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BookTrust's Great Books Guide 2024-25

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Message from BookTrust's CEO Diana Gerald

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Welcome to BookTrust's Great Books Guide for 2024-25.

We create this guide for primary school teaching professionals because your aim to get all children reading for pleasure is also our aim as a charity. Our particular focus is on helping children from low-income or vulnerable family backgrounds reap the many benefits of reading, but we know that every child can gain from discovering the magic of reading. We also know that you are short on the time it takes to be across the large number of children's books published in the last year. So we've worked with teachers and book experts to create this guide of top picks for you, including links to the curriculum for every book.

Here are 100 books that will get children excited about reading. We've arranged them in age categories, but you know your pupils, so this is just a guide. We've also included some titles for more advanced readers which are still suitable for primary school children in terms of content. The selection is designed to ensure that there is diversity and representation in stories, characters and illustrations, as we know from research how vital this is in helping motivate children to read.

Do visit **booktrust.org.uk/primary** for useful articles and booklists, information on our BookTrust Represents free virtual author visits to help diversify your bookshelves, and information on the new Waterstones Children's Laureate, Frank Cottrell-Boyce. Don't miss the free virtual visit from him on **Thursday 21st November at 11am**. Sign up at booktrust.org.uk/childrenslaureate.

And please don't miss the poster included in this envelope. It celebrates teachers as brilliant reading role models. Please put it up in your staff room!

We believe the right book is always the one a child wants to read and hope this guide gives you lots of ideas for books that are silly, scary, informative, moving and everything in between. So enjoy. Follow us on social media @BookTrust and share your thoughts!

Happy reading!



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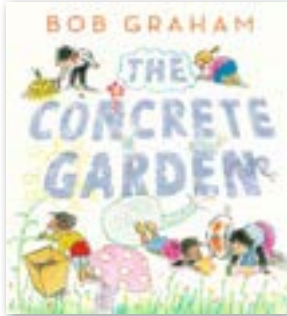


Our 'National Curriculum marker' indicates which subjects within the National Curriculum our book choices support.

Find out more

Visit **booktrust.org.uk** to find out how we can support you.

Illustration © Aysha Awwad



The Concrete Garden

Bob Graham

Walker Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Children spill out from the tower block, and Amanda brings chalks. She draws a green shape on the ground, then others add details. More children join in to create a beautiful picture, and the concrete garden brings colour to everyone's lives.

This simple picture book says a lot with very little text. There is an inclusive variety of people depicted, in a familiar urban setting. There are discussions to have about creativity, teamwork, and it should inspire young readers to draw.



Wanna See a Llama?

Simon Philip,
illustrated by
Ian Smith

Oxford University
Press



**Science: Features
of Animals**

Two children are out looking for llamas in a city. Every time they think they've found one, it turns out to be a different animal: a camel, a pangolin – even a giraffe! Meanwhile, in the background, an entire llama parade goes by without the children even realising.

Bridging the gap between entertainment and information, this book provides great opportunities for interaction as readers point out the hilarious, illustrated antics of the llamas while learning about the features of interesting, rare animals.





I Really, Really Don't Like Parties

Angie Morgan

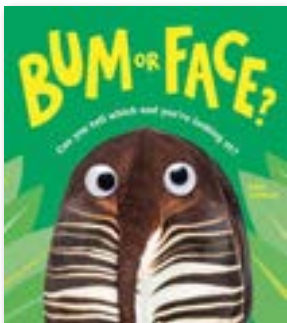
Otter-Barry Books



Reading for Pleasure

Dora likes to quietly observe her surroundings; she does not like parties. When she's invited to Rashid's birthday, she makes excuses to try and avoid attending. But, while there, she meets a kindred spirit in Tom and together they come to realise that parties are not so bad after all.

This charming book invites discussion and shares a positive message that it is OK to go your own way. It includes engaging, humorous elements and features relatable characters and situations.



Bum or Face?

Kari Lavelle

Sourcebooks



Science: Features of Animals

Could you tell the difference between a Cuyaba dwarf frog's face and its, ahem, bum? Kari Lavelle's unique non-fiction book explores this question and more – using humour as a gateway to introduce a variety of facts about some rare animals.

Featuring nature photography and bitesize chunks of information, this hilarious book contributes towards a scientific understanding of animals and their physiologies. A great choice for encouraging fans of toilet humour towards non-fiction texts.



The Best You

Nima Patel,
illustrated by Cally
Johnson-Isaacs

Little Tiger



PSHE: Growth Mindset

In this gentle and uplifting picture book, the common question, 'What do you want to be when you grow up?' is turned on its head. Instead, this book asks children who it is they would like to be. Different jobs are described by the important qualities and values they require; qualities like patience, empathy, bravery and vision.

With adorable illustrations and upbeat text from a former teacher, this is a celebration of attitude over attainment. It champions the importance of a growth mindset in a world where mistakes are an important part of learning.



Big Bad Dragon Club

Beach

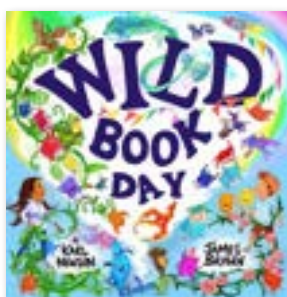
Simon & Schuster



**Reading for
Pleasure**

This is a very funny picture book about three wicked dragons: Scorch, Grub and Fang. They love to stomp around doing "bad dragon stuff", but, one by one, realise they can have even more fun being kind and creative.

The story is told in a super fun rhyming style and is fabulous to read out loud. There are all sorts of mini stories to spot in the illustrations, too. Featuring a gentle moral message, this would be a very entertaining choice for shared reading.



Wild Book Day

Karl Newson,
illustrated by
James Brown

Owlet Press



**Reading: Making
Connections**

It's Wild Book Day! The day the pictures escape from books. Dragons take flight with rockets and witches; and pirates go digging for treasure and riches. When you are looking, they're all nice and quiet, but when you're not there, it's a Wild Book Riot!

This is a fun-filled, glorious celebration of all that makes books interesting. The illustrations are packed with characters children will recognise and the idea that characters can leap off pages is enchanting. A great book for encouraging a love of reading in the Early Years.



Does a Bear Wash Its Hair?

Moira Butterfield,
illustrated by
Adam Ming

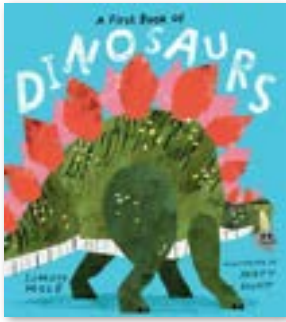
Bloomsbury
Children's Books



**Science: Features
of Animals**

Animals have routines, just like you, from cleaning their teeth to making friends, learning and even getting dressed. For instance, bears keep clean by licking their fur, while some crows even tidy up after they've eaten.

Written in rhyme, this brilliant non-fiction picture book is remarkably informative. Young children will enjoy comparing their own routines to that of the animals', and there are speech bubbles to encourage empathy. This would be useful to start conversations about self-care activities.



A First Book of Dinosaurs

Simon Mole,
illustrated by
Matt Hunt

Walker Books



Reading: Poetry

This fun and inventive collection of 30 roar-some, illustrated poems celebrates the weird and wonderful world of dinosaurs through playful language and brilliant metaphors. Young readers can learn loads from these exciting poems, from dinosaur eating habits to their modern-day descendants.

With striking graphic illustrations that bring a sense of fun and humour, this is a brilliant resource for Key Stage 1 teachers – pairing the ever-popular topic of dinosaurs with engaging poetry and rhyme.



Space Pirate Bears

Alastair Chisholm,
illustrated by
Jez Tuya

Walker Books

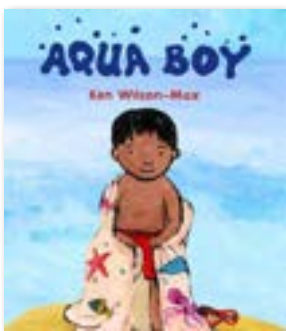


**Reading for
Pleasure**

Jamie and Abby's dad tells them a story about a villain who threatens to make the universe boring. Only the Space Pirate Bears can save the day!

Abby wants the bears to be unicorn doctors, but Jamie wants them to be secret agents. Can they come to an agreement to finish the story?

This is a funny and inventive picture book which celebrates the power of storytelling. Young readers will enjoy picking out all the details in the illustrations, and the story-within-a-story element is fun.



Aqua Boy

Ken Wilson-Max

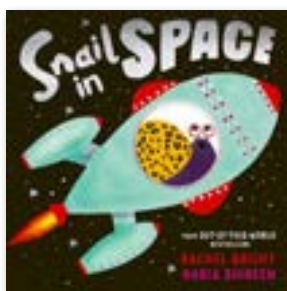
Otter-Barry Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Aaron loves the sea but is scared of going underwater. After a storm, Aaron is helping clear up all the plastic rubbish when he spots an octopus stranded on the sand. Can Aaron be brave like the octopus?

This gentle story has depths to it. It's about facing your fears when you're ready to do so; protecting the ocean; and a loving, encouraging family.



Snail in Space

Rachel Bright,
illustrated by
Nadia Shireen

Simon & Schuster



**Reading for
Pleasure**

When snails are born, they're told to live a simple life and not to dream big. But Gail is a snail who marches to a different beat. She has an out-of-this-world dream: to be the first snail in space.

From the creators of *Slug in Love*, this is a hilarious, warm story about the power of passion and persistence. Kids will love Gail's eccentric personality and her journey is captured beautifully by funny, rhyming text and punchy illustrations.



Gina Kaminski Saves the Wolf

Craig Barr-Green,
illustrated by
Francis Martin

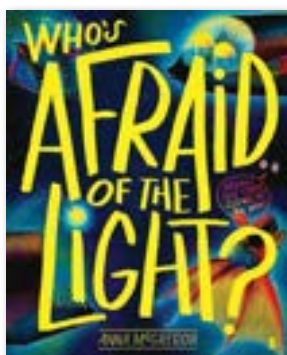
Little Tiger



**Reading:
Traditional Tales**

When Gina Kaminski reads Little Red Riding Hood, she's appalled at the plot. She decides to go into the story and help them out. It's hard work, but she manages to fix all the mistakes.

This is a wonderful book to share with children and would be great to read to a Reception class. Gina is neurodivergent, and she is confident and determined to challenge problems and identify solutions and coping strategies. This is an ideal book to empower all children to be the hero of their own story.



Who's Afraid of the Light?

Anna McGregor

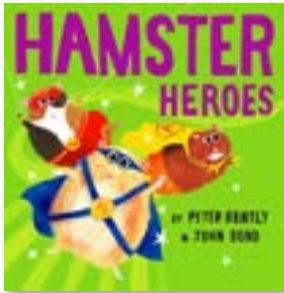
Scribble



**Science: Features
of Animals**

In the deepest, darkest depths of the ocean we meet Fergus, a deep-sea creature. But it's too dark to see what species Fergus is! Luckily, other deep-sea creatures swim past, with their bioluminescence lighting up the dark water.

This fiction/non-fiction mash-up contains a factual guide to the creatures of the deep ocean and features fantastic illustrations of mysterious fish. There's an enjoyable anarchic feel that will appeal to lots of children, and a big surprise reveal, too.



Hamster Heroes

Peter Bently,
illustrated by
John Bond

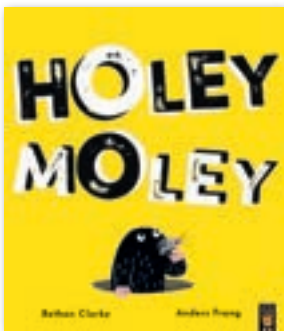
HarperCollins



Reading for
Pleasure

When you think of hamsters, you might picture furry pets who snooze in sawdust. Well, these cuddly critters have a secret life... meet the Hamster Heroes! They face many dangers (including aliens and giant chinchillas), but by combining their powers, they manage to save the day.

Children will love the energy and humour of this rhyming picture book, and recognisable superhero characters add interest. The illustrations are dynamic, and the text is rhythmic, funny and packed full of puns, making it an excellent choice to read aloud.



Holey Moley

Bethan Clarke,
illustrated by
Anders Frang

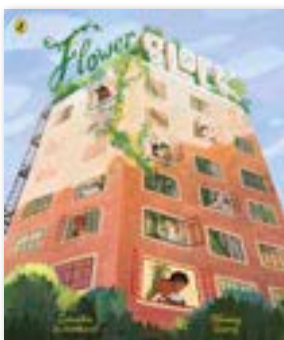
Little Tiger



Reading: Poetry
and Rhyme

Meet Mavis Mole and Gus the Goat. Gus is a big fan of rhyming and is curious about where Mavis lives. Well, as we all know, moles live in... holes! Or do they live in bowls? Or maybe even sausage rolls!?

A joyful, read-aloud book full of silly rhymes, wonderful wordplay and funny illustrations; this is a great story to introduce rhythm and rhyme in a light-hearted way – with plenty of opportunities for readers to join in and collaborate.



Flower Block

Lanisha Butterfield,
illustrated by
Hoang Giang

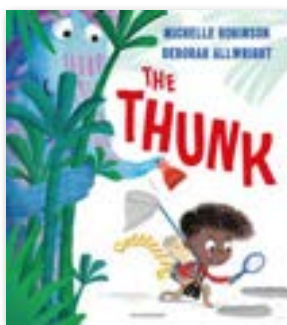
Puffin Books



Reading for
Pleasure

Jeremiah plants a sunflower seed in a pot and the next day, it's sprouted up, magically fast, and burst through the ceiling! Jeremiah and his brother follow it upwards, from flat to flat, neighbour to neighbour. But how will grumpy Mr Crisp at number 62 react?

This delightful book celebrates nature and community. The beautiful illustrations show the wonderful diversity of the people who live under the same roof. This might inspire little gardeners – you just need a plant pot.



The Thunk

Michelle Robinson,
illustrated by
Deborah Allwright

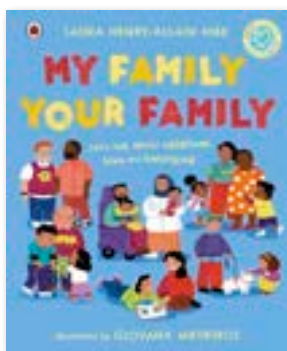
Bloomsbury
Children's Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

The Thunk is a beast, a bit like a skink, although more like a skunk on account of the stink! Young explorer Hector Voltaire is determined to find one – in fact, he finds 63,402, living in the forest. But Hector realises that if he shows off about this, these fabulous creatures will end up in captivity.

This is a fabulously funny picture book with glorious rhythm and rhyme, and the brilliant illustrations have lots of detail to pore over.



My Family, Your Family

Laura Henry-Allain,
illustrated by
Giovana Medeiros

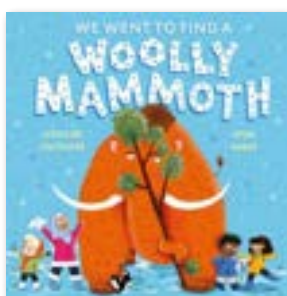
Ladybird Books



**PSHE: Similarities
and Differences**

This wonderful book explores many types of families children live in, including blended families, kinship families and foster families. It is so important for children to see their family and the families of their friends represented, which this book achieves beautifully.

It includes a clear glossary and notes for adults to use with the book, plus examples of questions to ask and an important guide to using inclusive language to describe different types of families.



We Went to Find a Woolly Mammoth

**Catherine
Cawthorne,**
illustrated by
Aysa Awwad

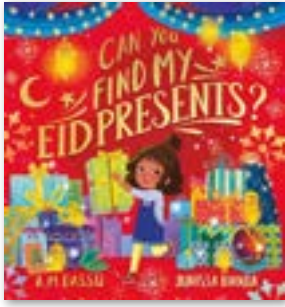
Hodder
Children's Books



**Science: Features
of Animals**

Join a group of children as they travel to the Ice Age to find a woolly mammoth. They have a checklist: tusks, thick shaggy hair – and being enormous! They discover other Ice Age animals, such as a sabre tooth cat and even a giant woolly rhino. But will they ever find a woolly mammoth?

There are details about each animal and a final spread compares our contemporary equivalents with their Ice Age ancestors. Charming and informative, with gorgeous illustrations.



Can You Find My Eid Presents?

A. M. Dassu,
illustrated by
Junissa Bianda

Scholastic



RE: Celebrations

It's the day before Eid, but there is a problem... Hana can't find the presents! She searches high and low to find them before the special celebrations begin. Can you help her save the day?

A delightful picture book that celebrates Eid and features a fun search-and-find element. The illustrations are warm and friendly, and there are some nice domestic details to spot, too, like the cat who tries to help Hana. A charming story to share.



This Rock is Mine

Kaye Umansky,
illustrated by
Alice McKinley

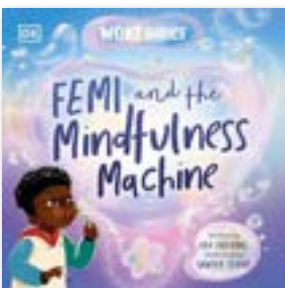
Alison Green Books



PSHE: Relationships

Two frogs argue over a small rock where they've both set up camp, each insisting, 'This rock is mine!' Then a common enemy arrives. It turns out it's a heron's rock! The frogs hurry to find a new spot and learn that they can live in harmony after all.

This is a great book to open conversations about sharing and compromise with little ones – and giggle about the silliness of bickering! The illustrations by Alice McKinley are funny and detailed, with loads to explore.



Femi and the Mindfulness Machine

Flo Fielding,
illustrated by
Sawyer Cloud

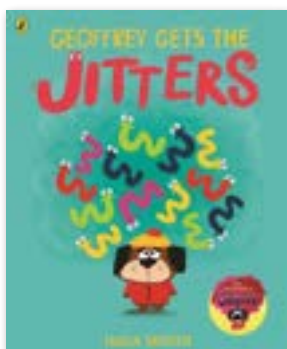
DK, with
Woke Babies



PSHE: Managing Emotions

Femi is making a wind machine for Science Day at school. When he blows on the sails, the blades spin round and lift a paper cup. But what if it doesn't work on the day? Luckily, Gran has a useful suggestion. She knows that the way to tackle any problem is to breathe slowly and stay calm.

This is a lovely picture book that would benefit children in their first few years of school. It might begin a conversation about techniques to calm anxiety.



Geoffrey Gets the Jitters

Nadia Shireen

Puffin Books



PSHE: Managing Emotions

Geoffrey has a peculiar flutter in his tummy, and a series of “what ifs” in his head. What if he lost Big Dave? What if dinosaurs with laser eyes stomp all over him? Geoffrey has the jitters and they’re out of control. How can he get rid of them?

Told with humour and great empathy, this picture book shows how worries can rapidly escalate. It provides tips on how to cope and would be useful for sparking conversations about feelings.



One Little Word

Joseph Coelho,
illustrated by
Alison Colpoys

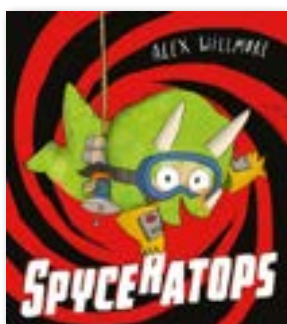
Frances Lincoln



PSHE: Relationships

In the school playground, a hairy blob-like creature suddenly appears – it’s called The Argument. The more the two friends yell or pull faces at each other, the bigger The Argument grows. There’s only one little word that can shrink The Argument and restore peace and fun to the playground. Will the two friends realise this?

This is a poignant picture book about the power of friendship and knowing when to say sorry. The text is complemented by brilliantly expressive illustrations.



Spyceratops

Alex Willmore

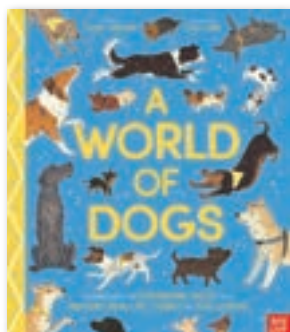
Farshore



Reading for Pleasure

Spyceratops is a feisty, top-secret spy, fully kitted out with all the latest gadgets and gizmos. Her latest mission is set to be her greatest challenge yet: to find out why her grandad has been behaving in a peculiar manner. A rip-roaring mission ensues as she tracks him through town.

A funny and action-packed read that adults and children alike will enjoy. Brilliant, bold illustrations and a cast of charming prehistoric characters provide plenty of hidden detail, so be sure to keep your eyes peeled for clues!



A World of Dogs

Carlie Sorosiak,
illustrated by
Luisa Uribe

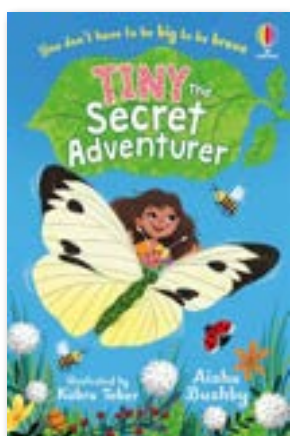
Nosy Crow



**Reading for
Information**

This book is a treasure trove for any child who loves or is interested in dogs and animals. It's a celebration of fascinating facts and real-life stories of amazing dogs, and the illustrations by Luisa Uribe are full of fun and heart – from the chihuahua in a teacup to the huge Great Dane who ate 26 sofas!

A truly brilliant example of non-fiction, this book is fascinating enough to read cover to cover. There's a helpful glossary and index, which will make this book one to return to.



Tiny the Secret Adventurer

Aisha Bushby,
illustrated by
Kübra Teber

Usborne



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Among the petals of a sunflower in Oakwood School lives Tiny, a miniature girl with a big heart. She sets off in search of friendship and adventure, only to encounter some rather unfriendly animals. Not daunted, she chooses to save Frog when he is in danger, demonstrating her courage and compassion.

This gentle, inclusive tale explores the effects of bullying and will help young readers to develop empathy. The short chapters provide natural breaks as readers build up their stamina, while plenty of black-and-white illustrations throughout add visual interest.





**Croaky:
Search for the
Sasquatch**

Matty Long

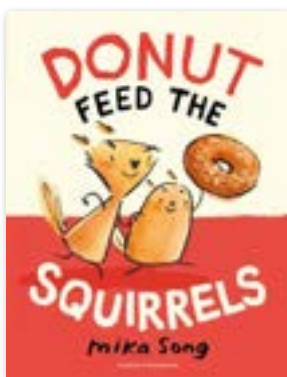
Oxford University
Press



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Croaky Hopper is a frog desperate for adventure, but sometimes he leaps before he thinks, and things go a bit wrong. Along with his new friends at Woggle Scouts, he hatches a plan – to camp out and discover the elusive Sasquatch! But can an accident-prone frog pull off such a perilous quest?

This charming chapter book is full of humour and action. The chapters are short, and the font is large, making it accessible to newly confident readers. Long's illustrations are energetic and funny and add an appealing element of physical humour to the book.



**Donut Feed
the Squirrels**

Mika Song

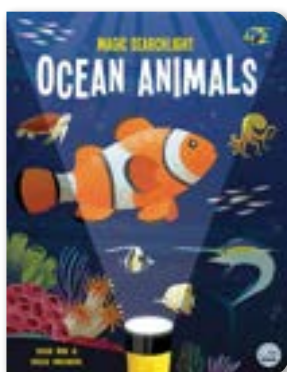
Pushkin Children's
Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Hungry squirrels Norma and Belly hatch a plan to get past a donut seller and inside his van to help themselves! Things are going well until the donut machine explodes, and they are caught cake-handed. Fortunately, they escape – leaving the donut seller with a mess to clear up and an inspiration for a new donut flavour...

This simple graphic novel by Mika Song is a sweet and amusing tale of two naughty squirrels. It features large panels and brief text, making it suitable for younger primary readers.



**Seek and Find:
Ocean Animals**

Susie Rae, illustrated
by Diego Vaisberg

Gemini



**Science: Features
of Animals**

Oceans are home to 94% of life on Earth. From the vibrancy of coral reefs to the depths of the ocean floor, you will find animals flourishing. This interactive book explores some of these amazing creatures and how they have adapted to their habitats.

With its awesome "magic searchlight", this interactive book encourages children to feel involved in the reading process. There are flaps to lift, fun facts to read and lots of details to spot in the bright, colourful illustrations. The information is displayed in an accessible way and is well-pitched for its target audience.



Our Earth is a Poem: Poetry About Nature

Various poets,
illustrated by
Annalise Barber;
Mariana Roldán;
Masha Manapov;
Nabila Adani

Little Tiger

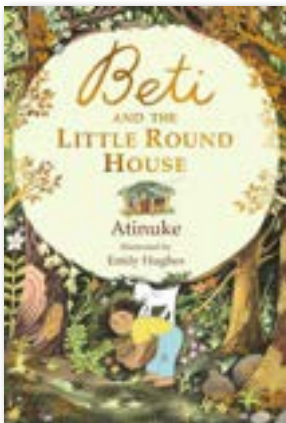


**Science:
Environment**

This stunning collection of 20 poems by 20 different poets explores and celebrates nature, from forests and rivers to gorillas, mollusc shells and mud.

There are dreamy, beautiful poems, funny and silly poems, and everything in between – including a variety of poetic forms. They pose questions that will make the reader consider nature differently and truly engage with the words on the page.

Each poem in this picture book format anthology is illustrated beautifully in full colour.



Beti and the Little Round House

Atinuke, illustrated
by Emily Hughes

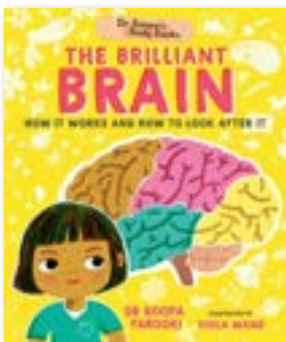
Walker Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

In a little round house in the green woods under the mountains, Beti lives with her Mam, Dad and baby brother Jac. Accompanied by a mischievous baby goat, the curious and determined Beti embarks on four stand-alone, mini adventures – one for each season.

Atinuke conjures an enchanting world with her storytelling and the incredible illustrations create a beautiful backdrop that immerses the reader in the woodland setting. Gentle themes of resilience and bravery are explored, and this would also be an excellent book to share over a few sessions with a class.



Dr Roopa's Body Books: The Brilliant Brain

Dr Roopa Farooki,
illustrated by
Viola Wang

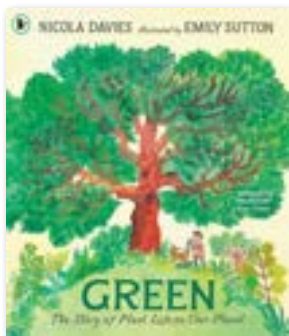
Walker Books



Science: Humans

Every second of the day, something is happening in your body – and your brain is controlling it all. It makes you you! This book introduces the basics of the brain and Dr Roopa Farooki explains its many functions in a clear, child-friendly way.

The illustrations are bright and full of imaginative detail to keep children turning the pages, and there are lots of interactive elements. This innovative non-fiction book is ideal for curious young readers and Reception classrooms.



Green: The Story of Plant Life on Our Planet

Nicola Davies,
illustrated by
Emily Sutton

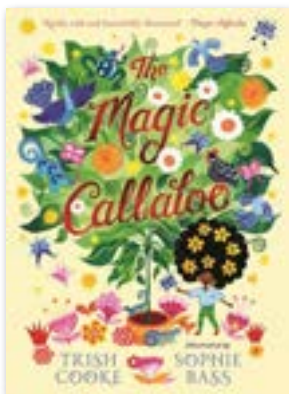
Walker Books



**Science:
Environment**

This is a lovely picture book about plants, how they work and how they evolved. Featuring gorgeous, detailed illustrations by Emily Sutton, it takes the reader from the first life on Earth right through to modern-day environmental concerns.

This non-fiction text has the warmth and feel of a story, making it particularly well-suited to younger readers with an interest in biology and nature. It's also a book with a powerful message for our times: Green really is the most important colour in the world.



The Magic Callaloo

Trish Cooke,
illustrated by
Sophie Bass

Walker Books

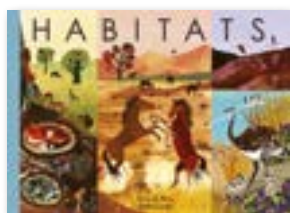


**Reading for
Pleasure**

A special callaloo plant grows in the middle of a village, its leaves granting wishes when eaten. Missus uses this magic to wish for a baby girl called Lou. But Lou is stolen away by a wicked man and must find her way home.

Trish Cooke's symbolic story highlights a crucial part of Black history, inspired by the real stories of Africans who escaped their enslavers. Sophie Bass's vibrant illustrations fill the pages with sunlight, nature and mystery, complementing Cooke's writing with beauty and magic.





Habitats

Hannah Pang,
illustrated by
Isobel Lundie

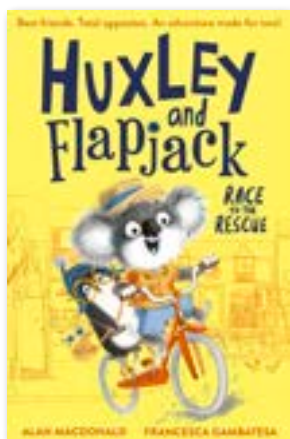
Little Tiger



Science:
Habitats

Nature is full of a variety of natural habitats – places where plants and animals coexist. This non-fiction book explores the sub-sections and layers that make habitats uniquely suited to different forms of life.

This is a charming book with a good text-to-picture ratio, suitable for mid-primary readers. The structured paper craft demonstrates the concept of layers to the reader in an interactive way, and its colourful, eye-catching collage-style illustrations show delightful details.



Huxley and Flapjack Race to the Rescue

Alan MacDonald,
illustrated by
Francesca Gambatesa

Little Tiger



Reading for
Pleasure

Huxley the koala and Flapjack the penguin are best friends. Huxley is energetic and eager, while Flapjack is a little more cautious. When Huxley is mistaken for a robber in a department store, they need to think hard and come up with a plan to catch the real thief.

This charming young chapter book is full of energy and features fabulous colour illustrations on every page. Huxley's impulsiveness leads to lots of funny situations, and this book would appeal to young readers who enjoy animal stories that aren't too cutesy.



I'm Going to be a Princess

Stephanie Taylor,
illustrated by
Jade Orlando

Nosy Crow



Reading for
Pleasure

When Maya announces that she wants to be a princess, her mum encourages her to consider other careers – exemplified by the real stories of high-achieving Black women. Maya remains resolute, but, to her mum's surprise, it is not the stereotypical "fairy tale" princess who has inspired her daughter.

This joyous picture book is a beautifully illustrated, funny story. It covers a range of careers in a child-friendly way and is an empowering celebration of the lives of amazing Black women. It includes a surprise ending bound to leave readers with a smile on their faces.



Destiny Ink: Sleepover Surprise

Adeola Sokunbi

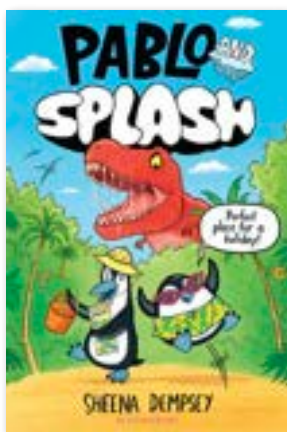
Nosy Crow



Reading for Pleasure

Destiny is invited to a sleepover, and she is excited but a little nervous – what if there are monsters hiding in the dark? One day, she meets a three-eyed monster called Trog and they have their own sleepover. Together, they overcome their anxieties and have a brilliant time.

This is a warm chapter book about friendship, anxiety and coping with new experiences. Destiny is relatable, and her everyday life is represented well. The illustrations and humour make it an engaging choice for early independent readers.



Pablo and Splash

Sheena Dempsey

Bloomsbury Children's Books

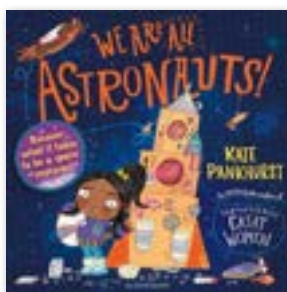


Reading for Pleasure

Penguin pals Pablo and Splash are craving a holiday, but when they fall into a time machine, they end up lost in the Cretaceous period avoiding hungry dinosaurs!

Sheena Dempsey's debut graphic novel is a lot of fun. The two penguins have contrasting personalities, so their dialogue is hilarious and sharp.

This is a pacey read with short chapters, funny pictures, wordplay and quirky characters. Perfect for fans of action, comedy and fast-paced graphic novels.



We Are All Astronauts!

Kate Pankhurst

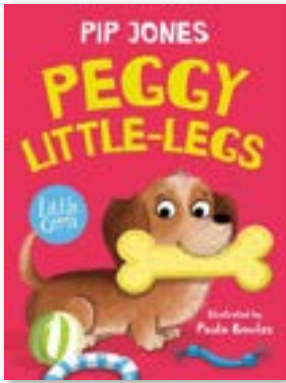
Bloomsbury Children's Books



Science: Space

Luna Scope is on a mission to be an astronaut, but first she needs to learn about a few things. Luckily, her granny is on hand to guide her through the science and, just as importantly, teach her about pioneering women in space exploration.

This picture book is packed with information that will inspire any budding astronaut. Kate Pankhurst brilliantly balances fascinating facts with Luna's overarching story and amazing illustrations. This is inspiring STEM content for children.



Peggy Little-Legs

Pip Jones,
illustrated by
Paula Bowles

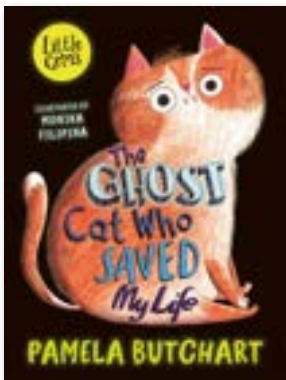
Barrington Stoke



**Reading for
Pleasure**

It's Puppy School Adventure Weekend and Peggy the sausage dog is very excited. But then she finds out she's too small and her legs are too short to compete with the other dogs in races and challenges. She can see all her friends are brilliant at something but what is she best at? Then an unexpected challenge gives Peggy the chance to shine!

A perfect chapter book for new readers, printed in dyslexic-friendly font and paper type. It's an inspirational tale with a moral that everyone has their talents and strengths, even though some are less obvious than others and take a while to emerge.



The Ghost Cat Who Saved my Life

Pamela Butchart,
illustrated by
Monika Filipina

Barrington Stoke



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Sav is convinced she has heard a ghost cat in an upstairs flat. With her friend Liam, she hatches a plan to capture it and keep it as a pet. As they search, the creature streaks past them, leaving Sav devastated. Liam searches for the elusive creature, and when he runs into trouble, an unexpected hero saves the day!

This engaging mystery is ideal for reluctant and dyslexic readers. Generously illustrated throughout, the book also features a selection of fun cat facts and a spot-the-difference game for further entertainment.





Big Bad Wolf Investigates: Fairy Tales

Catherine Cawthorne, illustrated by Sara Ogilvie

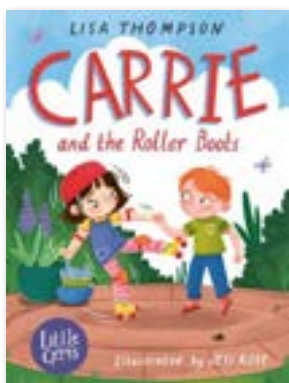
Bloomsbury Children's Books



Thinking Scientifically

Could a princess really feel a pea through all those mattresses? Would a gingerbread house stay up in the rain? Fear not – the Big Bad Wolf is here to guide you through the science behind fairy tales in this unusual and quirky picture book.

The familiarity of the storylines is appealing, and the STEM elements are perfectly pitched, along with fun activities. Sara Ogilvie's energetic illustrations have lots of detail to spot, and young children will enjoy this twist on classic fairy tales with a light scientific touch.



Carrie and the Roller Boots

Lisa Thompson, illustrated by Jess Rose

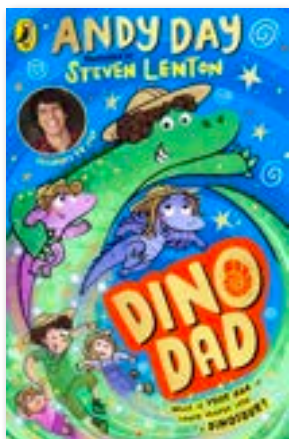
Barrington Stoke



PSHE: Managing Emotions

While Sidney is practising for a tap-dancing performance, his friend Carrie decides she will perform alongside him on roller-skates – despite never having skated before! Carrie is frustrated by her inability to instantly master her new hobby and, as the day of the performance approaches, she becomes increasingly anxious.

This delightful book highlights the importance of supportive friendships and sensitively explores feelings of frustration and apprehension. Colourful illustrations accompany the gentle tale, which is ideal for dyslexic or reluctant readers.



Dino Dad

Andy Day, illustrated by Steven Lenton

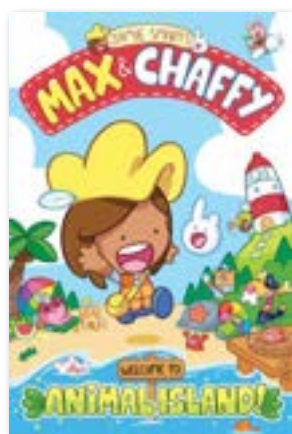
Puffin Books



Reading for Pleasure

Ruby and her little sister love hanging out with their dinosaur expert dad. One day, Little Indie runs into Dad's study, and suddenly there's a flash of light. Little Indie has vanished! Ruby and her dad follow her – to Dinotropolis, a world of talking dinosaurs! But can they find Little Indie?

The reader is introduced to many different dinosaurs and there are dino facts at the end. The cute illustrations are full of energy, adding to the gentle humour throughout.



Max & Chaffy: Welcome to Animal Island!

Jamie Smart

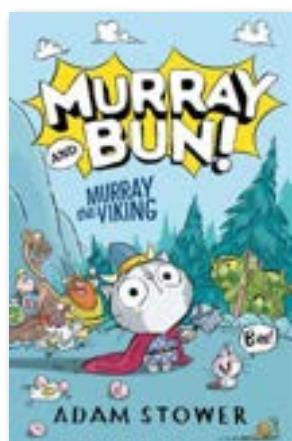
David Fickling
Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Max has just moved to Animal Island and, with the help of the reader, must help their new friend Chaffy find things and return them to their rightful place. Working together, can they find where Chaffy belongs?

This is the delightful first in a series of graphic novels by Jamie Smart and lots of thought has gone into making it as appealing as possible to younger children. The short text is perfectly pitched, the font is plain, readers are encouraged to join in, and the artwork is bright and full of energy.



Murray and Bun: Murray the Viking

Adam Stower

HarperCollins



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Murray the cat lives with Fumblethumb, an incompetent wizard who accidentally turns Murray's delicious bun into a sticky, bouncing bunny! Via an enchanted cat flap, the pair are transported to Viking times where they must rescue Eggrik the Viking from some terrible trolls!

With contrasting personalities and a touching friendship, Murray and Bun are a delightful duo. The story is illustrated with witty black-and-white artwork and there are giggles on every page. This comic caper is the first instalment in an exciting new series for young, independent readers.



The Girl Who Became a Fish

Polly Ho-Yen,
illustrated by
Sojung Kim-
McCarthy

Knights Of

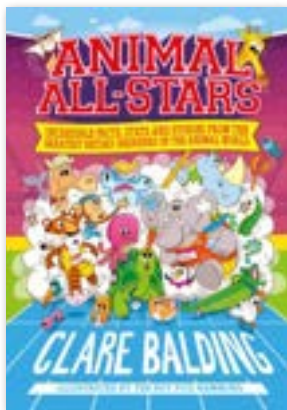


PSHE: Feelings

Ita hasn't felt settled since moving to a new house and different school. She has no friends yet, the house doesn't feel like home and her family is drifting apart.

But, when she ventures to put her hands beneath the surface of a nearby river, she discovers something unexpected and magical that changes everything.

Ho-Yen's writing is warm and well pitched, and there are lots of beautiful black-and-white illustrations which add to the story. Ita's experience reflects the challenging feelings that can be experienced by children when facing changes of circumstance. A heart-warming tale of triumph over adversity for newly confident readers.



Animal All-Stars: Incredible Facts, Stats and Stories from the Greatest Record-Breakers in the Animal World

Clare Balding,
illustrated by The
Boy Fitz Hammond

Wren & Rook



Science: Features of Animals

Get ready, set, go! For a stupendous set of eight edge-of-your-seat sporting events featuring all manner of brilliantly fast, strong and agile animals.

This funny, cartoon-style illustrated book is a must for animal and sports fans, using the format of an interspecies sports competition for readers to learn more about animals' features. It contains lots of other types of information too, with quizzes and Balding's Bonus Brainteasers. The combined allure of sports and animals will ensure that children really engage with this book.



Astrid and the Space Cadets: Attack of the Snailiens!

Alex T. Smith

Macmillan
Children's Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

By day, Astrid is a regular six-year-old, but each night, she transforms into a Space Cadet, an intergalactic hero who zooms across the universe. Astrid blasts off to join her fellow Cadets as they tackle an infestation of Giant Snailiens on the leafy planet Hortensis. Will they be able to stop the greedy snails before they get to the prize vegetables?

This fast-paced, funny cosmic adventure is perfect for newly confident, independent readers. The magnificent black-and-white illustrations steal the show and are packed full of quirky, imaginative detail and oodles of personality.



Dungeon Runners: Hero Trial

Kieran Larwood,
illustrated by Joe
Todd-Stanton

Nosy Crow



**Reading for
Pleasure**

The season finale of the Dungeon Runners competition is underway, and a new, inexperienced team has just entered. Kit the gnorf (half gnome, half dwarf), a vegan vampire, a trainee mage and a tiny green 'gobrot', team up to battle their way to victory through perilous, monster-filled challenges.

Presented in large, clear font and with black-and-white illustrations throughout, this funny, exciting, imaginative story is a great introduction to fantasy fiction for developing independent readers. It shows how teamwork, determination and kindness can be more effective than brute force.



Hercules: The Diary of a (Sort Of) Hero

Tom Vaughan,
illustrated by
David O'Connell

Scholastic



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Hercules Braver is struggling to fit in at his new secondary school, but when his famous, god-like Greek father turns up, his popularity soars. His newfound status brings issues of its own however, and Hercules must decide which friendships are truly important.

With a generous smattering of Greek mythology, this laugh-out-loud tale explores the nature of friendship, love and loyalty with a perfect mix of humour and tenderness. Written as a series of diary entries, it is illustrated throughout with amusing line drawings.





Yomi and the Fury of Ninki Nanka

Davina Tijani,
illustrated by Adam
Douglas-Bagley

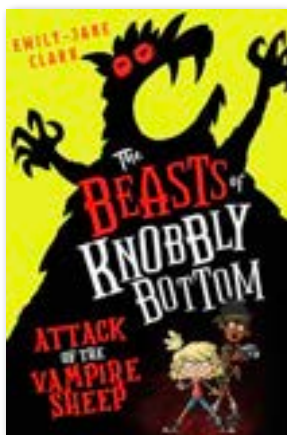
Little Tiger



**Reading: Stories
from Other Cultures**

Yomi and her brother Kay are spending the summer with their dragon researcher uncle. While in Gambia, she encounters Ninki Nanka the water dragon, and becomes embroiled in a battle against the Beast Hunters who aim to destroy all the world's dragons.

This is an energetic, fast-paced read that will keep children engrossed. It provides a fabulous introduction to the rich folklore and mythology of The Gambia. This is the first in the Nkara Chronicles series.



The Beasts of Knobbly Bottom: Attack of the Vampire Sheep

Emily-Jane Clark,
illustrated by
Jeff Crowther

Scholastic



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Nine-year-old Maggie is furious about moving from Leicester to the tiny village of Knobbly Bottom. Her distrust of the countryside is validated when, soon after arriving, she encounters a flock of talking vampire sheep who are determined to take over the world... Small but mighty Maggie must team up with other likeable characters to save the day.

With a fast-paced plot, off-the-wall humour and dynamic black-and-white illustrations, this hilarious chapter book is the first in a fabulously funny series that is perfect for junior readers.



Keisha Jones Takes on the World

Natalie Denny,
illustrated by
Chanté Timothy

Little Tiger



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Keisha Jones is brimming with energy and ideas. Inspired by her activist great aunt, she creates the Bee Squad with her friends – a team dedicated to tackling social injustice. When they decide to fight for bunny rights, their actions lead to some unexpected outcomes...

This is the first book in a funny new series. Themes of activism and making things right are handled lightly, and there's humour throughout. The lively dialogue brings the characters to life, as do the fantastic illustrations.



Marnie Midnight and the Moon Mystery

Laura Ellen Anderson

Farshore



Reading for
Pleasure

Young moth Marnie Midnight has just enrolled at Minibeast Academy where she is keen to learn everything she can about the moon. But, when she uncovers a dastardly plot, she must embark on a perilous quest with her new friends Floyd the bee and an intimidating ant named Star.

This imaginative, bug-sized world is entirely believable, and the gothic-style artwork really steals the show. The miniature characters have enormous personalities, while the setting is brought to life with delightful, quirky details and masses of humour.



Monkey King and the World of Myths: The Monster and the Maze

Maple Lam

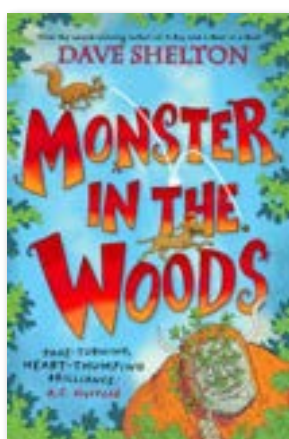
Hodder Children's Books



History: Ancient
Civilisations

An evil darkness, the Yao-Qi, threatens to plunge humanity into darkness and only the mischievous Monkey King Sun Wukong can save the world! He must brave many challenges in this action-packed graphic novel which weaves together elements of Chinese and Greek mythology.

Featuring great humour, dynamic action and engaging storylines, this is a fast-paced book that will maintain the reader's interest throughout. An excellent choice to spark children's interest in mythology that would pair well with school topics on ancient civilisations.



Monster in the Woods

Dave Shelton

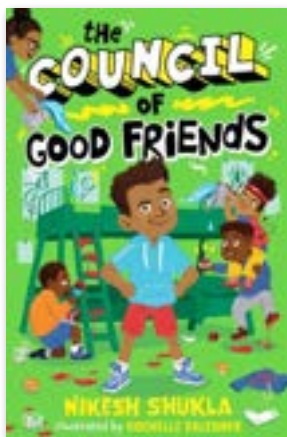
David Fickling Books



Reading for
Pleasure

After some strange events in the town, Frith sets out on an eventful journey in search of a monster that may or may not be lurking in the woods. She has many weird and wonderful adventures along the way, but what she finds is more surprising than anyone could have expected.

This generously illustrated book is accessible to younger readers but has a plot and writing that could be enjoyed across Key Stage 2. A gripping story with broad appeal and a subtle message about not judging by appearances.



The Council of Good Friends

Nikesh Shukla,
illustrated by
Rochelle Falconer

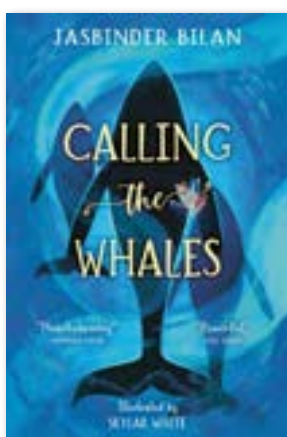
Knights Of



PSHE: Relationships

Vinay and his best friends are inseparable. They are "his crew, his council", and can be relied on in any situation. But when Vinay's cousin comes to stay, he disrupts their tight-knit group. After a mean prank goes wrong, the boys realise that empathy and understanding can resolve their differences.

In this funny story, the friends' interactions feel real, with modern slang and age-appropriate references. The friends come from families who have immigrated to the UK and aspects of their everyday culture are celebrated. A perfect choice for reluctant readers.



Calling the Whales

Jasbinder Bilan,
illustrated by
Skylar White

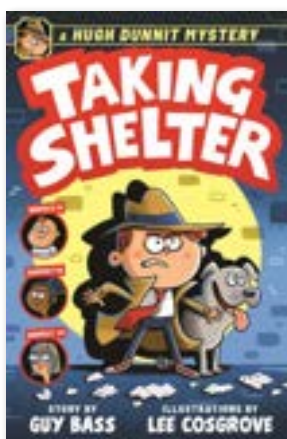
Barrington Stoke



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Best friends Tulsi and Satchen find a stranded humpback whale in the sea close to their Scottish island home. Putting themselves in danger, they struggle to save the majestic creature and battle against the harsh elements of the sea.

As a Barrington Stoke book, this is perfect for dyslexic readers and features accessible fonts, spacing and layouts. As well as a riveting plot, this story contains a strong environmental message about the threats to marine wildlife from overfishing.



Taking Shelter: A Hugh Dunit Mystery

Guy Bass,
illustrated by
Lee Cosgrove

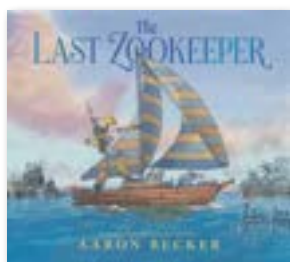
Andersen Press



**Reading for
Pleasure**

When wannabe detective Hugh Dunit rescues an unruly dog from a bus shelter, he knows he's found his new best friend. But, when his maths homework is torn to shreds, his parents declare that she must go, and Hugh begins an investigation to clear her name.

This fabulously funny tale is ideal for newly confident, independent readers. The chapters are short, providing natural reading breaks, while hilarious black-and-white illustrations combine with dynamic comic strip artwork to provide a visual narrative to accompany the humorous text.



The Last Zookeeper

Aaron Becker

Walker Books



Reading:
Drawing Inferences

In a dystopian world, a robot cares for the few remaining animals left stranded in a flooded zoo. The robot builds an ark to sail them away from the rising tide, but they are shipwrecked. When another robot appears, the animals have a chance of salvation.

This wordless book conveys an emotive and compelling story through intricate, beautiful illustration. It introduces themes of artificial intelligence, morality and environmental damage and parallels the story of Noah's ark in a modernised retelling.



Time Travellers: Adventure Calling

Sufiya Ahmed,
illustrated by
Alessia Trunfio

Little Tiger



History:
British History

Sahana, Ayaan and Mia are transported back to 1911 while on a trip to Parliament. There, they embark on a high-speed adventure and meet fascinating women from the suffragist movement, including women of colour who played important roles in British history.

This is a fabulous, accessible introduction to political history for 8-10 year olds and it raises important questions about underrepresented voices from the past. It would be a great book to read in primary classes as part of a contemporary British history lesson.



Tangled Tales: Bites, Camera, Action!/Movies, Magic, Mayhem!

Jenny Moore,
illustrated by
Sarah Horne

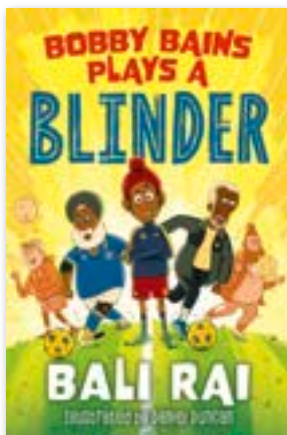
Maverick
Publishing



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Two interlinked stories in one – flip the book to read the second one. Will you choose to read about Derek the vampire on the run from Puffy the Vampire Slayer? Or Ruby the fairy who's been banned from using magic?

Each funny story is only 64 pages long and this, along with the brilliant illustrations throughout, will be very appealing to young readers. Children will easily gain confidence from finishing these books. There are more in the series to enjoy, too.



**Bobby Bains
Plays a Blinder**

Bali Rai, illustrated
by Daniel Duncan

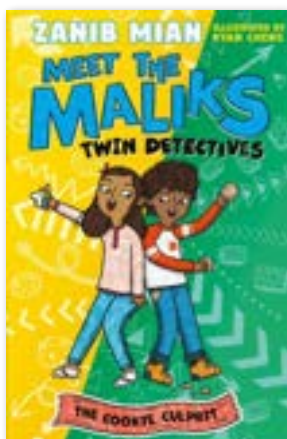
Barrington Stoke



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Bobby loves football and so does Nana-ji, his grandad. One day, Bobby is helping his mum at the community food bank, and chats to a lonely old man. So Bobby hatches a plan to get the two men to become friends – and it involves a strange kind of football!

This dyslexia-friendly story of kindness and community is a delight. It shows how helping others is part of Bobby's Sikhism, and features heartwarming family moments with his mother and his Nana-ji.



**Meet the Maliks,
Twin Detectives:
The Cookie
Culprit**

Zanib Mian,
illustrated by
Kyan Cheng

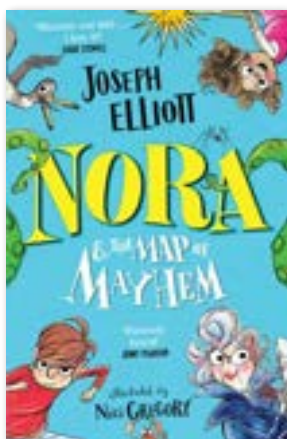
Hodder Children's
Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Maysa and Musa are twins but they're total opposites. Maysa is often in trouble, whereas Musa is calm and unflappable. But, when the cookies they've made for a competition at their mosque are destroyed, the twins must team up to find the culprit.

This is the first in another funny series from the author of *Planet Omar*. This book portrays family life with wit and empathy, and the short chapters and illustrations make it accessible. Young readers will find the moral dilemmas relatable and there are laugh-out-loud moments to keep them hooked.



**Nora and the
Map of Mayhem**

Joseph Elliott,
illustrated by
Nici Gregory

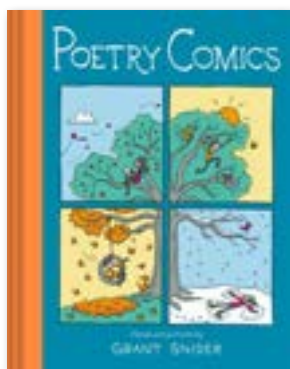
Piccadilly Press



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Nora looks like a normal old lady. But she isn't, as her great-grandchildren discover when a fierce villain sends her threatening notes. Nora used to be a Monster Hunter! Nora, Atticus and Autumn are soon catapulted into a rip-roaring adventure involving pirates, a large sea creature and a wonky goose.

The irrepressible Nora tells the story in her uniquely hilarious way. This would be excellent to read aloud, as there are lots of asides to the reader.



Poetry Comics

Grant Snider

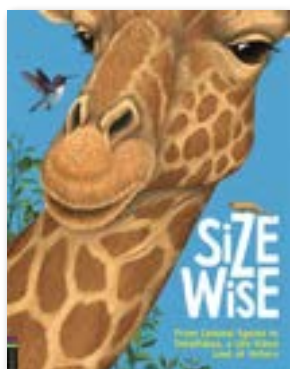
Chronicle Books



Reading: Poetry

Grant Snider uses a combination of charming, comic-style illustrations and meditative poetry to take readers on a pensive journey through the four seasons.

The poetry and illustrations are minimal but expressive and the well-known panel format will encourage readers who might not normally choose poetry. Some of the poems directly encourage readers to have a go at writing their own poetry, making it a great choice for introducing poetry in an engaging way in classroom settings.



Size Wise

Camilla de la Bedoyere,
illustrated by
Vasilisa Romanenko

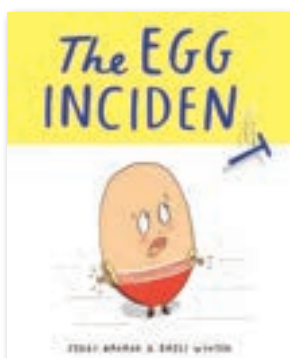
Buster Books



Science: Features
of Animals

This fascinating book zooms in on size, revealing all kinds of interesting facts about why things are the size they are, giving young readers a sense of scale. From the colossal squid to a grain of sand, each double page spread addresses a different living being or natural habitat with bitesize chunks of information and fun facts.

The realistic illustrations are depicted at life size with measurements, and curious readers will look in awe at the impressive scale of the natural wonders. An engaging book which is perfect for visual learners especially.



The Egg Incident

Ziggy Hanaor,
illustrated by
Daisy Wynter

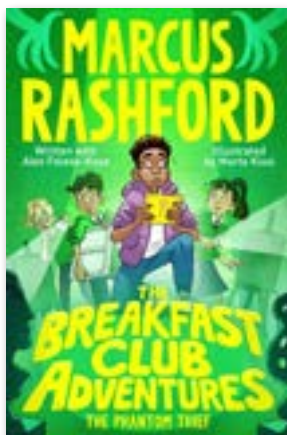
Cicada Books



Reading for
Pleasure

Humphrey the egg has a list of rules to follow – no running, no jumping and NO sitting on walls! He knows what happened to his uncle Humpty. However, when he finds himself locked in a park with his pal PJ, he must escape by climbing over a wall...

This is a funny graphic novel that will have children giggling out loud with many details to spot and some eggcellent puns! The font is in upper and lower case which aids legibility, and this would be a delight to share one-on-one.



The Breakfast Club Adventures: The Phantom Thief

Marcus Rashford
with Alex
Falase-Koya,
illustrated by
Marta Kissi

Macmillan
Children's Books

Marcus, Asim, Stacey and Lise are the Breakfast Club Investigators. They are spurred into action when a shadowy figure stalks the school's clubs, stealing prized items. It's a real puzzle. Can they unmask the culprit before the art exhibition?

With lots of energetic illustrations and short, pacy chapters, this mystery will appeal to a wide range of readers. It's set in a school environment, with teamwork and friendship at its core, and the dynamic between the Investigators is realistic, with plenty of humorous dialogue.



Reading for Pleasure



The World's First Rollercoaster and Other Amazing Inventions

Mike Barfield,
illustrated by
Franziska
Höllbacher

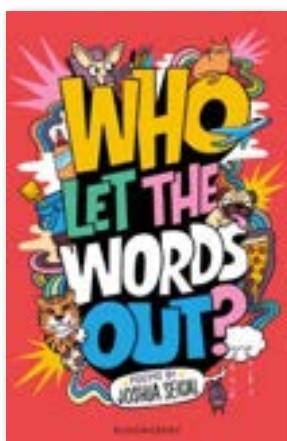
Templar Books

Step into Mike Barfield's crazy world to find out the stories behind some of humanity's most ground-breaking inventions. This bright and engaging non-fiction text uses a comic strip format, and Höllbacher's comedic illustrations make it feel more like a rollercoaster ride than an ordinary science lesson!

A great introduction to science and engineering, this book will be sure to inspire innovation and creativity in a light-hearted and accessible way.



Reading for Information



Who Let the Words Out?

Joshua Seigal,
illustrated by
Chris Piascik

Bloomsbury
Education

Never swim in lava, never tickle frogs, never poke your father, never pickle dogs... In this funny, engaging poetry collection Joshua Seigal offers useful 'advice', interesting images and silly juxtapositions. The everyday is made new through his quirky lens.

This poetry collection will make you smile, and the wordplay and humour are spot on for primary school children. The strong rhythm and rhyme make this collection great to read aloud and there are a range of poetic forms to explore. This would be an engaging poetry collection to share in classrooms.



Reading: Poetry and Rhyme



100 Things to Know About Sport

Various authors

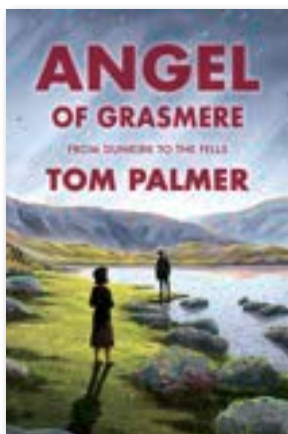
Usborne



Reading for Information

This bright and engaging non-fiction book introduces a massive range of information from the world of sports – expertly compiled by a team of writers. Learn about the history, evolutions, innovations, statistics and facts that relate to this significant aspect of global culture. Humorous illustrations and creative infographics complement the breadth of information and make the book feel very accessible.

This text provides excellent examples of the features of non-fiction writing and would lend itself well to teaching children how to write to inform.



Angel of Grasmere

Tom Palmer

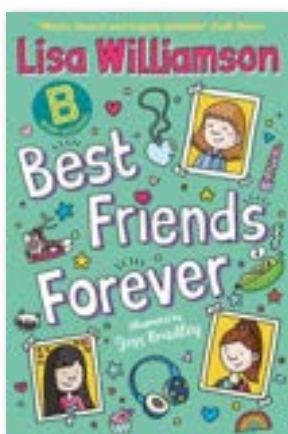
Barrington Stoke



British History

It's August 1940 and Tarn's brother has died at Dunkirk. She, her friend Peter and the evacuee Eric walk around the Cumbrian hills, watching for a Nazi invasion. Sometimes Tarn sees a figure on the fell, and when farm machinery is fixed in the night, the villagers think they have an angel looking after them. But the truth is more complicated...

This story is full of empathy. Written for dyslexic readers, it's an excellent addition to fiction about World War II.



Best Friends Forever

Lisa Williamson,
illustrated by
Jess Bradley

Guppy Books



**PSHE:
Relationships**

Lola is nervous about starting Year 7 but pleased to have her best friend Evie by her side. But, with Evie choosing to hang out with "annoying" Cleo, and Lola's parents going through a divorce, Lola becomes confused, upset and angry. She struggles to cope until finding loyalty and friendship in surprising places.

This funny and touching coming-of-age story will reflect the experiences of many youngsters making the transition to secondary school or experiencing changes in the family. Lola's first term at Henry Bigg is full of highs, lows and unexpected life lessons.



The Final Year

Matt Goodfellow,
illustrated by
Joe Todd-Stanton

Otter-Barry Books



**PSHE: Managing
Emotions**

Ten-year-old Nate lives with his mum and two younger brothers. When his best friend is put in a different Year 6 class, Nate is gutted. His teacher encourages him to use writing to help process his emotions and manage his anger. However, Nate's world is turned upside down when his youngest brother is rushed into hospital. How will he cope if he doesn't pull through?

This incredibly powerful novel, written entirely in free verse, connects readers with Nate's intense pain, anger and love. Thoughtful black-and-white illustrations punctuate this heart-wrenching but ultimately uplifting read.



The Boy Who Fell from the Sky

Benjamin Dean

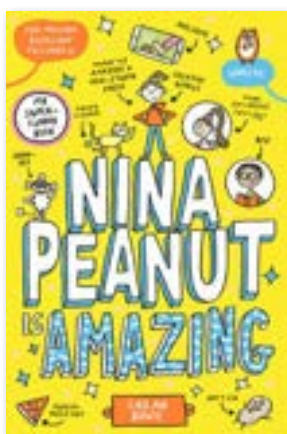
Simon & Schuster



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Demons fall to Earth from shooting stars, and they must be captured before they kill humans. Zed's dad is a Demon Hunter and Zed is expected to follow in his footsteps. But when Zed meets a Demon, he finds that it's just a frightened boy. Perhaps the myths about Demons were wrong?

This is an exciting adventure that explores human rights and demonising 'the other' in an accessible way. Readers are invited to consider others' points of view, and this would be a brilliant class reader for Key Stage 2 to stimulate rich conversations.



Nina Peanut is Amazing

Sarah Bowie

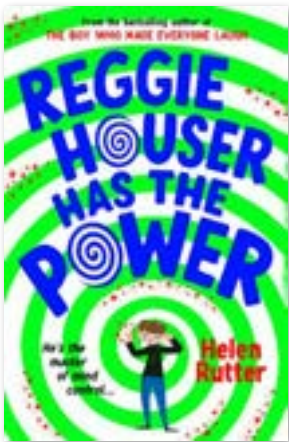
Scholastic



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Nina Peanut posts "amazing and non-stupid" videos. Despite her low viewing figures, she is confident in her creative genius and unique comedic style. But when an embarrassing video of her cat goes viral, she finds herself negotiating the intricacies of online fame, jealousy, rivalry and friendship.

Sarah Bowie's graphic novel is bursting with creativity, humour and infectious energy. The colour illustrations are full of comic details and will be sure to keep children engaged throughout. The difficulties of social media, popularity and cyberbullying are addressed in a positive and light way.



**Reggie Houser
Has the Power**

Helen Rutter

Scholastic



PSHE: Relationships

Reggie has ADHD and finds it hard to manage his energy; above all, he's lonely and struggles to fit in. After he learns the art of hypnosis, he attracts the interest of some new friends, but do they really have his best interests in mind?

This light-hearted and warm book reminds us how hard it can be when you feel alienated. It skillfully explores the dilemma of whether being accepted by the 'wrong' crowd is better than having one true friend.



**Pirates of
Darksea**

Catherine Doyle

Bloomsbury
Children's Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Max finds a letter inviting him onto the Stolen Sunrise, a pirate ship from the mystical kingdom of Darksea. Hoping to find a magical cure for his brother, he accepts, and a rip-roaring, perilous adventure ensues.

This fantastic story is filled with memorable characters, humour and pacy action to keep readers engrossed. It deals with the theme of family illness sensitively. A perfect option for fans of fantasy and adventure.



**Rune: The Tale
of a Thousand
Faces**

Carlos Sánchez

Flying Eye Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Chiri and Dai discover a portal to another world – one filled with danger, adventure and unusual characters. As they explore, they encounter the Shadow King and learn of his plans to spread malice. Chiri discovers that her sign language can produce powerful magic and, under the guidance of a band of heroes, eventually saves the realm.

Fans of anime and Studio Ghibli will love the quirky humour, cute animals and action in this colour graphic novel. Featuring a Deaf protagonist, it celebrates sign language and explores themes of bravery and resilience.



Lunar

**Chris Bradford,
illustrated by
Charlotte Grange**

Barrington Stoke



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Luna and her father live together on the moon. One day while out drilling for minerals, she gets caught in a meteorite storm and finds herself stranded and alone. Can she use her scientific knowledge and ingenuity to stay alive until help arrives?

With a great mix of science-fiction and fact, this nail-biting race against time is presented in an accessible, dyslexia-friendly format with black-and-white illustrations. A great choice for emergent Key Stage 2 readers who are fans of sci-fi.



The Clockwork Conspiracy

Sam Sedgman

Bloomsbury
Children's Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Isaac's dad looks after the Great Clock in the Palace of Westminster but when he vanishes from the belfry without a trace, Isaac's life is thrown into disarray. Along with his friend Hattie, he investigates the mysterious disappearance – uncovering a sinister plot which threatens time itself.

With Isaac's scientific mind and Hattie's fortitude, the pair make a great team. The thrilling first book of a new series, this fast-paced mystery is packed full of science, cryptic clues and adventure, and will have readers on the edge of their seats.



Bringing Back Kay-Kay

Dev Kothari

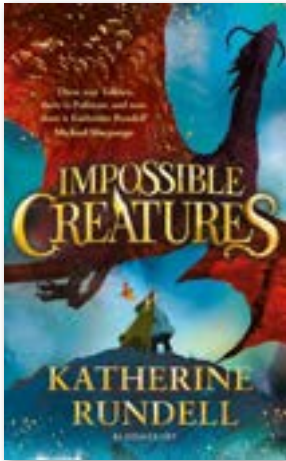
Walker Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

When Lena's older brother Kay-Kay doesn't return from summer camp, Lena knows she must find him. She discovers that he has been keeping secrets and travels across India and into the past to bring back her beloved brother.

This mystery, set in contemporary India, is gripping and emotional. It explores family relationships, the arts and the value of having a voice. It is an accomplished debut novel – finely balanced between action and emotion – and would inspire discussion as a class read for Key Stage 2.



Impossible Creatures

Katherine Rundell,
illustrated by
Tomislav Tomić

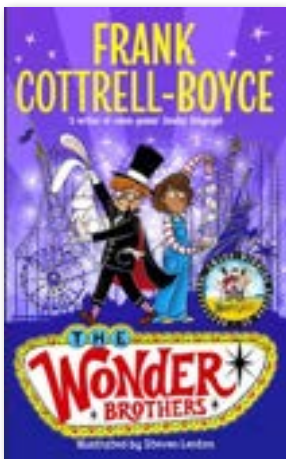
Bloomsbury
Children's Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

The Archipelago is a hidden world inhabited by creatures of myth. But the magical "glimourie" that sustains the islands is fading and darkness has taken root. Mal and Christopher (a boy from our world) embark on an epic journey across the Archipelago to look for answers.

Katherine Rundell has created an incredibly real-feeling magical world and story to rival classics like Narnia, with writing that sweeps you up and carries you forward with momentum. A wondrous, brilliant adventure.



The Wonder Brothers

**Frank Cottrell-
Boyce,** illustrated
by **Steven Lenton**

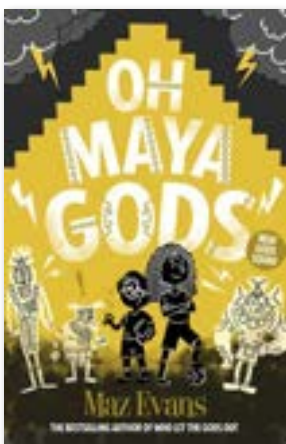
Macmillan
Children's Books



**Reading for
Pleasure**

When the Blackpool tower vanishes, Middy and her cousin Nathan, aka the Wonder Brothers, promise to bring it back. They end up on the trail in Las Vegas where many madcap, magical adventures ensue.

Fans of magical illusions will love this whacky, glitter-spangled adventure, which is told via multiple narrators. It is lively, funny and contains enough mystery to keep you guessing – a great read for anyone who likes a dose of danger with their magic.



Oh Maya Gods

Maz Evans

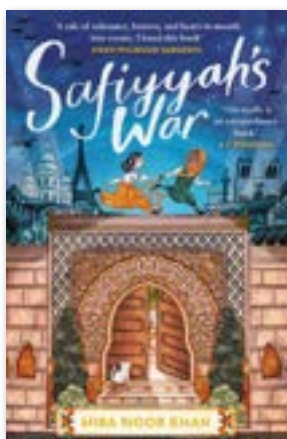
Chicken House



**History: Ancient
Civilisations**

When Vesper accidentally releases some nasty gods from their prison, it's down to her and Aster to save the world. Kizin, the Maya god of death, is intent on sacrificing every human – unless the cousins beat his team at the Maya ball game Pok-a-Tok.

Fans of Maz Evans' *Who Let The Gods Out?* series will be delighted to discover familiar and new characters in this action-packed adventure full of funny dialogue. Alongside the comedic action, readers can also learn about some elements of ancient history and mythology.



Safiyyah's War

Hiba Noor Khan

Andersen Press



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Focusing on the experiences of a small group of individuals, Safiyyah's story shines a spotlight on an under-recognised pocket of resistance from World War II when hundreds of Jews were led to safety via underground passages from the Grand Mosque in Paris.

This is a fascinating and moving story of courage, resilience and humanity that honours unsung heroes whose sense of justice outweighed concern for their own safety. The characters contribute a range of perspectives and reinforce the need for empathy and cultural understanding in times of adversity.



Scrap

Guy Bass, illustrated
by Alessia Trunfio

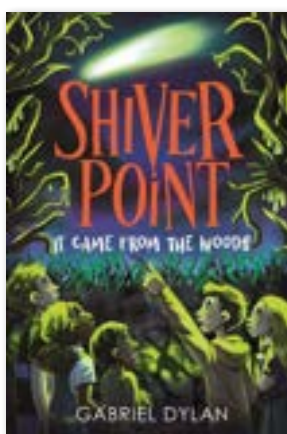
Little Tiger



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Scrap the robot has sat alone on planet Somewhere 513 for ten years. Since the war, humans have been banned. So, when two sisters burst into his life, Scrap finds himself in a breakneck adventure to help them and perhaps discover a new purpose for his own existence.

Guy Bass is well loved for his *Stitch Head* series and this book boasts a similar action-packed plot which is full of humour. There is lots to discuss including: consumerism, aesthetics, morality and heroism. This fantastic book is the first in a trilogy.



Shiver Point: It Came from the Woods

Gabriel Dylan

Piccadilly Press



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Alex and four other kids set out in the night to recover a valuable meteorite from Howlmoor forest, but they are not alone... A sinister, shadowy figure with huge teeth and a terrifying screech is tracking them through the darkness.

This is a short, snappy rollercoaster of a horror story with a skilful build-up of tension. Populated by mysterious exploding slugs, black goo and zombified townsfolk, this tale of five misfits will have wide appeal.



Bird Boy

Catherine Bruton

Nosy Crow



**PSHE: Feelings/
Relationships**

When Will loses his mother in a car accident, he must move to his gruff uncle's place in the countryside. Will is struggling with grief, but his life begins to turn around when he and his new friend Omar, a refugee, nurture an injured osprey chick back to health.

This beautifully written story is also intensely emotive. This text explores challenging themes including mental illness, depression, bereavement and displacement with great sensitivity.



The Last Dragon

**Polly Ho-Yen,
illustrated by
Charis Loke**

Knights Of



**Reading for
Pleasure**

In a world where a solitary dragon still exists, 12-year-old Lara moves to Milton Keynes because of her sister's illness. She hates her new school, and life just feels wrong.

When the dragon leaves her an egg, a gift of power that might help her sister, she must be brave and daring to escape the ominous Dragon Detection Squad.

This is a brilliantly written first-person story. It's about family, the power of sisterly bonds and having the confidence to be yourself no matter the cost.



I Am Wolf

Alastair Chisholm

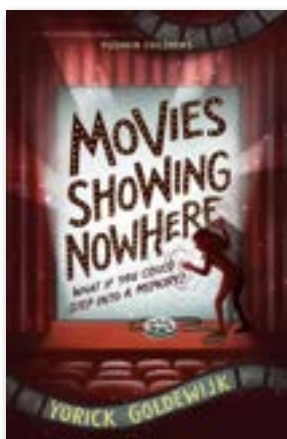
Nosy Crow



**Reading for
Pleasure**

Coll inhabits a futuristic world where vast technological 'Constructs' battle for territories. He and his mother are part of Wolf Construct and are fiercely proud of it. But, when Coll falls from Wolf in battle, he must learn to navigate the wider world, and to trust in new communities.

Jam-packed with action and suspense, this book grabs the reader from the first page. It speeds along at an exhilarating pace, with cliffhangers at every corner. Coll has two prosthetic limbs, and the depiction of limb difference has been well researched.



Movies Showing Nowhere

Yorick Goldewijk,
illustrated by
Yvonne Lacet,
translated by Laura
Watkinson

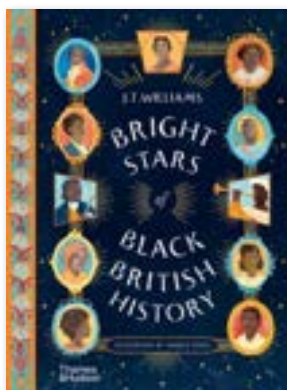
Pushkin Children's
Books



Reading for
Pleasure

At the precise moment Cate was born, her mother died, leaving her with an overwhelming sense of sadness and guilt. 12 years on, Cate and her father feel more alone than ever, but everything changes when she discovers a cinema that enables its viewers to replay lost memories. Cate knows exactly which moments she'd like to revisit, but is she brave enough to face her past?

Moving, thought-provoking and wonderfully imaginative, this clever time-travel adventure explores the nature of grief, guilt and loneliness through the complex relationship between Cate and her father.



Bright Stars of Black British History

J.T. Williams,
illustrated by
Angela Vives

Thames & Hudson



British History

J.T. Williams' *Bright Stars of Black British History* tells the extraordinary life stories of 14 Black British people and their contributions to the worlds of literature, theatre, journalism, politics, medicine, sport and music – covering the post-Roman to modern period.

The book is beautifully researched, and the stories are brought to life superbly by J.T. Williams. The illustrations are enticing and add brightness to the text-heavy, fact-filled biographies. This is an important book that should be in every school library.



Skylar and the K-Pop Headteacher

Luan Goldie

Walker Books



Reading for
Pleasure

K-pop obsessed Skylar and her headteacher swap bodies in a bizarre incident involving a dazzling flash of lightning and a bunny-ears hat. Could being in charge for once be fun? Or is adult responsibility not as appealing as Skylar had hoped? The 11-year-old superfan and the 71-year-old party-pooper play out a hilarious battle of wills until a nail-biting, unexpected conclusion.

This funny, engaging body-swap adventure explores fandom, friendship and empathy and every page is packed with fast-paced action and chaos. A comedic yet thought-provoking book that will have wide appeal.

What's next?

Looking for even more books that advanced readers will love?
Here are some suggestions!



Explodapedia: Rewild

Ben Martynoga,
illustrated by
Moose Allain



The Girl Who Couldn't Lie

Radhika Sanghani



Keedie

Elle McNicoll



King of Nothing

Nathanael Lessor



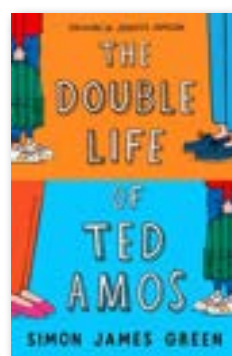
Cross My Heart and Never Lie

Nora Däsnes



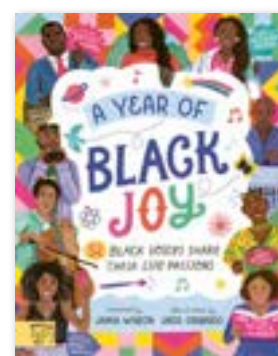
Black Hole Cinema Club

Christopher Edge



The Double Life of Ted Amos

Simon James Green,
illustrated by
Jennifer Jamieson



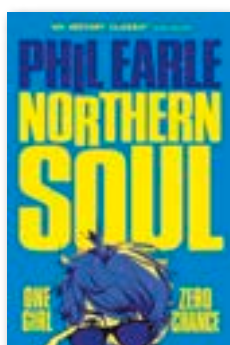
A Year of Black Joy

Jamia Wilson,
illustrated by
Jade Orlando



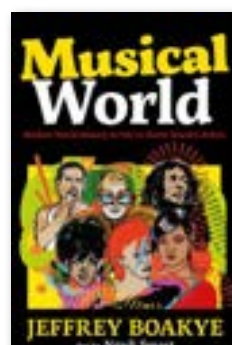
In the Shadow of the Wolf Queen

Kiran Millwood
Hargrave



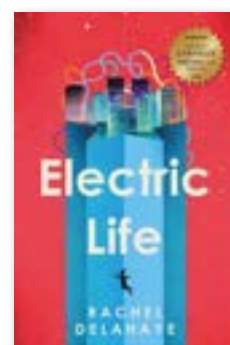
Northern Soul

Phil Earle



Musical World

Jeffrey Boayke,
illustrated by
Ngadi Smart



Electric Life

Rachel Delahaye

WATERSTONES

Children's Laureate

2024-2026



Hello!

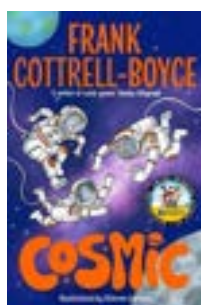
I'm Frank Cottrell-Boyce,

Author of **Millions**, **Cosmic**, **The Wonder Boys** and many more, and I am the brand-new **Waterstones Children's Laureate for 2024-2026**.

For my two-year tenure, I plan to celebrate the power of stories, because writing and reading has transformed my life. I want every single child to have access to books and the transformative ways in which they improve long-term life chances. There are decades of compelling evidence showing that reading for pleasure has a huge impact on the life chances of a child, and so I will be talking to a lot of people that hold the key to changing how children can access stories, no matter what their circumstances are.

With BookTrust, I have a very special live lesson airing on **Thursday, 21 November 2024, 11am for upper primary school students!**

To find out further details, access free class resources and register for the event visit **booktrust.org.uk/childrenslaureate** or follow X (Twitter) account @UKLAUREATE.



Bring an author into your classroom for free!

BookTrust Represents Virtual Author Visits bring diverse and inclusive authors, illustrators and books into your school so that all children can see themselves and their wider communities within books. Our virtual events are free to join and offer pupils an opportunity to interact with authors from the comfort of your own classroom. We will be giving away 60 copies of the author's book to 60 schools for every visit. See our website for more information.

We are excited to offer four free virtual author visits with authors of colour this academic year, including Benjamin Dean and Serena Patel. We're also providing two free additional visits by creators from under-represented groups, including neurodivergent author Elle McNicoll.

Scan the QR code or visit booktrust.org.uk/represents to sign your school up.



Benjamin Dean



Elle McNicoll

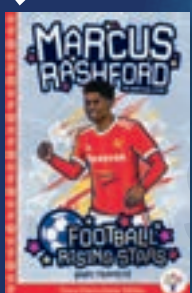


Serena Patel




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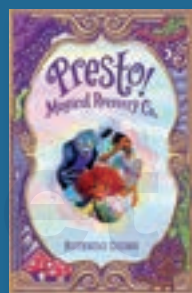


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