

# BookTrust's Great Books Guide 2020

100  
BOOKS  
INSIDE



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# Message from BookTrust's CEO Diana Gerald

Welcome to BookTrust's Great Books Guide 2020. At BookTrust, our priority is to get children excited about books, stories and rhymes, because if reading is fun, children will want to do it.

That's why we've put together this guide full of books we think are absolutely brilliant.

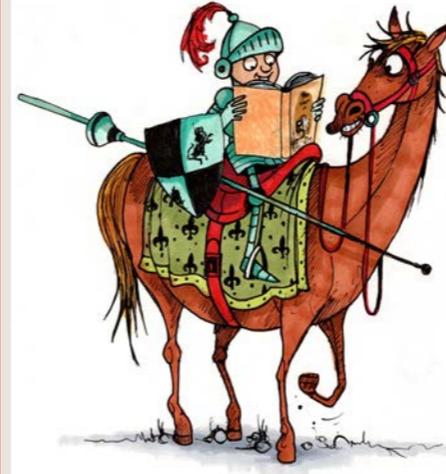
Inside you'll find 100 books that are silly, scary, informative and moving (and everything in between). They've been carefully chosen to engage and excite children all the way up to age 11.

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

**Happy reading!**



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# LITERACY 360

## WHAT'S YOUR READING PERSONALITY?

Discovering and understanding the individual reading personalities and behaviours of young readers is incredibly powerful when it comes to encouraging reading for pleasure and improving literacy and wellbeing.

And yet gaining that deep insight of each child in reality can be challenging with limited time and resources.

Literacy 360 is a new online tool created in collaboration with Adam Lancaster, experienced Senior Librarian and Head of Literacy.

It incorporates the tried and tested *Impact Through Reading* methodology and the *Attitude to Reading* survey that Adam has used successfully with over 3000 students so far in his own school to ensure all children are able to develop positive attitudes to reading and enjoy reading.



### Get in touch to find out more today!

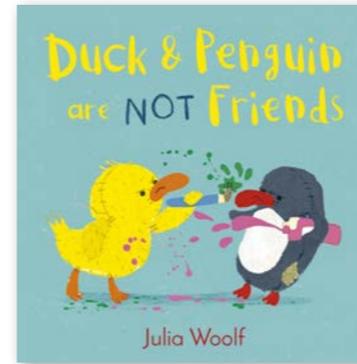
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READING  
CLOUD

Age  
0-3

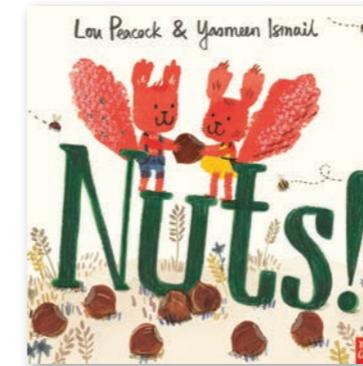


### Duck and Penguin Are Not Friends Julia Woolf

Andersen Press

Maud and Betty are the best of friends, so it only stands to reason that their favourite toys will be, too – doesn't it?!

Actually, it turns out that toy Duck and toy Penguin are definitely NOT friends. They do not want to swing together. They most certainly do NOT want to play baby dolls together. Yet, even if they'll never be the best of friends, it doesn't mean Duck and Penguin have to be the worst of enemies. A funny book that reminds us that it's OK not to be best friends with everyone.

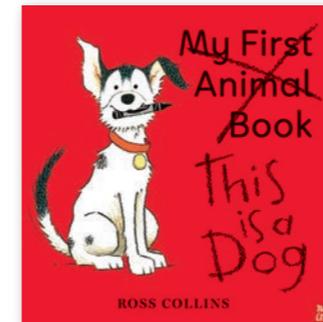


### Nuts! Lou Peacock, illustrated by Yasmeen Ismail

Nosy Crow

The squirrels are squabbling. One thinks the nuts are his and another thinks the nuts are hers. Badger, Rabbit, Bear and Owl all try to help, but soon it's a full-blown tantrum and the squirrels aren't speaking to each other. Someone has to be brave and offer to share, and soon the squirrels are happily collecting nuts together. That is, until they find the apples...

A lovely book for little ones about sharing, with some delightfully splodgy illustration.



### This is a Dog Ross Collins

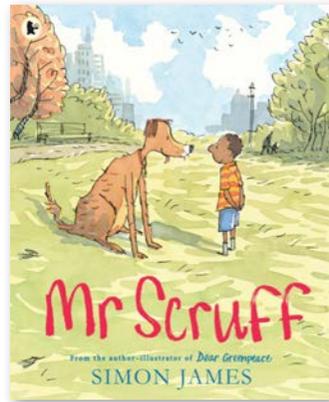
Nosy Crow

A mischievous dog has taken over a 'My First Animal Book'! Not satisfied with just having their own page in the book, Dog is jumping into every other animal's page too. How much will Dog be able to get away with before all the other animals decide enough is enough?

Each page has one simple sentence to read, and the illustrations are clear and bright, showing the different animals against a bold, single-colour background. Yet each animal is incredibly expressive, and there's so much story that can be told from the pictures alone.



Illustration © Daniel Taylor

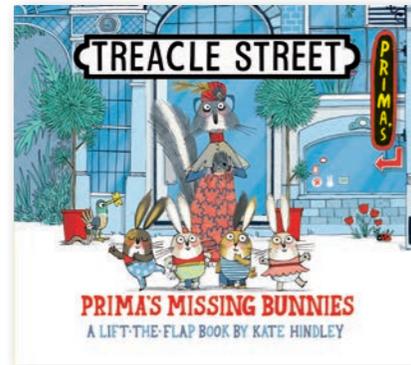


**Mr Scruff**  
Simon James

Walker Books

Polly belongs to Molly, just like Eric belongs to Derek. There's a poodle, a sausage dog and an old English sheep dog, and they are all suspiciously similar to their owners.

But for poor Mr Scruff, alone in the dogs' home, there is no one – until a very special little boy arrives. Jim is small and Mr Scruff is big. Their names don't even rhyme! But they're still the best of friends. There's a gently inclusive message here to look outside your bubble and welcome all kinds of different people (and dogs) into your life.



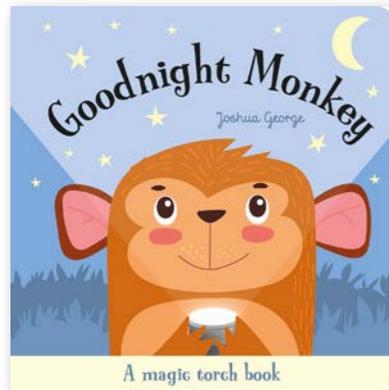
**Treacle Street: Prima's Missing Bunnies**

Kate Hindley

Simon & Schuster

It's a special evening on Treacle Street: everyone is excited about the Dance School's first performance of their musical epic, Duck Pond. However, the bunnies have gone missing! Miss Prima finds some hungry bunnies in the café, the prop store and inside the piano in the orchestra pit, but can she find them all before the curtain goes up?

The second book in Kate Hindley's brilliant *Treacle Street* lift-the-flap board book series showcases her stunning illustration and presents a simple story for little ones who loved the *Spot* books.



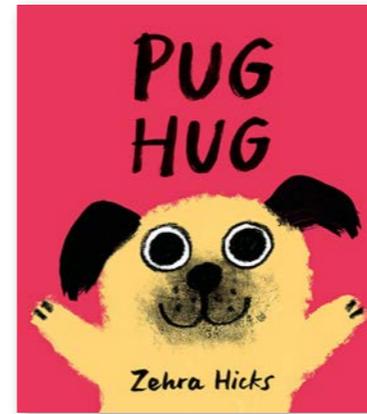
**Goodnight Monkey: A Magic Torch Book**

Joshua George, illustrated by Zhanna Ovocheva

Imagine That

It's time to go to bed. Monkey is going to help us all say goodnight and get snug, but first, he needs to say goodnight to all his friends. Can you help find them? It's getting dark...

Look for a different animal on every double-page spread, accompanied by a simple rhyming text. But the best part is that there's a cleverly illustrated plastic screen that the 'magic' torch slides behind, illuminating the images and enabling children to see what's on the panel. It's so ingenious, you'll wonder why you haven't seen it before.



**Pug Hug**

Zehra Hicks

Hodder Children's Books

A very cute pug really wants a hug, but no one wants to hug him! Cat doesn't like hugs, Hamster just wants to run in her wheel and Rabbit's too busy chomping carrots. What is a pug in need of a hug to do?

Fortunately, Pug's very huggable little girl comes home from school at just the right time and gives everyone a hug – even the goldfish.

The text is minimal, but there's lots to be read in the different animals' expressions, which are full of humour. This is definitely a book to read with plenty of giggly cuddles.



**Goodnight, Little Bunny**

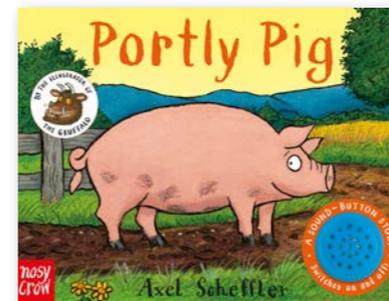
Amanda Wood, illustrated by Bec Winnel and Vikki Chu

Magic Cat

Little Bunny is nervous about leaving her burrow for the first time, but her best friend Mouse tells her she already has everything she needs for the big outdoors: an excellent button nose for sniffing, long whiskers for twitching and velvety ears for listening.

Little Bunny sets off to explore, using all her super senses to get to know the world around her. But when a nosy fox appears, can Little Bunny save the day before it's time to sleep?

A sweet story with photos of a super cute bunny make this the perfect bedtime story book.



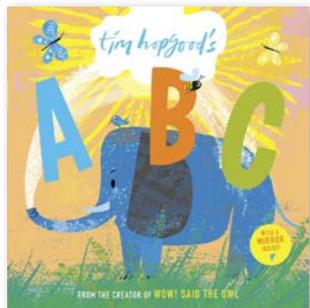
**Farmyard Friends: Portly Pig**

Axel Scheffler

Nosy Crow

Portly Pig is worried about being too clean. The grass is too pristine and the flowers and trees are altogether too neat. Yet when Portly finds a nice muddy puddle to roll in, grey clouds appear and Portly gets washed clean again. Argh!

A perfect early story in board book format, Portly Pig is a joyful, simple rhyming story told over six double-page spreads. Sturdy, thick pages mean that older babies can chew and bend away to their heart's content and still have a solid book afterwards for story time.



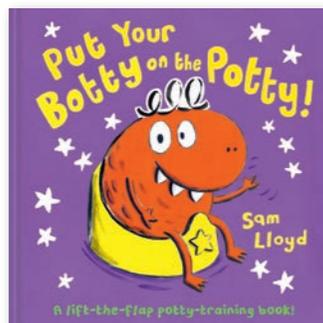
### Tim Hopgood's ABC

Tim Hopgood

Oxford University Press

A is for acorn, B is for butterfly, C is for cloud... Little ones will delight in this new alphabet board book that highlights the diversity of nature, from islands and hills to rainbows and snakes, and even stripy tigers and beautiful full moons. It's full of Hopgood's distinctive, colour-rich illustration and features a mirror for little ones to see themselves at the end when it comes to the letter Y, which is for You.

A well-made alphabet book with one- to two-year-olds in mind, this is a lovely book to start learning letters, animals and words.



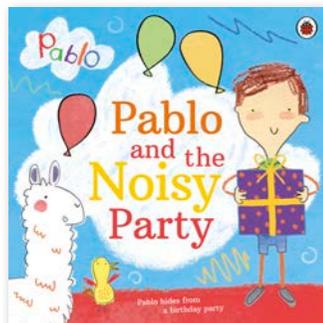
### Put Your Botty on the Potty

Sam Lloyd

Pavilion

Little Moo Monster is not happy. He wants to be grown up, but he's still wearing a nappy. Enough is enough – no more nappies for him! However, Moo still needs to be potty trained, so he practises sitting on it until... finally, success! Now Moo is all ready to wear grown up pants and go to the Monster Pant Party with all his potty-trained friends.

This silly and humorous lift-the-flap book is ideal to read together when children are going through their own potty-training stage. They will especially enjoy the cheeky illustrations hidden under the flaps!



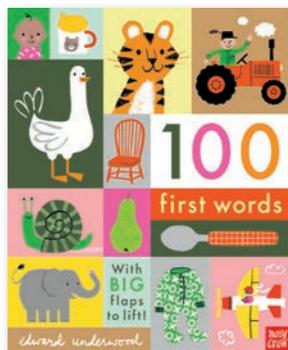
### Pablo and the Noisy Party

Andrew Brenner and Sumita Majumdar

Ladybird

When Pablo is invited to his cousin's party, he finds the music and laughter overwhelming. So he goes back to the car where it's quiet. Then, he starts to draw. Before long, his imaginary friends are there to help him make sense of the situation.

Fans of CBeebies will already know Pablo and friends from the successful TV series. This book shows that it's OK for people not to feel the same as each other: Pablo and Llama learn that they don't like parties, and Pablo's mother and friends are understanding and supportive.



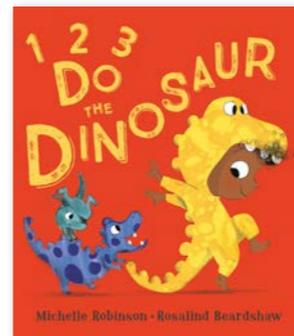
### 100 First Words: With BIG Flaps to Lift!

Edward Underwood

Nosy Crow

When toddlers are just starting to talk and learn new words, books like 100 First Words are invaluable. Themed by relatable topics – Farm, Outdoors, Animals, Home, Vehicles, About Us and Bedtime – each page features a variety of words accompanied by a picture, such as goose, rabbit and chicken, or ball, banana and chair, etc. There are also sturdy flaps that little ones can look under.

A book like this will be a favourite with toddlers as they listen to and repeat the words, learning pronunciation and what less familiar pictures mean.



### 123 Do the Dinosaur

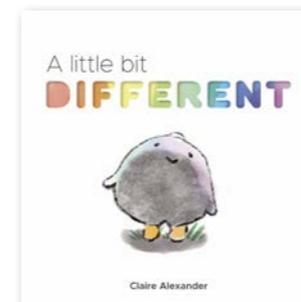
Michelle Robinson, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw

Egmont

Tom has his dino costume on and has gathered his friends together for a dino dance through the jungle. To do the dinosaur, you have to swish your tail, stomp your feet and – perhaps most importantly – ROAR!

Unfortunately, the friends are making so much noise, they've attracted the attention of the T-Rex! Run!

This bright, fun book combines actions and story to create a joyous reading experience that little ones won't be able to resist joining in with. Words like 'swish and rumble', 'jiggle and wriggle' make it perfect to read aloud.



### A Little Bit Different

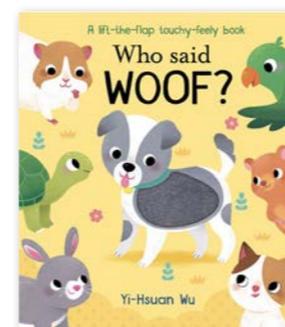
Claire Alexander

Words & Pictures

The Ploofers – little beings that look like upside-down balloons – have been busy practicing something very special, and now they're ready to show everyone. Sadly, their new trick doesn't quite go to plan when one of their number puffs out a different colour to all the others.

Yet, before long, the lonely Ploofer makes a new friend who makes sure he understands that what he did was different in the best possible way.

This wonderful book teaches children that being a little bit different is more than okay: it's what makes you, you.

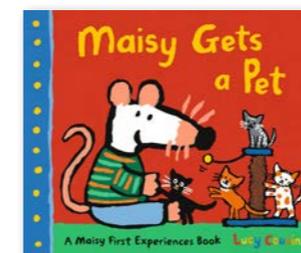


### Who Said Woof?

Yi-Hsuan Wu

Little Tiger

Who said Woof? Was it Bunny? No... it was Puppy! Who said Meow? Was it Guinea Pig? No... it was Kitten, of course! This lovely board book has big flaps that little ones can turn over to match the animal with the right noise. There's a touch-and-feel element too, so babies and toddlers can rub furry patches, smooth fabric and squeaky green plastic as they play with the book. Finally, there's a mirror at the end for babies to see themselves and make their own noises!



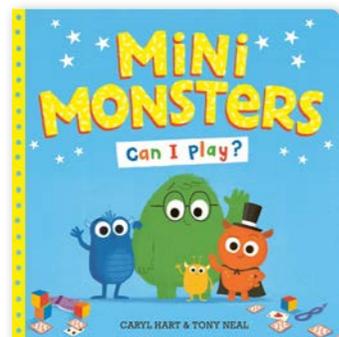
### Maisy Gets a Pet

Lucy Cousins

Walker Books

Maisy's friend Penguin has given her a little black kitten as a pet. Maisy has to learn how to feed her, clean the litter tray and play games. Then Maisy takes her kitten to the vets for her inoculations, and her friends come around to visit. Finally, Maisy and Little Black Cat snuggle up and go to sleep.

This story about getting a pet has all of Maisy's usual bright interest and calm friendliness as well as being a useful pet care guide for little ones.

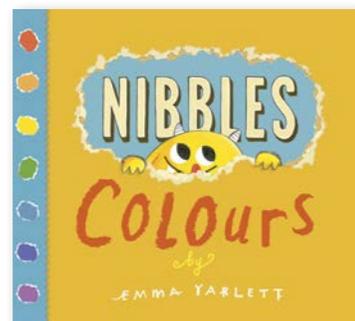


**Mini Monsters - Can I Play?**  
Caryl Hart, illustrated by Tony Neal

Simon & Schuster

Sparkle and Arthur are putting on a magic show. Yet when their friend Scout asks if they can join in, Sparkle says no. When Scout tries to help out with the disappearing rabbit trick, Sparkle loses her cool, and tells Scout they can't even sit in the audience.

But when Scout runs away upset, kindly Arthur goes to help, leaving Sparkle as the one left out. Realising that they'll have much more fun together, Sparkle invites both her friends to see her magic show and does a very brave thing indeed: she says sorry.

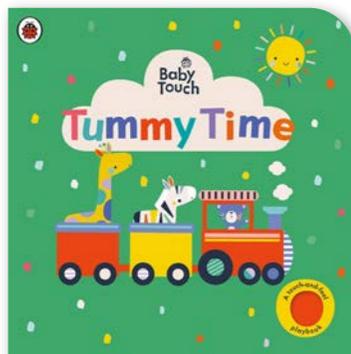


**Nibbles Colours**  
Emma Yarlett

Little Tiger

Nibbles, the cute book-eating monster, is HUNGRY. This book has some yummy colours in it that he wants to eat. Yet, the more Nibbles eats, the more a hole grows in the middle of the book! Hang on... In eating his way through all those yummy colours, Nibbles has made a rainbow of the book instead! What a clever monster.

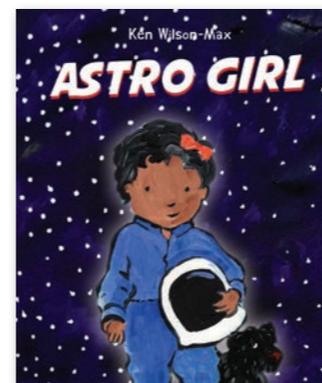
Perfect for toddlers, this bright little gem of a book teaches little ones their colours as well as being a super fun read.



**Baby Touch: Tummy Time**  
Ladybird

This colourful, three-dimensional book with a variety of touch-and-feel areas and peepo holes has been specifically designed to stimulate and entertain babies during their daily tummy time sessions.

It has three bright, bold sections for your baby to play with and explore. Direct them to the touch-and-feel areas, make the animal noises and encourage your baby to lift their head and reach and stretch towards the book. The benefits of daily tummy time, where a baby is placed on their stomachs for around ten minutes at a time, has been shown to be developmentally beneficial in a number of ways.



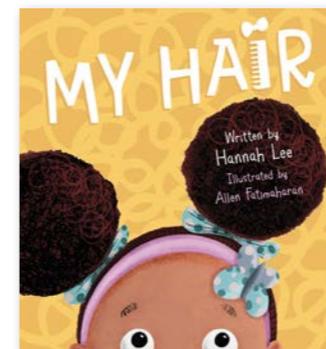
**Astro Girl**  
Ken Wilson-Max

Otter-Barry Books

Astrid loves space and wants to be an astronaut! She has lots of fun with her papa finding out what it takes to become one: from doing experiments and eating dried food, to getting used to near-zero gravity.

Astrid thinks she's ready to be an astronaut, but will she get to meet her personal hero and real-life astronaut soon?

A delightful and educational picture book for young readers interested in space travel. The illustrations are colourful and simple, with large-print text, diverse characters and heartfelt father-daughter interactions.

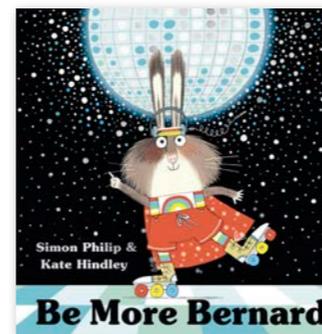


**My Hair**  
Hannah Lee, illustrated by Allen Fatimaharan

Faber & Faber

A young girl is excited about her birthday, especially as it means a trip to the hairdressers where she can choose any hairstyle she likes for her party. Mummy has dazzling dreadlocks that swing when she moves, while Aunty has short, shaved hair. Her big sister likes to experiment – from small coiled Bantu knots to the chiselled precision of a high top fade – and her brothers love to show off their intricate cornrow designs. With so many fabulous styles to choose from, how will she ever decide on the perfect head of party hair?

This joyful celebration of a black family is rendered with lovely detail by Fatimaharan in a picture book by a debut black author.



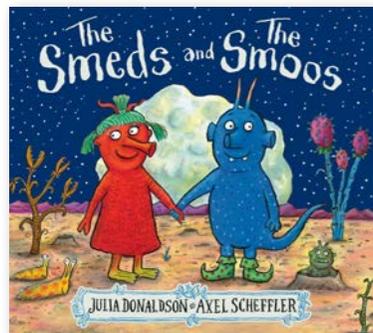
**Be More Bernard**  
Simon Phillip, illustrated by Kate Hindley

Simon & Schuster

Bernard has decided that he's not going to be like all the other bunnies anymore. While others might dream of carrots, Bernard's dreams are altogether more... disco!

Soon, all the other bunnies are admitting to Bernard that they, too, are sick of eating carrots. Some want to paint, others want to eat cheese... there are so many ways to enjoy life, after all!

This funny and fabulous picture book will coax children out of their shells and encourage them to stand out from the crowd.



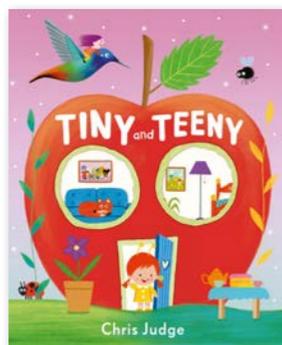
**The Smeds and the Smoos**  
Julia Donaldson, illustrated by Axel Scheffler

Alison Green Books

By a lobular lake on a far-off planet, a young Smed called Janet lives with the other Smeds. Not far away, on a humplety hill, Bill, a young Smoo, is getting bored of jumping around. Meeting by accident in the Wurpular Wood, Janet and Bill delight in each other's company until their grandparents find out and drag them away.

Can the Smeds and the Smoos ever be united, or will they be enemies forever?

The newest rhyming picture book from Donaldson and Scheffler provides all their usual read-aloud expertise in a story about tolerance and celebrating difference.

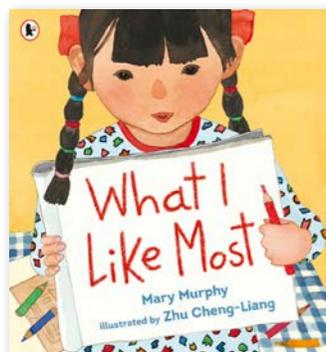


**Tiny and Teeny**  
Chris Judge

Walker Books

At the edge of Glengadget, helpful Tiny lives with her pet fox Teeny in a house made out of a shiny red apple. Yet when Tiny and Teeny's house turns a distinctly un-apple-ish colour, the villagers of Glengadget find a way to make everything even better than before.

Glengadget's little houses, such as the greengrocer inside a pumpkin and the Grand Hotel inside the teapot, are full of detail and delight, and there's a gentle message about the good things that happen when we do nice things for others.



**What I Like Most**  
Mary Murphy, illustrated by Zhu Cheng-Liang

Walker Books

A little girl thinks about what she likes most – is it the apricot jam her grandmother makes? Or the colourful trainers that flash when she walks? The list is endless!

Still, amongst all these changeable things (the pencil that gets shorter with use; the river that swells and shallows with the seasons), her mum remains her favourite person in the whole world.

Mary Murphy excels at writing cosy, sweet books which have a huge hug at their heart, while Zhu Cheng-Liang's watercolours capture the warmth of the bond between mother and daughter, and the safety and cosiness of home.



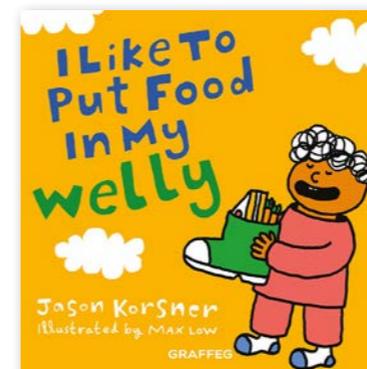
**Sulwe**  
Lupita Nyong'o, illustrated by Vashti Harrison

Puffin

Sulwe does not look anything like her family. They all have light-toned black skin, like the sunny day, whereas she has skin as dark as the night.

Anxious and aware of her difference, Sulwe is teased at school, so she tries all kinds of things to make her skin lighter. But one night she has a visit from a star who tells her how the world learned to appreciate the value and beauty of Night.

This gorgeous book reassures children that they are beautiful just the way they are.



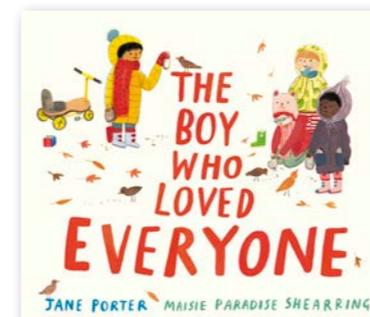
**I Like to Put Food in My Welly**  
Jason Korsner, illustrated by Max Low

Graffeg

Children will adore this brilliantly surreal set of poems, which get sillier as the book goes on.

Max Low's thick-lined cartoonish illustrations imagine a character climbing a cup of tea and a gleeful child boating on the back of a snake, among other odd combinations!

As well as a colourful and brilliant read, Korsner's word play is ideal for helping little ones learn when short sentences are right or wrong – Can a mat purr? Should you wipe your feet on a hat? – and allow for plenty of laughing, discussion and fun questioning.



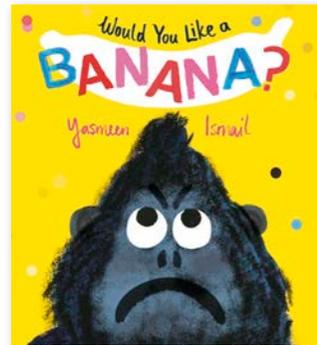
**The Boy Who Loved Everyone**  
Jane Porter, illustrated by Maisie Paradise Shearring

Walker Books

Dimitri is new at nursery, and no matter how many people (and trees) he says 'I love you' to, no one says it back.

When his mum walks him to nursery the next day, she explains that people show their feelings in different ways: the mean old man on the park bench is telling the stray cats he loves them by giving them tuna. Berthe the dinner lady says 'I love you' with her smile. Encouraged, Dimitri starts to see that most people love others, too.

A touching tale with a theme of emotional honesty and intelligence.

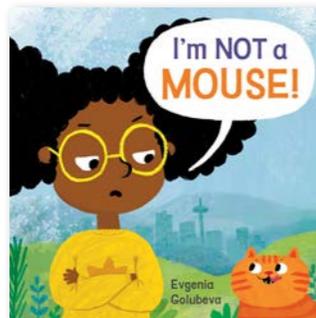


**Would You Like a Banana?**  
Yasmeen Ismail

Walker Books

Gorilla is hungry, but he doesn't want the banana he's been offered. Despite the attempts of the kind narrator who tries everything – delicious combinations with honey and ice cream, wearing a banana on your head or eating it in a bun – the gorilla is having none of it. Except, when the banana is taken away, it suddenly becomes more appealing...

Ismail's take on the fussy eating theme uses a mix of bold, expressive illustration and photography that brings a light, fun energy to what can sometimes be a frustrating experience for parents.

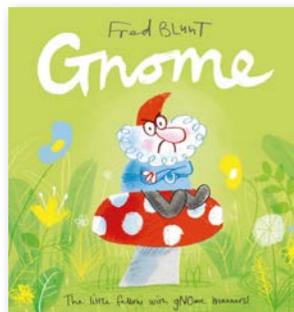


**I'm Not A Mouse!**  
Evgenia Golubeva

Child's Play

Olivia's mum's pet name for her is Mouse, and Olivia doesn't like it at all. Every time her mum shouts, cheers or calls 'Mouse!', Olivia turns into one. It's not great when she's playing football, about to blow out her birthday candles or roller-skating.

This book is a great opportunity to laugh at all the silly pet names we have for each other, and celebrate how nice it is to feel special, too. Perhaps little ones will find out that even grown-ups get called embarrassing pet names – it's definitely not just for kids.



**Gnome**  
Fred Blunt

Andersen Press

Mr Gnome isn't exactly the politest gnome. In fact, he's pretty rude. So when Miss Witch politely asks Mr Gnome to stop fishing in her pond, it's no surprise that he refuses. Unfortunately for Mr Gnome, it's not Miss Witch's first encounter with a rude gnome, and she has a pretty conclusive way of dealing with them...

This cautionary tale for grumpy little ones is a reminder that sometimes cutting off your nose to spite your face isn't the best plan. You'll never look at garden gnomes in the same way again!

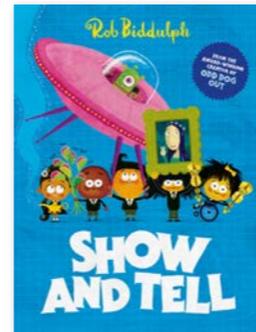


**Rhinocorn Rules!**  
Matt Carr

Egmont

Ron might look the same as all the other rhinos, but he is different. He doesn't enjoy following the grumpy rules that all other rhinos seem to stick to. Instead, Ron loves laughter and bright colours and feeling full of joy. Life isn't much fun for Ron – until he finds a way to show everyone his true colours and embrace his inner 'Rhinocorn'.

This funny story with a lovely message about being yourself is great fun and easy to read out loud. Older children can turn to the fascinating rhino facts at the end.



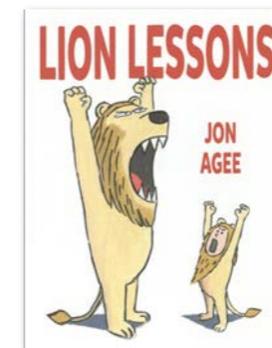
**Show and Tell**  
Rob Biddulph

HarperCollins

It's show and tell day and class 2L are very excited: the child that most impresses their teacher will win a special prize! The children compete to show increasingly impressive things: a parrot, grandad's false teeth, a racing car, Big Ben and the Sphinx!

Yet when an alien appears and steals all those wonderful treasures, there's only one thing left. Fortunately, it's just the right thing to win the prize. Hurrah!

This brilliant rhyming book reminds us that the most magical things aren't necessarily the biggest or most showy.

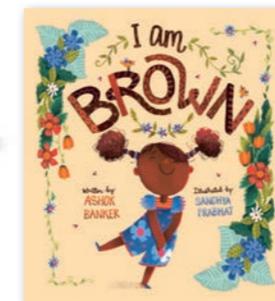


**Lion Lessons**  
Jon Agee

Sallywag Press

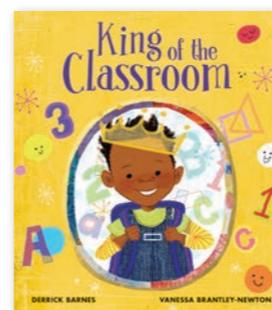
It's not easy getting your lion diploma. There are seven steps: looking fierce, roaring, choosing what to eat, prowling around, sprinting, pouncing and looking out for your friends. The little boy who ventures into the Lion Lessons shop on the high street finds it difficult to make his instructor happy – that is, until a neighbourhood cat is in danger...

Agee reminds us that while it's not always necessary to roar, sometimes we can still be fierce in protecting others who are less roar-some than ourselves.



**I Am Brown**  
Ashok Banker, illustrated by Sandhya Prabhat  
Lantana

A little girl celebrates her beautiful brown skin and imagines all the possibilities life has for her and her friends. Celebrating diversity and the variety of clothes, languages, aspirations, hobbies, faiths (including not having one) and cultures of a group of brown-skinned children, this delightful and upbeat book is all about being proud of your achievements, happy in your identity and comfortable within your wider community. It would be a lovely one to have at story time at school and as the focus for talking about our similarities and preferences with little ones.



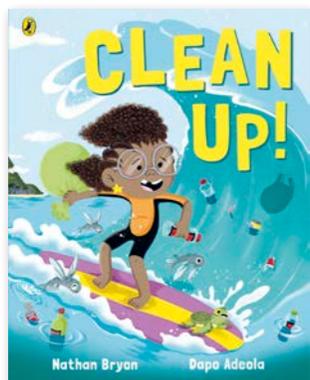
**King of the Classroom**  
Derrick Barnes, illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton

Sallywag Press

It's the first day at school for one little boy. Mummy tells him that he is going to be King of the Classroom!

Once at school, the King greets his kingdom cheerfully. At break time, the King and a girl fight a giant, fire-breathing dragon! Finally, at the end of his first day at school, the King of the Classroom returns home to tell his subjects all about his amazing day.

This wonderfully empowering picture book models a celebratory approach to the big day with an upbeat story about being confident.



**Clean Up!**

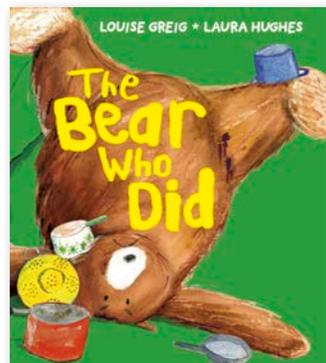
Nathan Bryon, illustrated by Dapo Adeola

Puffin

Rocket is going to visit her Grammy and Grampy on a Caribbean island, who run whale-watching tours and have an animal sanctuary at the back of their house.

Yet when a baby turtle washes up tangled in plastic, Grampy explains that plastic is ruining the island. So Rocket decides to form a Clean Up Crew. Finally, the beach is clean, and Rocket knows she's made a huge difference.

Featuring an authentic, well-drawn black family, this is an uplifting story about family and community as well as a useful way to talk to children about pollution.



**The Bear Who Did**

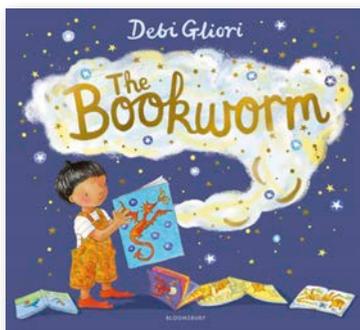
Louise Greig, illustrated by Laura Hughes

Egmont

One day, a jar of honey mysteriously goes missing. As one bear sleeps soundly, the other searches the house for it, becoming more and more frustrated.

The bear has just about to give up all hope of ever finding the honey when the snoozy bear starts to stir from his sleep. Will the mystery of the missing honey be solved?

Complete with detailed and animated illustrations, this is a hilarious, rhyming tale about two bears who need to learn how to share their favourite food.



**The Bookworm**

Debi Gliori

Bloomsbury

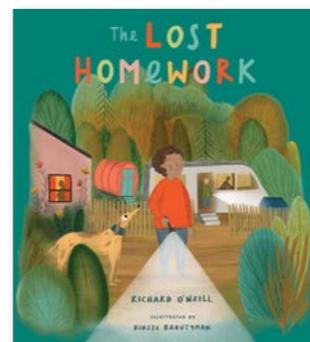
Max wants a pet, but his mum and dad don't want a puppy, a kitten, a shark or a dragon. Finally, Max finds a worm and brings it home to live in a bowl of earth in his room.

Excitingly, the worm loves listening to Max read books; it also loves curry and extra hot chilli crisps. Yet when the worm starts to change, Max realises it isn't a worm at all...

Children will relate to Max's desire for a pet and love this heartwarming tribute to the transformative nature of reading.



Illustration © Dapo Adeola



**The Lost Homework**

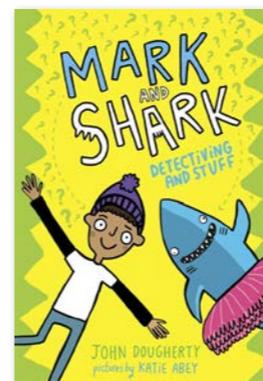
Richard O'Neill, illustrated by Kirsti Beautyman

Child's Play

Sonny is super excited because he's going to a family wedding this weekend.

Sonny is kept so busy by the preparations and the wedding itself that he doesn't realise until too late that he's lost his homework book. Yet when he goes to school and tells everyone about the weekend, his kind teacher points out that he's done plenty of learning.

This smart, charming book is written by an author of Traveller heritage and it's a delight to see this community represented in a children's book, including authentic Traveller language and customs.



**Mark and Shark: Detectiving and Stuff**

John Dougherty, illustrated by Katie Abey

Oxford University Press

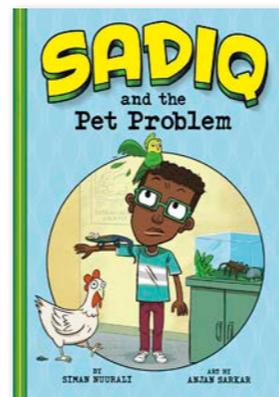
Mark and his best friend Shark run a detective agency, although they've not yet been offered any cases to solve. Luckily, they also deal with other 'stuff' too.

When Ursula, a large, aggressive polar bear, bursts into their office to hire them as ice cream sellers, they cautiously agree. But chaos ensues and Mark and Shark start to regret taking on Ursula as a client...

Featuring talking desks, menacing toasters and a dashing dazzling unicorn, this chapter book with entertaining illustrations is fast-paced, funny and utterly ridiculous. Ideal for independent readers who enjoy madcap adventures.



Illustration © Anjan Sarkar



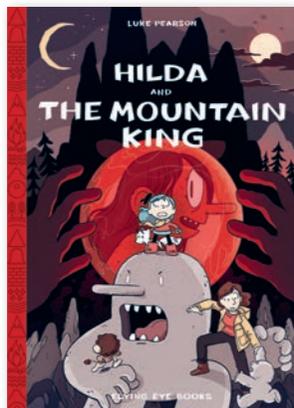
**Sadiq and the Pet Problem**

Siman Nuurali, illustrated by Anjan Sarkar

Raintree

Sadiq is excited when his teacher says his class can get a pet. But which one should they choose? Hamsters, bearded dragons and rabbits all have their drawbacks. The class sets out to find the pet which is best for them.

Sadiq is a relatable little boy who has everyday experiences that children will identify with. He is from Somalia, and the book includes two pages of information about his home country, including a list of Somali words. Somali children will see themselves reflected as welcome members of society, and other children will learn interesting facts.



**Hilda and the Mountain King**

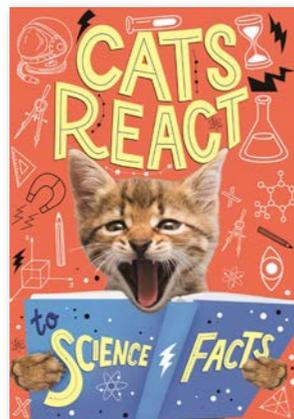
Luke Pearson

Flying Eye Books

Hilda finds herself turned into a troll child and left in the Stone Forest while her mother has unwittingly returned home with a real troll baby to look after.

Stuck out in the wild, Hilda realises that trouble is brewing. So when a troll offers to make her human again, Hilda jumps at the chance – all she has to do is find a mysterious blood-red spherical object in the Hall of the Mountain King...

A fantastic fantasy adventure in graphic novel format with a relatable heroine.



**Cats React to Science Facts**

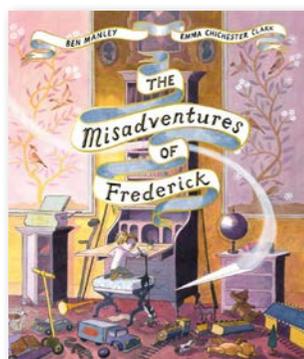
Izzi Howell

Wayland

Did you know that temperatures can reach 15 million degrees centigrade in the sun's core? You've got to be kitten me!

Howell combines a plethora of amusing and cute cat pics and genuinely 'wow!' scientific facts into one catty collection. Alongside each fact (from topics as diverse as circuits, photosynthesis and global warming), readers can laugh along with feline funnies and see if they agree with the React-o-Meter.

It's a perfect book for reading at primary school or home, and will spark conversations and questions as well as containing plenty of 'aww' appeal.



**The Misadventures of Frederick**

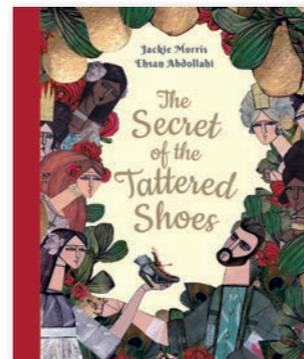
Ben Manley, illustrated by Emma Chichester Clark

Two Hoots

Emily is playing in the forest when she sees a boy watching her from a grand house opposite. Dashing off a note and folding it into a paper plane, Emily asks the boy to come out and play, but Frederick's mum refuses. So Frederick writes an extremely polite note expressing his regrets.

Yet Emily won't give up on Frederick, and finally wins him over. Will any of his fears come to pass – and what's more important, anyway?

There is much to love in this sophisticated, skilful picture book about 'feeling the fear and doing it anyway'.



**The Secret of the Tattered Shoes**

Jackie Morris, illustrated by Ehsan Abdollahi

Tiny Owl

A weary soldier meets a woman in the forest who tells him that there is a king in a nearby castle who has 12 beautiful daughters.

Each night, the daughters are locked inside their bedroom, but in the morning, they wake up exhausted with their shoes worn through. If the soldier can solve the mystery, he may choose a bride from among the princesses and rule the land.

For parents and carers worried about gory consequences for women in traditional fairy tales, there's a happy ending for the soldier and the princesses in this version.



**High-Five to the Hero: 15 Favourite Fairytales Retold with Boy Power**

Vita Murrow, illustrated by Julia Bereciartu

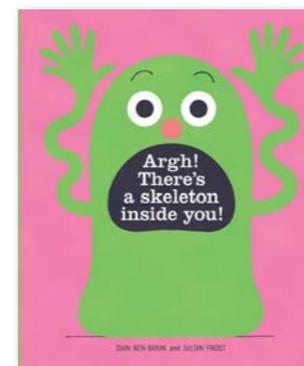
Frances Lincoln

What if heroes weren't always the strong and silent type?

In Murrow's retold King Arthur legend, Art is a boy who realises that his power lies in mediating disputes. In the legend of Hercules, the hero of the tale realises that his skills are best used healing people in hospital.

By rewriting classic fairy tales as well as cultural stories like the African Anansi tales, Murrow presents stories recognising that boys can be more than fighters, kings and monsters.

Plenty of food for thought and perfect for bedtime and story time alike.



**Argh! There's a Skeleton Inside You!**

Idan Ben-Barak, illustrated by Julian Frost

Allen & Unwin

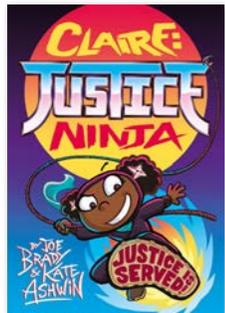
Quog and Oort are off to Kevin's birthday party but – oh no! – their spaceship is broken. They need the readers' help mend it.

Oort is so impressed at how helpful hands can be that he wants to take a closer look inside them. He shows Quog how bones stop our arms being wobbly, muscles give us strength, and nerves let us feel.

This beautifully crafted book distils complex ideas into a fun story. It is thoroughly recommended for anyone looking to explore the world of science with young children.



Illustration © Nick Sharratt



**Claire: Justice Ninja**  
Joe Brady, illustrated by Kate Ashwin

David Fickling Books

Claire intends to right the world of wrongs. Fed up with the corrupt politician paving over the playground? Your mum eating all the pepperoni off the top of the pizza? Not to worry: Claire is on the case.

This fun graphic novel has 12 short stories for young readers, featuring a hero who doesn't take no for an answer. Her superpowers are tenacity, determination and a belief in equality: no crime is too small for Claire and her trusty apprentice Nigel.

Perfect for young activists and anyone looking for a short and satisfying read.

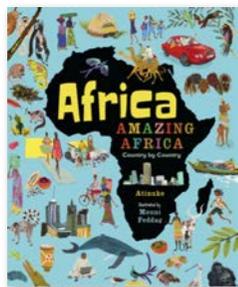


**Bad Nana: That's Snow Business**  
Sophy Henn

HarperCollins

It's almost Christmas and Jeanie's town is holding a Winter Wonderland Variety Show. Jeanie and her friends Wilf and Marcy get Bad Nana to coach them in a dance routine. Yet when Bad Nana takes to the stage in a VERY sparkly gown, the rivalry begins between her and fellow luvvie Bobby Trulove.

The relationship between a little girl and her favourite grandma is beautifully crafted in this series, and the final message – that having fun is more important than performing perfectly – is pitch perfect.

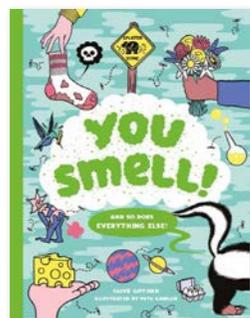


**Africa, Amazing Africa: Country by Country**  
Atinuke, illustrated by Mouni Feddag

Walker Books

In this beautifully produced atlas of Africa, stunning maps show the layout and placement of African countries, highlighting an interesting variety of animals, buildings and natural features.

After a broad overview of the continent, languages, culture and people, the book focuses on the countries individually, adding interesting details, rather than overwhelming with information. From Ghana's giant markets to the skyscrapers of Sierra Leone, the boy drummers of Burundi and the oases of Mauritania, flicking through this happy book is like working through a box of delicious sweets.



**You Smell! And So Does Everything Else**  
Clive Gifford, illustrated by Pete Gamlen

Laurence King

Smell is the Cinder-smella of the senses: it's often forgotten after sight and hearing. Yet without smell, we wouldn't be able to taste anything – and our sense of smell does really important things like warning us of danger and making us buy things in shops!

This brilliant read is full of fun facts and silly puns, covering everything from how the olfactory system works to a tour of the smelliest places on Earth. It's just right for that middle primary age where kids are fascinated by poo, farts and yucky things.

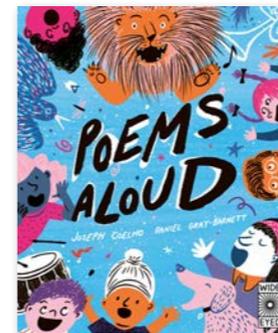


**Sofia Valdez, Future Prez**  
Andrea Beaty, illustrated by David Roberts

Abrams Books for Young Readers

Sofia Valdez isn't just a do-gooder: she's a do-better. She visits people in her community who can't get out much, or just stops by for a chat. Yet when her grandpa falls on a huge heap of landfill, Sofia begins a campaign to get rid of the rubbish and build a fabulous new park for the community instead. Thankfully, the local council and the community of Blue River Creek are on hand to help.

Another inspiring picture book in the *Ada Twist, Scientist* series, this time introducing children to local politics, which will hopefully inspire a future community leader.



**Poems Aloud**  
Joseph Coelho, illustrated by Daniel Gray-Barnett

Wide Eyed Editions

The aim of this dynamic collection of verse is to bring poetry to life, both for the reader and their audience. There are tongue twisters to master and riddles to decipher, poems to read alone and others to perform in a group, all with an emphasis on being read aloud.

Each poem is accompanied by practical suggestions about a variety of performance techniques.

The distinctive illustrations are bold and joyful, adding to the drama and humour of the text. Perfect to encourage children to develop a love of poetry and performance.



**Is My Teacher a Robot?**  
Dave Cousins, illustrated by Catalina Echeverri

Stripes

Robin, an eccentric family robot, wakes up after a reboot convinced he's a teacher – and is hired as supply cover for Jess and Jake's class!

Deciding to enter a science competition, Robin and the class invent a car fuelled by waste. Yet when the project begins to fall apart, Jess suspects nasty neighbour Mr Burton may be involved – and when Robin disappears on the eve of the science fair, Jess fears the worst.

A zany twist on school life with lots of laughs and raucous adventure, full of sneaking around and close shaves.



**The Adventures of Harry Stevenson: Guinea Pig Superstar!**  
Ali Pye

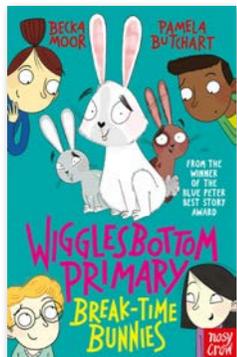
Simon & Schuster

This illustrated book for young readers contains two stories that are perfect for animal fans looking for quick reads.

First, Billy takes Harry to school for show and tell. Yet when it turns out that Fergus has also brought in his pet snake, the day has some unexpected results.

Next, Billy, Maya and Harry enjoy a fun day at the local swanky hotel and Harry foils a robber intent on stealing a very special trophy.

Charming, relatable stories for younger-aged primary school children.



**Wigglesbottom Primary: Break-Time Bunnies**

Pamela Butchart, illustrated by Becca Moor

Nosy Crow

There's always something going on at Wigglesbottom Primary, and this time, Class 2R are convinced that the rabbits in the playground are actually attack bunnies. Not only that, the special visitor sitting at the back of the classroom might be a TV talent scout, and Miss Stein the music teacher could definitely be a witch...

Featuring three short stories in one brilliantly illustrated volume, Butchart and Moor's zany yet simple stories are perfect for younger kids looking for silly chapter books with lots of pictures.



**Agents of the Wild: Operation Honeyhunt**

Jennifer Bell, illustrated by Alice Lickens

Walker Books

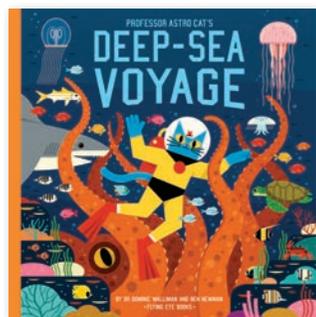
Agnes Gamble returns to her city tower block after her daily visit to the park only to find a small elephant shrew sitting on her bed. The shrew informs Agnes that she has is now a field agent for SPEARS, the Society for the Protection of Endangered and Awesomely Rare Species.

Agnes' first mission is to rescue an endangered bee called Elton before he falls into the clutches of illegal insect collector Axel Jabheart.

Fast-paced and funny, this eco-chapter book with attractive, two-tone illustrations is ideal for young beginner readers with an interest in nature.



Illustration © Anjan Sarkar



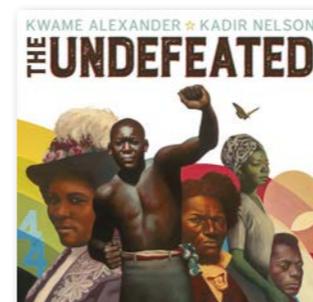
**Professor Astro Cat's Deep-Sea Voyage**

Dr Dominic Walliman, illustrated by Ben Newman

Flying Eye Books

Professor Astro Cat is back with his friends, diving into an incredible deep-sea voyage. Journeying to kelp forests and deep-sea vents, witnessing giant squid battling sperm whales in the very deepest parts of the ocean and exploring the 2300 kilometres of the Great Barrier Reef, everyone's favourite cat professor is as fun and fascinating a guide as ever to this most unknown of regions.

Ben Newman's illustration has a brilliantly retro appeal and clear layout, while Astro Cat's team of animal explorers explain fascinating ocean facts to young readers in an accessible way.



**The Undefeated**

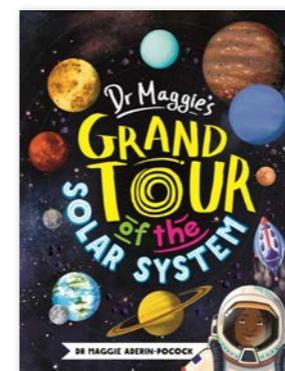
Kwame Alexander, illustrated by Kadir Nelson

Andersen Press

A deeply moving illustrated poem, *The Undefeated* remembers famous and overlooked figures from black history – from Jesse Owens to Michael Jordan, to the thousands of black soldiers that fought in the American Civil War – and chronicles the ways that black people have been persecuted because of the colour of their skin.

While it's a book best read with an adult who can talk through the history and continuing presence of racism, it's also a book about survival and remembrance.

Biographical information at the back of the book is also given for more detail.



**Dr Maggie's Grand Tour of the Solar System**

Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock, illustrated by Chelen Écija

Buster Books

Space scientist Dr Maggie invites readers to join her on a grand space tour – the journey of a lifetime from Earth to the outer edge of the Oort Cloud, located around 15 trillion kilometres away, via the sun, moon, planets, satellites and asteroid belts.

A 'database' of facts includes details about scientists, engineers and astronauts, whose pioneering work has provided a greater understanding of what lies beyond planet Earth.

Packed full of interesting information and accompanied by fabulous illustrations, diagrams and photographs, this is a book to treasure.



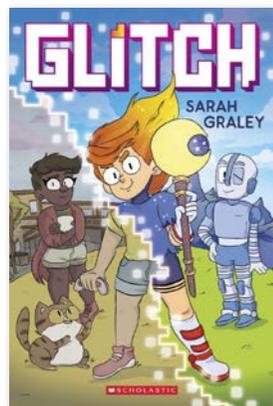
**The Iron Man**

Ted Hughes, illustrated by Chris Mould

Faber & Faber

One day, a giant made of metal appears in a village. No one knows where he's come from or how he was made, but the villagers decide that something must be done. Yet, is the Iron Man really bad? Or will the humans find that they need his help when an even bigger threat arrives?

Whether you're already a fan of this classic children's story or a new reader, this wonderful new version is a real treat. Chris Mould's mechanical Iron Man has a great deal of personality, and the artwork is out of this world.



**Glitch**  
Sarah Graley

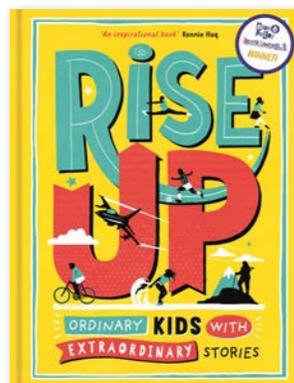
Scholastic

Izzy and her friend Eric can't wait for Dungeon City to arrive. Yet when Izzy starts to play, she's literally sucked into the game.

Once inside, her new robot friend Rae tells her she's destined to save Dungeon City from the Big Boss, a terrifying monster which has been hidden in the code.

But is Izzy risking her life by being in Dungeon City? And is she neglecting her friendship with Eric?

Sarah Graley's fantastic and fun games-themed comic novel reminds readers that real-life friendships are as important as online ones.



**Rise Up: Ordinary Kids with Extraordinary Stories**

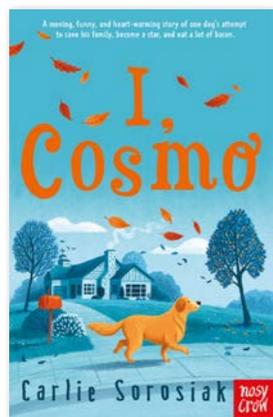
Amanda Li, illustrated by Amy Blackwell

Buster Books

Is there something you've always dreamed of doing but feared it might be impossible? Perhaps it's ballet dancing like Joel Kioko or becoming a chess champ like Phiona Mutesi.

However, there are also extraordinary stories of survival here: such as the remarkable life of Lizzie Velasquez, whose rare medical condition made her experience extreme bullying, yet who still managed to find the strength to become an inspirational speaker, helping thousands of people around the world.

This is a fantastic and inspiring book that shares the stories of normal kids from across the world and their amazing achievements.



**I, Cosmo**  
Carlie Sorosiak

Nosy Crow

Cosmo and Max are best friends, but Cosmo is a dog, and Max is a boy. And 13 in human years is very different to 13 in dog years.

What they do have in common is their love for each other and for their family. As Cosmo tells the story of one dramatic year in his family's life, he and Max fight their very hardest to stay together, even though their beloved family is breaking up all around them.

Fans of heartwarming doggy stories will love this book.

Illustration © Emily Rowland



**The Cloud Horse Chronicles: Guardians of Magic**  
Chris Riddell

Macmillan

Without the magic of the Forever Tree, the cloud horses would not be able to fly. And without the flying cloud horses, the power of the Forever Tree would be no more. Not everyone thinks that this is a bad thing. In fact, there are forces that want to hijack the ancient magic and use it for their own dark purposes.

Can three ordinary children defeat the King Rat, the Clockmaker and the Professional Princesses and, in so doing, protect the Forever Tree from their evil plans?

Packed with beautifully intricate illustrations, this is an absorbing, original read.



**Strange But True: 10 of the World's Greatest Mysteries Explained**  
Kathryn Hulick, illustrated by Gordy Wright

Frances Lincoln

UFOs, the Bermuda Triangle, Atlantis... Are they really mysteries, or could a scientific explanation help us understand these odd cases?

Each mystery is thoroughly explained and, though the author presents the reader with the most likely explanation, she does accept that in some cases, mysteries remain unknowable until science gives us the tools to understand.

In a world of alternative facts and conspiracy theories, it's nice to find a book that respects children's love of the strange and spooky whilst reminding us that rational thinking and exploration should always be our first port of call.



**Harriet Versus the Galaxy**

Samantha Baines, illustrated by Jessica Flores

Knights Of

When ten-year-old Harriet is rummaging under her bed for her hearing aid, the last thing she expects to find is a sock-munching alien from planet Janet. But what is it doing under her bed? Perhaps Harriet's mild-mannered, tea-sipping, sock-knitting gran knows more about the alien invasion than she's letting on.

Laced with lively black-and-white illustrations and lots of laughs, this is a rare and welcome example of a female protagonist who just happens to be hearing impaired without this being the focus of the story.

A quirky, fast-moving adventure, rich with humour and heart.

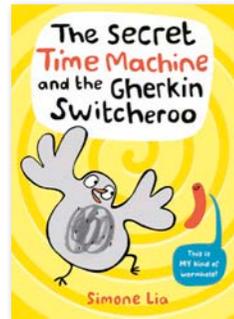


**Gut Garden: A Journey into the Wonderful World of your Microbiome**  
Katie Brosnan

Cicada Books

What do microbes do? Are they helpful, harmful, or both? Luckily, this is a tremendously informative guide to the smallest particles and organisms: bacteria, archaea, fungi, viruses, microscopic animals and protists.

Taking us through the different types of microbe, including how they work and live in the mouth, throat, stomach, intestines and poo, Brosnan explains what antibiotics do to valuable gut microbes, what prebiotics and probiotics are and even how fermented food can really help us tend our precious gut gardens. A wonderful and eye-opening guide to the smallest things in the world.



### The Secret Time Machine and the Gherkin Switcheroo

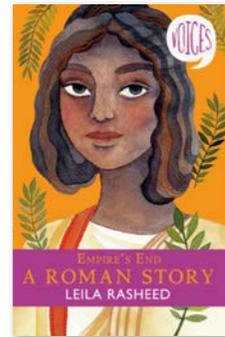
Simone Lia

Walker Books

Marcus (a worm) lands himself in trouble by telling Laurence (a bird) that his aunt has built a time travelling machine. When Laurence actually believes him, Marcus realises that he has to either invent time travel, or confess he lied.

With his friend Vera's help, Marcus and Laurence 'time travel' and happen upon a delicious medieval-style banquet, but, of course, lies always get found out...

Lia's fantastically silly story is full of her *Adventure Time*-esque illustration, and combined with a simple but tongue-in-cheek humour, it's completely brilliant.



### Empire's End: A Roman Story

Leila Rasheed

Scholastic

Camilla lives with her parents in Leptis Magna on the north coast of Africa, and when her father is recalled to Rome, she can't hide her excitement.

Yet when the Emperor demands that the family accompany him to the furthest corner of the Empire, Britannica, Camilla finds herself navigating life in a cold and dangerous land.

Roman Britain in 207 AD was a cultural 'melting pot' – it's refreshing to see a girl of North African origin depicted as the daughter of a valued member of the Emperor's entourage.

A tense, thrilling read.



### Planet Omar: Unexpected Super Spy

Zanib Mian, illustrated by Nasaya Mafaridik

Hodder Children's Books

When his mosque is in danger of being closed down, Omar decides to raise the £30,000 that's needed for the emergency building repairs. But when Omar organises a school talent show to raise the money, the funds go missing. Juggling many potential suspects, Omar and his friends need to become super spies to get the money back.

A hilariously funny, warm-hearted, easy-to-read tale with the gentle moral of how people working together can achieve wonderful things, Zanib Mian's wit and great ability to create believable characters makes this a must read.



### Charlie Morphs into a Mammoth

Sam Copeland, illustrated by Sarah Horne

Puffin

Animals are going missing all over town, from pets to exotic specimens from the zoo. Surely Charlie McGuffin's ability to change into animals means he can get to the bottom of the mystery? Not when school bully Dylan has other plans – and the evidence pointing to Charlie as the animal-napper is piling up...

In a story packed with hilarious footnotes, jokes about poo and bare bottoms, and equally comical pen and ink illustrations, readers will laugh along but also enjoy a relatable story about dealing with anxiety.



### Work It, Girl! Become a Leader Like Michelle Obama

Caroline Moss, illustrated by Sinem Erkas

Frances Lincoln

Michelle's passion for education meant that she became a star student from an early age. Yet when Michelle went to see the university advisor at her school, the woman told her she 'wasn't Princeton material'.

Fortunately, the young Michelle was very determined. She became a top lawyer (where she met her future husband, Barack), and got more and more involved in local politics, all informing her work as First Lady and beyond.

This book is a must for anyone with a dream, and a reminder that with hard work and focus, anything is possible.



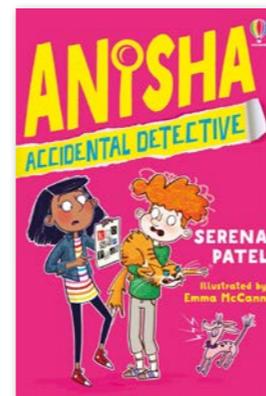
### Willow Wildthing and the Swamp Monster

Gill Lewis, illustrated by Rebecca Bagley

Oxford University Press

Willow is exploring the garden at her new house when she meets the Wild Things: a small band of barefoot children with sticks and feathers in their hair. After they capture Willow's dog Sniff, she pursues them across into the woods, where she learns that they need Sniff to help track the monster that's been invading their camp.

This is a gentle adventure story that celebrates children immersing themselves in imaginative play in the 'wild' outdoors. There's a lovely theme of friendship and a fun twist when it comes to the swamp monster itself.



### Anisha, Accidental Detective

Serena Patel, illustrated by Emma McCann

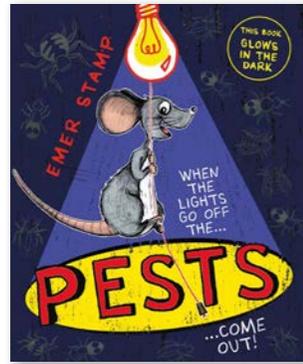
Usborne

Ten-year-old Anisha's dramatic Aunty Bindi is getting married and tensions are running high. When Anisha gets a note saying Bindi's groom has been kidnapped, it's up to Anisha to find Uncle Tony with the help of her best friend Milo.

Anisha has a hunch that the culprit is somebody close to the family. She needs to use her scientific skills of logic and deduction to track down Uncle Tony in time for his wedding.

This is a highly amusing, fast-paced debut in a very promising new detective series.





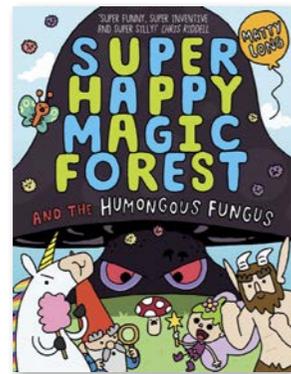
**Pests**  
Emer Stamp

Hodder Children's Books

Stix is a tiny mouse who lives with his grandmother. They survive by remaining hidden, knowing that the humans will call Nuke-a-Pest if they ever see them. But one day, Stix wants to see a little bit more of the world...

When his grandmother is flushed down the toilet to save him, Stix joins a secret school for pests just like him and finds himself caught up in the horrible plots of Professor Armageddon.

Hilarious and full of warmth as well as toilet humour, this adventure will appeal to all kinds of readers.



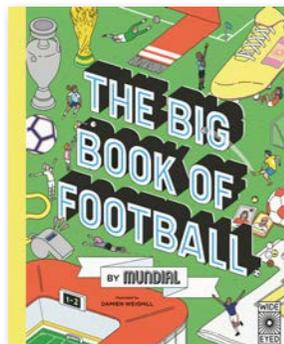
**Super Happy Magic Forest and the Humongous Fungus**  
Matty Long

Oxford University Press

It's the day of the Frolic Festival in the Super Happy Magic Forest and everyone's waiting for the Rainbow Dragon to appear to breathe new life into the Mystical Crystals of Life. But when she finally flies over the forest, something seems to be very wrong.

Five heroes set out to investigate and venture deep into the Sacred Glade, where they discover a giant, smelly, evil mushroom called Fungellus who is intent on world domination and has infected the Rainbow Dragon with his disgusting fumes.

Brilliant fun and plenty of laughs.

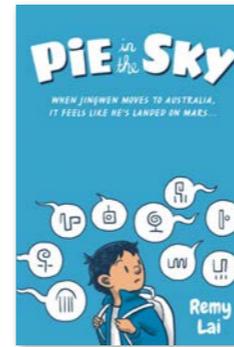


**The Big Book of Football**  
Mundial, illustrated by Damien Weighill

Wide Eyed Editions

Did you know that South Korean uber footballer Ji So-Yun is famous for her perfect shots? Or that Didier Drogba is famed for his amazing attacking headers? Or that Fernando Torres is widely celebrated for beating the offside trap?

Covering the history of football, profiles of popular players, managers, famous stadiums, kits and much more, there's a great balance here between fun (including a double-page spread about footballer's hairdos) and a serious appreciation of the craft of football, so will suit general readers and football fanatics alike.



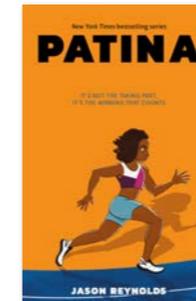
**Pie in the Sky**  
Remy Lai

Walker Books

Jingwen has moved to Australia with his mum and little brother Yanghao. It's hard enough trying to cope with the loss of their dad, but Jingwen finds it especially tough at school.

One day, Jingwen decides that he's going to make all the cakes he used to make with his dad. Yet he realises that it isn't making him feel any better in this alien place. What can he do to feel like he hasn't landed on Mars?

An illustrated, heartfelt story about the redemptive power of creativity, bereavement, family and making a new life.



**Patina**  
Jason Reynolds

Knights Of

Elite runner Patina is a girl with a lot on her plate. After her dad died, her mum became so unwell that Patina and her little sister have to live with her Uncle Tony and his wife Emily.

Patina takes responsibility for everything and everyone – even her school project with the posh girls at her new school. Yet sometimes you need to let others help you, and to be proud of yourself and what you do achieve.

A beautiful, flawless reading experience that will hook reluctant readers (especially those into sports).



**Some Places More Than Others**  
Renée Watson

Bloomsbury

Amara desperately wants a trip to Harlem in New York for her birthday so she can meet her dad's family and see where he grew up. She can't understand why her parents are reticent about the trip, until she discovers her dad hasn't spoken to his father, Grandpa Earl, for 12 years. What could have made them so mad at each other?

Amara's family history is tied together with the extensive roots of black American history, giving her a true sense of empowerment and identity. A warm and positive story, beautifully written, with a poetic feel.



**Max Kowalski Didn't Mean It**  
Susie Day

Puffin

Max's home life is tough: since mum died, Max's dad works several jobs and Max has to help look after his three little sisters. Then, his dad gets into trouble and leaves Max all alone to look after the girls.

Max knows he's expected to be a 'Big Man', but he's scared. After finding a key to a remote Welsh cottage, Max makes a plan: he'll hide out in Wales until his dad gets back. But when things go from bad to worse, Max needs help.

A remarkable book about families, being a boy and coping with loss.



**The Girl Who Speaks Bear**  
Sophie Anderson, illustrated by Kathrin Honesta  
Usborne

Yanka has always felt like an outsider – found in a bear cave when she was a baby and raised by her foster mother Mamochka, she's always wondered where she came from.

But when something very unusual begins to happen to her, it's the push she needs to leave her village on a quest to discover her family, her origins and who she really is.

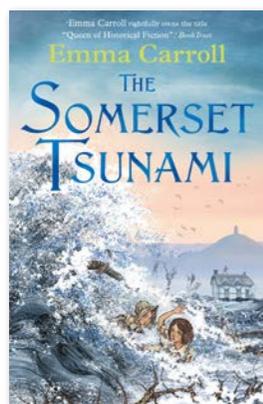
A wonderful adventure that draws heavily on Russian folk tales to bring us a gripping story of dragons, bears and magic, with underlying themes of friendship, identity and family.



**Boy Giant: Son of Gulliver**  
Michael Morpurgo, illustrated by Michael Foreman  
HarperCollins

War forces Omar to flee his home in Afghanistan. And when the boat he is on sinks, Omar finds himself shipwrecked in Lilliput with a race of tiny people. The Lilliputians hate their neighbours on the island of Bluefescu, and war is imminent. What can Omar do to help the two islands become friends again?

This is an easy, delightful read. Gulliver's Travels is part of the inspiration, but Morpurgo's story is his own, merging a modern refugee boy with the traditional tale of being an outsider in an unfamiliar place.



**The Somerset Tsunami**  
Emma Carroll  
Faber & Faber

Fortune Sharpe is forced to leave her home when she is spotted rowing the boat on the Sabbath.

Sent off to find work while disguised as a boy, Fortune doesn't have to look far before she discovers that Barrow Hill, the local manor house, has an opportunity for her. Yet Fortune slowly realises that this manor house holds many secrets within its walls.

With King James's witchfinders roaming the west country, will Fortune – a girl in the wrong place at the wrong time – escape unscathed?

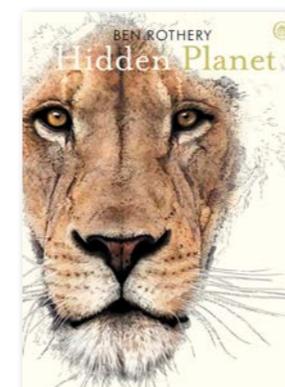
A feisty, female-led adventure that is based on real-life events.



**The Extremely Inconvenient Adventures of Bronte Mettlestone**  
Jaclyn Moriarty  
Guppy Books

Ten-year-old Bronte's parents have left her a will full of bizarre, detailed instructions that she must follow or her home town will be destroyed by magic. The will sends her journeying alone across kingdoms where she finds friendship, family and excellent food in cosy cafes. It sends her to visit her several aunts, whom she has rarely seen before. Then it takes her right to the borders of the sinister Whispering Kingdom.

This book really has everything: a skilfully spun plot, humour and charm, as well as unforgettable characters and poetry in its language.



**Hidden Planet**  
Ben Rothery  
Ladybird

Rothery's book is a study of the hidden connections between species, their relationships and the unexpected abilities and behaviours of many creatures that we think we know.

The book explains natural relationships such as parasitism (the parasite benefits at the expense of the other), mutualism (both species benefit from the relationship, like bees and flowers) and commensalism (one organism benefits while the other is neither harmed nor helped), as well as the families of species and their connections.

Fascinating and beautiful.



**The Fowl Twins**  
Eoin Colfer  
HarperCollins

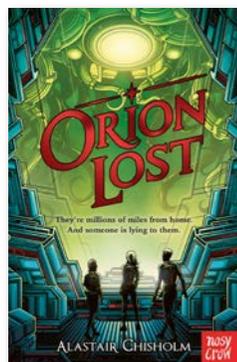
Twins Myles and Beckett Fowl are completely different: Myles is an intellectual, while Beckett is a boy of action.

When a troll comes burrowing up through the ground to their private island, it's attacked by a rogue aristocrat who wants to steal the troll's magical power. Yet when the twins find themselves captured by a menacing nun who works for the evil organisation ACRONYM – who are also after the troll's secret of eternal life – they realise that their criminal genius is required to help the fairies stop ACRONYM in its tracks.

A well-developed fantasy world with a plot that is full of clever, satisfying twists and turns.

Illustration © Erika Meza





**Orion Lost**  
Alastair Chisholm

Nosy Crow

The Orion is a large spacecraft, transporting people from Earth to a new planet 26 light years away.

When the craft is unexpectedly attacked and all adults are incapacitated, 13-year-old Beth is informed by the Orion's central interface hologram that she is now Captain.

Surrounded by meteor storms and ruthless space pirates as well as the terrifying, mysterious alien lifeform known as the Videshi, Beth must captain the ship to safety.

Full of twists and turns, this thrilling, futuristic journey into the unknown will have readers on the edge of their seats.

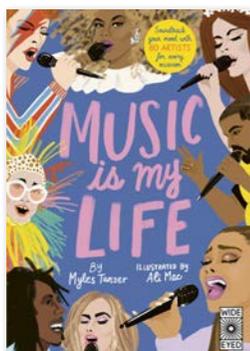


**Nothing Ever Happens Here**  
Sarah Hagger-Holt

Usborne

12-year-old Izzy was lacking confidence before she met her best friend Grace. Now settled safely into her second year of senior school, she feels brave enough to audition for the school play. Then her father reveals that he is transgender. Suddenly Izzy's world is wobbling. What will this mean for the family's future? Will things ever be normal again?

The author's own experience, passion and knowledge permeate through every page whilst never preaching. This is a highly readable, touchingly honest and deeply uplifting book that everyone should read.



**Music is My Life**  
Myles Tanzer, illustrated by Ali Mac

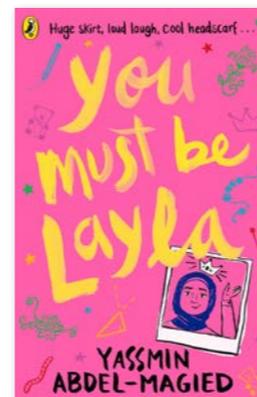
Wide Eyed Editions

If music is your safe space, you might appreciate some help finding tracks that fit your mood, inspire you to get creative or simply chill out.

This book acts as a music library featuring some of the greatest performers and songwriters of the past 50 years from Bob Marley to Drake, and Ariana Grande to the Arctic Monkeys. 80 artists are included and classified into 12 listening mood sections such as 'Celebrate Life', 'Dance Around', 'Cry it Out' and 'Focus'.

Original illustrations and plenty of colour add interest and keep the mood light.

Illustration  
© Emily Rowland



**You Must Be Layla**  
Yassmin Abdel-Magied

Puffin

13-year-old Layla has left her comfortable Islamic school in Australia and is starting a scholarship at a private school where she is the first (and only) student to wear a headscarf.

When she ends up being suspended for fighting back against a prejudiced bully, Layla decides the only way to prove herself is to win a big robotics competition with her invention. But what will she do when she sees that the boy who bullied her is on the other team?

A laugh-out-loud story about making friends and having confidence.



**Clean Getaway**  
Nic Stone

Knights Of

One day, Scoob's grandma turns up at his house in her new camper van.

G'ma tells Scoob that they're retracing the steps of a road trip she took with his late grandpa. But 51 years ago, things in America were very different for mixed-race couples. G'ma shows Scoob the Green Book, an old guide to travel in America for black people.

Yet as G'ma and Scoob get further from home, Scoob realises that G'ma isn't quite her usual self...

A tightly plotted book with short chapters that never lets up on the gas.



**Crater Lake**  
Jennifer Killick

Firefly Press

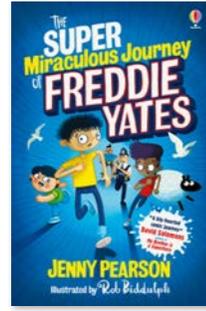
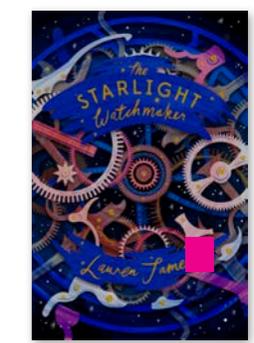
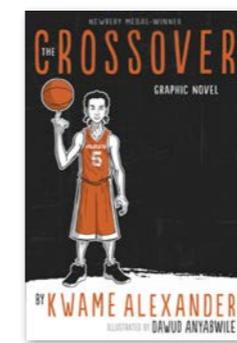
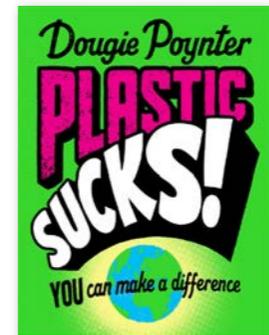
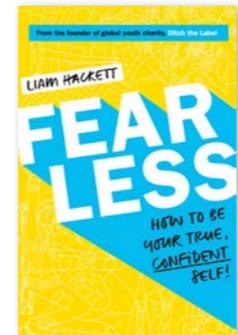
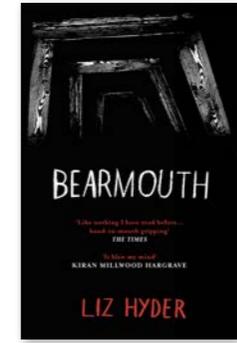
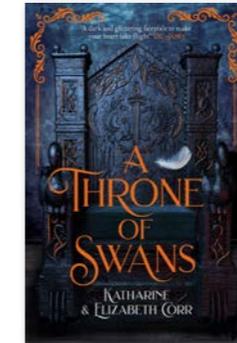
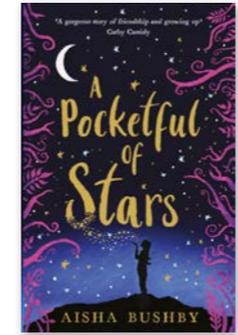
When Lance's class arrives at the Crater Lake activity centre, something isn't quite right. Aside from a weird lack of staff and a very odd manager, there's also the man covered in blood shouting at them.

It's not long before the teachers and other kids in his class start behaving strangely too, so it's up to Lance and his friends to find a way to stop it. But time is ticking, they're exhausted, and if they fall asleep, then all will be lost...

A fast-paced, high-action read full of suspense, scares, twists and turns.

# What's next?

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



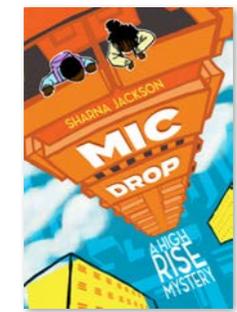
## The Super Miraculous Journey of Freddie Yates

Jenny Pearson, illustrated by Rob Biddulph

Usborne

Freddie has never been bothered by the fact that his dad isn't actually his dad but, when his beloved Grams dies, he's curious about his birth father. And what are best friends for if not to encourage you to start the summer holidays with a massive deception and a disaster-prone trip to a foreign country?

At times sad, funny and even a bit scary, Freddie's journey will have you spitting out a mouthful of crisps and maybe wiping away a tear or two. After all, family isn't just the people who share your name or your DNA.



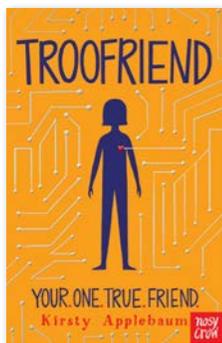
## Mic Drop: A High-Rise Mystery

Sharna Jackson

Knights Of

Up-and-coming popstar TrojKat is recording her latest video at the south London tower block she grew up in. Sisters Nik and Norva are delighted when Katarzyna ropes them in to be part of the shoot. Yet when tragedy strikes, Nik and Norva are there to investigate. Was it really an accident, or did someone have a grudge against Kat?

It's great to see an inner-city crime mystery for kids, as well as two black girl sleuths, and Jackson gives us a twisty, witty novel full of red herrings, sass and adventure.



## TrooFriend

Kirsty Appelbaum

Nosy Crow

Sarah is not impressed when her mum buys her a state-of-the-art android best friend called Ivy; she'd rather have a dog.

But worrying reports soon start emerging from the TrooFriend factory that the androids might actually have feelings – could that explain why Ivy is scared of the dark?

An original and fascinating exploration of artificial intelligence that feels all too relevant, TrooFriend manages to tackle tricky moral questions about human (and android) rights and what actually makes us human.

A thought-provoking story that will have you hooked.



## Hello, Universe

Erin Entrada Kelly

Piccadilly Press

Virgil has a crush on Valencia – a no-nonsense deaf girl at his school who doesn't know he's alive. Needing guidance, he makes an appointment with self-professed kid psychic, Kaori. On his way to her house, Virgil falls foul of the school bully. Can Kaori, Valencia and Kaori's little sister Gen save Virgil before it's too late?

Told through multiple points of view, this evocative, thoughtful book is an intriguing, relatable friendship story. A perfect, easy read for upper primary school children that nonetheless holds nuance and a quirky sensitivity in its pages.

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*Telegraph*

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Frank Cottrell-Boyce



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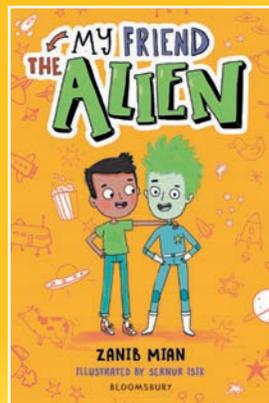
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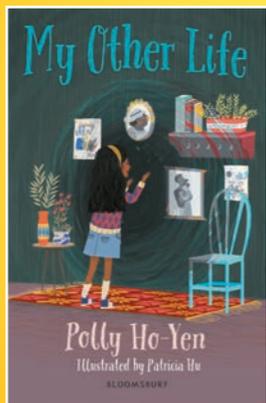
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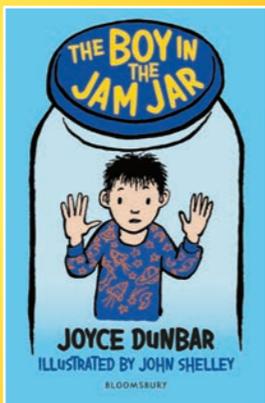
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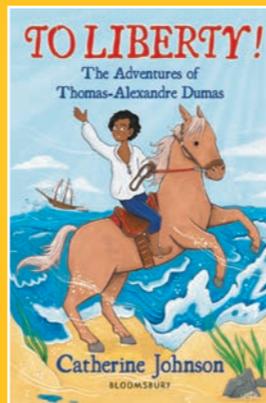
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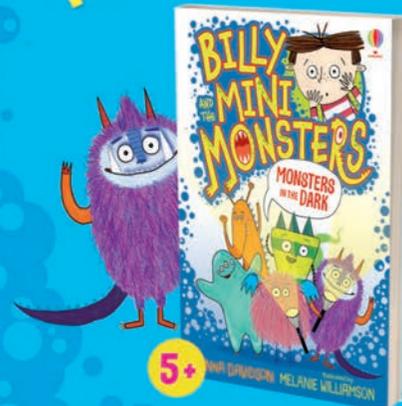


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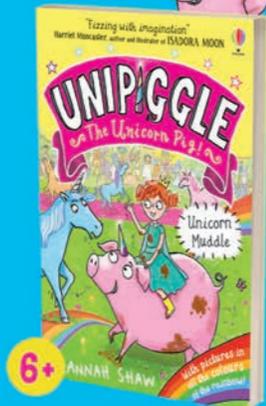
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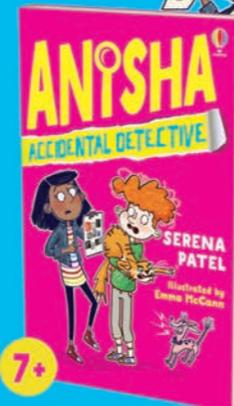
## Meet Billy, Unipiggle, Anisha and Freddie!



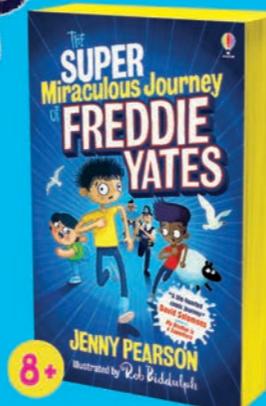
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Dawn Molloy, Librarian,  
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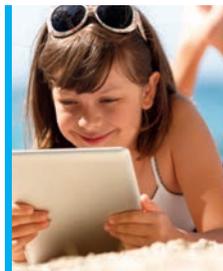


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