cry, or get excited. Of course, you have to write the poems you find, because poems can't hold a pen or type on a keyboard. This book is full of poems I found when I was looking out for them. I had to dig some out of my imagination - ouch! You'll discover in the pages some things that I think should be in a poem, but I'm sure you can think of more. Go hunting!' Coral Rumble's warm, vibrant, exciting world of poems is complemented by Shih-Yu Lin's expressive colour illustrations.



Sheep School

Author: Ross Montgomery **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/03/2023

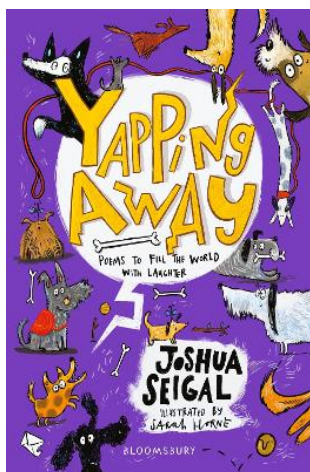
A thwarted thespian must use his talents to save his flock from a woolly situation in this hilarious gem from bestselling children's author Ross Montgomery. William the lamb just can't stand still. His feet are always tapping, ready to dance, and he loves nothing more than bursting into song. But his talents aren't always appreciated at Sheep School. Cast out of the flock, he wanders miserably away only to witness the rest of the sheep being captured by the Big Bad Wolf. Can William find a way to put his artistic skills to use to save the day?



My Heart is a Poem

Author: Various Authors **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 02/02/2023

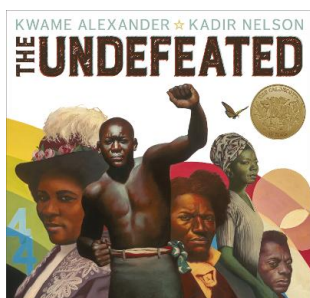
This is a book of poetry for everyone. This beautiful collection of poetry celebrates the brilliant thing that is feelings. It explores all the different emotions we experience and how different situations bring these emotions to the surface. From feelings of uncontrollable excitement and inexplicable sadness to the electricity which surges from anger and pride, the poems in this anthology perfectly put into words all the different things we feel in our hearts. Vivid and stirring artwork from an array of talented artists brings breathtaking poetry from a range of voices to life. Featuring powerful poetry from: Mandy Coe Laura Mucha Nikki Grimes Naomi Shihab Nye Debjani Chatterjee Coral Rumble Kate Wakeling John Agard Karl Nova James Carter Valerie Bloom Janet Wong Joseph Coelho Ken Nesbitt Jack Prelutsky Nikita Gill Jay Hulme Rachel Plummer Ruth Awolola Elaine Laron And awe-inspiring artwork from: Annalise Barber Mariana Roldan Masha Manapov Nabila Adani Also available: Courage in a Poem



Yapping Away: Poems by Joshua Seigal

Author: Joshua Seigal **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 19/08/2021

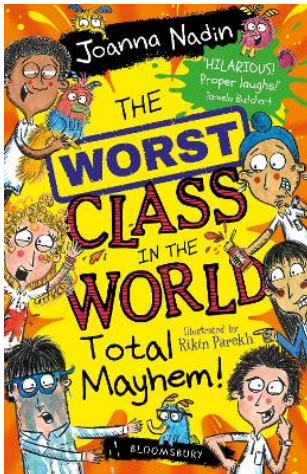
September 2021 Book of the Month The opening poem in Joshua Seigal's sparkling new collection invites readers to 'fill the world with words', and he does a very good job of doing just that in poems that represent his audience's world perfectly. Here are poems about classrooms, playtime, grandparents, chocolate biscuits - all just right to read aloud and deliciously easy to remember. There are poems that deliver jokes, poems that play with sense and their shape, poems that sneak in deeper meanings too as they describe familiar emotions. One thing is for certain, everyone will find a favourite in this collection, a poem they'll want to read to someone else. It ends with a selection of Seigal's tips for children on writing poetry and I think lots of readers will be inspired to add their own poems to the world as a result.



The Undefeated

Author: Kwame Alexander **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 20/02/2020

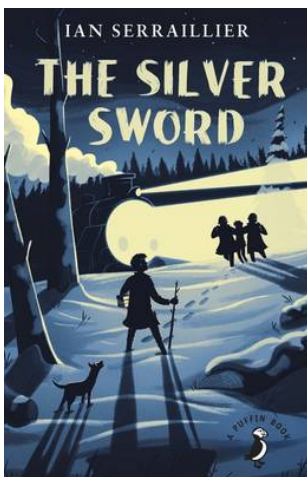
Winner of the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | Shortlisted for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2020 Written for and about "the swift and sweet ones/who hurdled history and opened a world of possible", for those who "survived America by any means necessary. And the ones who didn't," this is an inspiring ode to the author's forebears and to the world-changing feats of unforgettable Black American figures. Author Kwame Alexander's initial inspiration for this book came in the year his second daughter was born, the same year Barack Obama became the first African American president of the USA. As a result, Alexander wanted his daughters "to know how we got to this historic moment", which is exactly what this stirring book does. The chained slaves who kept faith, the elite Olympians, the innovative musicians, the seminal scientists, the courageous activists - people from all walks of life are celebrated in Alexander's poetically poised words, and gloriously illustrated by Kadir Nelson, with much for young children to ponder and ask questions about. As well as being a wonderful way for parents to explore Black American history with their little ones on a one-to-one basis, this will also work well with older children in a classroom context. Indeed, this is one of those rare and wonderful picture books that defies age boundaries - a radiant, resonant unforgettable tour de force, as befits its theme.



The Worst Class in the World Total Mayhem!

Author: Joanna Nadin **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 08/06/2023

A laugh-out-loud young fiction series from bestselling author Joanna Nadin, perfect for fans of Horrid Henry. Head teacher Mrs Bottomley-Blunt thinks 4B is the WORST CLASS IN THE WORLD. She says school is not about footling or fiddle-faddling or FUN. It is about LEARNING and it is high time 4B tried harder to EXCEL at it. But best friends Stanley and Manjit didn't LITERALLY mean to get covered in newt pond water just before the Class Photo. And they really didn't LITERALLY mean to cause TOTAL MAYHEM by trying to get fake teeth to the very best tooth fairy. These things just happened, even though they had FOOLPROOF plans to get away with it all. Highly illustrated and featuring two hilarious madcap adventures in one book, these stories are just right for children ready for their first chapter books.



The Silver Sword

Author: Ian Serraillier **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/07/2015

A classic story from World War Two, this tells how three children, Ruth, Edek and Bronia are helped by the young orphan Jan to escape from the horrors of Warsaw after the arrest of their parents. How the children travel across war torn Europe surviving every kind of danger and privation is thrilling and deeply moving. It is the story of a terrible time made bearable by the strong streak of humanity at its heart and by the unusual acts of kindness the children experience on their travels.

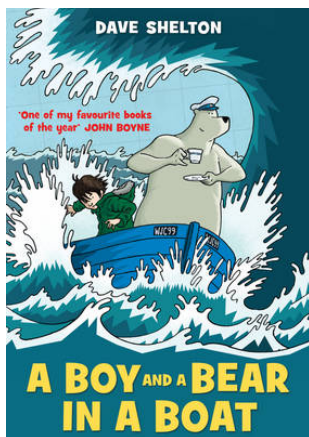


The Nothing to See Here Hotel

Author: Steven Butler **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 22/02/2018

March 2018 Book of the Month Any young reader who enjoys funny, surprising, brilliantly inventive stories should check into The Nothing to See Here Hotel IMMEDIATELY. They'll be welcomed by Frankie Banister, son of the owners and great-great-grandson of troll legend Regurgita Glump, who still lives on the hotel's top floor. Frankie does a great job introducing the hotel and its bizarre assortment of magical guests and staff, including chef Nancy, the giant Orkney Brittle-Back spider, and Ooof the ogre doorman. The story takes off with the arrival of goblin prince Grogbah and his enormous entourage. He's a very difficult guest, and is Granny right when she decides he's up to something sneakerish? The plot zips along like the best-oiled luggage trolley and Butler and Lenton make readers feel completely at home in the extraordinary world they've created. A 5* reading experience and

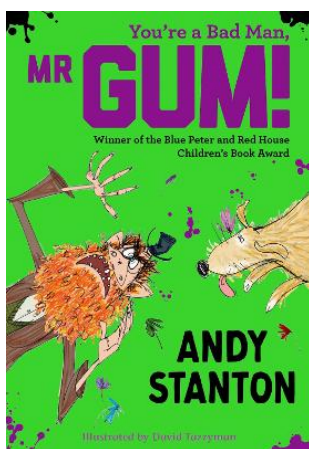
the first in a new series to boot. Children of 7 to 9 are being really well-served by authors at the moment, and those who enjoy this book will also love the Amelia Fang series and Kaye Umansky's *Witch for a Week*. Books in *The Nothing To See Here Hotel Series*: 1. *The Nothing To See Here Hotel* 2. *You Ain't Seen Nothing Yeti* 3. *Sea-ing in Believing* 4. *Fiend of the Seven Sewers*



A Boy and a Bear in a Boat

Author: Dave Shelton **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/03/2013

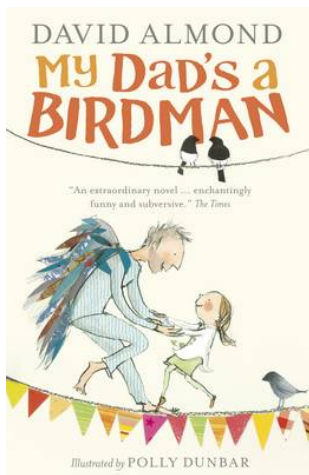
Winner of the Branford Boase Award 2013, the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2013 & the Costa Children's Book Awards 2012 An amazing adventure follows when a boy takes what he thinks will be a short ride in a boat with a bear. But the ride is not a short one... Soon, the boat is in the middle of an empty sea and the bear is struggling with a map and searching the horizon with a telescope. Luckily the boy has brought some food with him as together, the boy and the bear deal with impenetrable mist, a terrifying sea monster and even the remains of a disgusting sandwich in this humorous and gentle journey of survival and self-discovery.



You're a Bad Man, Mr Gum!

Author: Andy Stanton **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/05/2019

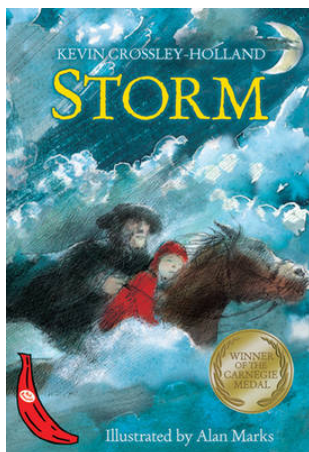
Mr Gum may well be a 'bad man' but rest assured the author Mr Stanton is a 'funny man'. There's a wonderful sense of humour throughout. Eccentric illustrative and graphical style to match the totally eccentric stories but a winning character to hook readers into this hilarious series. Fans of Roald Dahl will love it.



My Dad's a Birdman

Author: David Almond **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/04/2015

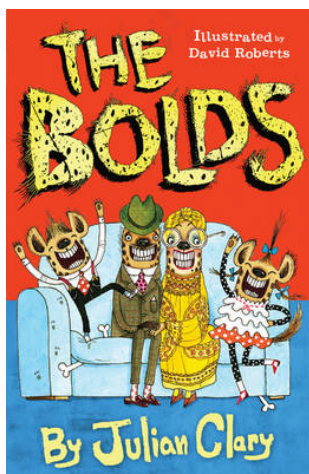
Join a father and daughter as they find their wings together and take to the skies in this funny, tender tale from the master of contemporary storytelling.



Storm

Author: Kevin Crossley-Holland **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/09/2001

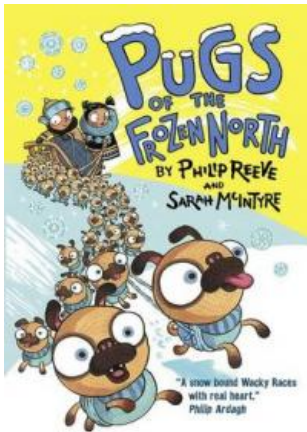
Winner of the Carnegie Award in 1985. A wonderful story of drama and adventure that is beautifully unraveled by award-winning author Kevin Crossley-Holland. The characters are superbly drawn and the narrative is simply but lyrically told. And there's a surprise at the end. (7+) To find out more about this book [CLICK HERE](#) to visit the Carnegie Greenaway site



The Bolds

Author: Julian Clary **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 30/07/2015

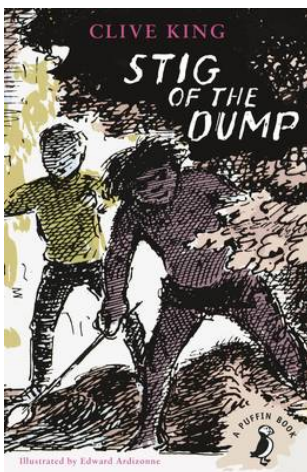
One of our Books of the Year 2015 - A Reader Review Panel Pick of the Year 2015 Comedian, entertainer and 'national trinket' Julian Clary now turns out to be a talented children's writer too. The Bolds, his first book for children, is a real treat - a funny story with a ludicrous but hugely enjoyable plotline, lots of jokes, some nail-biting moments and wonderful characters. The Bolds live happily in Teddington where Mrs Bold sells hats and Mr Bold writes the jokes for Christmas crackers, jobs for which they are perfectly suited. Hardly anyone knows they are actually hyenas! Their secret nearly comes out when they attract the attention of their grumpy next-door neighbour, but maybe he's got things to hide too. David Roberts' illustrations are a joy to behold and perfectly catch the stylishly dressed Bolds' blithe, carefree happiness. A very special book. Books in The Bolds Series: 1. The Bolds 2. The Bolds in Trouble 3. The Bolds to the Rescue 4. The Bolds on Holiday 5. The Bolds' Christmas Cracker 6. The Bolds Go Wild 7. The Bolds Go Green



Pugs of the Frozen North

Author: Philip Reeve **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/09/2016

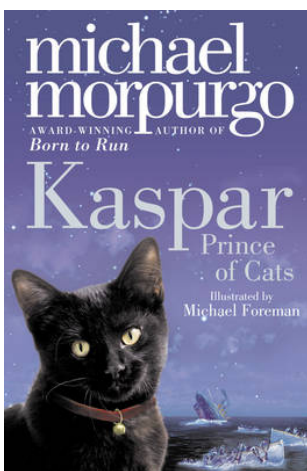
Shortlisted for the UKLA 2017 Book Award Award winning author partners Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre head north for their latest adventure. When the cabin boy is abandoned by his shipmates when their ship is stranded in the ice. He's completely alone, except for 64 little pugs, part of the ship's cargo! He soon teams up with Shika, a girl desperately seeking dogs to pull her grandpa's sled in the Race to the Top of the World, a once in a lifetime contest to win your heart's desire. The eccentric competitors mean there's something of the Wacky Races about all of this, but amongst the crazy - and very entertaining - scenes there are surprising notes of poignancy, as well as some lovely descriptions of the True Winter, fifty types of snow and all.



Stig Of The Dump

Author: Clive King **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 25/01/1973

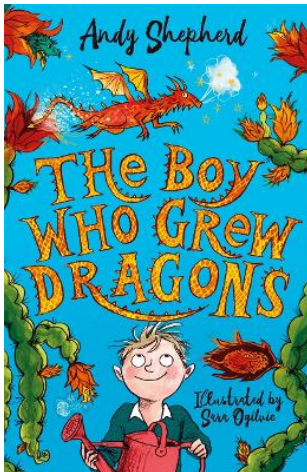
Published in the early 1960s and yet as relevant today as it was then, this is a book that will captivate the imagination of a 7 or 8 year old - in fact even the most reluctant reader will be hooked. When Barney falls into a disused quarry he's confronted by Stig, a caveman but none of Barney's friends believe the story of Stig. So Barney has the time of his life and the two of them get up to a whole heap of adventures. Just read it - we guarantee you'll enjoy it.



Kaspar Prince of Cats

Author: Michael Morpurgo **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/01/2010

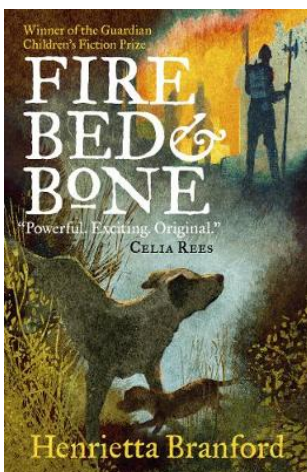
A wonderfully emotional but heart-warming tale from the pen of one of the foremost writers for children. Brilliantly interwoven in historical fact at the time of the sinking of the Titanic is the story of Kaspar the Savoy cat, who we also discover is a survivor of the sinking of the Titanic. The story is utterly compelling and brought to life still further by some really dreamy illustrations by Michael Foreman. A story to read aloud during those cold wintry evenings as much as a story to cuddle up with alone. Wonderful.



The Boy Who Grew Dragons

Author: Andy Shepherd **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/06/2018

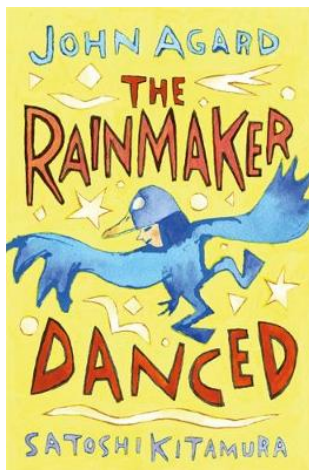
Shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize 2019 - Longlisted for the Blue Peter Book Awards 2019 Andy Shepherd's series about Tomas, a boy who discovers dragons growing in his grandad's garden is hugely popular and deservedly so. The plot is delicious - what young reader wouldn't love to have magical, mischievous, lovable little pets flying round their bedrooms. If you think a kitten can cause trouble, just think of the extra chaos a young dragon can cause, fiery, exploding poo being just part of it! Cheeky as the little dragons are, they are also hugely lovable, affectionate and loyal. When Tomas's friends find dragons of their own, the fun multiplies, and together they find out more about their dragons and have wonderful adventures, fuelled always by copious amounts of jam tarts. Another joy is all the time Tomas spends with his wise old grandad, cultivating the garden and discovering lots about nature and life in general. No matter how wild the dragon's antics, the stories are grounded in real life and the human relationships are perfectly described. The stories are illustrated throughout with black and white line drawings by Sara Ogilvie and her dragons are quite as naughty and as gorgeous as they sound in Shepherd's descriptions.



Fire, Bed and Bone

Author: Henrietta Branford **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/09/2018

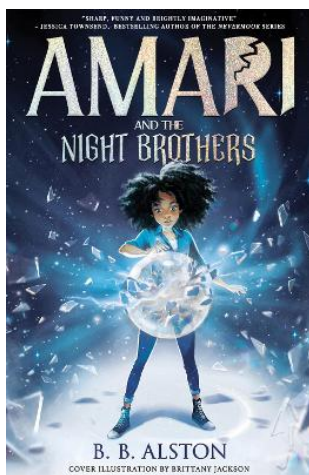
A most welcome reissue of a superb piece of accessible historical writing told from a most unusual viewpoint. Ultimately uplifting, this is an unflinching look at issues of social justice at the time of the Peasants Revolt. Marcus Sedgwick, who won the Branford Boase Award in 2001, says: "Fire, Bed and Bone is one of those very short books that is nevertheless powerful and moving; one of those books which oozes confidence from the first line to the last. With it, Henrietta won the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize, and twenty-two years later I think it would still win. It's far from being the first novel narrated by an animal, in this case a hunting hound witnessing the events of the Peasant's Revolt of 1381, but remains a masterclass in how to pull off that feat successfully. Its prose is robust and rhythmic; flawless in its execution, showing just what complex themes and stories one can address in a 'book for children'."



The Rainmaker Danced

Author: John Agard **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 21/09/2017

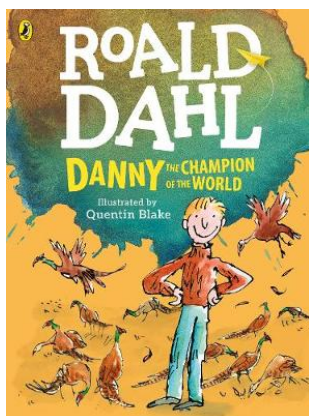
This collection from John Agard, winner of the Queens Medal and the Eleanor Farjeon Award, explores the wonders of the world - inviting your child to ponder life's questions with lots of fun along the way!



Amari and the Night Brothers

Author: BB Alston **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/09/2021

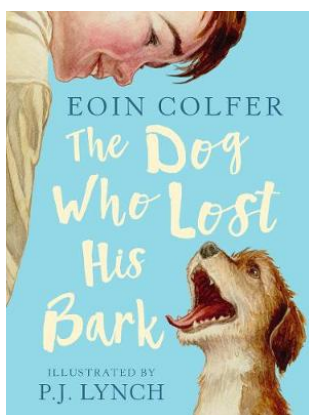
September 2021 Debut of the Month Alston is a debut author who looked in vain for a hero or heroine who looked like him in fantasy novels - and this delivers and so much more too. Amari is a child who attends a posh school on a scholarship - but really finds it hard to fit in and avoid the bullies. Her mother is a hard-working health worker, and her brother Quinton is missing - his disappearance seems to be the root of Amari's difficulties. As the holidays approach Amari receives an invitation via a mysterious messenger to be considered for something (at this stage unexplained) - by attending an interview. From here on the story becomes a hugely imaginative, funny and compelling adventure. Magic and mystery flow thick and fast from this point on - as Amari takes her chances to prove herself and to start finding out what happened to her brother. The story takes you through the development of some close and lasting friendships, against some awful magical bullies and monsters, to an exciting and nail-biting adventurous conclusion, though it leaves a possible opening for more books about Amari in future. A wonderful fun adventure addition to every child's bookshelf and any school library looking for more representation across all its genres.



Danny, the Champion of the World

Author: Roald Dahl **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 25/01/2018

A classic Roald Dahl title, a most touching story of a boy and his very special father. Danny and his father live in a caravan parked right next to the garage where his father works. Danny father teaches him how to fix bits of car, reads him bedtime stories and introduces him to the wonders of nature. One night, Danny discovers his father has a secret. He is a brilliant poacher and he is determined to outwit the local gamekeepers. How Danny helps his father carry out his most daring plan of all without being caught is a thrilling read and a triumph for father and son.

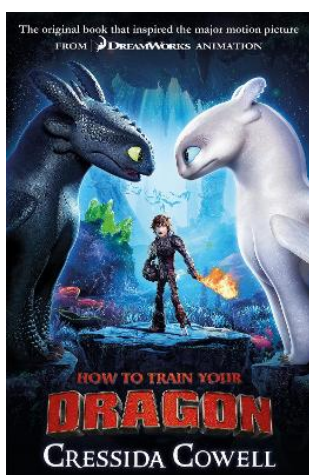


The Dog Who Lost His Bark

Author: Eoin Colfer **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/08/2019

Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2020 | Shortlisted for the Children's Book Awards 2019, Books for Younger Readers

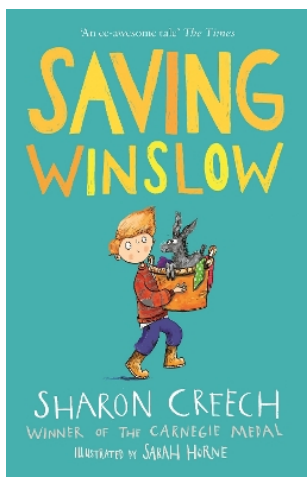
Category Patrick is delighted to go to stay at his grandparents' house, especially when he is told he can choose a rescue puppy. Oz, the puppy has had a terrible start but Patrick is determined to help, until his own life falls apart and he doesn't love his dog. Colfer explores his subject with an empathy which makes the characters and dilemmas very real. A great read.



How to Train Your Dragon

Author: Cressida Cowell **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 10/01/2019

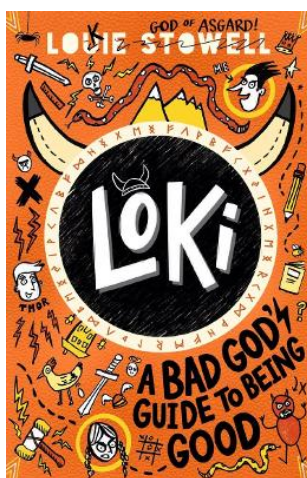
Jokes flow thick and fast from this most original and inventive Viking adventure, which launched the career of a Viking with a difference. Hiccup Horrendous Haddock grew up at a time of dragons but he was not always a hero. He had to learn to fight them. To do so he had to pass the Dragon Initiation Programme, an awesome schedule run by Gobber the Belch, idiot in charge of initiation on the Isle of Berk. Hiccup was by no means a natural high achiever when it came to dragon training but after many hilarious mishaps, he soon got the hang of it and was on the way to becoming a Hero. Books in The How To Train Your Dragon Series: 1. How To Train Your Dragon 2. How To Be A Pirate 3. How To Speak Dragonese 4. How To Cheat a Dragon's Curse 5. A Hero's Guide to Deadly Dragons 6. How To Twist a Dragon's Tale 7. How To Ride a Dragon's Storm 8. How To Break a Dragon's Heart 9. How To Steal a Dragon's Sword 10. How To Seize a Dragon's Jewel 11. How To Betray a Dragon's Hero 12. How To Fight a Dragon's Fury



Saving Winslow

Author: Sharon Creech **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/01/2021

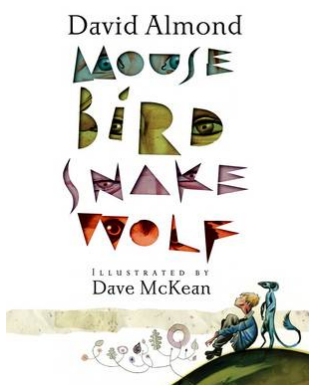
Selected for The Book Box by LoveReading4Kids | Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021 The fragility of life underpins this heart-warming story from the start. Louie was born prematurely “a pitiful, scrawny, struggling thing”. Newcomer Nora lost a premature baby brother and this experience has left her anxious and slow to trust. The two children bond over Winslow, a frail orphaned baby donkey, not expected to survive, whom Louie adopts despite his poor track record with saving bugs, worms or goldfish. For both, saving the adorable Winslow helps them to feel less powerless about underlying anxieties, such as Louie’s fears for his beloved brother serving in the army who now signs his infrequent letters “remember me”. Carnegie medal winning Creech packs a real emotional punch into so few words of beautifully spare prose. This short novel would be an ideal read aloud with delightfully humorous scenes as Winslow grows stronger (and louder) as well as great pathos and a dramatic and satisfying climax. It is set in an unspecified past and would be a wonderful companion read to Charlotte’s Web or Eva Ibbotson’s One Dog and His Boy and is as deserving of classic status.



Loki: A Bad God's Guide to Being Good

Author: Louie Stowell **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/02/2022

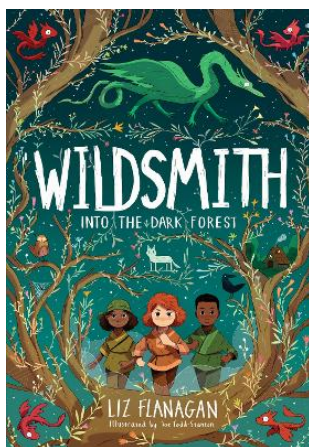
Winner of the Children's Book Award 2023 | Shortlisted for the British Book Awards 2023 Shot-through with wit, myth, friendship and fart jokes, and told through a blend of narrative text, doodles and comic strips, Louie Stowell’s Loki: A Bad God's Guide to Being Good is a riot from start to finish. Oh, how the mighty are fallen! After playing one joke too many, trickster god Loki has been banished to earth by Odin, and this book presents Loki’s diary account of his 31-day exile as a mere mortal. The interlocking of words and pictures is hilariously effective from the off, such as when the author juxtaposes Loki’s “before and after” form. Before he had “awesome big hair”, “cool facial hair”, “broad shoulders” and “arm muscles”. As an eleven-year-old boy his hair is “only slightly awesome”, and his body is decidedly scrawny. Despite believing “I am too awesome to be treated like this!”, Loki reluctantly admits that “Odin IS the boss of me”, which leaves him no choice. If he wants to return to his god-form, he must do good deeds, go to school, and show some kind of progress. Alongside the fast-paced execution of an excellent concept, this heady hotpot of humour has been superbly designed. I loved the droll correction boxes flagging-up Loki’s fibs. As he explains, “this is a magical diary. If I lie in here, the diary will correct it”. And there are comic corrections aplenty as Loki strives to increase his “virtue scores” to end his banishment. The first in a series, Loki: A Bad God's Guide to Being Good is sure to generate tonnes of “have you read this?” enthusiasm in the playground.



Mouse Bird Snake Wolf

Author: David Almond **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/01/2014

Shortlisted for the Kate Greenaway Medal 2014 Award-winning David Almond is at his most lyrical and imaginative in this story of how three children fill up the gaps the gods have left when creating their world. First they create a mouse, a soft squeaky thing, then a flying thing to fill up all the space above them. They are pleased with what they do. But are they brave enough to create a wolf? And what will happen when they do? Dave McKean's illustrations bring the children and the creatures they create vividly to life.



Into the Dark Forest The Wildsmith #1

Author: Liz Flanagan **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/02/2023

Shortlisted for the Week Junior Book Awards 2023 When war threatens her beloved city, Rowan and her mother must flee to the Dark Forest, meeting Grandpa and his white wolf Arto for the first time. Though she misses her father, Rowan makes new friends - including a trio of powerful witches. When she rescues a baby dragon from poachers, she discovers the secret of her own identity. Could Rowan really be a wildsmith? Fostering a whole clutch of dragons, the summer speeds by. But when danger threatens, Rowan and Grandpa must call on all their friends for help. Shortlisted for the Week Junior Book Awards 2023

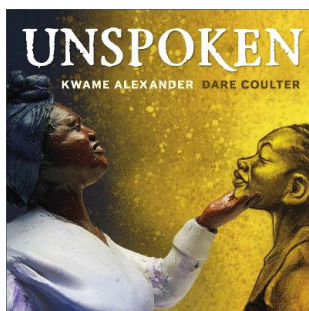


Ways to Make Sunshine

Author: Renee Watson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 23/07/2020

August 2020 Book of the Month From the author of exceptional YA novels like *What Momma Left Me* and *Piecing Me Together* comes this beautiful bighearted story for 7+ year-olds - a true treasure about everyday family life, being yourself and making the best of things, with an unforgettable African American heroine at its luminous heart. Keen cook Ryan and her family live in Portland, Oregon, and she's not best pleased when they have to move to a smaller house as a result of her dad's new job paying less than the one he lost a while back. But Ryan's not the kind of girl to complain for long, or to let anything get her down. She's one of life's thinkers and doers, whose loving parents have infused her with a life-affirming sense of self-worth and pride in her heritage: "I remember what Mom always tells me, how she named me Ryan because she wanted me to feel powerful, to remember that I am a leader every time someone calls my name. Dad is always telling me our

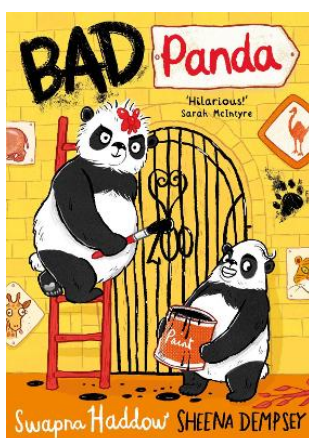
people come from royalty, that my ancestors lived in Africa and were kings and queens and inventors and hard workers. Mom tells me their strength is running through my veins.” Told through manageable interlinked vignettes, this soulfully illustrated gem - the first in a series - sits in the tradition of Judy Blume’s young fiction and Beverly Cleary’s Ramona series, but it’s also refreshingly unique. The pitch-perfect evocation of Ryan’s grace and warmth, and her positive perspective will entertain and inspire young readers, while helping them understand the world and handle change.



Unspoken

Author: Kwame Alexander **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 02/02/2023

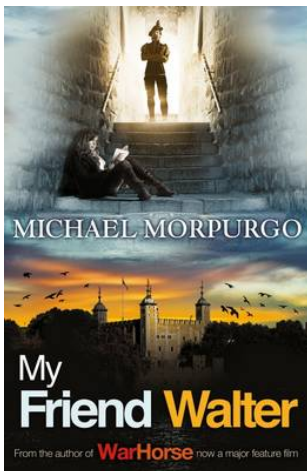
March 2023 Book of the Month Companion to the brilliant *The Undeclared*, Kwame Alexander’s *Unspoken* achieves the seemingly impossible, beginning with the question: “How do you tell a story/that starts in Africa/ and ends in horror/An unbelievable story/about evil plans/and big guns/hiding in the night/waiting”. Presented as a teacher talking to their pupils about slavery, this bold, poetic masterwork speaks to multiple ages. Add to that Dare Coulter’s powerful illustrations — portraits and scenes that speak to the soul — and you have a tremendous book that will be appreciated and treasured for years as a testament to truth, bravery, struggle and survival. We learn of the “sly men from cold places” who shackled African people in their ships, and the unpaid, backbreaking labour Black children were forced to do while their white counterparts “ate their candy/and played tag/before school”. We read of “families torn apart, sold like cattle”. And we also bear witness to fighting back, standing up and speaking out, before the answer to that opening question is presented - the story is told “by being brave enough/to lift your voice”.



Bad Panda

Author: Swapna Haddow **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/07/2021

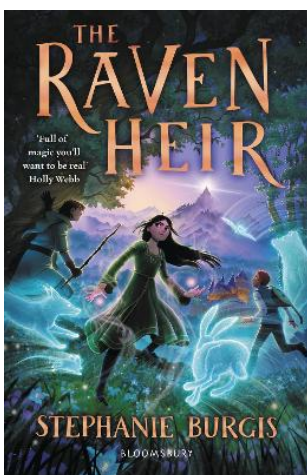
Lin is seriously cute, even for a panda. In fact, she’s the sort of cute that reduces everyone to inarticulate cooing and desperate requests for cuddles. It’s part of the genius of Haddow’s book that lots of small children will identify with that, and with Lin’s utter disgust at this response! When she’s sent away from her brother and best friend Face-Like-A-Bag-Of-Potatoes to a different zoo, and advertised as The World’s Fluffiest Panda, Lin flips: she’ll do anything to get back. Her plan, in which she is ably assisted by new friend Fu, involves being so bad the keepers will have to send her home. Readers will love Lin’s comic adventures and race through the story. Sheena Dempsey’s two-colour illustrations are as lively as Lin, and the story often slips into comic strip, making it super-readable as well as super-fun.



My Friend Walter

Author: Michael Morpurgo **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/02/2007

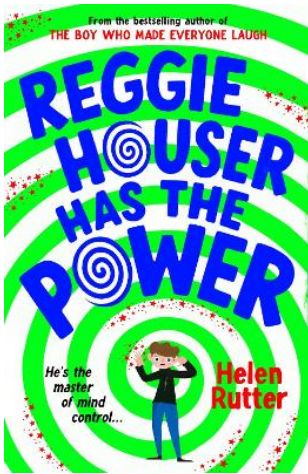
A delightfully exciting and witty adventure that interweaves elements of history - Sir Walter Raleigh comes into the present as a ghost and wreaks havoc and fun with a family! - into a fun and gripping story which children will love.



The Raven Heir

Author: Stephanie Burgis **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/08/2021

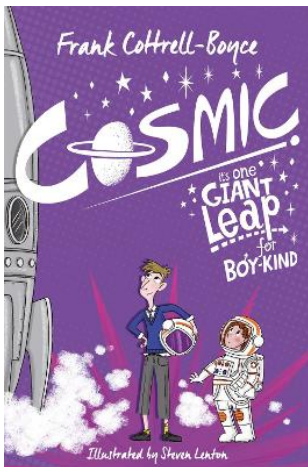
From the author of a delicious feast of dragon novels, *The Raven Heir* is a riotous romp of an adventure story, replete with old world atmosphere and more mystery, magic and quest-driven action than you can quiver a medieval sword at. Triplets Cordelia, Rosalind and Giles have lived all their lives in a castle protected by their mother's magic, surrounded by a wonderfully evoked enchanted forest that was "shot through with trails of sunlight, tracing golden paths of possibility." These paths of possibility have caught Cordelia, in particular. She longs to be forever free as a bird, not only when she's permitted to transform into a flying thing, as she's able to. Though this longing for freedom might come to serve her well, brave Cordelia - and her siblings - face more immediate trouble. The eldest of them is heir to the throne of the Kingdom of Corvenne (a kingdom that's been unrulable since the Raven Crown was broken), and this comes with such tremendous risk that their mother won't reveal which of them was born first. As a result, their mother is captured, and the triplets must rescue her. Driven by a child-centred spirit of solidarity, this clearly-drawn quest is overlaid with a wonderful scheme of magic - a terrific treat for adventure story fans. The LoveReading LitFest invited Stephanie to the festival to talk about this epic fantasy adventure of warring dynasties, magically powered triplets and a broken crown in need of a rightful heir. You can watch the full event for free [here](#).



Reggie Houser Has the Power

Author: Helen Rutter **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/02/2024

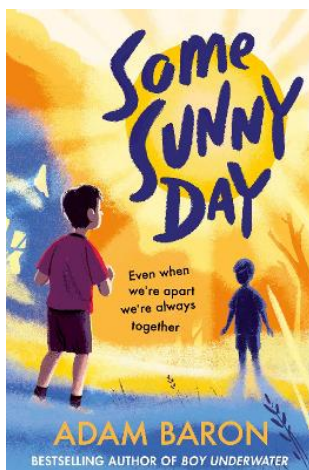
Having twice had stories selected for Empathy Day collections, Helen Rutter is becoming known for her capacity to make the reader see the world through another pair of eyes and to walk in the shoes of individuals in challenging circumstances. She is renowned also for her capacity to do this in narratives that are as funny as they are touching - an extraordinary talent that is amply demonstrated in this her latest novel. Reggie has ADHD and is coming to the end of primary school where he has constantly struggled to make friends, to fit in and to 'be good.' He desperately wants secondary school to be different and when he sees a hypnotist perform on stage, Reggie becomes obsessed with learning the skills of mind control and discovers that he has an incredible talent for it! Could this be the answer to gaining friends and popularity? But his talents are noticed by a gang who want to use his skills for their own advantage and things quickly get out of hand. Reggie needs to learn what real friendship is and to trust and believe in himself. This is a really perceptive and moving exploration of what ADHD is like, what it feels like to not fit in and the dangerous power of peer pressure. Readers will find much to relate to and enjoy in this heartwarming and hilarious story. Sharing as a class or at bedtime will promote some really valuable discussion about acceptance and tolerance. Highly recommended.



Cosmic

Author: Frank Cottrell-Boyce **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 21/02/2019

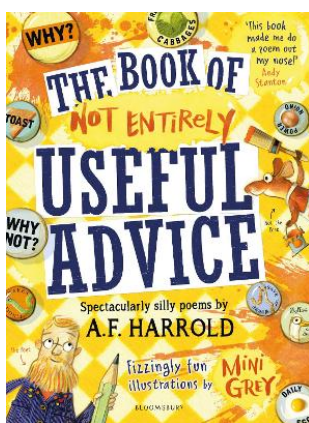
Shortlisted for the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize 2008 and the Carnegie Medal 2008 Cosmic and cosmic, this is a roller coaster adventure that takes Liam Digby up into space with a handful of other children and their parents. It's an hilarious journey of discovery as Liam hurtles around the world finding out exactly what makes children and adults different.



Some Sunny Day

Author: Adam Baron **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/07/2022

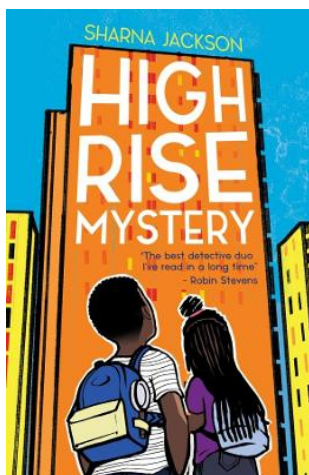
July 2022 Book of the Month Brimming with kindness, and voiced with humour by its adorable Charlton-obsessed protagonist, Adam Baron's *Some Sunny Day* evokes all the fears and frustrations of pandemic lockdown from a child's perspective. With a cast of gloriously authentic characters, it's also a beautiful tribute to the work teachers did during the pandemic, and incredibly funny, with a mystery to boot. Cymbeline Igloo (Cym) is well and truly fed up of being locked down. His mum is super-paranoid about COVID-19 and takes social distancing to the extreme. She's also obsessed with keeping busy, which is why a massive clear out leads to her accidentally giving away Cym's beloved signed football shirt. A powerful subplot about the experience of refugees comes to the fore when Cym discovers who has his shirt. Then, when COVID strikes close to home and his fellow Charlton-supporting neighbour Mrs Stebbings, the much-loved school cook, is taken into hospital, Cym realises what really matters, and rallies his class to pivot their WWII history assignment into a magical project to make her feel better. Incredibly moving (reader, I cried), *Some Sunny Day* also brilliantly evokes the hilarious absurdities of lockdown, from taking daily exercise with a TV personality and baking sourdough bread, to supermarket shortages, and the triumph/despair of discovering/missing out on that last pack of toilet paper or bottle of ketchup. A truly special story that will chime with thousands of young readers, this would also make a great book to read as a class. You can watch our exclusive interview with author Adam Baron [here](#).



The Book of Not Entirely Useful Advice

Author: A. F. Harrold **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 03/09/2020

Two phenomenally talented people are united in this book, and it is hard to know which of them – poet A.F. Harrold or illustrator Mini Grey – had the most fun creating it. Either way, the end product is glorious, an entirely essential collection of poems offering unforgettable advice on an extraordinary range of subjects. Scanning through the index will give you an idea of the topics covered, and how: the entry for banana, for example, reads how to identify a ... while that for pencil case is why you shouldn't muddle one up with a lunchbox ... There are three entries for tiger, referring you to very useful poems, including the one that explains just how many tigers it takes to spoil a picnic. Harrold is a master of the absurd, taking ideas or phrases and turning them quite round about and Mini Grey illustrates his poems with an equal delight in the possibilities he conjures up. Most of the poems are wonderfully comic, but there's space for quiet, thoughtful verse too. It's a book to fire the imagination and to make you see things in a whole new way, like a poet in fact.

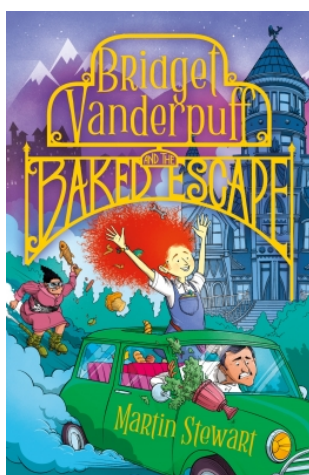


High-Rise Mystery

Author: Sharna Jackson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/04/2019

Winner of the Younger Readers' category of the Waterstones Children's Book Prize 2020 | Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2020 | Longlisted for the Branford Boase Award 2020

Sisters Nik and Norva would agree that they are slightly obsessed with murder mystery series on the television so, when a body is discovered in their block of flats, they are sure they are the right people to discover the truth. Balancing jokey dialogue and insights into the reality of city life, Sharna Jackson has written a very likeable, fast-paced book. Books in the High-Rise Mystery Series: 1. High-Rise Mystery 2. Mic Drop



Bridget Vanderpuff and the Baked Escape

Author: Martin Stewart **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 08/06/2023

There are orphan stories with bold, indomitable orphans escaping cruel and unusual treatment, and then there's this orphan story, which is wonderfully idiosyncratic, full of imagination and a celebration of blended families, baking and ingenuity. Bridget has experienced a truly awful life at Miss Acrid's Orphanage for Errant Childs (sic) and it seems set to get even worse when, in an act of unparalleled spite, Miss Acrid arranges for all the errant childs, except for Bridget, to be adopted, leaving her not just miserable and oppressed, but horribly lonely too. Miss Acrid has reckoned without the lovely Mr Vanderpuff however and can't stop Bridget escaping with him for adoption. Life at Vanderpuff's Bake Shop seems magical after the orphanage, and literally so, when Bridget meets Pascal La Fleur, bakery elf, but Miss Acrid is out for revenge and determined to get Bridget back under her control. With nods to Dahl, who would have admired Miss Acrid, and huge amounts of invention, humour and heart, Martin Stewart has created a story and characters that will hugely entertain young readers. Also available in the series: Bridget Vanderpuff and the Ghost Train



Coraline

Author: Neil Gaiman **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 10/10/2013

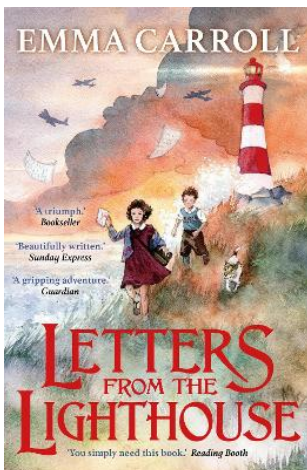
Tenth anniversary edition of Neil Gaiman's modern classic, brilliantly illustrated by Chris Riddell, with a new foreword by the author. When Coraline's family move into a new home, she steps through a door into another house which seems strangely familiar. It has many of the things she has at home but they are all strangely different. There is even a replacement set of parents. At first, Coraline likes her new home but she soon realises that the new parents are reluctant to let her go. Can Coraline escape? Will she ever get home? Not for the faint hearted, this is a fascinating and chilling story, exquisitely told.



Spellstone

Author: Ross Montgomery **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/05/2023

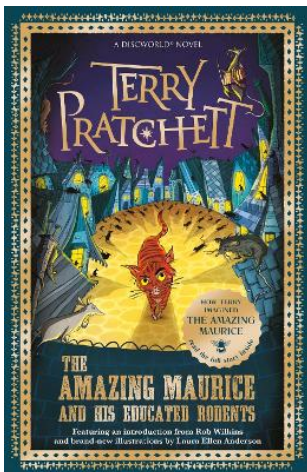
A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month May 2023 Evie is a bored, cross and very ordinary twelve year old when she is suddenly recruited into the Order of the Stone by Wainwright, a mysterious magician she meets by chance. With no idea as to how or why she has been chosen she is swept up in the Order's ancient battle to keep the forces of darkness at bay and to defeat Vale, the evil magician. Evie's companions in the fight look like a motley and unlikely crew, including a very bossy talking cat, but each of them has very special magic powers of their own. Vale's powers are huge and his team of henchmen, known as smoke-men, are deeply sinister. Has Evie the courage that is needed to lead her team and win the battle? The stakes are high and Ross Montgomery sensitively explores how Evie finds more courage than she knew she had in a roller-coaster read full of creative surprises.



Letters from the Lighthouse

Author: Emma Carroll **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/06/2017

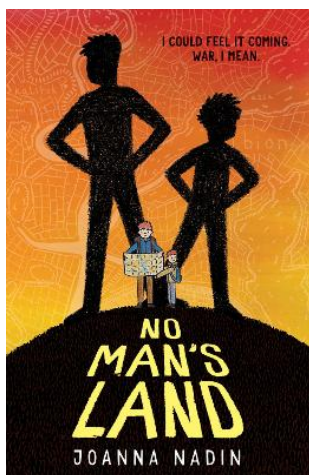
One of Our Books of the Year 2017 | July 2017 Book of the Month
LoveReading4kids are big fans of Emma's books. Her stories continue to delight and move me, and Letters from the Lighthouse does not disappoint at all. It's 1941 and the Second World War rages on longer than anyone anticipated. Reeling from the death of their father and the disappearance of their sister Sukie, Olive and her brother are evacuated to the coast of Devon. After discovering a strangely coded message that she's certain has something to do with Sukie's disappearance, Olive embarks on a dangerous adventure as she's determined to get to the bottom of the mystery. Emma Carroll has a wonderful talent for bringing historic events to life for today's young readers and with Letters from the Lighthouse continues to create an enthralling, thrilling read, whilst introducing situations and characters that are still relevant in our world today. Olive is a wonderful protagonist. Being an evacuee she has an understanding of the prejudice that can come from lack of understanding. The thing that touched me most within this wonderful novel was the opportunity to hear the stories behind all those effected by war along with the refugees and the impact they had on the locals. War and hate has the ability to divide communities but Letters from the Lighthouse shows how much can be achieved when people work together. A beautifully written story about bravery, compassion, understanding, and having the strength to fight for what you believe in.
~ Shelley Fallows



The Amazing Maurice and his Educated Rodents

Author: Terry Pratchett **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 26/04/2018

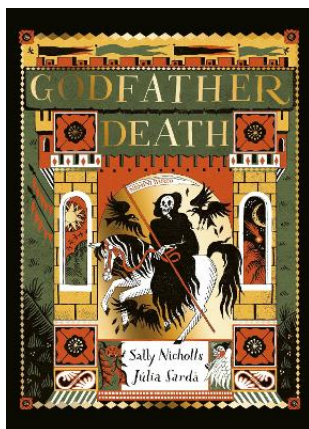
A Carnegie Medal winner that is the perfect introduction into the comic, yet thought-provoking, Discworld created by the late lamented Sir Terry Pratchett.



No Man's Land

Author: Joanna Nadin **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/09/2021

Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2023 ages 7-10 Perfectly-pitched for its intended age group, Joanna Nadin's *No Man's Land* is a mightily thought-provoking, utterly gripping, and empathy-inspiring story of a ten-year-old boy's bravery in the face of the terrifying changes that come in the wake of an impending war in far-right Albion, a dystopian imagining of post-Brexit Britain. It started "when the Albioneers won the election. Maybe before, even - before I was born. When England decided it didn't like Europe any more." That's how endearing Al surmises the situation as things worsen in Albion - his non-British, non-white friends are being compelled to leave this intolerant, racist land, and war is on the horizon. As a result, Al and his little brother Sam are sent to safety by their dad, to Kernow in the country, where a community of mainly women eke out survival. While Sam believes this is all part of a game, Al is angry at being sent away, and desperate to be reunited with his dad by his imminent birthday. But time sweeps by, and war is certain. There are valuable lessons to be learned from Al's realisation that the women of Kernow are, in fact, the true heroines of the piece - "there were different ways to resist... I saw them then. The women in the kitchen, whispering, drinking, planning. Not bad things. But not nothing either. Providing a life for anyone who needed it." In Al's words, "not all heroes wear capes. And not all heroes carry guns." Powerfully prescient stuff, with wonderfully-drawn characters.

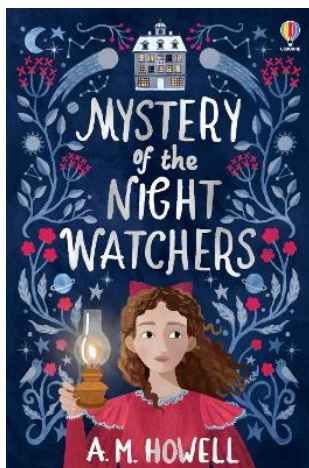


Godfather Death

Author: Sally Nicholls **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 07/09/2023

September 2023 Book of the Month You can tell that everyone involved in the production of this book: from author to artist to designer, has relished their task! It truly is a beautifully produced book, with gold foiling and a dark autumnal palette, but the quality of the writing is equally outstanding. Spare, yet lyrical and sardonically witty this is a personification of Death to match Terry Pratchett! On the birth of his son, a poor fisherman in his leaky cottage, decides to seek out an honest man to be his son's godfather in the hope of a brighter future for his son than he could provide. Bitingly rejecting the offers of both God and the Devil, he next meets the terrifying figure of Death and must concede that Death is truly honest and fair and invites him to be godfather. The scene where Death attends the christening is very droll, as he tucks into the food "everyone wondered where it went but were all too polite to ask". Death bestows upon the fisherman a gift which enables him to earn fame and fortune for his family. But when a sick King needs his skills, he is faced with an impossible choice and discovers that Death will not take kindly to being cheated. Further, when faced with his own demise, his greed leads to a terrible conclusion. The detailed illustrations have an appropriately medieval

woodcut feel and are the perfect foil to a perfect dark moral tale that will be fabulous to share around Halloween or to complement any Gothic or traditional tale study. Frankly I would love somebody to commission this pairing to remaster the complete Grimm canon! What a treat that would be.



Mystery of the Night Watchers

Author: A.M. Howell **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 08/07/2021

A proper, old-fashioned (in the best sense) mystery story, A M Howell's book poses a series of puzzles for its young protagonist Nancy to solve. It's 1910 and Halley's Comet is blazing closer to earth, provoking hysteria amongst some members of the public. It certainly seems to be having a strange effect on Nancy's mother who suddenly takes her two daughters on a secret visit to their grandfather – the grandfather she'd told them was dead. His Sussex village seems normal but below the surface things are far from happy. As she finds out more, Nancy realises it's in her hands to heal the village and the family she never knew she had. The story is clever, involving and delightfully atmospheric with the village providing some excellent settings – eerie old houses, gorgeous ballrooms, a dismal prison. With her new friend and associate grocer's boy Burch, Nancy uncovers lies, deceit and corruption, and learns the power of speaking up.



The Song from Somewhere Else

Author: A. F. Harrold **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/11/2017

Awarded the Amnesty CILIP Honour from the Kate Greenaway Medal shortlist 2018 | Shortlisted for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2018 | A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month November 2017 | Longlisted for the UKLA 2018 Book Award Award-winning A.F. Harrold blends reality and imagination in a moving and thought-provoking story about friendship, loneliness and being brave when things are difficult. Bullied at school and unsupported at home, Frank makes an unusual friendship with Nick, the weird boy in her class who everyone else shuns. After Nick rescues Frank from the bullies, she goes round to his house where she discovers something very unusual. What should Frank believe about what she sees? And should she keep Nick's secret? Levi Pinfold's illustrations add to the illusory feel of this story that tests imagination and belief and leaves the reader wondering.



Brand New Boy

Author: David Almond **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 05/11/2020

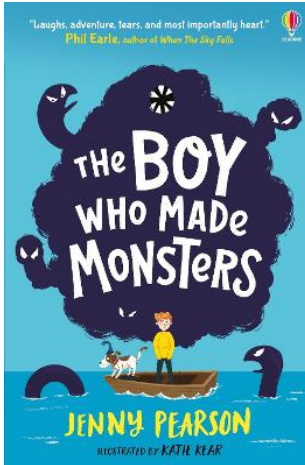
Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 7-10 A warm and thought-provoking tale from a master storyteller, winner of the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award and author of the Carnegie Medal-winning Skellig.



The Lion Above the Door

Author: Onjali Q. Raúf **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 14/10/2021

Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2023 ages 7-10 On a school trip to Rochester Cathedral, Leo is astonished to see a World War II memorial to a man with exactly the same name as him, Leo Kai Lim. Who was the Leo commemorated with a golden lion in the cathedral, and could there be a family connection? Determined to find out more, Leo suggests forgotten heroes as the theme for the class project on WWII, and it's chosen alongside family histories. The project takes on even more significance when the class learn it will be put forward for a national Remembrance Day competition. In his endeavour to find out more about his namesake, Leo is helped by his best friend Sangeeta, who is tracking down information on the part played by Indian soldiers in the war, and thrilled to discover more about the role played by women too. He's also helped, to his surprise, by Olivia Morris, universally regarded as the coolest kid in school. Leo's efforts get him into trouble with his parents (a midnight phone call to his Auntie Su in Singapore) and his school (a disastrous, but very funny secret trip to the RAF Museum), but Leo's determination is overwhelming. When a nasty racist bit of sabotage threatens the project, Leo suddenly finds everyone is on his side, and there are more surprises to come. Onjali Raúf writes superb adventure stories for children, full of excitement and incident, and has a great ear for the way they speak. This story will intrigue and entertain young readers while also helping them understand racism, past and present. It's not just a really good read, it's a really important read.



The Boy Who Made Monsters

Author: Jenny Pearson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/07/2023

July 2023 Book of the Month Benji McLaughlin is a self-confessed visionary and resolutely hopeful, no matter the circumstances, and his are very tough. His parents are missing after an accident at sea in which his big brother Stanley also nearly died, and the two of them have been moved to live with Uncle Hamish in the remote Loch Lochy in Scotland. Benji is as certain that his parents will be found safe as he is that there's a monster in the Loch. All he has to do while waiting for his parents to come back, is find the monster. Then the tourists will come flocking, thereby saving Uncle Hamish's holiday business from bankruptcy. As the story unfolds, Benji learns that monsters are real, though not in the way that the Loch Lochy monster might be real. His other big lesson is that hope can shift, and it's such shifts that allow you to carry on living. Jenny Pearson explores grief and bereavement in a book that is frequently laugh-out-loud funny and is not afraid to include the occasional miraculous bit of good luck. It's a rare skill to be able to mix humour with such profound themes, and one that makes her books rich and rewarding reading. Few authors create such warm and original characters either and this is every bit as entertaining and warm-hearted as the award-winning *The Super Miraculous Journey of Freddie Yates*.

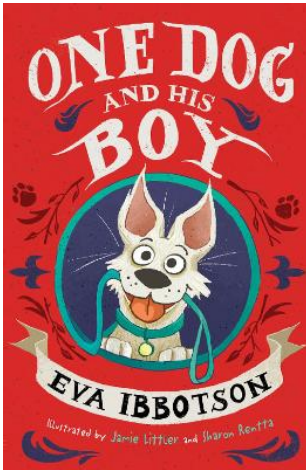


Tuck Everlasting

Author: Natalie Babbitt **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/04/2020

First published in 1975, this extraordinary story of the friendship between the gentle Tuck family and ten-year-old Winnie feels older than its years, but also of our age, in the magical way true classics do. The story is enthrallingly set-up by juxtaposing three apparently unconnected happenings during the "strange and breathless days" of a hot August. As the Prologue states, and as things turn out, "things can come together in strange ways." Dissatisfied at home, Winnie longs to do "something that would make some kind of difference in the world." Certain this will never happen "if I stay in here like this," she explores her family's wood and chances upon a "glorious" boy who stops Winnie in her tracks, and warns her against drinking from a spring. Winnie meets the boy's family - the Tucks - and discovers a "big, dangerous secret" that must ever be revealed if their way of life is to be preserved, if the equilibrium of humanity is to be maintained, for the spring seems to have granted the Tucks everlasting life. In their company, in their warm-hearted, higgledy-piggledy home, Winnie "discovered the wings she'd always wished she had". For their part, the Tucks say she's the best thing that's happened to them in "at least eighty years." Then, when a yellow-suited stranger seeks to disrupt the Tuck's lives, Winnie bravely leaps on her opportunity to make a difference. Dazzlingly written (how about this for a description of sunset? "The sun was dropping fast now, a soft, red sliding egg yolk"), this is a wondrously

wise story. Take Tuck's remarks about the nature of life and death: "You can't have living without dying. So you can't call it living, what we got. We just are, we just be, like rocks beside the road." With a bittersweet ending that brings tears to the eyes and warmth to the soul, I couldn't love this book more. It's that rare kind of tale that speaks of all things, to all ages.



One Dog and His Boy

Author: Eva Ibbotson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/01/2021

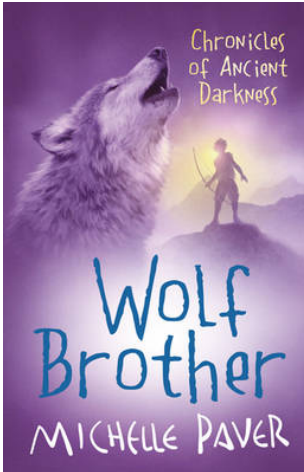
A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month January 2021 Award winning Eva Ibbotson's poignant and beautiful last book celebrates a boy's passion for a dog. All Hal has ever wanted is a dog but his parents refuse to contemplate the idea. A dog would mess up their beautiful house and disturb their busy routine. When they discover East Pets, they hire Hal a dog for a weekend thinking that will do the trick. But they don't know Hal! Hal takes matters into his own hands. Soon Hal and all the dogs he has released from Easy Pets are out on the road - with a price on their head. How Hal makes his escape is both thrilling and moving as it marks his growth from sadness to great happiness.



The Rescue of Ravenwood

Author: Natasha Farrant **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 23/02/2023

Ravenwood is an eccentric house, surrounded by old trees - in fact it has a collapsed tree taking up a great deal of the kitchen! But to Bea and Raffy it is their home, their refuge and their strength. They form a family with Raffy's mother, Bea's uncle and the wonderful countryside around them - full of memories and magical natural places. Bea struggles with the apparent rejection she faces from her own parents - but whenever she visits them something always seems to go wrong and her mother cries until Bea is back at Ravenwood. But she is bold, creative and adventurous and she and Raffy have the sort of relationship that many siblings would envy. Until Noa arrives - having a third person around changes the dynamic in their relationship and seems to cause a difficulty in communication for the pair. As they all try to have a summer to remember events conspire against them until they have to fight for what they believe in, and to save their home. Natasha Farrant writes books that instantly feel like classics - and this is no exception. It is a book rejoicing in celebrating the environment in your own area, as well as exploring the dynamics of families, friendships and courage. I read it from cover to cover and really didn't want to put it down - it grabs you by the heartstrings and lives on after you have finished it. We should all make sure we protect our Ravenwood's. A vital message for today wrapped in a warm and enthralling story.



Wolf Brother: Book 1 Chronicles of Ancient Darkness

Author: Michelle Paver **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 27/05/2005

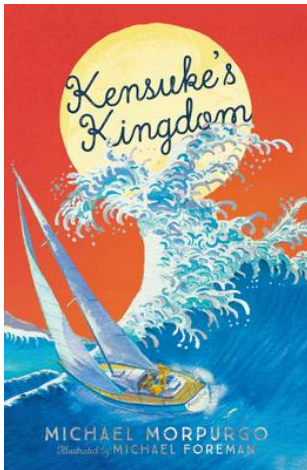
Rich in detail which brings the past to life and makes the forest background vivid to all readers, Wolf Brother tells how orphaned Torak must set out on a terrible mission. Tricked, trapped and betrayed at almost every turn, it's a lonely quest but Torak finds comfort in the support of a wolf cub. Relying on their quick wits, the two journey through danger until Torak must make the final sacrifice. Titles in the Chronicles of Ancient Darkness series: 1. Wolf Brother 2. Spirit Walker 3. Soul-eater 4. Outcast 5. Oathbreaker 6. Ghost Hunter



Ghostlight

Author: Kenneth Oppel **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 13/10/2022

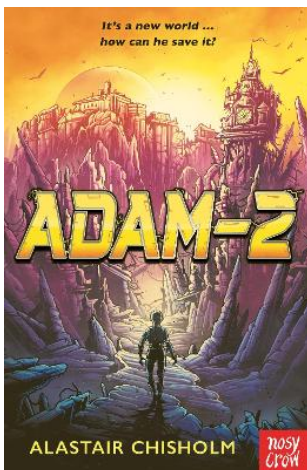
Featuring authentic friendship dynamics, a thrilling race against time, and chilling atmosphere, Kenneth Oppel's Ghostlight is a great read for fans of fast-paced adventures with supernatural edge. In 1839 a lighthouse keeper and his daughter fall to their deaths from Gibraltar Point Lighthouse. This arresting opening scene takes place just after the keeper reveals he belongs to the Order, a secret society that dates back to the days of the ancient Greeks and the Alexandrian Pharos lighthouse, and exists to "stand guard over the night, to protect the living from the wakeful and wicked dead". So far, so gripping... This haunting historic story lives on in the contemporary world when teenage history-buff Gabe gives ghost tours of Toronto Island. Though he doesn't believe the tales he tells tourists, worlds and eras and collide when Gabe encounters Rebecca's ghost for himself. But hers isn't the only spirit the island should be worried about, for it's also under threat from far darker forces. All of which makes for a rollercoaster ride that's resplendent with spirits from the past and latter-day heroes.



Kensuke's Kingdom

Author: Michael Morpurgo **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 25/02/2016

Michael's parents buy a yacht, and take him off to sail round the world. Washed overboard in a fierce storm, Michael finds himself on the shore of a remote island - and soon discovers he's not alone. Kensuke, a former Japanese soldier, survived the war and the bombing of Hiroshima, but his family perished. As an extraordinary bond forms between the two, Kensuke faces a heart-breaking choice: can he give up the secluded life he's built for himself to help reunite Michael with his parents? Knowing the pain of losing his own family, Kensuke knows which way he has to decide... Reading this book will take you through every emotion you can think of, from great joy and laughter to utter sadness and loss. At its heart is a story of friendship that will live long in your mind long after and whilst reading it you will be utterly captivated.



Adam-2

Author: Alastair Chisholm **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/08/2021

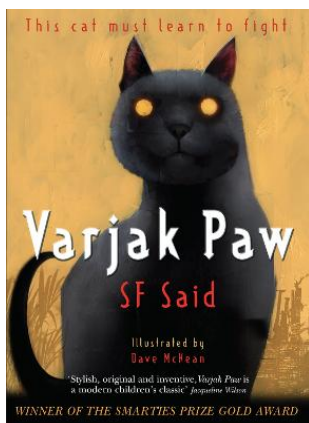
Alastair Chisholm's Orion Lost was a cracking sci-fi adventure and his latest, Adam-2, is also excellent, an exciting, thought-provoking futuristic story with as much to say about how we live now as it does about where we might be heading. After centuries locked in a windowless basement, Adam-2 is finally brought out into the world. He finds it deep in a civil war that has been raging almost as long as his imprisonment, humans versus Funks, thinking robots. Both sides we learn have reason to hate one another and are pretty evenly matched. Peaceable, calm Adam has power to swing the fight one way or another, but which side deserves his support? The plot is full of surprises and twists and will have readers examining all they understand about human nature. This is page-turning reading that thoroughly respects its readers' intelligence. The LoveReading LitFest invited Alastair to the festival to talk about Adam-2 with MD Deborah Maclaren and one of our young ambassadors, Jay - find out why every child will love this science fiction story! The digitally native, all year round, online literature and books festival, with new content released every week is a free-for-all-users festival. What are you waiting for? Check out a preview of the event and sign up to become a member.



When the Sky Falls

Author: Phil Earle **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/06/2021

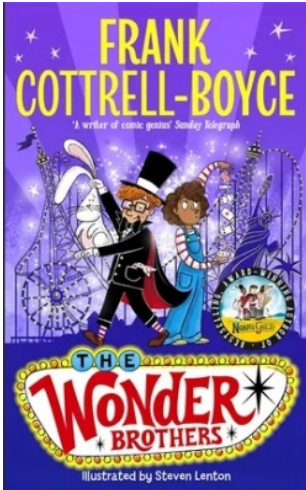
A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month June 2021 | Winner of the British Book Awards 2023 Fiction Book of the Year | Shortlisted for the Yoto Carnegie Medal 2022 | Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2023 ages 7-10 Chosen by our Guest Editor for May 2023, Jacqueline Wilson, as one of her must-reads - "This story about a fierce lonely boy and his bond with a huge gorilla called Adonis is exceptionally moving." No wonder he is angry! Bombs are raining down on the city that Joseph is sent to as an evacuee. And anyway, who came up with the stupid idea that he should live with Mrs F. who doesn't even like children! He knows he should just run away but where would he go? Instead, he finds himself inexorably drawn into Mrs F's life and the zoo and the animals she is fighting to keep safe - in particular, Adonis, the powerful silverback gorilla. Every night when the bombs fall, Mrs F rushes to the zoo. She risks her life to be with her animals safe knowing that, if the very worst happens and the zoo is bombed she will have to take exceptional and radical action. Will she be brave enough? And would Joseph be? In this deeply moving story of Joseph's journey of self-discovery Phil Earle not only tells a brilliant story of a child's emotional development but also added an important and true dimension to World War 2 stories.



Varjak Paw

Author: S F Said **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 13/03/2014

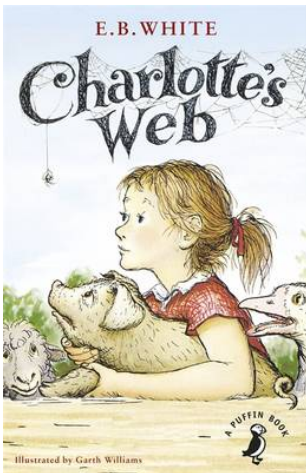
Beguiling and mysterious, thought provoking and as wise as the feline hero, this is becoming a modern classic.



The Wonder Brothers

Author: Frank Cottrell-Boyce **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 20/07/2023

You can absolutely guarantee that any new Frank Cottrell Boyce adventure will keep you and the young readers you give it to, absolutely entranced until the last page. He has performed his writing magic ever since his Carnegie medal winning Millions first appeared and real magic, the sort practised by magicians, is at the heart of this story. The protagonists are cousins Nathan and Middy who share an obsession with magicians. Middy is all about practising her skills and Nathan is the born showman and together they are the Wonder Brothers (don't ask!). Older cousin Brodie is supposed to be looking after them, but all he cares about is his giant rabbit, Queenie, who turns out to be the real star of the show. Together they are on the track of the Blackpool Tower, gone missing since superstar magician Perplexion's last ever show there. Alternatively narrated by the cousins and the world-weary Las Vegas Police captain trying to find out how and why they are alone in Las Vegas, this is a story that genuinely has you suspending disbelief amidst the laughter. Full of wonder and fascinating facts and stories about magic and brim full of brilliant characters that you are reluctant to leave, this is masterful storytelling. Steven Lenton weaves his own magic with the illustrations to complete this perfect treat.



Charlotte's Web

Author: E B White **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 25/09/2003

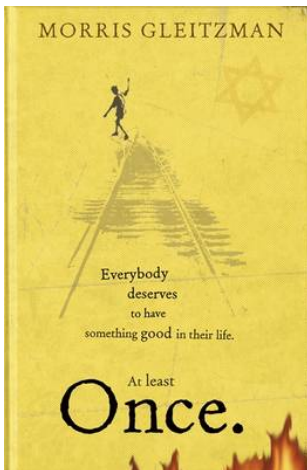
A extraordinary story, exquisitely written, with unforgettable passages of dialogue and description, that confronts the dilemma of our relationship with farm animals. Witty, and in places, desperately sad this is a book where animals talk yet remain who they are, themselves. A book to make you cry. - Michael Morpurgo Magical, this timeless farmyard story tells of the power of friendship. When the runty little piglet is saved from an early death, he grows into a fine and handsome pig. And the farmer wants to kill him. Can Charlotte, the spider who has grown to love him, save his life?



The Book of Stolen Dreams

Author: David Farr **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/09/2022

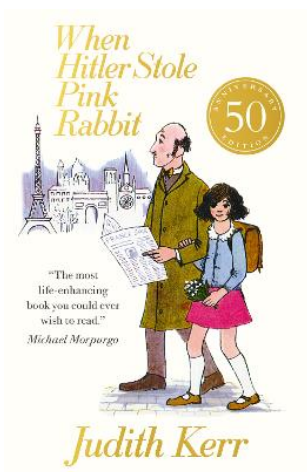
September 2022 Debut of the Month Farr is a master storyteller as evidenced by his phenomenally successful screenwriting and directing for the stage. This is evident in the confidence with which he controls all the elements in this complex, engrossing fantasy thriller – his first novel for a child audience. Rachel and Robert live in a dictatorship in Brava that makes life very drab and humdrum – as well as very dangerous. Their father is a librarian – and on Rachel’s birthday he involves them in the theft of an important and forbidden book from the precious books room in the city library. For that theft he is captured – leaving the siblings with their ailing mother. When she dies it is planned that they will be separated into different parts of the grim orphanage that exists. Can they escape that fate, find out the secret of the book they keep hidden and keep it out of evil dictator Malstain’s hands? Meeting a wonderful cast of characters along the way – some good, some bad – they set off on individual journeys across the land to escape Malstain’s reach. This is a rich story, full of adventure, peril, and huge bravery from the children and many of the other characters, as well as awful evil. It will keep readers engaged and probably reading long after bedtime and lights out! Inspired by Farr’s great Aunt and Uncle’s escape from Nazi Germany this adventure is set in a timeless world that could be anywhere so that it will chime with children the world over. I hope Farr goes on to write more for children if this, his debut, is anything to go by.



Once.

Author: Morris Gleitzman **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 23/02/2006

A moving and convincing child-eye view of what happened to the children of Poland after the Germans invaded. Felix has been placed by his parents in an orphanage for safe-keeping but, when the Germans come and burn the books in the orphanage library, Felix knows he must set out to return to his parents who are booksellers and make sure they are safe. Felix’s journey is dangerous and desperate but also full of courage and hope in a world where friendships and loyalty are the glue that hold things together.



When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit

Author: Judith Kerr **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 30/09/2021

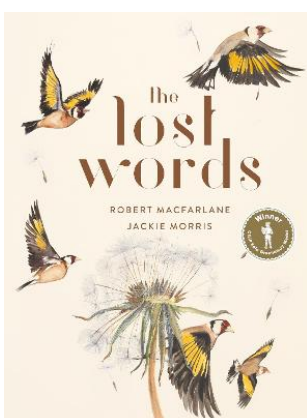
A life-enhancing book and even more amazing because this is the late author's own story, telling of her and her family's flight from Nazi Germany from their home and everything they knew to become refugees, first in Switzerland and then in Paris. - Michael Morpurgo This unforgettable story of a Jewish family fleeing Germany before the Second World War is now available in a special hardback celebratory 50th anniversary edition.



Dread Wood

Author: Jennifer Killick **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 31/03/2022

April 2022 Book of the Month | Winner of the Children's Book Award 2023 - Older Readers category Four young people, who know but don't like one another; a Saturday detention in their creepy old school; and the sudden, terrifying disappearance of their teacher... The stage is set for a fabulously scary horror story in which Jennifer Killick gleefully plays the genre for everything it's got: shocks, surprises, black humour, and a growing understanding between our bunch of unlikely heroes that if they're going to get out alive, they'll need to work together. Killick knows just the right amount of gory detail to include and has a great line in teenage banter too. Readers, especially those new to this kind of story are in for a treat!

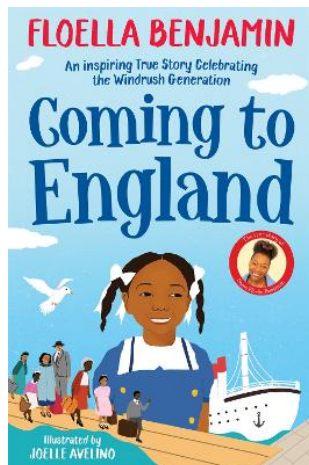


The Lost Words

Author: Robert Macfarlane **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 02/10/2017

Chosen by Cressida Cowell, Guest Editor May 2020 | Winner for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2019 | One of Our Books of the Year 2017 A book to make you think and feel, this is an important, beautiful, spellbinding treasure. Words from nature are disappearing, being removed, left to one side to be forgotten. Some words are in real danger of being lost forever, this book reveals those words, sings them, shows them, reminds us how to love them. Spell-weavers Robert MacFarlane and Jackie Morris have created a bewitching ode to nature, reminding us of the danger of absence, highlighting beauty, whispering to our soul. It feels as though the words, the poems, and vividly beautiful pictures are as one, the essence of the word, of the being, escapes the page to wrap itself around you. 'The Lost Words' is suitable for all ages, and should find a special place in all homes, all libraries, all

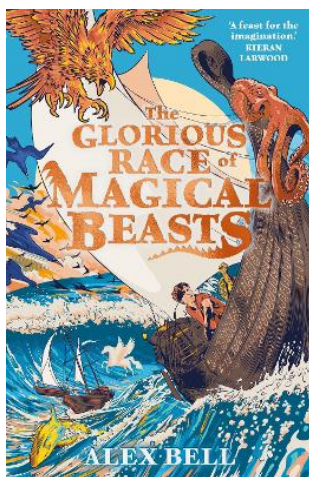
schools, all hearts. Do read the spell-poems out loud, listen, look, feel, touch, allow your awareness to open and receive these gifts. I found myself entranced, I fell completely under the spell of 'The Lost Words', I simply can't recommend it highly enough. Our Guest Editor, Cressida Cowell said; "We need our children to have a connection with the natural world, and the language to describe it is crucial. Robert and Jackie's book is not only a truly beautiful book, it's an important one too."



Coming to England

Author: Floella Benjamin **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 15/04/2021

Floella Benjamin's touching, well-observed and generously un-judgemental memoir is a classic which is a pertinent now as when it was first published 25 years ago. In a simple story Floella recounts her own experience of her family moving from Trinidad to London when she was a little girl. She brings to life her experience in the family's original home in Trinidad; the brightness of the light, the joy of Carnival and, above all, the warmth of her family. She records the pain of separation as, initially, her parents went on ahead to England leaving her and some of her siblings behind and she describes the difficulties of adjusting to the new country when she finally arrives. It is a smart child's view of migration which is as valuable now as when it was written as well as a stark reminder of the entrenched prejudices of the 1960s.



The Glorious Race of Magical Beasts

Author: Alex Bell **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/02/2024

A spectacularly imaginative fantasy adventure seems the very least we can expect from the author of the bestselling Explorer's Club series, but when the story also has an orphaned apprentice librarian as the hero and with the many and varied libraries of this world being fundamental to his chances of winning the famous race and the magical prize which could cure his beloved grandmother, then we have a story to grab any librarian's heart! But there is so much more to enjoy in this enthralling, page-turning read. We cannot help but love Eli, the unassuming introvert and reluctant mage, but we also care for loyal swashbuckling friend Jeremiah, who had been brought to life by Eli from the pages of a favourite book, with potentially disastrous consequences, and adore Humphrey the poetry-loving, elderly Moon tortoise who becomes his much-ridiculed Magical Beast partner in the race. Then we meet Raven, the race rival, who with her magical ice hare, becomes an ally and friend during the many pitfalls and perils they all face, including a sinister bounty hunter and the nightmarish joo-joo-bubs. Having a hare and a tortoise cooperating in a race is yet another delicious storytelling element and the way that the friendships between the young protagonists are explored and challenged creates real pathos and

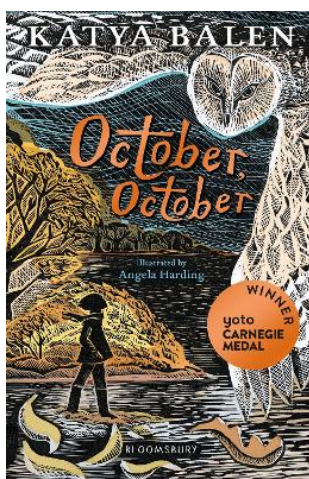
tension. A beautifully crafted, genuinely thrilling story that just begs to be read aloud.



A Glasshouse of Stars

Author: Shirley Marr **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 10/06/2021

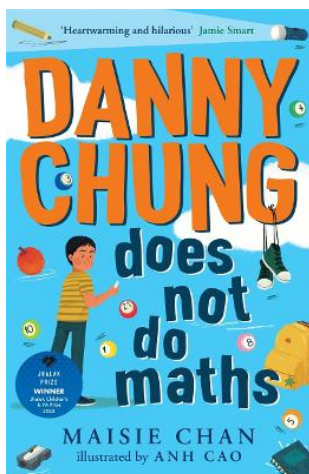
A hugely original story which imaginatively captures the complexity of migration for a child. Having suddenly inherited a house from a relative, Meixing Liam and her family are newly arrived in the New Land to begin a New Life. Everything is confusing. Everything is different and everything seems to be going wrong. Cleverly using a third person voice to tell a first person story, Meixing narrates the practical and emotional swirl of her life in a way that enables readers readily to understand just how baffling a new life is. It also allows Meixing to escape into a magical greenhouse where she can escape into an extraordinary dream world. When the dream world collapses, Meixing finds unexpected help and support which show her the power and importance of friendship even in this strange New Life.



October, October

Author: Katya Balen **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 30/09/2021

Winner of the Yoto Carnegie Medal 2022 | Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 7-10 Raw, lingering and stirring lyrical, *October, October* had me hooked from opening to end. Conjured in language that crackles and smoulders like an autumn bonfire, this is a book of bones and bark, of frost and flame, captivating in the manner of *Skellig* or *Stig of the Dump* as it undulates towards a wondrous homecoming of the heart. “We live in the woods and we are wild... Just us. A pocket of people in a pocket of the world that’s small as a marble. We are tiny and we are everything and we are wild.” *October* has everything she wants living in the woods in the house her father built. Her mother left when *October* was four and she’s adamant that, “I don’t want her. She’s not wild like we are.” This year *October*’s euphoria at the onset of autumn is sullied when she discovers a dead owl and a motherless baby owl: “my heart won’t stop bruising my ribs.” So, she rescues the baby, names it *Stig* and declares it her first ever friend. Calamity strikes when the woman “who calls herself my mother” arrives as a birthday surprise - her beloved dad breaks his spine after falling from a tree and *October* must stay with this woman - her mother - in London while he recuperates. In the chaotic city, *October* is a bird with clipped wings. Torn from her wild world, she implodes, becomes a “firework of fury”, until she strikes up a bond with a boy named *Yusef* and discovers mudlarking, which makes her once more “a wild animal skulking and prowling for food”, “a pirate hunting for treasure.” An unforgettable story, an unforgettable heroine - it’s no exaggeration to hail this a future classic.



Danny Chung Does Not Do Maths

Author: Maisie Chan **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 10/06/2021

Winner of The Branford Boase Award 2022 | Shortlisted for the Blue Peter Awards 2022 Best Story | Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2023 ages 7-10 Danny Chung loves art. Unfortunately, everyone else – parents and schoolfriends alike – thinks he should love maths. Then his grandmother arrives from China, and she and Danny have to share a bedroom. It feels like a catastrophe, but could funny, intelligent Nai Nai turn out to be his best friend? The Branford Boase judges commented: ‘well-rounded characters and I loved the depiction of the intergenerational relationship’; ‘you could feel the author’s love for the story she was telling’; ‘it provides a really important perspective’; ‘I’ve never read anything that describes the diasporic experience so specifically.’



Beetle Boy

Author: M. G. Leonard **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/03/2016

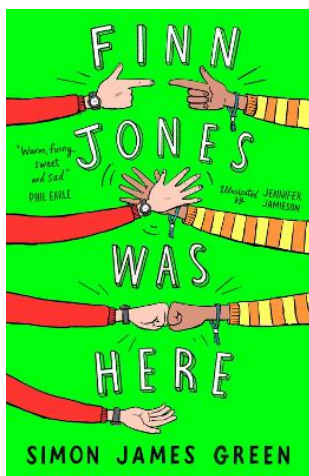
Winner of the Branford Boase Award 2017 | One of our Books of the Year 2016 | Shortlisted for the Children's category of the Books are My Bag Readers Awards 2016 | Longlisted for the UKLA 2017 Book Award and March 2016 Julia Eccleshare's Debut of the Month A rollicking adventure spiced up with fascinating information about beetles, this debut novel fuses science, survival and sleuthing! Darkus’s life is turned upside down when his father goes missing. Darkus refuses to accept that his father is dead and he is determined to find out what happened for himself. Sent to stay with his uncle, he discovers the strange neighbours have a yard full of junk – and beetles. Darkus is befriended by a handsome, giant beetle who seems to understand Darkus and is also connected to his dad’s disappearance. What is going on? And who is Lucretia Cutter, one of the best villainess since Cruella de Vil? Books in The Battle of the Beetles Series: 1. Beetle Boy 2. Beetle Queen 3. Battle of the Beetles



The Last Bear

Author: Hannah Gold **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/01/2022

Winner of the Blue Peter Awards 2022 Best Story A heart-warming and magical story of a very special relationship between a child and a polar bear which will inspire readers of all ages to realise that they, like April, can make a difference in the battle against climate change. When animal loving April arrives on Bear Island in the Arctic Circle where she will live for the next six months while her father runs the scientific operations she is told that, despite the island's name, there are no bears on it. The melting ice caps mean that the polar bears can no longer arrive from the nearest mainland near Svalbard. But April soon finds out that there is one bear left. And April needs to do everything she can to keep him alive. Confident of her ability to communicate with the bear and to feed him, April nourishes the bear and even plans his return to safety. Beautifully illustrated by Levi Pinfold, The Last Bear invites readers to care about the science behind the fate of an endangered species and to believe in one girl's magical solution to the problem. **The images and illustrations in this extract are subject to copyright © Levi Pinfold and may not be used without permission.



Finn Jones Was Here

Author: Simon James Green **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 11/05/2023

A funny, heartbreaking story about life and loss, and making every second count. Eric's best friend, Finn Jones, was the world's biggest prankster. Now Eric can't believe Finn's not here anymore. ...Or is he? Eric seems to be getting messages from beyond the grave, and as he follows Finn's wild, cryptic instructions, his hope grows that he'll find Finn laughing at the end. The journey also brings memories - and a truth that seems impossible to accept. Hilarious illustrations throughout by Jennifer Jamieson



Tom's Midnight Garden

Author: Philippa Pearce **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/01/2008

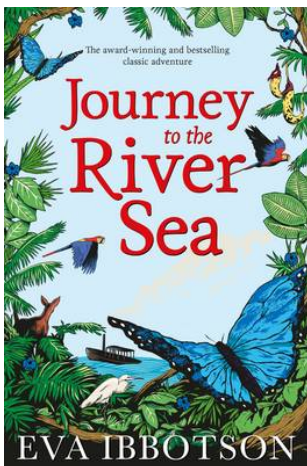
Winner of the 1958 CILIP Carnegie Medal Winner of the 1958 CILIP Carnegie Medal A classic time slip story in which Tom, staying in big house now divided into flats, manages to get into the garden at night and make friends with a little girl. But who is the girl? Can she really be the old woman in Tom's waking life? This is one of the most touching and magical children's books I've ever read and it's one that's stayed as fresh in my mind as if I'd just read it yesterday. Tom's imaginary garden is beautifully portrayed and the characters and situations within are richly satisfying and the poignancy of the moments are cherished. Children will love the story and it is as relevant now as it was some 20 years ago when it was first published. (9-11 key age range)



The Shark Caller

Author: Zillah Bethell **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/02/2021

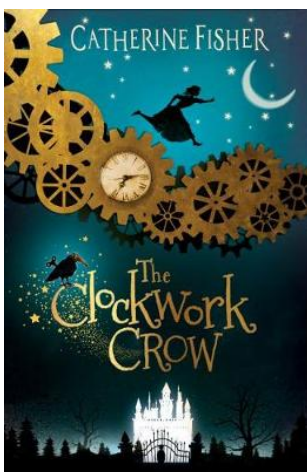
A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month February 2021 A mysterious and deeply touching story woven through with serious themes, The Shark Caller is packed-full of adventure, old magic and, above all, friendship. Vividly set in Papua New Guinea with its landscape of sea, sun and beach it gives a glimpse into a way of life dominated by the natural environment. Blue Wing lives in a hut on a sandy beach. She has little formal learning but she knows the ways of the sea and, because she lives with the local shark caller, the ways of the sharks which swim off shore in particular. When a plane arrives with visitors, an American academic purporting to investigate coral in the region and his daughter Maple, Blue Wing's life is turned upside down. Initially full of hostility towards each other, the two girls quickly discover that they are as alike inside as their lives are different outside. Forging a strong friendship they unravel the mystery of what Maple's father is really looking for and, in doing so, help Blue Wing uncover her own mystery. A gripping and inspiring read.



Journey to the River Sea

Author: Eva Ibbotson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 08/05/2014

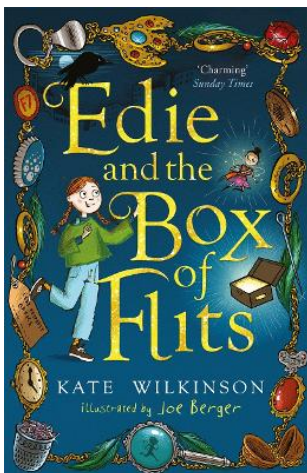
A new cover edition of this award-winning classic adventure from Eva Ibbotson in which orphaned Maia travels from England to the Amazon with her governess. August 2013 Guest Editor, Lauren St John "To me, Eva Ibbotson is a genius. You can pick up any of her books - The Dragonfly Pool and One Boy and His Dog are also fantastic - and be guaranteed a good read. Journey to the River Sea is about orphaned London schoolgirl, Maia, who, accompanied by her strict but kind governess, is sent to live with her ghastly relatives in South America. Unlike her nature-phobic relatives, Maia loves her exotic, colourful new world. This is a journey of the spirit as well as the globe and the way Maia unfurls like a flower with each new adventure and encounter is one of the many reasons Journey to the River Sea is a classic. A warm, joyous book to be enjoyed by any generation." ***Eva's son, Toby Ibbotson, is now continuing the tradition of storytelling with his debut novel Mountwood School for Ghosts which is based on an original idea by Eva Ibbotson.



The Clockwork Crow

Author: Catherine Fisher **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/10/2018

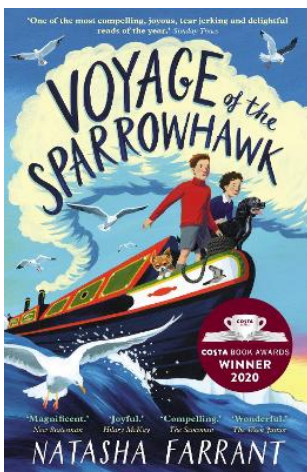
January 2019 Book of the Month | Shortlisted for the Blue Peter Book Awards 2019, Best Story category Beautifully written in prose that sparkles like the snow that provides its backdrop, this fantasy novel is practically perfect in every way. Young orphan Seren (it's Welsh for star) is travelling alone through a winter's night to her godfather and his family. They live in a big house in the heart of Wales and though she's never met them before, a lifelong reader, she knows how this sort of story should go. Waiting for her next train on a freezing platform she meets a stranger. He's flustered, clearly frightened of something, and leaves a bulky parcel in her care before disappearing. When she finally arrives at her destination, to find that her godfather, his wife and young son Tomos are absent, and that there's only a skeleton staff of servants to meet her, she assembles the contents of the parcel to stave off boredom and loneliness. It's a clockwork crow - an awkward, clumsy-looking thing, yet magic: wound up it comes alive. Psammead-grumpy the crow becomes her ally and together they embark on a dangerous adventure to find out what has happened to Tomos, who disappeared mysteriously one frosty night a year ago. The story is rich with the sense of old magic and fairytale, yet is a totally original and particular bit of storytelling. At a time when books often sprawl over 300 pages or more, it is wonderfully concise too, and even better for that. A delight, and thankfully there should be more adventures for Seren to come. This review originally appeared in Books for Keeps.



Edie and the Box of Flits

Author: Kate Wilkinson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 22/07/2021

When eleven-year-old Edie Winter finds a mysterious box on the London Underground she's amazed to discover that it's home to a family of Flits - tiny winged people. But Impy, Speckle and Nid need Edie's help. Not only do they need supplies (rice crispies, sugar sprinkles, digestive biscuits and raisins) and someone to look after them, but their brother Jot has run away and they need Edie's help to find him.



Voyage of the Sparrowhawk

Author: Natasha Farrant **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/09/2020

Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 7-10 | Winner of the Costa Children's Book Award 2020 | September 2020 Book of the Month I challenge any reader, young or old, not to want to devour this book in one delicious sitting. Once started upon the story of Lotti and Ben, two orphans living in the aftermath of World War 1 and who could not be more different in temperament or background, it is impossible to put down. Initially and understandably wary, they gradually become each other's best friend and staunch allies in their respective quests for family and a safe haven for an increasing number of dogs. Their odyssey takes them, in the faithful old narrowboat which has been Ben's home, across the stormy channel to France, with a vengeful, deceitful uncle and a steadfast policeman hot on their heels. But there is nothing far fetched in their survival, they do need and even eventually welcome the support of friendly adults on both sides of the channel and they learn to work together and to counteract each other's failings. They never lose hope in even the darkest moments and neither does the reader, despite some heart-stopping tension. These are characters who will dwell long in your memory and indeed leave you wanting to know more, including about some of the fascinating minor characters. The authentic period detail and dialogue captures the spirit of an age where children may seem, to a modern audience, to have a thrilling level of agency and independence, but only because they are largely ignored or neglected rather than protected by society. A standalone, middle grade adventure that is as well written as this, is pure gold dust with which to captivate young readers and a perfect class read. But be warned, they may not want to go home!

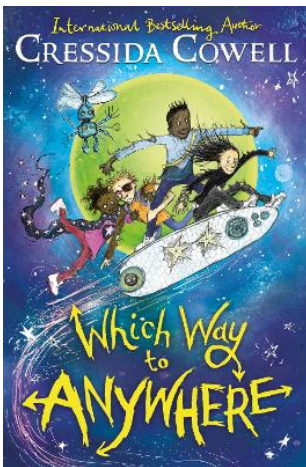


Resist: One Girl's Fight Back Against the Nazis

Author: Tom Palmer **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/08/2022

August 2022 Book of the Month | Interest Age 8+ Reading Age 8

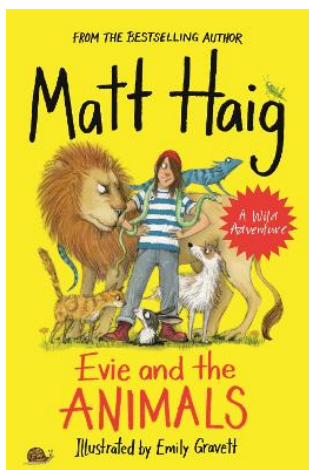
It's 1943, Edda is 14 and living in Velp in the Netherlands under German occupation. Young as she is, she is already risking her life working for the resistance, delivering newsletters and, more dangerous still, helping US airmen stranded behind German lines. With typical economy and directness, Tom Palmer tells her story brilliantly, describing Edda's heroism plus the fear and misery experienced every day by all those trying to live their lives as war rages around them with the same eye-level detail and insight. As often in Palmer's books, this is inspired by a real person and somehow the story of this courageous young girl is even more remarkable when he reveals in the concluding pages that Edda van Heemstra grew up to be Audrey Hepburn, one of the most famous of all the Hollywood stars, though also a longtime ambassador for UNICEF. Written for dyslexia specialist Barrington Stoke, the book is accessible to all readers and for many it is likely to prove unputdownable.



Which Way to Anywhere

Author: Cressida Cowell **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 15/09/2022

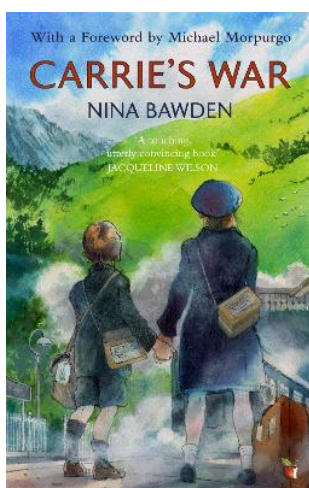
Best-selling children's author and former Children's Laureate Cressida Cowell's *Which Way to Anywhere* is a fantasy story and a family story that zings with magic, warmth and adventure. It is a firecracker of vast imagination that will leave its readers braver and kinder. Against a background of wild and sometimes frightening magic, a strange new planet Excelsiar and some worrying disappearances of parents and appearances of aunts, four children, two from the O'Hero family, two from the Smith family and one baby born to the new family they are all part of, are trying to adapt to living together. Its complicated, messy and full of much unexpected noise. They have problems to solve and relationships to build. Luckily, their story is in the hands of the storyteller who can guide all readers on a thrilling journey.



Evie and the Animals

Author: Matt Haig **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 20/02/2020

This is a delightful pacy read, led by Evie with her super-talent of being able to hear and talk to animals. When Evie has released the school rabbit and caused a deal of trouble, she promises her father she will ignore her talent – which she does for a whole year. But then animals start to disappear, all sorts of animals, can Evie help to find them and solve their mysterious disappearances? This is a timely novel which has themes around helping save the environment and its animals and will surely appeal to all animal lovers. This character led tightly plotted thriller enables the reader to fully engage with the heart-warming story, whilst also embracing your own difference – making for a very satisfactory reading experience in a chapter book. Emily Gravett's amusingly lifelike illustrations of all the animals add a great deal of pleasure to the reading experience – creating a book you won't want to put down until you know the end! A book to stimulate thoughts about the environment and self-worth wrapped up in an excellent story for young readers.



Carrie's War

Author: Nina Bawden **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 09/11/2017

I loved Carrie's War from the moment I read it and have enjoyed it more and more with each rereading. At first, I appreciated Nina Bawden's descriptions of the place and the people: the way she created the stifling atmosphere of the shop and how it contrasted with the freedom of everything that happened at Druid's Bottom. I read it as the story of a girl being brave when she was away from home. Later, I came to realise that I and all other readers learned tolerance and understanding just like Carrie does. When Carrie is evacuated to Wales with her brother, Nick, she is removed from everything she knows. In a new home and without her parents to advise her Carrie has to work out for herself how she feels about the places around her and how to respond to the unusual circumstances in which she finds herself. While Nick's emotions are always open, both as he grieves for his missing parents and in how he throws himself without restraint into the new way of life, both embracing Auntie Lou and challenging the bullying councillor Evans, Carrie is more reserved. Carrie waits and watches: she accepts the new situations and considers them coolly. She takes time to adjust to living apart from her parents and to find that she can make decisions for herself. But it's only when she and Nick are sent to Druid's Bottom, the strange spooky house set down in the bottom of the valley, that she can really let herself go, having at last found people she can trust. Carrie's personal journey of discovery is a rich and marvellous one. It's at Druid's Bottom that Carrie meets Mrs Gotobed and discovers that growing old is not as terrible as it seems. Here to she meets Mr Johnny with his strange gobbling speech and learns that differences need not be frightening, while from her fellow evacuee Albert sandwich she learns

to value her own intelligence. Above all it's at Druids bottom that she meets the kindly and wise Hepzibah Green whose all-enveloping love and common sense keep Carrie going in difficult times. Despite these themes of separation and the very real dangers posed by the background of the war, Carrie's War is an upbeat lyrical story containing moments of emotional truth. It is also universal story about growing up, making choices and learning who you can trust. Above all, it's a story of enormous warmth and understanding, capturing that all-important transition from childhood to adolescence as Carrie grows in her understanding and finds out what really matters to her. One of the most heart-warming and unforgettable stories of the war tells the story of the evacuation of two children to Wales and about growing up amongst strangers and without family. It's a wonderful evocation of times past and beautifully written. ----- Chosen by Jacqueline Wilson, February 2012 Guest Editor: "This is a very touching utterly convincing book about three wartime evacuees billeted to Wales. It's very much a children's story, with a mystery to be solved, but Nina Bawden is very subtle with her characterisation - even hateful Mr Evans with his cruel bullying is seen as sadly pathetic too. Carrie and her little brother Nick are a delight, but my favourite character is their friend Albert Sandwich. He might sport steel spectacles and have a few spots on his chin, but he's one of the most charming boys in all children's fiction."

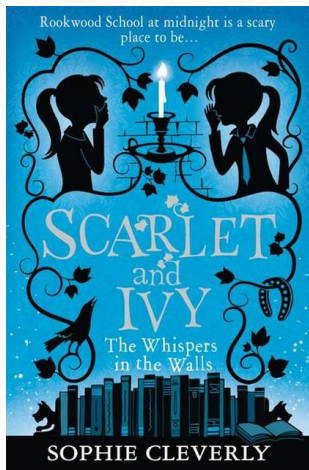


Saving Neverland

Author: Abi Elphinstone **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 05/01/2023

The reimagining of the classic story of Peter Pan could not have been in safer hands than with the multi award winning Abi Elphinstone. Wild magical adventures with real heart and a strong moral compass are her forté and she has crafted a wondrous tale which encapsulates all that is best of the original while removing some undeniably racist and sexist elements which are off-putting to modern generations. Martha Pennyworth and her younger brother Scruff have come to live in 14 Darlington Road, which once belonged to the Darling family, and discover the permanently open window and mysterious golden dust in a drawer. With a missing mother and a busy father, Martha, aged ten, is feeling that she must grow up and be more responsible for younger asthma-ridden brother Scruff, after a "Terrible Day" she won't talk about. But Peter Pan entices her and her brother to go with him to save Neverland from an icy curse that was cast upon it by Captain Hook. The fairies and fairytale creatures are in danger of extinction and childhood itself is in danger. The initially reluctant but redoubtable Martha is only one of a fantastic cast of well-rounded and believable new characters, including new Lost Kids and a much more likeable new Fairy called Muddle. In Neverland she must battle frostbears, icesharks and snowtigers before a thrilling showdown with the truly dreadful pirates. The peril feels genuine and the bravery immense. Just as with the original Peter Pan this is a story about the transition from childhood to adulthood, but Martha comes to realise that a life full of adventures is

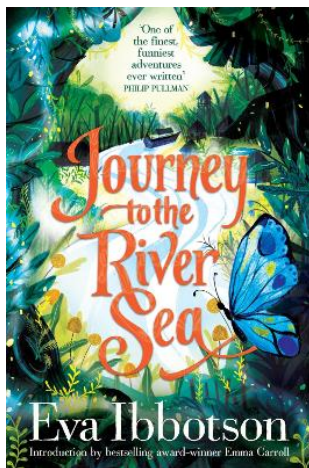
far better than a life of worry. She can deal with her guilt about the 'Terrible Day' and find a way to embrace the wonder and hope of childhood again. Adventure laced with magic powered by genuine emotion, this is thrilling, heartwarming and utterly enthralling. A triumph!



The Whispers in the Walls

Author: Sophie Cleverly **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/11/2015

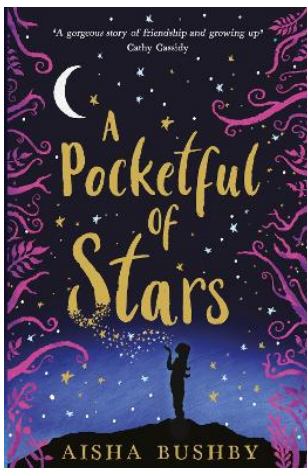
November 2015 Book of the Month Boarding schools provide excellent settings for mystery stories and *The Whispers in the Walls* will have young readers on the very edge of their seats. Twins Ivy and Scarlet both attend Rockwood School, already the scene of some strange goings on. Scarlet has a reputation as a trouble-maker and when things are stolen from another girl, even Ivy suspects her sister. But blood is thicker than water and soon they are working together to clear Scarlet's name. Their investigations involve lots of creeping about the corridors of their spooky school late at night, the discovery of secret rooms, and an ages-old crime. It's spine-tingling stuff, and Cleverly is as good at the ordinary school-girl intrigues as she is on the bigger mystery.



Journey to the River Sea

Author: Eva Ibbotson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 13/05/2021

A gorgeous 20th anniversary edition of Eva Ibbotson's award-winning, bestselling classic adventure, with a beautiful cover by Katie Hickey and an introduction by award-winning author of *Letters from the Lighthouse* Emma Carroll. August 2013 Guest Editor, Lauren St John "To me, Eva Ibbotson is a genius. You can pick up any of her books - *The Dragonfly Pool* and *One Boy and His Dog* are also fantastic - and be guaranteed a good read. *Journey to the River Sea* is about orphaned London schoolgirl, Maia, who, accompanied by her strict but kind governess, is sent to live with her ghastly relatives in South America. Unlike her nature-phobic relatives, Maia loves her exotic, colourful new world. This is a journey of the spirit as well as the globe and the way Maia unfurls like a flower with each new adventure and encounter is one of the many reasons *Journey to the River Sea* is a classic. A warm, joyous book to be enjoyed by any generation." Chosen by Anne Fine as one of her favourite reads... 'A charming and magical adventure story that is full of wisdom, warmth and understanding. Orphaned Maia is sent off to stay with her relatives far, far away in the heart of the Amazon jungle. She's excited by the prospect of living such an inspiring place but soon finds that life with her twin cousins Gwendolyn and Beatrice is torture.'

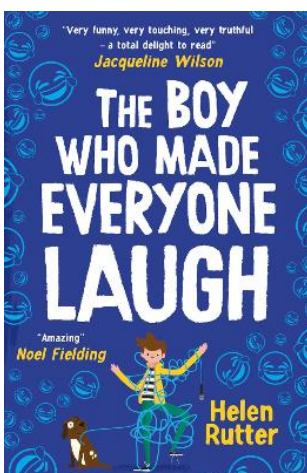


A Pocketful of Stars

Author: Aisha Bushby **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 08/08/2019

Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | Shortlisted for the Children's Book Award 2020 | Shortlisted for the Branford Boase Award 2020

This assured and beautifully written debut perfectly captures that awkward phase of growing up when you feel left behind and uncertain who you are. Safiya is obsessed with gaming and Studio Ghibli, feels guilty for choosing to live with her father after her parent's amicable divorce and feels her ambitious high achieving mother would prefer the more sophisticated and worldly girls at her school. Their relationship is very strained, both are such strong and complex characters, and a particularly bad argument sadly precedes her mother's hospitalisation. Understandably guilt and anxiety fill her waking moments, and, in her dreams, she finds herself witnessing the turbulent relationship between her mother and grandmother in Kuwait and begins to understand the influences on her mother's character. The line between these game-like dreams, that are so well evoked, and her daily reality is skilfully blended as Safiya tries to find out more and believes she can find the key to saving her mother. As their back story is gradually revealed, Safiya comes to terms with who she is and can finally understand and accept the truth of her mother's love. A deeply moving and satisfying coming of age novel that is highly recommended. The Branford Boase judges said: 'I love the voice, and the story brought me to tears'; 'Safiya is a very well rounded, developed character'; 'a really clever idea, and the story is so well told'; 'she makes the magic credible'; 'I was so impressed by the way the friendships developed'.



The Boy Who Made Everyone Laugh

Author: Helen Rutter **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/02/2021

Shortlisted for The Branford Boase Award 2022 | Shortlisted for the Costa Children's Book Award 2021 | Shortlisted for the Blue Peter Awards 2022 Best Story | A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month February 2021 | February 2021 Debut of the Month

Both touching and funny this is a brilliant story about being brave, being different and learning that being you is what really matters. Billy likes nothing more than making and performing jokes and dreams that one day he will be a famous stand-up comedian. But Billy has a stammer and it can be hard for him even to get a joke out quickly enough. Just now, Billy has a problem which will strike a chord with many: he is about to start secondary school and knows that it will be all too easy for him to become a target for bullies. Especially because of his stammer. Billy thinks of all kinds of schemes to avoiding speaking while also knowing that staying silent goes right against who he really is. How can Billy show his tremendous inner strength and especially his great sense of humour if he never dares to speak? Luckily Billy makes some good friends, meets a great teacher and, drawing on the support of his family

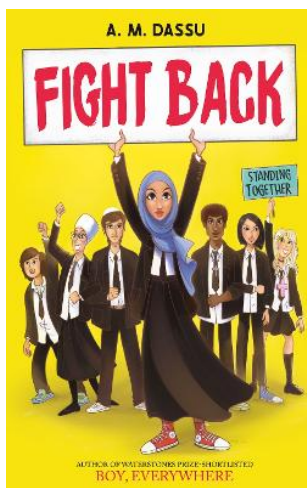
and the work of his speech and language therapist, manages not only to survive but also to succeed! Find more books with Positive Images of Disability.



The Wrong Shoes

Author: Tom Percival **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 09/05/2024

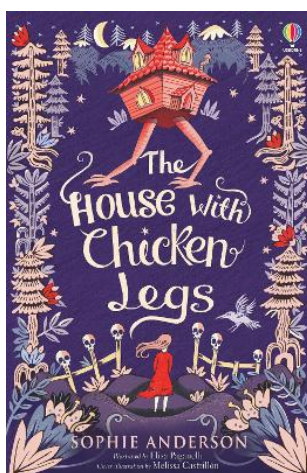
May 2024 Book of the Month Tom Percival's award winning picturebooks have demonstrated his powerful capacity for empathy building and in this, his first full length novel, that skill is even more evident as he gives a painfully authentic insight into the shamefully growing problem of child poverty. It is unlikely that you will read a more powerful and important book all year. It should be required reading for all politicians and for those eligible to vote. But young readers will just be entirely gripped by Will's story, at the same time as gaining insight into what it is like to face this struggle every day. There is not enough money for food let alone the trendy haircut or the new pair of shoes that might make him look more normal and make the school bullies leave him alone. Will hides the true extent of his worsening situation from teachers, friends and even his mother and her new partner. He certainly does not want his best friend's charity, however well meaning. Their rift seems to push Will towards some bad life choices just as his father disastrously turned to loan sharks. Yet Will does not give up and his artistic talents give him small moments of joy and hope for the future. Will is a wonderfully nuanced character and seeing the way he triumphs over temptations to find the strength to be true to himself and recognise that there is no shame in asking for and accepting help, gives an empowering message to those children who will see themselves in his predicament. The author is frank about his own lived experience which adds unmistakable reality to the portrayal of the complex characters and situations. The striking black and white illustrations add even more life and vigour to this completely enthralling story, which does end on a hopeful but realistic note. This would make a fantastic book to read aloud in a classroom or at home, enabling children to discuss the issues raised. I cannot recommend this more highly.



Fight Back

Author: A. M. Dassu **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/06/2022

Shortlisted for the Week Junior Book Awards 2023 Exploring pertinent themes of identity, racism and resistance, A.M. Dassu's *Fight Back* is a powerful, moving triumph. A gripping story that will support and inspire young readers who experience Islamophobia and racism, and enlighten all readers on how to be a better ally. Thirteen-year-old Aaliyah is into reading, K-pop, and loves her best friends Lisa and Sukhi. But life as a Muslim isn't easy in a society that ripples with racism. After a terrorist bombing, she's passed a note in class - "Is the London attacker one of your uncles? I heard your dad got the weapons from Pakistan for him". Meanwhile, Aaliyah's lawyer mum is abused in a supermarket for wearing a hijab. Then, when another attack happens closer to home - very close, in fact - the abuse escalates and Aaliyah is ghosted by Lisa, whose controlling older brother Darren holds despicable "take back our country" views. Though hurt, Aaliyah's response is one of pride and courage. She decides "wearing a hijab would empower me to be true to myself... I'd show everyone a proper Muslim wasn't anything like the few bad ones plastered all over the news. It was time I came out and was confident about who I was. It was time to fight." When her school bans hijabs in response to complaints from pupils and parents, and Darren organises a "BRING BACK OUR SAFE WHITE NEIGHBOURHOODS" protest, Aaliyah decides that enough is enough and speaks out at a public event. Perfectly pitched and paced, and radiant with Aaliyah's courage, *Fight Back* is an engaging must-read that challenges racist stereotypes as it shines with the vitality of empathy, friendship and positive protest.

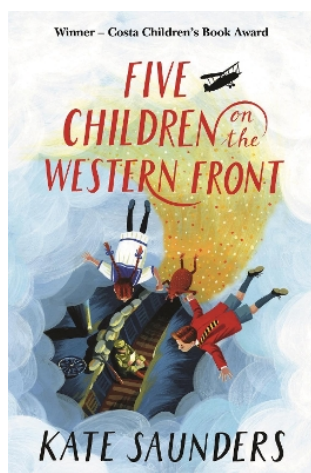


The House with Chicken Legs

Author: Sophie Anderson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/05/2018

This sparkling debut weaves the captivating folklore of Baba Yaga with the thrills of a classic venturing-out-into-the-world quest, replete with primal conflicts, tantalising twists and an unforgettable protagonist that readers will truly root for. Twelve-year-old Marinka yearns to live in a "normal house" and to have a "normal family", but instead her house has chicken legs, and her grandmother is a Yaga, a Guardian of The Gate between this world and the next. Worse still, in Marinka's eyes, is that it's her destiny to become a Yaga herself, to take on the duty of giving the dead "one last wonderful evening" before they "return to the stars". Baba Yaga has long warned Marinka of the dangers of venturing too far in the world of the living, but her desire "to have friendships that last more than one night" is so strong that she's prepared to risk everything. Teetering on the cusp of childhood and adulthood, Marinka's frustrations and determination to find her own way in the world will truly strike a chord with the intended readership. This age-old conflict is delivered with heart and skillfully interwoven with the glorious

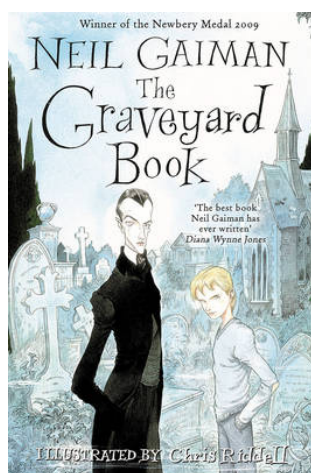
trimmings of the original folklore. Add to this the twists, the unveiling of truths and the critical choices Marinka must make and you have a heartily satisfying novel that's ideal for fans of Neil Gaiman's *The Graveyard Book*. Older readers might also enjoy *Circus of the Unseen*, which offers an alternate re-working of Baba Yaga's infinitely enthralling Slavic folklore. Radiant with wonder and wisdom, this is an exceptional debut. Shortlisted for The Branford Boase Award 2019 | UKLA Longlist Book Awards - 2019 | Shortlisted for the Blue Peter Book Awards 2019, Best Story category | Shortlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2019 | May 2018 Debut of the Month | One of our 2018 Books of the Year



Five Children on the Western Front

Author: Kate Saunders **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/10/2017

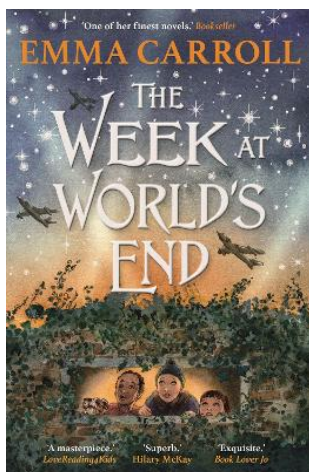
Shortlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2016. Shortlisted for the 2015 Guardian Children's Book prize. Winner of the Costa Children's Book Award 2014 Witty, tender and full of insights into life love and politics, this is a brilliant book in its own right as well as a worthy tribute to E. Nesbit's classic *Five Children and It*. The year is 1914. Anthea, Robert, Jane and Cyril, who has just enlisted, are now grown up, the Lamb is a schoolboy and even Edie, an addition to the family since the original, is old enough to meet the extraordinary and magical Psammead when he re-enters their life. All the children are longing for some new adventures but has the Psammead still got his magical powers? As befits the serious times, the Psammead plays an invaluable role in helping the family understand the First World War while also sorting out problems from his own past. Action-packed, funny and thoughtful this is a book to fall in love with.



The Graveyard Book

Author: Neil Gaiman **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/10/2009

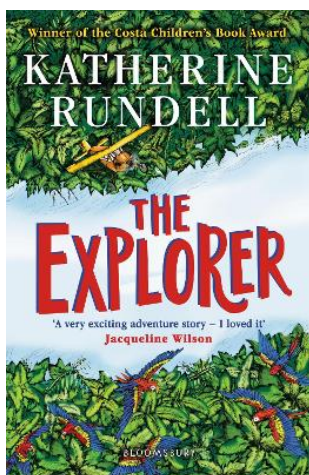
11+. Winner of the Carnegie Medal in 2010, shortlisted for the Kate Greenaway Medal in 2010, winner of Best Novel at the Hugo Awards 2009 and of the prestigious Newbery Medal. Spooks galore in this brilliant and fantastic story of life in the graveyard. When Baby Bod escapes a murderer intent on killing his whole family, he is taken in by the graveyard ghosts. In eight chapters, each of which depicts every other year of Bod's life, a separate story of Bod's life unfolds and always in the background there is the sinister, haunting presence of a killer. Bod's curious tale is a masterpiece of original, absorbing and unstoppable storytelling.



The Week at World's End

Author: Emma Carroll **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 13/04/2022

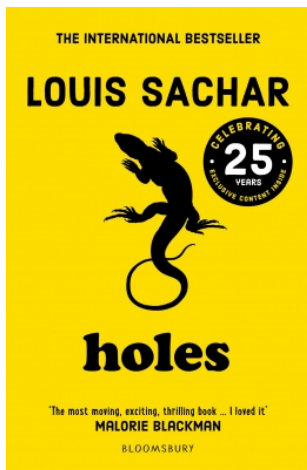
July 2022 Book of the Month Set in Britain in 1962, at the height of the Cuban missile crisis this makes for an edgy thriller as everyone wonders if they will survive the week, never mind solve the mystery of the girl found in the coal shed! Stevie and her best friend Ray, the former British, the latter American, realise they are living through uncertain times with their parents on edge in case there is to be a nuclear war - but Stevie and Ray have their own problems to solve. Stevie has discovered a mysterious girl - Anna - in her coal shed. She agrees to help shelter Anna from the people who are threatening Anna's future - Anna says people are trying to poison her. There are family secrets unearthed, families stressed, and a thriller unfolding over a period of seven days. What a masterpiece of thrilling historical writing. Carroll has taken family themes, mixed in with the politics of the day and woven them into a compelling thriller based on strong historical research. The characters are endearing as they struggle to piece together many complex issues in an accessible way and make a hopeful story emerge from what could have been a very dark period in history. Another triumph, highly recommended.



The Explorer

Author: Katherine Rundell **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/01/2018

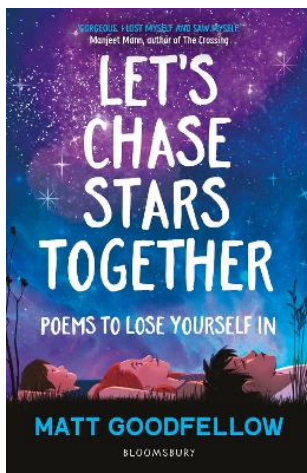
Winner of the UKLA Book Awards 2019 | Winner of The Costa Children's Book Award 2017 After crashing hundreds of miles from civilisation in the Amazon rainforest, Fred, Con, Lila and Max are utterly alone and in grave danger. They have no food, no water and no chance of being rescued. But they are alive and they have hope. As they negotiate the wild jungle they begin to find signs that something - someone - has been there before them. Could there possibly be a way out after all?



Holes

Author: Louis Sachar **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/05/2015

Wholly original and brilliantly plotted, *Holes* is a funny and poignant story about surviving. When Stanley Yelnats is falsely accused of stealing a pair of trainers, he is sent off to Camp Green Lake which is not a camp, not green and not near a lake but a boys' detention centre in the middle of the desert. Every day every boy has to dig a hole five foot deep and five foot across because, the Warden says, it's good for them. How Stanley survives and proves that the Warden has a different and far more sinister motive for wanting so many holes to be dug unravels in unexpected and wholly satisfying ways. Roddy Doyle was our Guest Editor in 2011 and chose *Holes* as one of his favourite books... "Boys in jail – a great idea. The jail has no roof and they have to dig huge holes in the baking sun all day – it's getting even better. I read *Holes* in hospital a few years ago. I wasn't ill, and was only there for the day. I actually forgot I was in hospital, the book was so good. I had about ten pages left when a nurse told me I could go home. I was half-hoping she'd tell me I'd have to stay longer, so I could finish the book." Perfect for Reluctant Readers as well as keen readers. Find more books that we think are great for reluctant readers here.



Let's Chase Stars Together: Poems to lose yourself in

Author: Matt Goodfellow **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 15/09/2022

October 2022 Book of the Month | Shortlisted for the CLIPPA 2023 Compassionate, thought-provoking, playful and poignant, Matt Goodfellow's *Let's Chase Stars Together* is a truly captivating collection of contemporary poems that will surely spark an infinity with poetry in even the most committed "I don't like poems" nay-sayers. With themes ranging from friendship, family life and fitting in, to growing up and anxiety, each and every poem has the power to chime with readers of 10 upwards, whether savoured in solitary moments, or in a lively classroom context. Many will prompt personal reflection, among them *A Thought*, in which the child narrator poignantly reveals how they wish "Mum's sadness/was a necklace/she could unclasp/from her throat", or *Dig, Sid, Dig*, a moving, loving tribute to a beloved pet dog. Then there are those that might spark deep discussion, such as *First Class* which tells of the time "Mum crossed his name out on the letter/and wrote/NOT AT THIS ADDRESS". Quite simply, this breath-takingly beautiful collection has tremendous emotional value — it's a true star with long-lasting radiance.