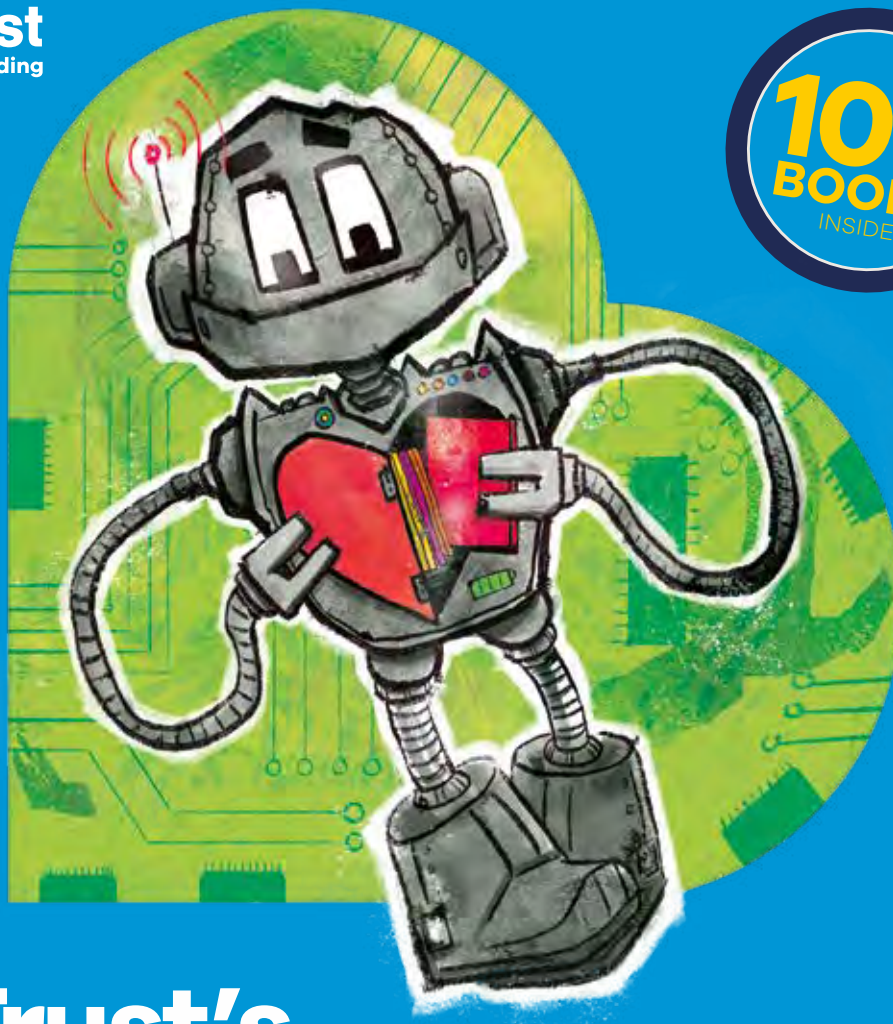


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BookTrust's Great Books Guide 2022

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RENAISSANCE



Message from BookTrust's CEO Diana Gerald

Welcome to BookTrust's Great Books Guide 2022. We want to get children excited about books, stories and rhymes – because if reading is fun, children will want to do it. And if children read for pleasure, this has a huge impact on their opportunities in life.

We know teachers don't always have time to keep an eye on brilliant new books that are published each year, so that's why we've picked out 100 of the funniest, scariest, most engaging, informative and interesting books that have been recently published – and they will be a welcome addition to any school library.

In this guide you'll also find a message from Joseph Coelho, our new Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022–24, telling you about his mission to get all children writing poems. You'll find a brilliant poster designed by Joelle Avelino for your classrooms to help you join in! We've also included some information about our BookTrust Represents programme to get inclusive books into schools, and our virtual visits with authors and illustrators of colour that you can join.

At BookTrust, we believe the right book is always the book your child wants to read. We hope this guide inspires you to find that book.

Happy reading!

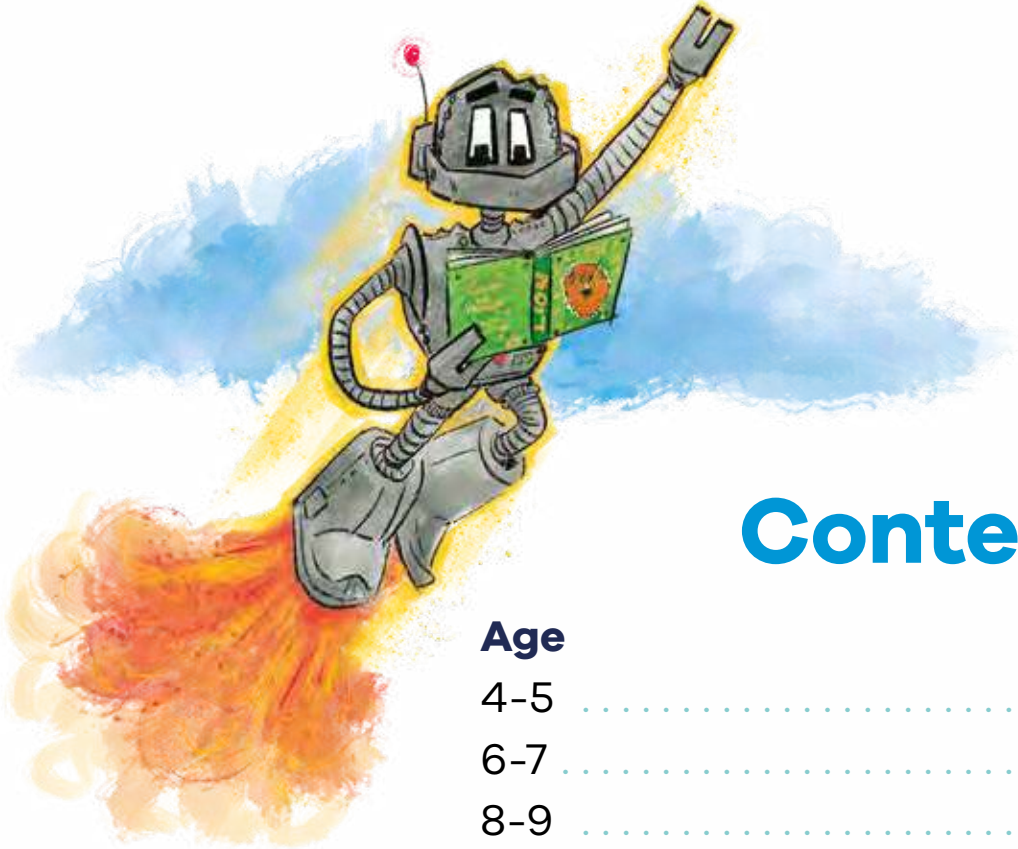


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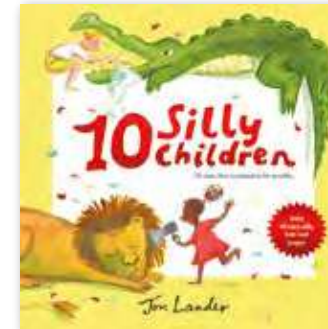
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Age
4-5



10 Silly Children
Jon Lander

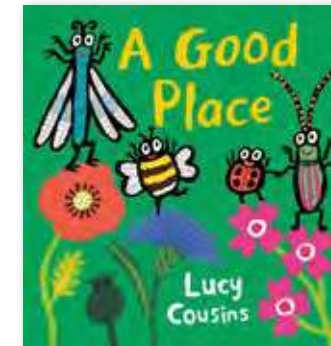
Pavilion

The author of this book would like you to be sensible and not open its fold-out pages, unless you're ready for some seriously silly behaviour.

Sure enough, inside the flaps we find kids having chaotic mud baths, eating frogspawn on toast and playing with a number of wild animals, including some crocodiles who really need their teeth cleaned!

It's a brilliant idea to start a book by telling readers NOT to do something, especially when the book has been set up to reveal the raucous activities of the children inside the flaps.

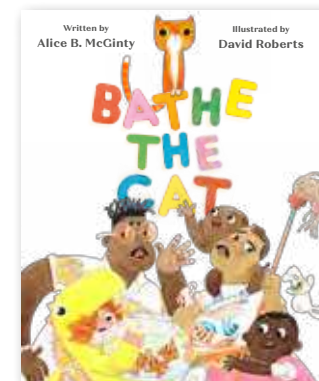
A really original book that is great fun to read together.



A Good Place
Lucy Cousins
Walker Books

Four insect friends – a bee, a ladybird, a beetle and a dragonfly – decide to look for a new place to live together. Yet, there's always a problem. First, it's the lovely dandelions that are in the middle of a busy pavement, then it's the tiny pond that turns out to be a puddle on a noisy road.

Finally, a butterfly shows the friends a beautiful garden that a little boy has made. At last, here is a good place for all the insects to live. Cousins's bright and joyful book about friendship also holds an environmental message perfect for little ones.



Bathe the Cat
Alice B. McGinty, illustrated by David Roberts

Chronicle Books

Grandma is coming to visit, so it's time to tidy up. There's even a useful list, spelt out using fridge magnets, to keep everyone on track.

However, the cat is unhappy with the final chore of 'bathe the cat' so, with a swipe of the paw, rearranges some of the magnets with hilarious results.

A contemporary, multi-ethnic family is at the heart of this riotous tale, with two dads, three children and a cheeky ginger cat. The colourful illustrations are an absolute joy, and contain so many wonderful details, from stylish clothing to the fabulous facial expressions of the characters.



Big
Sav Akyüz
Oxford University Press

Sometimes being small is just no fun, and so a young boy wishes he was big like his older brother. When his dream comes true, he's finally big enough to enjoy the most exciting ride at the theme park.

Soon, though, he's GIANT and big enough sit on top the city's tallest tower. But as he continues getting bigger, he starts to panic... Fortunately, the boy wakes up small again, and grateful for a hug.

This is a beautifully illustrated, mostly wordless story that children will love, and use their imagination to think about what they would do if they were BIG too.



Dinosaurs on Kitten Island
Michael Slack
Farshore

The three dinosaurs on Dinosaur Island are utterly bored, so they've decided to take a trip across the ocean to Kitten Island. But what will happen when the dinosaurs realise that the kittens aren't quite as cute as they expect?

Dino and kitten lovers will love this cheeky picture book in which there are plenty of opportunities to shout out and warn the dinosaurs of the danger of their cat-astrophic play date. Slack's bright colours and hilarious expressions make this an immediate favourite for story time, and while this is a deliciously funny story with a mischievous twist, the messages of celebrating friendship, creativity and compromise shine through.



Don't Ask the Dragon
Lemn Sissay, illustrated by Greg Stobbs
Canongate

It's Alem's birthday, but he's alone with no one to help him celebrate, and he doesn't know where home is. A bear, fox, treefrog, meerkat and bulldog don't have any good advice, except to tell him not to ask the dragon... or he will be eaten!

Alem eventually stumbles across the dragon, but he's nothing like anyone expects. Along with the other animals, the wise dragon helps Alem celebrate his birthday and discover where home really is.

This is a lovely celebration of curiosity and belonging. With an overall message of home being inside you, the story is perfectly matched by wonderful vibrant illustrations.



Georgie Grows a Dragon
Emma Lazell
Pavilion

Georgie loves to grow flowers and is always thinking about the next plant she should grow. One morning, she discovers that overnight she seems to have grown a real-life, fire-breathing dragon.

Georgie applies all her gardening knowledge to taking care of the troublesome dragon, but he doesn't like being out in the sunshine, definitely doesn't like being watered and other plants make him sneeze flames! Despite all the chaos, kind-hearted Georgie is determined to do her best for him and figure out why he's so grumpy. Once she helps him, she realises that dragons make great friends.



Gretel the Wonder Mammoth
Kim Hillyard
Ladybird Books

Gretel – who has been hibernating inside an iceberg for quite some time – is the last mammoth left on Earth, and everyone loves her. Still, the world that Gretel wakes up to is rather different to the one she remembers. Although she tries her hardest to fit in, Gretel starts to feel sad. How can she get the hang of living in this new world, where she feels she doesn't belong? Fortunately, her friends are there to help – and stroke her woolly feet if needed.

This utterly delightful picture book is all about finding the confidence to be ourselves in what sometimes seems like a scary world.



I Spy Island
Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet
Simon & Schuster

In the middle of the ocean is a happy little Island who loves to play 'I Spy' with its friends Banana, Bottle, Bird and Glove. One day, their game is interrupted when Treasure Chest washes up on the Island's chin. It expects to be rescued at any moment, so orders the friends to make signs and flags to alert the search party. After a while, however, it becomes clear that nobody is coming, so the kind islanders devise a plan to cheer Treasure Chest up.

A delightful celebration of friendship and happiness, which is sure to elicit plenty of giggles.

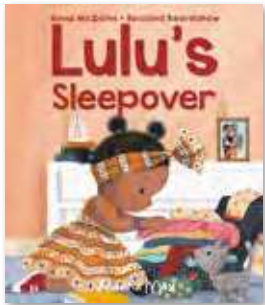


Little Glow
Katie Sahota, illustrated by Harry Woodgate
Owlet Press

From the window of a cosy house in a seaside town, a lonely little candle looks out onto the world. Throughout the year, the small flame watches as families use different kinds of light to celebrate Lunar New Year, Diwali, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Halloween and Christmas.

This glimmering, gorgeous book is a gentle story that showcases the amazing celebrations of light across different communities, including mixed-race families, same-sex parents, disabled children and a range of body sizes.

Perfect for winter night reading, the book's message of love and togetherness is relevant all year long.



Lulu's Sleepover

Anna McQuinn, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw

Alanna Max

Lulu is getting ready for her first ever sleepover at her cousin Hani's house. At Hani's house the cousins build, paint, play, dress up and even watch a film before bedtime. When it's time for bed, they snuggle up for stories before they fall asleep. In the morning, Daddy returns to collect Lulu with a big hug.

Spending the night away from home may be a little daunting for some children. Full of warmth and family love, the story focuses on the fun activities and joyful new experiences of a sleepover, making it perfect for a little one gearing up for their first sleepover with a relative or friend.



Luna Loves Dance

Joseph Coelho, illustrated by Fiona Lumbers

Andersen Press

Luna is excited about her forthcoming dance exam, believing she will be a real dancer when she passes. However, while the other children master the steps, Luna trips and stumbles. With each unsuccessful attempt, she loses a little more confidence and leaves the exam with a heavy heart, believing she is not a real dancer. Gradually, with the gentle support of her family, Luna begins to regain her sparkle, but can they convince her that to be a real dancer, she must believe in herself?

This delightful tale shows young children that, with perseverance and determination, they can overcome setbacks and follow their dreams.



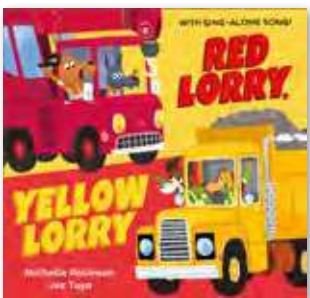
Rainbow Hands

Mamta Nainy, illustrated by Jo Loring-Fisher

Lantana

A young Indian boy's favourite time of the day is painting-his-nails-time with his Ma. Every time he dips the brush into the magical bottles of nail varnish, he finds a colour that suits his mood that day – whether that's matching the mossy greens of the garden, a mysterious purple after a magical dream or a joyful yellow to match the dancing bumblebees.

But the boy's father doesn't understand his fondness for nail painting, leaving the boy confused and angry. On those days, he paints his nails a fiery red. But Dadaji, his grandfather, is there to remind him to always shine bright and stay true to he is.



Red Lorry, Yellow Lorry

Michelle Robinson, illustrated by Jez Tuya

Andersen Press

This colourful picture book features a fabulous array of vehicles, from a forklift truck to a cement mixer, all of which are driven by dogs.

The story follows two lorries as they set off from the depot. Bright, lively illustrations are full of humorous detail and create a wonderful visual narrative to enrich the minimal text.

An entertaining page of mishaps, including a steamroller driving through spilt paint and a sportscar being squashed by a bulldozer, is sure to elicit plenty of giggles. The rhythmic text generates pace, making this an ideal story to read aloud and children will love joining in with the repetitive phrases.



Small's Big Dream

Manjeet Mann, illustrated by Amanda Quartey

HarperCollins

In Small's world, everything is small – her house, her shoes, her bed. Everywhere she looks, she's reminded that her dreams are too big for a girl like her. So she decides to swallow them, stamp on them and push them deep down, apart from at night when they take over her sleep.

The thing is, dreams don't like being ignored, and they have a way of surfacing. Small's big dreams begin to grow, spilling out and it gets harder and harder to squash them down. When she finally allows herself to believe, she discovers that big dreams can make anything and everything happen.



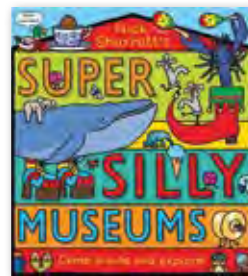
Splash

Claire Cashmore, illustrated by Sharon Davey

Farshore

Even on the hottest summer day, Claire won't go in the water... until the day she's brave enough to put in just a toe. Then, with a huge 'splash', Claire is in the pool – and she never wants to get out! From then on, Claire has a dream to be the very best and, although it's not always easy, she knows she'll get there in the end.

Being based on the real-life experience of a Paralympic gold medallist adds authenticity to a joyful story about mastering a new skill by stepping out of your comfort zone.



Super Silly Museums

Nick Sharratt

Alison Green Books

You've heard of the Natural History Museum and the Science Museum... but what about the Pouseum, the Blueseum and the super sleepy Snoozeum?

On every double page, a card flap pulls open to reveal the wonders of each marvellous museum, complete with plenty of puns and jokes to keep everyone giggling. It's a very funny book, but there are lots of vocabulary-building words to learn too, from quartz to blueberries.

Last, you can draw in the All-About-You-Seum, a fold-out section with plenty of spaces to draw everything from an alien poo to a portrait of yourself when you're grown up. Absolutely brilliant in every way.



The Cat and the Rat and the Hat

Em Lynas, illustrated by Matt Hunt

Nosy Crow

Cat adores playing on his favourite yellow mat, which is so brilliant that it even gives him sweet dreams. Then, along comes Rat with a spectacular pink hat. Suddenly, the once-content Cat wants Rat's hat and will stop at NOTHING to get it.

Yet when Bat arrives wearing a fancy cravat, what could be better than that? Chaos ensues as both Cat and Rat decide they MUST have Bat's fancy cravat for themselves.

Featuring a hilarious tongue-twister text, this raucous, rhyming tale will have both kids and adults laughing out loud from start to finish.



The Rapping Princess

Hannah Lee, illustrated by Allen Fatimaharan
Faber & Faber

Shiloh is a princess and has everything a princess could possibly want. But there's one thing she doesn't have: a singing voice. All the other princesses can sing. What Shiloh can do is rap. But she's a princess – she's supposed to sing, not rap. In despair, Princess Shiloh seeks comfort from her magic mirror. While doing so, she discovers – she's had talent all along. Will she finally embrace her differences and stand out from the crowd?

A hip-hopping fairy tale about standing out and accepting your uniqueness, *The Rapping Princess* bursts with energy and joy, making it perfect to enjoy together.



The Spectacular Suit

Kat Patrick, illustrated by Hayley Wells
Scribble

Frankie is having a big party: there's a tent, bunting, lights and a large blue cake. But Frankie doesn't want to wear any of the dresses her mum suggests.

Frankie secretly draws a spectacular suit with lightning bolts, stars and swagger. But where will she get such a thing? Luckily, Mum finds Frankie's drawing and makes Frankie the spectacular suit of her dreams, meaning that she looks just as wonderful at her party as she feels inside.

This is an empowering story of a child who (possibly) feels that they don't fit into a traditional gender role, and the ways that their family support them in a positive way.



We Sang Across the Sea: The Empire Windrush and Me

Benjamin Zephaniah, illustrated by Onyinye Iwu
Scholastic

In Trinidad, Mona spends her days singing. It is her dream for the whole world to hear her voice. When she sees that a large ship will be sailing to England soon, she knows she has to be aboard it. When she arrives in the strange new land, she begins singing in clubs, on the radio and television and, soon enough, across Europe.

This story is based on the real-life experiences of the Trinidadian musician Mona Baptiste, who boarded the *Empire Windrush* in the hopes of becoming a singer and making a better life for herself.



We're Going to Find the Monster!

Malorie Blackman, illustrated by Dapo Adeola
Puffin

Charlie and Eddie are playing in the garden one morning when Dad gives them a ten-minute warning for breakfast. They know that they have to find the grumpy, prickly monster, but where will they find him?

The brave siblings set off on an adventurous journey across shimmering oceans, over high mountains and past fierce tigers to discover the terrifying monster in his lair: or, as it turns out, their teenage brother Marcus in his bedroom.

A lovely, slightly fairy tale-inspired story about a family with two younger siblings and a teenager, *We're Going to Catch a Monster* features wonderful storytelling and relatable family dynamics.

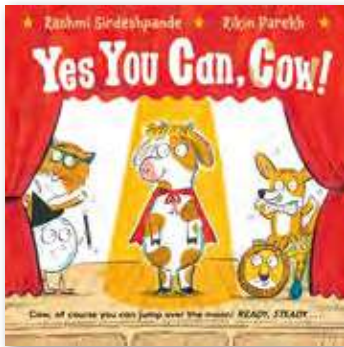


Who Are You?

Smriti Halls, illustrated by Ali Pye
Red Shed

Every child has a unique set of strengths and abilities that allow them to express their individuality. These wonderfully diverse qualities are all celebrated in this joyful non-fiction book.

Each vibrant spread focuses on different aspects of a child's life and poses questions to the reader: Who's in your family? What do you like about your hair? What are your favourite foods to eat? It's a wonderful way to get children thinking about their own families and opening up discussions about all of the other pieces that come together and make everyone unique.



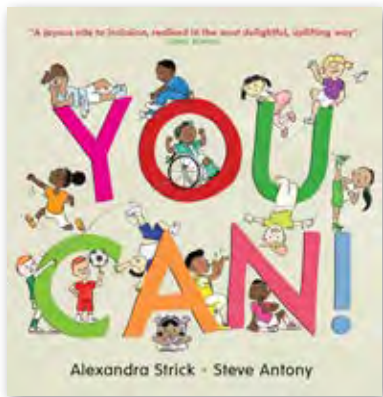
Yes You Can, Cow!

Rashmi Sirdeshpande, illustrated by Rikin Parekh
Faber & Faber

Rehearsals are under way for the big production of Hey Diddle Diddle, but Cow is not ready for the spotlight. In fact, she's absolutely terrified – she doesn't think she'll be able to nail the grand finale and jump over Moon.

After a lot of encouragement, Cow agrees to give it a go. But when it's time to jump over Moon, it's a disaster. Will her friends be able to convince Cow to try again, or is it curtains for Hey Diddle Diddle?

Not just a hilarious read-aloud, this picture book comes with a message about the importance of encouragement, bravery and not fearing failure.



You Can!

Alexandra Strick and Steve Antony
Otter-Barry Books

You can dress up, paint your face, dance and be silly. You can be part of a crowd or lead the way. You can forgive others and yourself, and you can make mistakes and learn from them too. There are so many amazing things that you can do!

Based on real children's own voices and messages (including young disabled people), *You Can!* is a fabulously inclusive picture book that reminds all children that they are valued individuals with a bright future. This is a non-fiction book that aims to empower children, reassuring them that whatever life they may lead, there are opportunities to be supported, loved, happy and fulfilled.



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Age
6-7



Bad Panda

Swapna Haddow, illustrated by Sheena Dempsey
Faber & Faber

In the panda sanctuary, Lin was the cutest baby. Being cute had her sent to be the cuddly face of a foreign zoo. So maybe being bad will get her sent home?

But scaring pigeons, doing stinky farts and kicking over piles of bamboo just make people think she's cuter than ever. Time to take Mission Bad Panda to the next level.

Lin and her new friend Fu put serious effort into their badness and their hilarious exploits are illustrated on every page. With widely spaced text and lots of pictures, this is an ideal story for young readers.



Bunny vs Monkey and the League of Doom!

Jamie Smart

David Fickling Books

Since his partner-in-troublemaking disappeared, Monkey is a bit short on devious schemes. But before long, Skunky comes raging back with a whole new batch of genius inventions to help him in his quest for world domination, the destruction of the woods and generally annoying everyone else.

With absurd attempts like filling Bunny's house with custard and distorting the fabric of time and space, the latest instalment in the Bunny vs Monkey universe is as hilarious and wildly imaginative as ever.

Presented as a series of short comic strips that build to tell an overarching story, the adventures can be read in chronological order or dipped into at random.



Cat Kid Comic Club: Perspectives

Dav Pilkey

Scholastic

It's another day at Cat Kid Comic Club, and the frogs in the class are having trouble paying attention. Maybe it would help to see something from the other's perspective?

Of course, 'perspective' has more than one meaning when it comes to comics. It can mean a specific point of view in a picture, or opinion of the person telling the story.

Creating stories within a story, Pilkey uses a variety of techniques to portray each frog's perspective as they 'create' their own cool little comics, all in different styles. There are also frequent 'how-to' sections showing readers how to create their own comics too.



Illustration © Anjan Sarkar

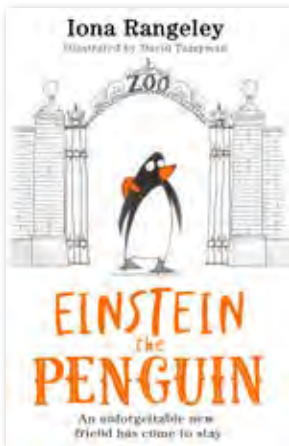


**Everything Under the Sun:
A Curious Question for Every Day of the Year**

Molly Oldfield, illustrated by Momoko Abe, Kelsey Buzzell, Beatrice Cerocchi, Alice Courtley, Sandra de la Prada, Grace Easton, Manuela Montoya Escobar, Richard Jones, Lisa Koesterke, Gwen Millward, Sally Mullaney and Laurie Stansfield

Ladybird Books

Why are dogs domesticated? Can whales fart? Why are sweets bad for you? These, and 366 other questions (including an extra one for a leap year), were sent to author Molly Oldfield for her podcast, and are now answered in one extremely helpful book. Featuring illustrations from 12 different illustrators, this is a beautiful gem of a book that is great both for researching specific questions and browsing through for fun.



Einstein the Penguin

Iona Rangeley, illustrated by David Tazzyman

HarperCollins

When the Stewart family visit London Zoo, Imogen and Arthur are enthralled by a small, inquisitive penguin named Einstein. As they leave, Mrs Stewart jokingly tells him that penguins are always welcome at their house.

However, the family are astounded when Einstein turns up on their doorstep later that evening, clutching a small rucksack stuffed full of silver herrings, a Polaroid camera and a selection of photographs.

Readers will laugh out loud at the family's hilarious attempts to integrate Einstein into their household. Funny, intriguing and utterly heart-warming, this wonderful chapter book, which is accompanied by lively black-and-white illustrations, will delight newly confident junior readers.



Grimwood

Nadia Shireen

Simon & Schuster

Fox siblings Ted and Nancy live in the big city, where there's plenty of food to be scavenged from the bins behind the chicken shop.

Yet, when Ted accidentally bites Princess Buttons's tail off, the two foxes need somewhere to lie low. What better place than Grimwood, a faraway forest where furry denizens play endless games of Treebonk and tough-talking bunnies frisk under shady trees?

Yet, Princess Buttons is hot on their heels. Can the animals of Grimwood save their new fox friends?

Nadia Shireen's first illustrated middle grade novel is a heart-warming, gloriously anarchic tale with tons of giggles and brilliant characters.



Kitty Quest

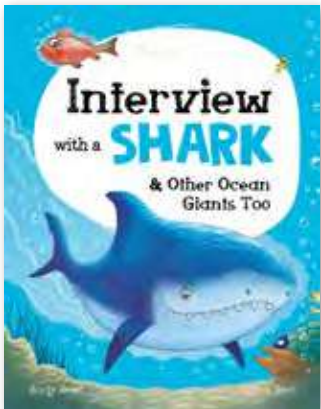
Phil Corbett

Simon & Schuster

Kittens Woolfrik and Perigold are monster hunters. However, there aren't any monsters on the islands of Pawdor so work is a bit scarce.

So when an enormous monster appears from nowhere and rampages through the town, it's Woolfrik and Perigold's moment to shine. The dynamic duo must also face their somewhat inept nemesis, Dagzobad the Demonhearted, whose schemes never quite work out, despite his determination to cause mayhem.

This hilarious comic-strip tale is quirky, colourful and fun. With plenty of riotous action on every page, readers will laugh out loud at the witty quips and zany antics of the oddball feline characters.



Interview with a Shark and Other Ocean Giants Too

Andy Seed, illustrated by Nick East

Welbeck

Intrepid wildlife reporter Andy Seed is here with a collection of interviews for which he has risked personal safety – and got seriously wet.

While chatting to ten of the sea's biggest creatures, Andy finds out that the anglerfish lives in the dark at a depth of 200 metres and can eat things bigger than itself thanks to a stretchy belly, bendy bones and a massive mouth that opens extra wide.

With fabulous, quirky illustrations and the familiar question-and-answer format, this is a welcome addition to the 'Interview with ...' series and includes suggestions for positive action to protect endangered species.



Leonora Bolt: Secret Inventor

Lucy Brandt, illustrated by Gladys Jose

Puffin

Awesome inventor Leonora Bolt has lived most of her nine years in a lighthouse on remote Crabby Island, visited only by her Uncle Luther. She hopes that her new gadget, the Switcheroo, will transport her to the mainland.

Her work is interrupted when Jack, a young castaway, is washed ashore on an inflatable lobster. Talking to Jack, Leonora realises that much of what Uncle Luther has told her is untrue. Is Leonora's uncle up to no good, and what plans does he have for the Switcheroo?

This wacky adventure combines larger-than-life characters, a fittingly devious villain and a fast-paced plot with a sprinkling of science and engineering.





Marv and the Mega Robot
Alex Falase-Koya, illustrated by Paula Bowles
 Oxford University Press

When Marvin's grandad unearths his old brown suitcase, there's an amazing surprise inside: his old superhero suit which he bequeaths to Marvin. Not only that, but there's also a robot sidekick, Pixel, who is overjoyed to be of use again.

But when the supervillain Mastermind turns up at the school Science Fair with her evil mega robot, Marv has to step in and save the day – with Pixel's help, of course.

This illustrated early reader is fast-paced, with plenty of adventure for young readers just making the transition from picture books, or kids who really love books with dynamic illustrations.



Mega Robo Bros: Double Threat
Neill Cameron
 David Fickling Books

Being the most advanced robots on the planet isn't always as cool as it sounds. You still have to go clothes shopping with your mum, and there's no escape from bullying either.

But when a Mega-Robo emergency is declared, Alex and Freddy snap into action. Yet, far beneath the ground in the tunnels of London's old Tube network, discarded robots are being rescued and repaired. And some of them are out for revenge on mankind... and on the Mega Robo Bros themselves.

Bold, atmospheric and bursting with energy and laughs, this fun comic adventure is relatable and fast-paced, making it a hit with all kinds of kids.



Midnight Magic
Michelle Harrison, illustrated by Elissa Elwick
 Little Tiger

From the moment she was born on a snowy winter's night, there has been something special about Midnight. Little does she know that black cats born at midnight have magical gifts – she just thinks all kittens can fly on brooms and shrink themselves so they can win hide-and-seek.

Trixie's dad isn't sure he wants a kitten in the house, but as soon as Trixie meets Midnight, it's a match made in heaven. But how will the family react when magic and mischief take over their previously quiet lives?

Newly independent readers will love the clever rhymes, repeated rhythm and detailed pictures in Midnight's story.



Mike Falls Up
Candy Gourlay, illustrated by Carles Ballesteros
 Little Tiger

Mike and his dog Bowow are out for a walk when a crack opens up in the ground in front of them, and Bowow leaps into the chasm.

Then a party invitation drifts out of the hole, instructing him to 'just fall up', so Mike follows his dog into the unknown, waking up in the home of a girl called Kaneisha in London. Together with Kaneisha, Mike embarks on a dreamlike adventure. But will he ever be able to return home?

This quirky tale of friendship and adventure features distinctive, full-colour illustrations, while the short chapters are ideal for young readers.

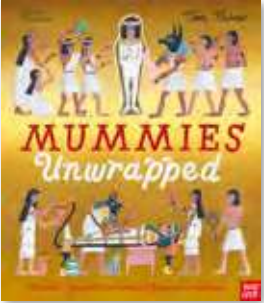


Monster Max and the Marmalade Ghost
Robin Bennett, illustrated by Tom Tinn-Disbury
 Firefly

Max has an awesome secret: when he burps, he turns into a huge, orange monster with amazing strength and pointy teeth. And he can turn back into a boy just by sneezing!

When Max and his friend Peregrine volunteer at the local day centre, odd things start to happen. Reg is stuck on the ceiling, Sydney is trapped in the television and the marmalade seems to be haunted.

In this second adventure in the series, Max discovers that turning into a monster and eating everything in sight isn't the answer to every problem. Sometimes cleverness and planning – provided by Peregrine – give you the best chance at success.

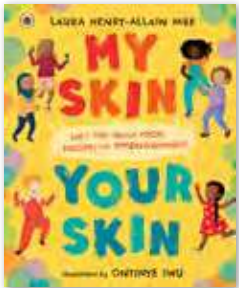


Mummies Unwrapped
Tom Froese
 Nosy Crow and The British Museum

Fans of ancient Egypt will enjoy this non-fiction book, which answers questions such as what embalmers did with the organs they took out of the body, how mummies were wrapped, what happened at a funeral and how they were buried, as well as what happened when some mummies were discovered.

Tom Froese's illustration gives the grisly subject a light-hearted and friendly feel while still depicting the detail of, for instance, the jewellery pieces sometimes interred in a mummy.

Perfect for mid-primary-aged children, this is an attractive introduction to the mysterious practice of mummification, which will doubtless inspire plenty of questions.

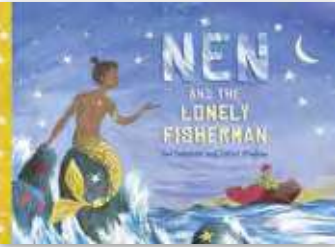


My Skin, Your Skin
Laura Henry-Allain MBE, illustrated by Onyinye Iwu
 Ladybird Books

This important non-fiction book explores the concept of racism for a young audience, explaining what it is and why it is always wrong. It examines differences in skin colour to family set-up and religious beliefs, emphasising that these differences make the world a richer place and should be celebrated.

Questions encourage readers to consider how it might feel to witness or be on the receiving end of racism. A useful section at the end provides some practical suggestions about how adults can help support young children.

With colourful pages and engaging illustrations, there's an essential message here: nobody should be disadvantaged because of their race.



Nen and the Lonely Fisherman
Ian Eagleton, illustrated by James Mayhew
 Owlet Press

Merman Nen loves to explore the mysterious depths of the ocean, but his heart feels empty. Each night, he sings to the sea and his words of hope are carried across the waves. On the shore, a lonely fishman called Ernest also feels that something is missing from his life. When he hears Nen's song, he sets off in his boat to discover the source of the magical voice, and the pair strike up a relationship. Nen's father Pelagios warns his son to stay away from the world above, as humans are damaging the oceans. However, Nen knows that there is something special about Ernest.

Full-page illustrations combine with small vignettes, creating pace and guiding the reader through this tender tale of love and acceptance.



Princess Minna: The Enchanted Forest

Kirsty Applebaum, illustrated by Sahar Haghoo
Nosy Crow

When Princess Minna learns that her neighbour, Prince Welling-Tunboot, has fallen under a sleeping spell cast by an evil fairy, she is keen to help. He must be woken before sunset, or he will never wake again. Princess Minna summons her dragon Lorenzo and flies to the enchanted forest to rescue the prince, but with several distractions along the way, will she arrive in time?

This hilarious, contemporary interpretation of a traditional fairy tale is hugely entertaining. With short chapters and vibrant, full-page illustrations, it is ideal for children who are transitioning from picture books to early readers.

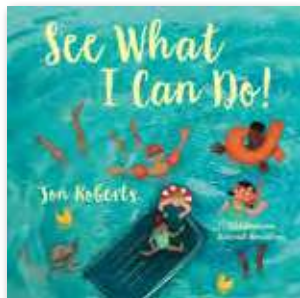


Real Pigeons Nest Hard

Andrew McDonald, illustrated by Ben Wood
Farshore

The third title in this zany, highly illustrated adventure for children sees the Real Pigeons outwitting an evil pinchy pigeon, helping a ferociously huggy Child Beast and finding a long-lost pigeon family.

Each of the three fast-paced stories is packed with adventure and some seriously silly humour, perfect for newly independent readers ready for the challenge of their first chapter book. Short sentences and multiple font styles make it a fun read – plus there are lots of activities in the back for children to draw their favourite characters or find out about the surprisingly fascinating world of pigeons.



See What I Can Do!

Jon Roberts, illustrated by Hannah Rounding
Graffeg Books

Every one of us is different, each with our own unique personality, challenges, interests and skills. Yet, where disability is concerned, there is a risk that we categorise children together into convenient boxes. In reality, there are numerous different conditions and impairments: some visible, some not.

See What I Can Do! introduces a range of characters (based on real-life children from around the world), each pointing out not only the challenges but also the positive aspects of their lives. The book does all this in a gentle, friendly and very readable way.

A beautiful book that celebrates individuality, empathy and understanding.



Silas and the Marvellous Misfits

Tom Percival
Macmillan

Erika, Beastling, Silas, Wade and Sim, otherwise known as the Dream Defenders, are a team of covert agents who enter children's dreams to rid them of night-time worries. Silas is usually upbeat and optimistic, but while on a mission to help a boy who feels controlled by his parents, he is reminded of his own domineering family, the Glooms, and has a crisis of confidence. Can Silas and his friends prevent the Glooms from infiltrating everyone's dreams, leaving people feeling sad, hopeless and dejected?

The imaginative setting, short chapters and lively black-and-white illustrations make this an engaging tale for young junior readers.



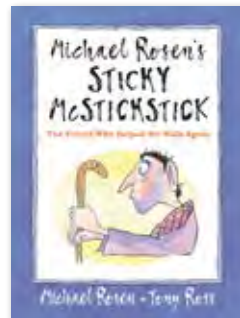
Sona Sharma: Looking After Planet Earth

Chitra Soundar, illustrated by Jen Khatun
Walker Books

When Sona learns about climate change at school, she makes a pledge to look after the planet. Taking advice to 'start small, start now', she makes some radical changes at home, but they don't go down too well with her family.

Sona then turns her attention to the forthcoming kolam competition: patterns are drawn on the ground outside people's homes. Can she persuade her neighbours not to use the colourful chemical dyes and glitter, which are harmful to the environment?

Set in India, this gentle tale is one of a series, peppered with interesting details about Hindu traditions, culture and food. The short chapters and black-and-white illustrations are ideal for independent young readers.



Sticky McStickStick

Michael Rosen, illustrated by Tony Ross
Walker Books

In March 2020, Michael Rosen became ill with Covid-19 and was admitted to hospital. He was so ill that the doctors put him in an induced coma for 47 days. When Michael woke up, he had to learn to walk again, and this picture book chronicles his recovery at a rehabilitation hospital and his eventual return to his family with his walking stick, which he named Sticky McStickStick.

Characteristically open and honest about his experiences, Michael doesn't shy away from talking about the difficult things, but does so in a way that provides a safe space for children and families to talk about tricky topics.



The World's Most Pointless Animals... Or Are They?

Philip Bunting
Happy Yak

The natural world is filled with creatures which have adapted over generations to thrive in their environment, and each one has an important role to play in our planet's ecosystem.

In this delightful and informative book about some of the more unusual animals in our world, we learn about animals including the axolotl, which can regrow its limbs, and the platypus, which is so remarkable-looking that biologists who saw it for the first time thought it was a hoax.

This collection of unusual animals from around the world is an amusing read thanks to its rogue narrator, who shares jokey facts and silly names for each animal.



Wishes

Mượn Thị Văn, illustrated by Victo Ngai
Scholastic

A little girl watches her family preparing to leave their village forever for a new life in another country. Boarding a tiny wooden rowing boat with what seems like too many other people, the girl, her mother and her brothers and sisters set off on their perilous journey, through harsh storms and boiling hot sun, hoping that they will live to see their destination.

A story expressed in muted colour and with a focus on the small details of this Vietnamese family's life as they endure a perilous journey, *Wishes* is a deeply moving story told with minimal text about a child's experience of being a refugee.

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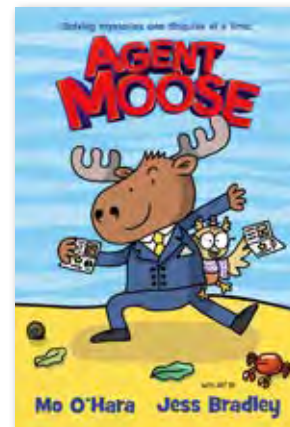
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**Age
8-9**



Agent Moose

Mo O'Hara, illustrated by Jess Bradley

Scholastic

Special Agent Moose ('Anonymoose') and his wisecracking Owlfred are on the case to find a missing witness. Woodland HQ has reported a turtle has disappeared after another agent, Camo the Chameleon, solved his 100th case.

But everything is not quite what it seems at the South Shore and the celebrated Agent Camo is acting rather shady... With a few missteps and hilarious disguises galore, the duo must interview a cast of animal residents to solve the mystery and find the missing turtle.

A brilliantly funny and easy to follow graphic novel with likeable characters and just the right amount of witty spy humour to entertain young readers.



Agent Zaiba Investigates: The Smuggler's Secret

Annabelle Sami, illustrated by Daniela Sosa

Little Tiger

Young Zaiba is a talented detective and has already solved several cases with the help of her loyal friends Poppy and Ali. When Zaiba sets off to Chesil Bay on a school trip, she is faced with another mystery. A valuable artefact has gone missing from a shipwreck's salvage, and anyone could be the thief!

This is a classic adventure with a very up-to-date attitude, which provides positive role models and a realistic picture of today's society as well as inclusive examples of step-families and same-sex relationships. All of this is done within an exciting adventure that keeps the reader guessing along the way.



Bandoola: The Great Elephant Rescue

William Grill

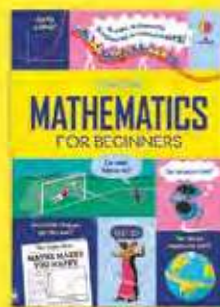
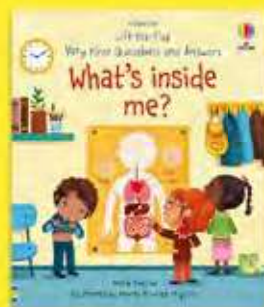
Flying Eye Books

After fighting in World War One, James Howard Williams worked in Myanmar, transporting teak from the forests while aided by elephants. He became fascinated by these noble creatures and learned as much as he could about them from the local people.

Yet, when World War Two reached Myanmar in 1944, Williams was told to evacuate everyone to Assam, but he couldn't bear to leave the elephants behind. Therefore, he planned a dangerous journey: one that would become one of the bravest escape missions in history.

William Grill's stunning depiction of a deeply inspiring story of kindness and bravery might be his best book yet.

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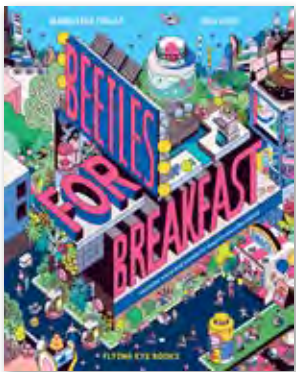
Be Nice to Aunt Emma

Anne Fine, illustrated by Gareth Conway
Barrington Stoke

Aunt Emma is rude, prickly and seems to find fault with everything Tansy does. Thankfully, she only visits twice a year.

As the peacekeeper of the family, Dad encourages Tansy to be nice, and promises to buy her a new computer game if she remains on her best behaviour. Tansy turns on the charm and is delighted when she realises that her extra-polite attitude is the perfect way to really annoy Aunt Emma.

This charming, light-hearted tale explores the complex dynamics which exist in many families, demonstrating that with patience, understanding and humour, difficult situations can be overcome.

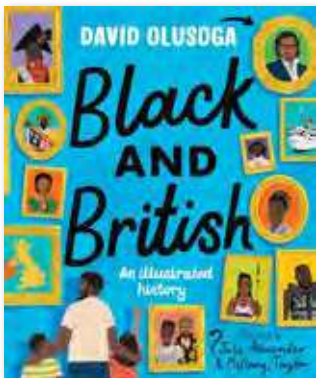


Beetles for Breakfast... and Other Weird and Wonderful Ways We Could Save the Planet

Madeleine Finlay, illustrated by Jisu Choi
Flying Eye Books

Climate change and global warming is a huge problem, but fortunately there are thousands of scientists on the case, coming up with wacky but genius solutions for more sustainable food sources, types of energy, transport and buildings, new ways of farming, and other fabulous gadgets that will change our lives for the better.

Organised into easy-to-understand sections such as In the Park, On the Farm, In the Bathroom and At the Breakfast Table, this utterly fabulous and uplifting book tells children all about the new inventions currently being worked on by scientists, from insects as a new food source to making fuel from fatbergs.



Black and British: An Illustrated History

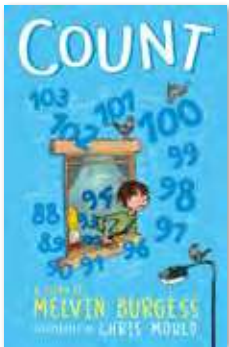
David Olusoga, illustrated by Jake Alexander and Melleny Taylor
Macmillan

This fascinating illustrated book features key figures from Black British history such as World War One football star Walter Tull, Black Victorian celebrity Sarah Forbes Bonetta, and author and abolitionist Olaudah Equiano, who was kidnapped from his home in West Africa at the age of 11 and sold as a slave, later writing a famous book about his experience.

Olusoga tells the fascinating – and often heart-breaking – story of Black people in Britain's history clearly, and with a focus on the real humans involved.



Illustration © Emily Rowland



Count

Melvin Burgess, illustrated by Chris Mould
Andersen Press

Brandon boasts about everything and claims that he can count to ten million, even though it will take him almost a year. As he begins, the numbers take on a life of their own, emitting a shimmering light as they wait in line to be counted. The higher Brandon counts, the more his life is on public view, and he becomes part of a media frenzy.

This light-hearted, engaging tale, with a dash of magic, shrewdly demonstrates how social media adoration can swiftly flip to hatred and abuse. The short chapters are humorously illustrated with expressive black-and-white drawings.



Curious About Crocodiles

Owen Davey
Flying Eye Books

Did you know that the ancient Egyptians revered a part-man, part-crocodile god called Sobek? Or the fact that crocodiles' tough skin is reinforced by bony plates underneath, which warm rapidly in the sun, acting like small solar panels? What about the fact that crocodiles have been known to climb trees? The latest in Owen Davey's non-fiction series about particular animals, *Curious About Crocodiles* is a must for any nature enthusiast.

As ever, Davey's genius at representing facts and curious details alongside accessible and beautiful graphic design is achieved marvellously, making a fascinating read about these sometimes misunderstood ancient creatures.



Diary of an Accidental Witch

Perdita and Honor Cargill, illustrated by Katie Saunders
Little Tiger

Bea Black is unenthusiastic about moving to the curious village of Little Spellshire and is upset when her dad accidentally enrolls her at the wrong school. She is even more alarmed when she discovers on her first day that the Spellshire School of Extraordinary Arts is, in fact, a school for witches.

Sworn to secrecy by headteacher Ms Sparks, Bea confides only in her diary, where she writes her innermost thoughts and tries to make sense of her baffling new surroundings.

Full of magical mayhem, this funny tale light-heartedly explores the challenges of moving home, starting a new school and dealing with bullies.



Frankenstiltskin

Joseph Coelho, illustrated by Freya Hartas
Walker Books

Resourceful Bryony is a taxidermist, whose skilful needle allows her to bring beloved pets back to life – well, almost.

When her boastful father makes an absurd promise to a sinister king, Bryony is whisked off to a castle of horrors, where she finds herself in debt to a nameless magical creature who seems able to steal anything it wants from her. She is doomed unless she can guess its name.

This is a funny, clever and very enjoyable verse retelling of Rumpelstiltskin with the addition of a smart, likeable heroine. The lavish illustrations are warm and fun, and a nice counterpoint to the gross and gory content.



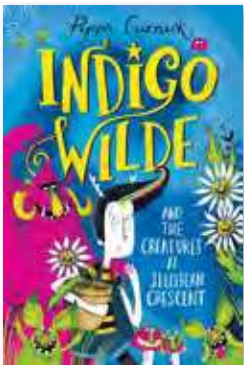
Girl Power: Indian Women Who Took On the World

Neha J Hiranandani, illustrated by Aditi Kakade Beaufrand and Niloufer Wadia

Scholastic

This book is full of true stories of Indian women, such as Indra K Nooyi, who became the CEO of PepsiCo in 2006 and re-visioned the brand to include healthier options such as fruit juice, baked crisps and bottled water, and reduced the salt and sugar in many snacks. Under her leadership, PepsiCo became one of the most successful companies in the world, and Forbes magazine ranked Indra as one of the 100 most powerful women in the world.

Featuring 50 brilliant Indian women from history and the present day, *Girl Power: Indian Women Who Took On the World* is a truly inspirational read, with clearly laid out text and gorgeous illustrations by Niloufer Wadia and Aditi Kakade Beaufrand.



Indigo Wilde and the Creatures at Jellybean Crescent

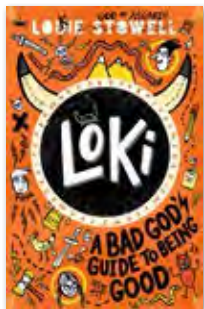
Pippa Curnick

Hodder

Indigo Wilde lives in a very strange house with her parents and her little brother Quigley, who is deaf. However, Indigo's Very Important Explorer parents are often away, sending Indigo and Quigley strange creatures that don't quite fit in anywhere else to look after. Thus, the house on Jellybean Crescent is bursting with purrmaids (half cat, half fish) and croquet-playing yetis, amongst other creatures.

When a new arrival escapes, things at Jellybean Crescent start to get a little out of hand. Can Indigo and Quigley find it before disaster strikes?

Hilarious, inventive and brilliantly colourful.



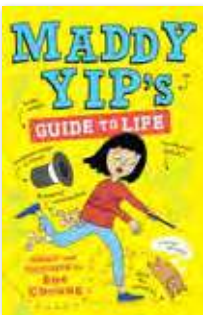
Loki: A Bad God's Guide to Being Good

Louie Stowell

Walker Books

Loki, Norse god of mischief, is sent to live on Earth as an 11-year-old boy. He has one month to prove that he can mend his ways, or Odin will condemn him to eternal torture. Loki must record evidence of his moral improvement in a magical diary. Furious that he must suffer indignities such as attending school and doing chores, Loki struggles to be good.

This side-splitting tale is hugely entertaining from start to finish. A great choice for reluctant readers, it is generously illustrated with witty black-and-white cartoon drawings, and the daily diary entries break the text into manageable sections.



Maddy Yip's Guide to Life

Sue Cheung

Andersen Press

Maddy Yip lives happily with her Mam, Dad, Agung and two annoying brothers. Until the day she realises that all her family and friends have at least one talent – something they are really good at.

The only thing Maddy is good at is armpit farts. And so begins the quest to discover what else Maddy can do really well.

Maddy's quest is written as a diary in an easy, conversational style that gives her thoughts and mishaps the air of truth. It's also packed with energetic, black-and-white, comic-style illustrations that add to the readability and provide some of the biggest laughs.



Meg and Merlin: Making Friends

Tanya Landman, illustrated by Sônia Albert

Barrington Stoke

Meg adores ponies and longs to have one of her own, but knows that her parents can't afford it. She is overjoyed to find a beautiful pony in her front garden on her tenth birthday and, for one incredible moment, she wonders if he is a birthday gift. However, when she realises that he has escaped from his field and must be returned to his rightful owner, she is heartbroken.

This moving tale of hope and trust is accompanied throughout by gentle black-and-white illustrations. Aimed at dyslexic and reluctant readers, it features short chapters to help build confidence and stamina.



Ollie Spark and the Accidental Adventure

Gillian Cross, illustrated by Alan Snow

David Fickling Books

Ollie Spark is a skilled engineer who cleverly transforms a clapped-out old van into a stylish and functional mobile home for his Aunt Caz. Eager to travel the world to research her new series of spy books, Aunt Caz zooms off, completely unaware that Ollie is trapped in the boot. When they arrive in a mysterious land, which is covered in a thick blanket of smog, Aunt Caz is promptly kidnapped, so Ollie bravely embarks on a rescue mission.

This entertaining, illustrated chapter book is full of intrigue and humour, with an underlying theme of caring for the environment.



On Your Marks, Get Set, Gold! A Funny and Fact-Filled Guide to Every Olympic Sport

Scott Allen, illustrated by Antoine Corbineau

Nosy Crow

Did you know that in water polo, one type of foul is called a 'brutality' and players who commit fouls spend time in a 'sin bin'? Or that beards and moustaches are banned in boxing? What about the fact that the Paralympics added a version of volleyball called sitting volleyball in 1980 for men and in 2004 for women?

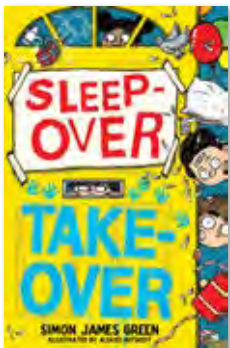
Organised into seven sections, this amusing and interesting book is a great place to start for primary school age children interested in learning more about the great variety of Olympic and Paralympic sports, from Judo to Artistic Gymnastics and everything in between.



Rainbow Grey
Laura Ellen Anderson
Farshore

Ray Grey lives in the magical Weatherlands. Ray is surrounded by Weatherlings with astounding weather power at their fingertips, but she doesn't have ANY magic... Until a trip to Earth to find some secret treasure changes Ray's life forever – and she becomes Rainbow Grey.

Rainbow Grey is a rollercoaster adventure, full of twists and turns. There's enough excitement in this chapter book to keep every child happy, and it's all swept along by joyful, cartoony illustrations that animate almost every page. From rainbow-sprayed edges to dramatic moments when the pages go dark to reflect the weather in the scene, it's a gorgeous book that young readers will love to own or borrow.



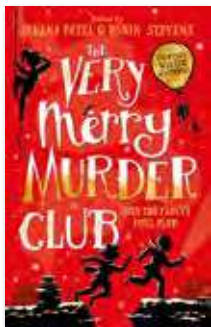
Sleepover Takeover
Simon James Green, illustrated by Aleksei Bitskoff
Scholastic

Otis and Jagger are the class dorks – and very happy about it. But when they get an invitation to cool-kid Rocco's birthday sleepover, they can't resist the temptation to go along.

The party is spectacular. That is, until Otis wakes next morning to a scene of absolute carnage. As the rest of the guests make a hasty exit, Otis, Rocco, Other Chloe and Tiana must team up to try and solve the mystery, clear up the mess – and find Jagger.

A fantastically funny, exciting mystery thriller with a dramatic, slapstick finale, non-stereotypical gender representation and important themes of self-discovery.

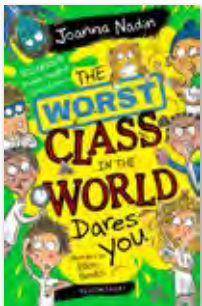
Illustration © Erika Meza



The Very Merry Murder Club
Various, edited by Serena Patel and Robin Stevens, illustrated by Harry Woodgate
Farshore

Join Ali and her sister Tulip – or the Double Detectives, as they're also known – as they investigate who has stolen the presents from the children's grotto at the local hospital. Hold your breath as Evie and her brother Ulric enter their Aunty's house to feed her cat and find something they weren't quite expecting... And try to avoid biting your nails as Arjun witnesses a neighbourhood crime while recovering at home from having his tonsils out.

Featuring stories by a number of popular writers, this is a treat of a book for all young mystery lovers, perfect with a cup of hot chocolate and a cosy chair.



The Worst Class in the World Dares You!
Joanna Nadin, illustrated by Rikin Parekh
Bloomsbury

Class 4B have been labelled 'the worst class in the world' by their brusque headteacher, Mrs Bottomley-Blunt. Determined to avoid Tuesday's maths test, Class 4B are thrilled to learn that the school has a nit epidemic and devise a flawless plan to infect themselves so they will be sent home. Next, the arrival of a new girl who introduces her classmates to the concept of dares leads to 4B undergoing some truly revolting tasks.

Featuring two side-splittingly funny short stories, this is an extremely enjoyable book to read. With well-spaced text and entertaining black-and-white illustrations, which inject much hilarity into the riotous tales, it is ideal for young, independent readers.



The Adventure Club: Red Panda Rescue
Jess Butterworth, illustrated by Kirsti Beautyman
Orion

Tilly is excited to be in Nepal, caring for endangered red pandas. With her new friends Leo and Anita, she learns to ride a yak, plant bamboo and identify different types of poo.

But poachers are laying traps across the mountains. When the Adventure Club gang can't find Iniya, a red panda soon to have cubs, they fear the worst. Can they track her before the poachers do?

This is the first in the Adventure Club series, packed with black-and-white illustrations and animal facts. The diary format, mild peril and cute endangered animals form an irresistible combination for young readers.



What's New, Harper Drew?
Kathy Weeks, illustrated by Aleksei Bitskoff
Hodder

It's Maisie's birthday party, and the whole class is invited – and while Maisie is sometimes friendly to Harper, sometimes she says unkind things too. There's a lot of pressure to get everything exactly right for Maisie's big day, and Harper definitely doesn't want to look like a weirdo.

With the help of her real friends and her perfectly imperfect family, can Harper find the confidence she needs to just be herself?

This laugh-out-loud diary is perfect for fans looking for their next *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* or *The Extremely Embarrassing Life of Lottie Brooks*. A fabulously fun read about being true to yourself.



Return of the PESTS
Emer Stamp
Hodder

Stix is a young mouse who lives with his grandma behind the washing machine in Flat 3, Peewit Mansions. Luckily, the people who rent the flat are quite messy, so there is always plenty of food to enjoy.

Yet, when the landlady dies and leaves the building to her son, Colin, he wastes no time evicting the tenants and arranging for all areas to be deep cleaned. Stix and his friends take refuge in the basement, but are forced to take action when Colin's grand plans for the building put their lives in jeopardy.

This hilarious tale about an endearing collection of creatures will delight independent young readers.



The Lion Above the Door
Onjali Q. Raúf
Orion

Leo and Sangeeta often feel like the odd ones out in the small village they live in, where everyone else is white.

Going on a trip to a war museum, Leo envies his classmates that have stories to tell about their family members who fought in the war. Yet, when he finds his own name on a war memorial, he is amazed. With Sangeeta's help, Leo starts an amazing investigation that will highlight some of the hidden history of World War Two – and his own family.

Another sensitive, thoughtful book from Onjali Q. Raúf that highlights the way that people of colour's stories from history have often been ignored.

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Age 10-11



Adam-2

Alastair Chisholm

Nosy Crow

In his isolated basement room, Adam-2 has followed the same daily routine for over 200 years – until the day two hungry humans break in and Adam-2 rescues them from a robot attack. When the trio emerge into the city, Adam-2 finds it unrecognisable: blackened, hollow, flooded. It's been devastated by two centuries of war between humans and intelligent machines.

Could Adam-2 hold the key to saving the world by destroying one side and saving the other? And, if so, which side should he save?

With a diverse cast of complex characters, an exhilarating plot and a real sense of peril, Adam-2 is a breath-taking science fiction thriller.



Cameron Battle and the Hidden Kingdoms

Jamar J. Perry

Bloomsbury

The Book of Chidani is a special thing in Cameron Battle's life: a magical storybook of queens, monsters and gods. His parents read it to him until, one awful day, they vanish.

When Cameron and his two best friends find themselves transported into the magical kingdom of Chidani – locked in the book and carried to America on slavers' ships – Cameron learns he must defend Chidani... even if he does not feel ready.

With echoes of *Jumanji*, *Black Panther* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*, this is a book that readers of fantasy aged nine and above will find wholly engrossing.



Dread Wood

Jennifer Killick

Farshore

Detention on a Saturday! Could life get any worse? Well... yes. One minute the PE teacher is giving out chores, and the next he's dragged underground, leaving only his cap behind. As the fear and dread build up in this tense thriller, a group of misfits is forced to work as a team to defeat the most terrifying of hidden attackers. Creepy things lurk in the shadows, indescribable nasties leap out when least expected and death awaits anyone who dares to put a foot to the ground.

Not for the faint-hearted, this edge-of-seat horror is hard to put down, with many chapters ending on a cliff-hanger.



Frankie's World

Aoife Dooley

Scholastic

Frankie has always felt different to everyone else. She finds it hard to pay attention in school and sometimes says random things that upset other people.

Thankfully, Frankie has two best friends and her Mam who totally get her. Unfortunately, Mam is often in and out of hospital because of a problem with her heart.

This lovely, funny, relatable story about Frankie, an autistic girl, was inspired by the author's own experiences. Readers will be cheering Frankie on as she deals with bullies and comes to understand herself a little better. A great story about growing up and learning who you are.



Ghostcloud
Michael Mann
Hodder

Deep under an alternative London, kidnapped children shovel coal in Battersea Power Station, working for the vicious Tabatha Margate. One of them is Luke, who longs for an Amber Ticket which will give him his freedom.

As a half-ghost, it is up to Luke to discover Tabatha Margate's evil plan, and why ghosts as well as humans are being kidnapped.

This inventive adventure presents a unique world where ghosts bond with water to become clouds, lose themselves in rivers, and read your thoughts through rain. It's a satisfying and often surprising fantasy world that children will no doubt enjoy coming back to again and again.



Good News
Rashmi Sirdeshpande, illustrated by Adam Hayes
Wren & Rook

From pandemics and environmental destruction to war and discrimination, world news can leave children feeling anxious and despondent. This superb, upbeat book redresses the balance, highlighting amazing news stories from around the world that will reassure and empower young people.

Bad news is not ignored, as it's important to understand what's wrong to be able to fix it. However, the overwhelming focus is on positive projects, innovations and research that address a range of world problems.

This marvellous book will help young people to better understand the world in which they live and motivate them to approach life with a positive, well-informed attitude.



How Not to be a Vampire Slayer
Katy Birchall
Scholastic

Skeleton Lodge is a rather wonky, dusty, old place right next to Skeleton Woods, which are said to be full of ghosts, ghouls and even vampires.

Maggie hopes desperately that her new house is haunted as she loves horror and scary stories. And, to her delight, she is soon being warned not to enter the woods as no human has ever come out alive...

Expect vampires, bats, swishing capes, an ancient castle, a greedy politician, and plenty of beetroot juice and tomato ketchup in a hilarious adventure that is more funny than frightening.



Julia and the Shark
Kiran Millwood Hargrave, illustrated by Tom de Freston
Orion

Julia and her parents are spending the summer at a remote lighthouse. Julia's dad is there for work, but her marine biologist mum wants to study the elusive Greenland shark.

Yet, as the summer goes on, Mum's obsession with the creature begins to pull the family apart.

Kiran Millwood Hargrave's captivating story of family, love and mental illness is complemented by unusual yellow and black, often abstract, illustrations by Tom de Freston.

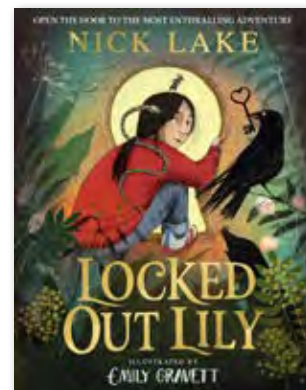
In turns beautiful, uplifting and immersive, this is a perfect read for fans of David Almond's *Skellig* or Patrick Ness's *A Monster Calls*.



Like a Charm
Elle McNicoll
Knights Of

When Ramya Knox's beloved grandpa dies, it prompts her to discover that extraordinary beings lurk behind the mundane day-to-day world we all see, disguised by something called Glamour. Now, it's up to Ramya to harness her own magic and continue Grandpa's magical mission, entering the dangerous world of the Hidden Folk, armed only with the knowledge that she must 'beware the Sirens'.

Ramya is a bright, determined, bold and hugely likeable character who happens to have dyspraxia. The city of Edinburgh provides the attractive contemporary backdrop with plenty of authentic detail that works brilliantly alongside the magical realism of the story.



Locked Out Lily
Nick Lake, illustrated by Emily Gravett
Simon & Schuster

Lily's parents have gone to the hospital to have a new baby and left her with her grandmother. Soon Lily realises her house has been taken over by things that look like her mum and dad – but definitely aren't.

With the help of a gang of talking animals, Lily tries to get back in her house and force the odd, coal-eyed parents out. Will Lily be able to reclaim her home before her parents come home with the new baby?

Perfect for fans of Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*, this is a heartfelt story about a child coping with serious illness and big change, told with lots of sensitivity.





Mia and the Lightcasters

Janelle McCurdy, illustrated by Ana Latese

Faber & Faber

12-year-old Mia lives in the city of Nubis, under the light of the forever moon and permanently starlit skies. She has always dreamed of being an umbra tamer, but a terrifying encounter with a red-eyed umbra out on the Nightmare Plains three years ago has frightened her to staying within the city walls.

Now Mia's parents have been captured and caged – and it's her job to find help in Stella, the City of Light. To do it, Mia must face the Nightmare Plains again and defy the Reaper King, all while taking care of her little brother Lucas. But first she must find and tame her umbra.

A thrilling and imaginative story, perfect for young gamers.



My Story: Princess Sophia Duleep Singh

Sufiya Ahmed

Scholastic

Princess Sophia Duleep Singh grew up in the Punjab. The daughter of a maharajah, she also fought for women's rights. Joining the Suffragette movement, she stood up for Indian soldiers, despite lifelong attempts by the British government to suppress her actions and words.

Princess Sophia Duleep Singh's fascinating life has been ignored until recently within the larger context of suffrage, which may have led many to believe that only white women in history cared about women's rights. Sufiya Ahmed's powerful and detailed biography puts right that unfair impression, and is an essential book for any school that intends to cover the history of women's rights.



Onyeka and the Academy of the Sun

Tolá Okogwu

Simon & Schuster

This is the first instalment of an unusual superhero series, with spectacular fight scenes and the timeless clash between good and evil.

Onyeka hates her wild mass of out-of-control hair. Until the day at the swimming pool when it's her hair that saves her and best friend Cheyenne from drowning.

Her mum is alarmed by what's happened, swiftly whisking Onyeka back to Nigeria where she is enrolled at the Academy of the Sun, a school for children with superpowers.

As Onyeka comes to terms with her newly discovered powers, she struggles to control them. Suddenly she has to do a lot of growing up in a short space of time when she finds herself in the middle of an epic battle that threatens her very existence...



Run Like a Girl: 50 Extraordinary and Inspiring Sportswomen

Danielle Brown, illustrated by Robin Shields

Button Books

The term 'run like a girl' is often perceived as a derogatory phrase, but in this wonderful anthology of real-life tales, it is used to celebrate the sporting achievements of 50 remarkable women from around the world. The collection includes a diverse selection of sports, from gymnastics and cricket, to skiing, martial arts and sailing.

The compilation of motivational stories is enhanced by stylish design and contemporary artwork. Ideal to empower girls with an interest in sport, it has even broader appeal and is sure to inspire any young person to follow their dreams, redefine stereotypes and never give up.



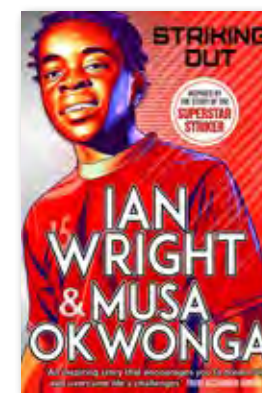
Saving Sorya: Chang and the Sun Bear

Trang Nguyen, illustrated by Jeet Zdung

Macmillan

When Chang finds out about poachers keeping wild bears in captivity, she's determined to do something about it. Joining the local Wildlife Rescue Centre, she meets a baby sun bear, Sorya, who's just been rescued. It's Chang's job to look after Sorya and prepare her for release back into the wild – something that takes a lot of time and patience!

This beautiful, heartfelt graphic novel is Chang's story of befriending Sorya and helping her get used to living in the forest. Based on the author's own experiences, it includes fascinating information on bears and conservation, while stunning illustrations bring Chang's world to life.



Striking Out

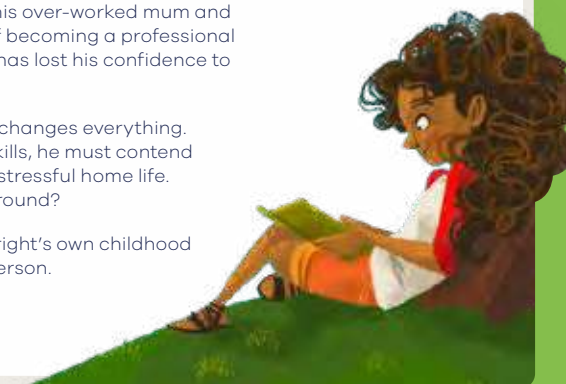
Ian Wright and Musa Okwonga

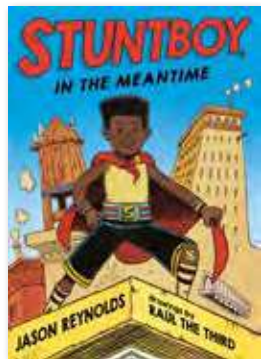
Scholastic

Jerome Jackson is a Black teenager who lives with his over-worked mum and volatile stepfather in their London flat. He dreams of becoming a professional footballer, but since the death of his father, Jerome has lost his confidence to try out for the major clubs.

A chance meeting with legendary striker Ian Wright changes everything. As Jerome concentrates on honing his footballing skills, he must contend with a new school, racist abuse and an increasingly stressful home life. With Ian's guidance, can Jerome turn his fortunes around?

This engaging and uplifting novel is based on Ian Wright's own childhood experiences and will appeal to any aspiring sportsperson.





Stuntboy, in the Meantime

Jason Reynolds, illustrated by Raúl the Third
Knights Of

In Portico Reeves's imagination, he's a superhero – Stunt Boy – and neighbour Herbert Singletary the Worst is his evil nemesis. But the biggest threat to Portico's world is in his very own home: his parents are being 'mean' to each other and he needs his friends to get him through.

Portico's story is fun, but it's also a serious child's-eye view of coping with the trauma of arguing parents. The book samples different media such as TV shows, graphic novels and films, mixing in voiceovers from the author, making this a dynamic read, perfect for kids who think they don't like books.



The Amazing Edie Eckhart

Rosie Jones
Hodder

Edie and her best friend Oscar are excited to be starting secondary school together, so are devastated when they are put into different classes. Edie throws herself into the school play, where she lands herself a leading role, and begins to develop some very special relationships of her own.

Edie has cerebral palsy, affecting her speech and meaning she sometimes falls over. However, this is just one aspect of Edie, which has helped her to develop determination, resilience and a wicked sense of humour.

The first in a series, this entertaining book sensitively explores the challenges and joys of growing up.



The Good Turn

Sharna Jackson
Puffin

Josephine Williams loves the internet. She is also desperate to explore the world outside of her cul-de-sac. So when she learns about the first Girl Scout Group for Black girls in America, Josephine is inspired to set up her own, enlisting the help of her closest friends.

As they set out to attempt to obtain their Camping Badge, the three friends soon find themselves confronted with a mystery that just needs to be solved. But can they succeed?



Illustration © Emily Rowland



The Lost Whale

Hannah Gold, illustrated by Levi Pinfold
HarperCollins

Feeling abandoned after his mother goes into a hospital for treatment for mental illness, Rio arrives in California to stay with a grandmother he has never met.

Watching the grey whales off the coast, Rio realises he has a special talent that allows him to hear them. When one of the whales, Whitebeak, goes missing, both adults and children join forces to find her. Coming together to rescue Whitebeak, families are healed.

With passionate and lyrical descriptions of the sea and whales, this novel takes us through Rio's emotional journey from a traumatised outsider to someone who knows his strengths and his place in the world.



The Offline Diaries

Yomi Adegoke and Elizabeth Uviebinene
HarperCollins

Ade is unhappy that she has been forced to move to a new town for her stepfather's job, leaving behind her dad and friends. When she meets Shanice, she's delighted that they have lots in common, including identical diaries, and they become instant friends.

However, their relationship is tested when two spiteful girls in their class befriend Ade but exclude Shanice.

The two main characters are immensely likeable and their voices feel authentic. Centred around some typical pre-teen issues, including friendship and bullying, the book also sensitively explores the topics of bereavement and parental separation.



The Ogress and the Orphans

Kelly Barnhill
Piccadilly

The villagers of Stone-in-the-Glen feel very fortunate to have a famous dragon-slayer as their mayor, even if he hasn't slain any dragons recently.

Yet, when terrible things start happening in the village and an orphan goes missing, the mayor persuades everyone that the kindly Ogress is to blame. Will Stone-in-the-Glen return to its former glory with the help of the Ogress, or will the villagers believe in a mayor who might not be all that he seems?

This charming story is both a brilliantly imagined fairy tale-style fantasy world as well as a very contemporary story about the misuse of power and the othering of wise outsiders.



The Secret Sunshine Project

Benjamin Dean, illustrated by Sandhya Prabhat

Simon & Schuster

When Bea's big sister, Riley, told Mum and Dad that she was gay, Dad took them all to a Pride march, where Riley felt like she belonged.

But that was when Dad was still with them. Now, the family can't afford to stay in their home and have no choice but to move to stay with Gran. While Bea makes new friends, Riley is missing Dad and Pride. So, Bea has a radical idea: if Riley can't go to Pride, Bea will bring Pride to her.

With a magnificent cast of diverse and inclusive characters, this is a story of pain, joy, loyalty, courage and love.



The Week at World's End

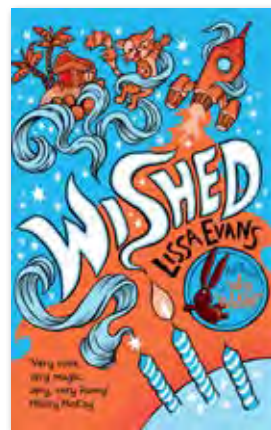
Emma Carroll

Faber & Faber

There's a girl hiding in Stevie's garden shed who claims she is on the run from people trying to poison her. And she needs help.

But as Anna's behaviour gets stranger, and Stevie discovers a shocking family secret, it almost seems as if Anna has been sent to her with a message from beyond the grave.

Set against the backdrop of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Stevie's story shows how global events can have consequences that trickle down to change individual lives. Stevie and Anna discover that if you have the courage to speak up when something is not right, you may find that other people feel the same way.



Wished

Lissa Evans

David Fickling Books

Half term is supposed to be fun, but Ed and his sister Roo are spending it with boring old Miss Filey while the builders are converting their house to accommodate Ed's wheelchair.

Despite the lack of WiFi, the prospects for their week improve dramatically when they discover an old pack of birthday candles that grant real wishes. But it turns out that wishing is a complicated business and you don't always get quite what you'd imagined...

Utterly bonkers and totally brilliant; searingly funny and acutely painful; completely fantastical yet strangely believable; this wild adventure will make you gasp, smile and maybe even shed a tear or two.



Illustration © Anjan Sarkar

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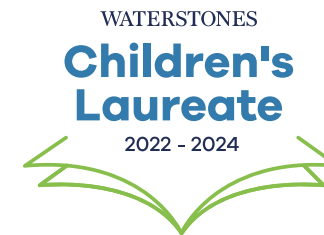
Our next virtual visit is with
Jeffrey Boakye on **November 4th.**

See you there!

www.booktrust.org.uk/represents



Illustration © Anjan Sarkar



Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022-2024 Joseph Coelho



We are very excited that Joseph Coelho is the brand-new Waterstones Children's Laureate for 2022-2024, and he has some **BIG** plans!

He is on a mission to celebrate the **power of poetry** in all its forms, breaking down the fear often associated with creating, performing and understanding poetry, by launching his **Poetry Prompts** videos on **National Poetry Day**.

Every Monday, a new video, lasting under 10 minutes, will go live on **BookTrust's website**, and we encourage schools to play this during registration time for students to create a poem based on the prompt given.

We encourage schools to play this during registration and for students to create a poem based on the prompt given. We have teamed up with **Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE)** to create free resources to guide you on how to embed the prompts into lesson planning.

We'd love to see your poems so please tweet us using the hashtag **#PoetryPrompts**.

You can also use the free beautiful poster we sent accompanying the **Great Books Guide**, designed by **Joelle Avelino**, to create a display board and pin your students' poems during the course of the school year.

To access Joseph's weekly videos and download the learning resources visit

www.booktrust.org.uk/childrenslaureate.

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