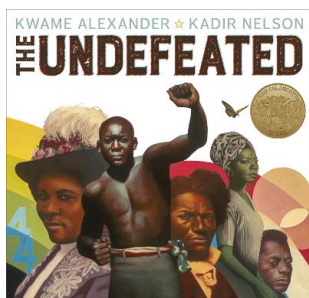


A selection of books especially selected for children in Year 4 (8 - 9 year olds) of average reading ability for the 2023/24 academic year.

If your child is a competent reader or has read all these titles then try the books from the Year 5 list. Alternatively if these books are a little challenging try books from the Year 3 list. Our overall mission is to promote reading for pleasure with quality texts that are perfectly pitched for the age group and the curriculum. We have particularly avoided blockbusters, classic or set texts, known to everyone, so that we can include poetry, stunning information texts and inspirational books in which all children and young people can find themselves reflected.



The Undefeated

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

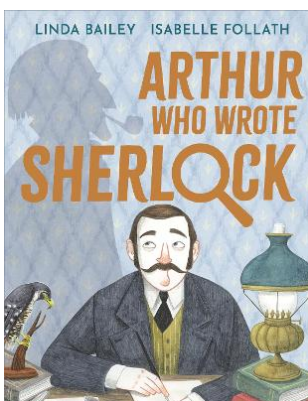
Winner of the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | Shortlisted for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2020 Written for and about “the swift and sweet ones/who hurdled history and opened a world of possible”, for those who “survived America by any means necessary. And the ones who didn’t,” this is an inspiring ode to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



Paradise Sands: A Story of Enchantment

Author: Levi Pinfold **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 03/11/2022

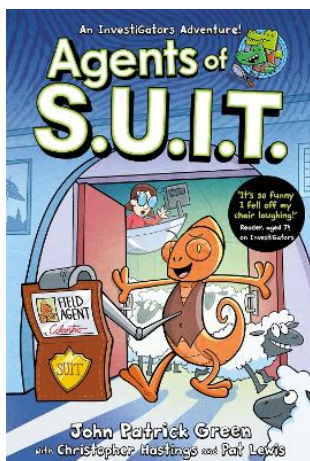
Julia Eccleshare's Pick of the Month November 2022 Award-winning Levi Pinfold tells a haunting tale of enchantment and entrapment in a simple, beautifully formed text and his exquisite and atmospheric illustrations. On a journey through a hot and dry landscape a young girl and her brothers stop to pick flowers. While the brothers are led on to a forbidding palace where their thirst is quenched by plenty of drink and they are cooled by a swim in a beautiful pool, the young girl holds back. She alone avoids being enchanted by the Teller who rules the palace. While the boys are transformed into white birds she makes a deal that saves her life and allows her to bring her brothers home to safety. Levi Penfold's illustrations set the unsettling tone of the story while also providing readers with scope for endless imagination.



Arthur Who Wrote Sherlock

Author: Linda Bailey **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/01/2023

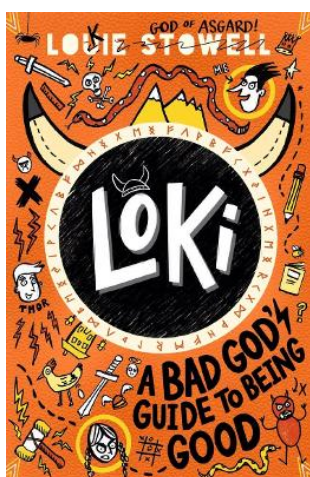
Everyone knows something of Sherlock Holmes, the world's most famous detective, but this handsomely illustrated picture book tells the life story of his creator, Arthur Conan Doyle, and what a life it was. We learn that Arthur's love of stories and storytelling was a comfort at home, where money was short, and at his boarding school with its strict teachers and horrible food. In search of adventures of his own, he went to sea as a young medical officer and was almost eaten by a shark. Back in Edinburgh and working as a doctor, he never stopped writing and it was then that he came up with the idea of the brilliant detective who can solve mysteries purely through his powers of observation and deduction. Success was slow and then enormous, so big that it seemed the only way to protect himself from the pressure was to kill his creation. The story is fascinating, both Conan Doyle's life and his relationship with Holmes, and it casts real light on the creative process and what it's like to be an author. The text is lively and engaging throughout and Isabelle Follath's stylish illustrations full of detail and drama.



Agents of S.U.I.T. A full colour, laugh-out-loud comic book adventure!

Author: John Patrick Green, Christopher Hastings **Format:** Paperback
Release Date: 09/03/2023

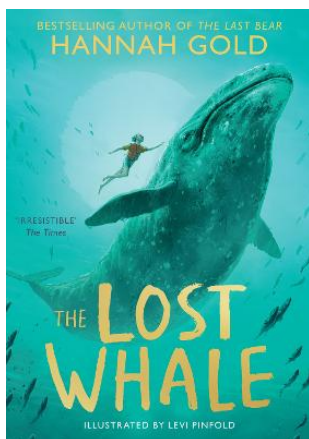
From John Patrick Green, the creator of the side-splitting InvestiGators series, comes Agents of S.U.I.T. - the first in a full colour, laugh-out-loud graphic novel series perfect for fans of Bunny vs Monkey! Meet Cilantro the Chameleon! Newly appointed Agent of S.U.I.T.* Cilantro finally has a chance to prove herself . . . but her first big case is OUT OF THIS WORLD. As she begins to uncover a sheep-led worker's rights revolt and an alien invasion conspiracy, can Cilantro earn her V.E.S.T.** and catch the bad guys? Created by John Patrick Green with cowriter Christopher Hastings and artist Pat Lewis, join the Agents in this standalone but complementary series. *Special Undercover Investigation Teams **Very Exciting Spy Technology



Loki: A Bad God's Guide to Being Good

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

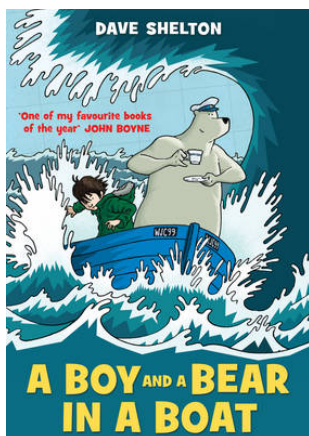
Winner of the Children's Book Award 2023 | Shortlisted for the British Book Awards 2023 Shot-through with wit, myth, friendship and fart jokes, and told through a blend of narrative text, doodles and comic strips, Louie Stowell's *Loki: A Bad God's Guide to Being Good* is a riot from start to finish.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



The Lost Whale

Author: Hannah Gold **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/02/2023

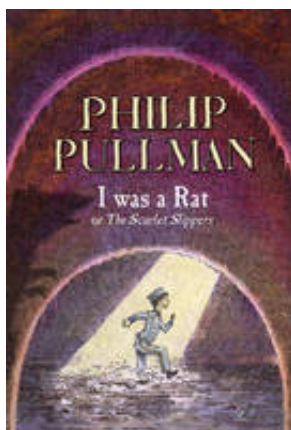
Rio is sent to stay with his grandmother in California whilst his Mum is hospitalised back home in the UK. Unfortunately, Rio only met his grandmother 5 years ago so knows little about her or about the area she lives in the US. Grandmother Fran lives by the Pacific Ocean – so life becomes punctuated by the sound of the sea and waves breaking on the shore. Rio feels totally alone, away from friends and his usual surroundings. That is, until he meets Marina by chance on the harbour. Marina and her dad, Birch, live on a boat and run whale spotting trips for tourists. It is this and the finding of his Mum's 'treasure' box that contains drawings of whales, and especially one who somehow seems to draw Rio in – an individual named White Beak – that helps give Rio a focus and a way back from feeling adrift. The story is totally engrossing – once I started reading I had to read it in one go! Gold writes about animal adventures in a completely natural way, combining lots of information with a strong story line and characters which evoke our empathy. It's a story you can literally dive into, enjoying the vicarious thrills of spotting – and along the way – saving grey whales. As I read a proof copy I had no chance to see the illustrations from award winning illustrator Levi Pinfold – but, if the author/illustrator pairing is even half as good as Gold's previous novel *The Last Bear*, then we are in for an absolute treat! A read that appeals to anyone interested in ecological themes.



A Boy and a Bear in a Boat

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

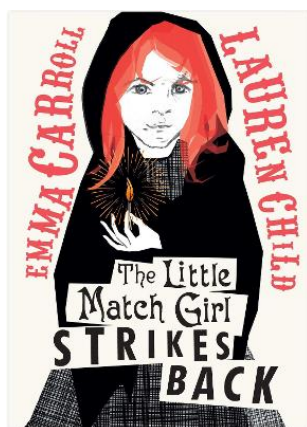
Winner of the Branford Boase Award 2013, the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2013 & the Costa Children's Book Awards 2012 An amazing adventure follows when a boy takes what he thinks will be a short ride in a boat with a bear. But the ride is not a short one... Soon, the boat is in the middle of an empty sea and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



I Was A Rat!

Author: Philip Pullman **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/11/2004

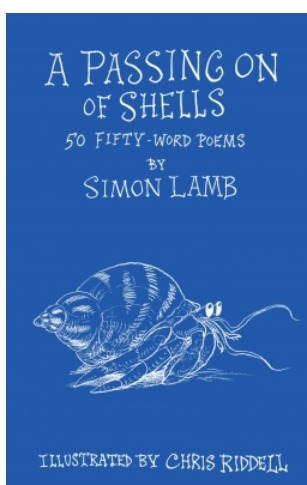
Acclaimed author Philip Pullman turns his hand to a stunning and original story for younger readers. Who is Roger? He says he was a rat - and some of the time he behaves like a rat. But, he is also a small boy. Or, he could be the Monster of the sewers...Everyone has a view - including The Daily Scourge - who tells their own version in screaming newspaper headlines. There is just one person who really knows who Roger is. And she's the princess...Cleverly, Pullman weaves together strands of story from different sources creating a fast-paced and multi-layered adventure. ~ Julia Eccleshare Perfect for Reluctant Readers as well as keen readers. To view other titles we think are suitable for reluctant readers please click [here](#).



The Little Match Girl Strikes Back

Author: Emma Carroll **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 15/09/2022

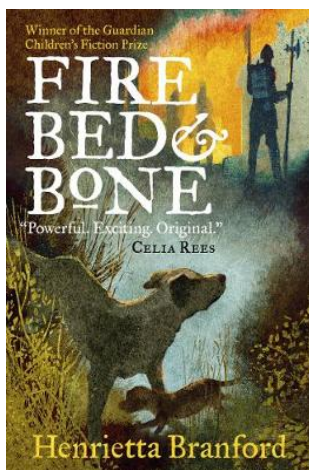
Award winning author Emma Carroll and former Children's Laureate Lauren Child bring a fresh twist and a whoosh of magic to one of Hans Christian Andersen's best-loved stories. As in the original, this Little Match Girl, a feisty red head called Bridie Sweeney, is also poor and cold and hungry. She makes what money she can by selling matches while her mother struggles to keep a roof over the family's head by working in the factory where the matches are made. But Bridie is never going to accept that life can be so unfair. Why should the rich live in great comfort and the poor suffer? Bridie strikes back! Helped by some powerful magic, she soon makes great and wonderful changes to everything!



A Passing On of Shells

Author: Simon Lamb **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 23/02/2023

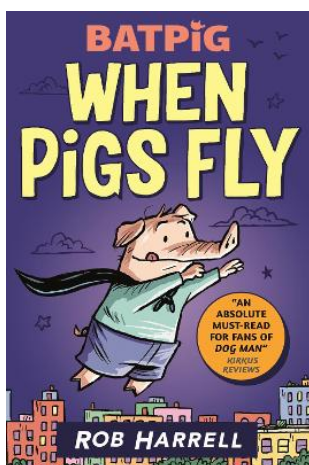
March 2023 Debut of the Month | Shortlisted for the Week Junior Book Awards 2023 A carefully curated selection of very brief but meaningful poems which will amuse, inspire and provoke readers. Chris Riddell's attractive line illustrations wittily bring out the key points of each adding to the enjoyment of the poems and the book in general. As do the beautiful production values of the book which make it a joy to dip into again and again.



Fire, Bed and Bone

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

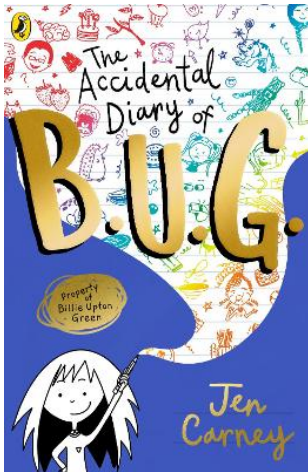
A most welcome reissue of a superb piece of accessible historical writing told from a most unusual viewpoint. Ultimately uplifting, this is an unflinching look at issues of social justice at the time of the Peasants Revolt. Marcus Sedgwick, who won the Branford Boase Award in 2001, says: "Fire, Bed and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



Batpig: When Pigs Fly

Author: Rob Harrell **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/08/2022

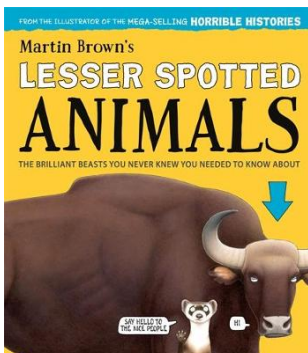
Some pigs are born great, other pigs have greatness thrust upon them. BATPIG follows the amazing, porktastic adventures of Gary Yorkshire - an entirely normal piglet whose world is turned upside down when he's bitten by his friend, Brooklyn the bat, and develops the power of flight! And what could Gary do with this newfound talent other than become a superhero? Alternating between Batpig's origin story and a furious and hilarious battle with his nemesis, Repto-Man, this is a brilliantly funny and skilfully rendered commercial young graphic novel series, with each book containing two separate stories. Perfect for fans of Dav Pilkey and John Patrick Green.



The Accidental Diary of B.U.G.

Author: Jen Carney **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 15/04/2021

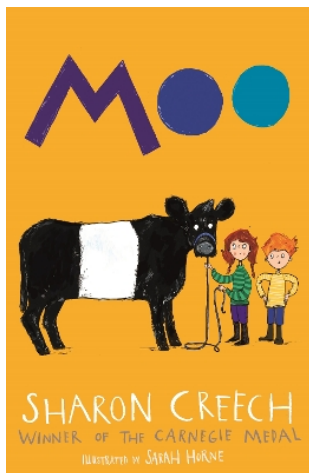
May 2021 Book of the Month Ten-year-old Billie Upton Green opens up her doodle diary to readers, and what a treat it proves: a fabulously lively and idiosyncratic record of an eventful couple of weeks in her life. When a new girl joins her class, Billie is determined to make her feel welcome, even though Janey seems a bit of a show-off. She's disconcerted that Janey doesn't know what it means to be adopted, like Billie, or that you can have two mums, also like Billie. It gets harder to like Janey though when it appears she's stealing Billie's best friend, Layla. This also seems, to Billie, to put Janey in the frame for a sudden spate of thefts at their school, but the culprit is someone else altogether and by the end of the book, Billie, Layla and Janey are firm friends, the three of them performing a special dance at Billie's mums' wedding. Readers will love Billie's adventures, and her funny, doodle-filled way of sharing them, as much as they love the Dork Diaries or Wimpy Kid stories, and it's great too to see such a warm celebration of diverse family life.



Lesser Spotted Animals

Author: Martin Brown **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/04/2017

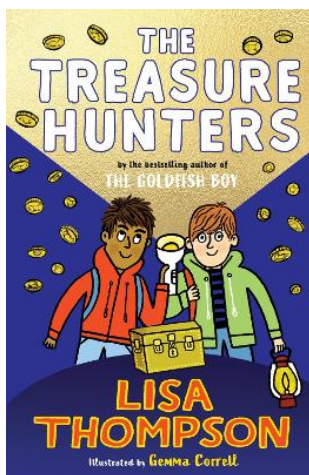
Winner of the UKLA 2018 Book Award 7-11 This is no ordinary animal book, you won't find the usual suspects in its page, no tigers, pandas, bears here. Instead be prepared to be amazed by animals you've never heard of, from the Cuban solenodon (one of the few mammals with a poisonous bite) to the stinky but useful zorilla, aka Africa's pongiest predator. Martin 'Horrible Histories' illustrator' Brown celebrates a host of animals that deserve to be better know, in a book that offers a refreshingly different approach to natural history. Each page is packed with fascinating information, cleverly laid out with frequent jokes and cartoon asides adding to the fun. At the same time, there's a serious message about the threat to these creatures from humans, and habitat loss.



Moo

Author: Sharon Creech **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/04/2021

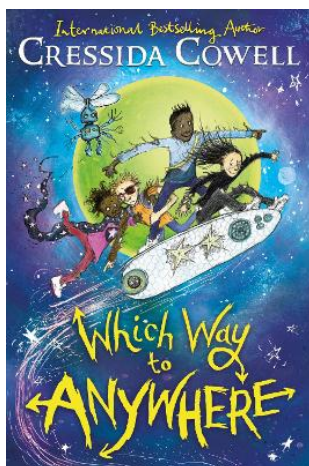
Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 7-10 Reena and Luke's lives change forever and in completely unexpected ways when they move from New York City to live in Maine. The surroundings and lifestyle are completely different, but the biggest drivers of change are their encounters with a cow called Zora. Sent by their parents to help Zora's owner Mrs Falala, one of the most doughty and memorable eccentrics in fiction, they are pushed and pummelled (often literally) into becoming proficient cow handlers. There is so much more to learn too, not least about Mrs Falala. The story is told in a blend of poems and prose that is perfect for the story, conjuring up unforgettable images of the characters and the setting. Sharon Creech won the Carnegie Medal for Ruby Holler and Moo is just as original and heart-warming. Congratulations to new independent publisher Guppy Books for bringing it to readers in this country.



The Treasure Hunters

Author: Lisa Thompson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 13/04/2023

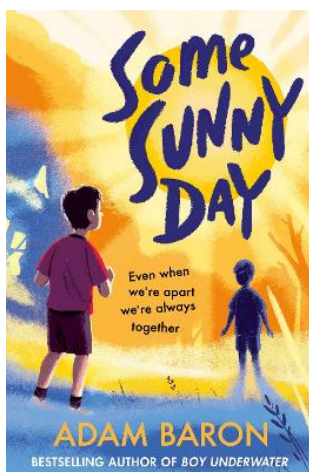
A gripping, page-turning mystery adventure from the bestselling author of modern classic *The Goldfish Boy* When Lonely Vincent is forced to go on an outdoor activity weekend with three other kids from his class, he's counting the seconds until he can escape home. But one of his classmates is hiding a secret: she's convinced there's pirate treasure buried deep within a nearby mountain. Suddenly, this boring trip becomes an exciting adventure! But a thief is hot on the trail, intent on stealing the loot for themselves... can the Treasure Hunters work together to stop them? for fans of Frank Cottrell Boyce's *Millions* and classic action adventure movie *The Goonies* funny, moving and a real page-turner a sensitive depiction of a hero with dyspraxia PRAISE FOR LISA THOMPSON BOOKS *Goldfish Boy* an utterly captivating read BookTrust This empathetic debut is a middle-grade whodunit with a very special heart. Kirkus a heart-warming tale Books for Keeps *The Light Jar* Shortlisted for the Children's Book Awards 2019, Books for Older Readers Category bags of empathy to a deftly plotted tale *The Guardian* A hugely endearing boy hero *The Times* *The Day I Was Erased* Lisa Thompson's light touch in delicately exploring emotional wellbeing means the story can be enjoyed by younger children and teenagers alike and can help begin important conversations about memory loss, parental discord and the meaning of friendship. BookTrust



Which Way to Anywhere

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

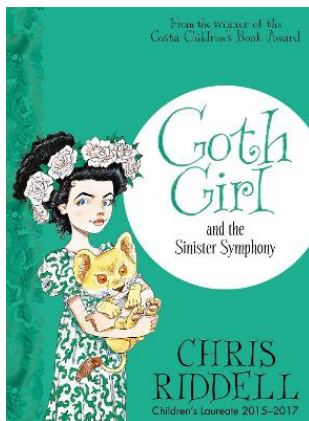
Best-selling children's author and former Children's Laureate Cressida Cowell's *Which Way to Anywhere* is a fantasy story and a family story that zings with magic, warmth and adventure. It is a firecracker of vast imagination that will leave its readers braver and kinder. Against a background of wild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



Some Sunny Day

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

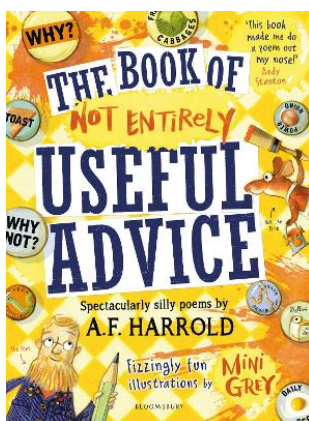
July 2022 Book of the Month Brimming with kindness, and voiced with humour by its adorable Charlton-obsessed protagonist, Adam Baron's *Some Sunny Day* evokes all the fears and frustrations of pandemic lockdown from a child's perspective. With a cast of gloriously authentic characters, it's also a beautiful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



Goth Girl and the Sinister Symphony

Author: Chris Riddell **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 20/09/2018

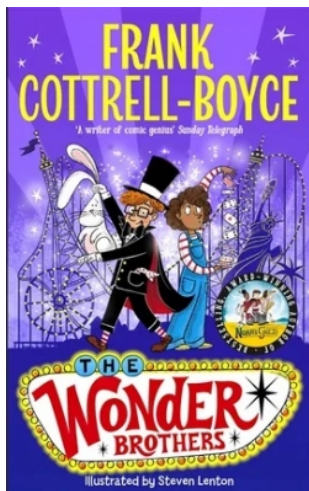
Best-selling Goth Girl is back for an action-packed new adventure in this stunningly produced volume by former Children's Laureate Chris Riddell which has the additional delight of a mini-book, Fable of a Faun, tucked into it. Lord Goth is turning Ghastly-Gorm Hall into the venue for Gothstock, a sensational music festival that will match his home. Naturally, Ada Goth is thrilled at the thought but will it all go to plan? In both words and pictures Chris Riddell creates an amazing cast of characters and the most original escapades in which they are all entangled.



The Book of Not Entirely Useful Advice

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

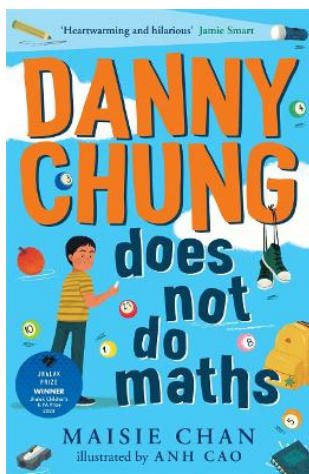
Two phenomenally talented people are united in this book, and it is hard to know which of them – poet A.F. Harrold or illustrator Mini Grey – had the most fun creating it. Either way, the end product is glorious, an entirely essential collection of poems offering unforgettable advice on an extraordinary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



The Wonder Brothers

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

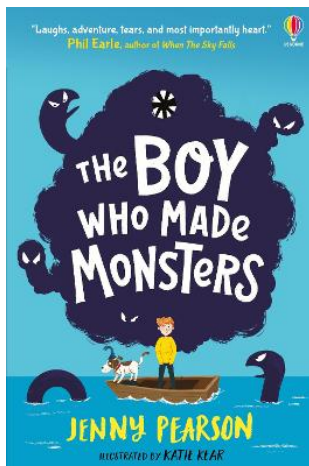
You can absolutely guarantee that any new Frank Cottrell Boyce adventure will keep you and the young readers you give it to, absolutely entranced until the last page. He has performed his writing magic ever since his Carnegie medal winning Millions first appeared and real magic, the sort practised by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



Danny Chung Does Not Do Maths

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

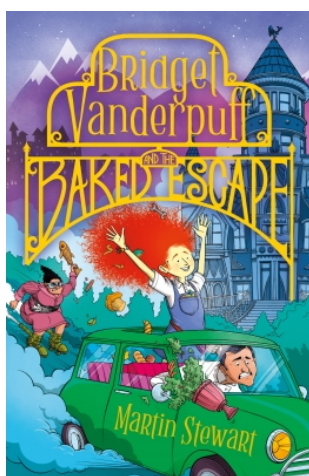
Winner of The Branford Boase Award 2022 | Shortlisted for the Blue Peter Awards 2022 Best Story | Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2023 ages 7-10 Danny Chung loves art. Unfortunately, everyone else – parents and schoolfriends alike - thinks he should love maths. Then his grandmother arrives from China,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



The Boy Who Made Monsters

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

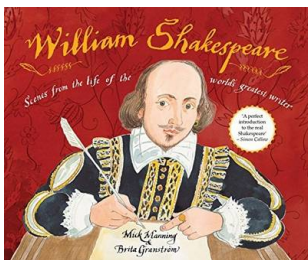
July 2023 Book of the Month Benji McLaughlin is a self-confessed visionary and resolutely hopeful, no matter the circumstances, and his are very tough. His parents are missing after an accident at sea in which his big brother Stanley also nearly died, and the two of them have been moved to live with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



Bridget Vanderpuff and the Baked Escape

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

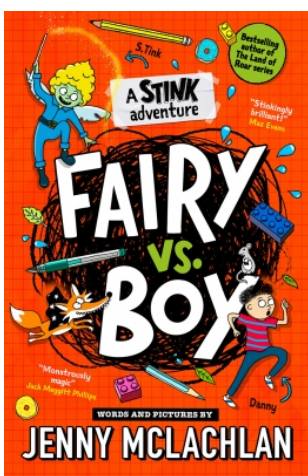
There are orphan stories with bold, indomitable orphans escaping cruel and unusual treatment, and then there's this orphan story, which is wonderfully idiosyncratic, full of imagination and a celebration of blended families, baking and ingenuity. Bridget has experienced a truly awful life at Miss Acrid's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



William Shakespeare Scenes from the Life of the World's Greatest Writer

Author: Mick Manning **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/03/2016

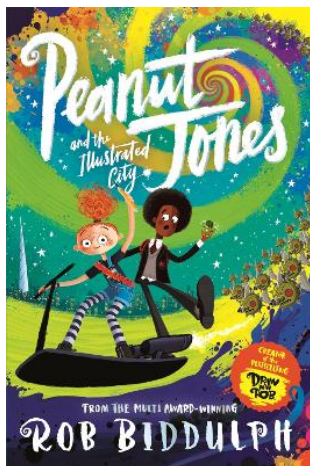
Shortlisted for the English Picture Book Award 2016 Mick Manning and Brita Granström have developed a picture book approach to non-fiction that brings their subjects to vivid life. Beautifully illustrated throughout in coloured pencil and watercolour and with pen and ink for the hand lettering, this is beautiful to look at and packed with information. There is lots on Shakespeare's childhood – stories of the famous as children always catch the imagination of young readers – and the book provides a very clear impression of Tudor life. It explains the 'lost years', when no-one really knows what Shakespeare was up to, and cleverly puts the plays in the context of Shakespeare's life and times. There are retellings in a sort of comic-strip of some of the most important plays – Hamlet, Macbeth, A Midsummer Night's Dream and Romeo and Juliet – while comic-strip style speech bubbles throughout let readers hear Shakespeare's words and world. Children can read this book in so many different ways, and Simon Callow, quoted on the cover, is right when he says this is a perfect introduction to the real Shakespeare.



Stink: Fairy vs Boy: A Stink Adventure

Author: Jenny McLachlan **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 16/03/2023

April 2023 Book of the Month Is Stink the Worst. Ever. Fairy? Readers will laugh out loud at this madcap story, as recorded by 11 year Danny Todd in his diary, about a fairy who seems to break all the rules. Danny sets out to tease his sister, who believes strongly in fairies, that he can summon one. Not believing a word of it, he follows 6 invented steps including Knocking on a Fairy Door and Saying a Magic Rhyme. Much to his surprise, a real life fairy appears! What's more, the fairy promises to stay with Danny until he dies! Danny knows that sounds like a terrible threat but he doesn't know quite how bad it is until Stink starts biting his ear to keep him in check! From then onwards, Danny lives in constant fear of Stink and the terrible things that happen next. How will he ever escape??



Peanut Jones and the Illustrated City

Author: Rob Biddulph **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 17/03/2022

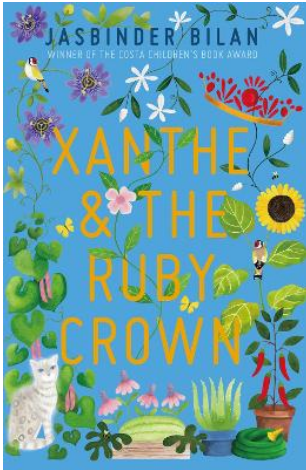
The first novel from the lockdown #drawwithrob hero for schools and families everywhere, is an absolute triumph. The first in what is sure to become a best selling and popular series introduces us to the amazing Peanut Jones. Her artist father has gone missing, and her own love of drawing is being stifled in her new school and not valued by her mother. The discovery of a magic pencil, that literally brings drawings to life, enables her to draw a door and step through into another world, where she hopes she may be able to find her father. Peanut is aided and accompanied by her new science-loving friend, Rockwell, and her genius younger sibling, Little Bit. Together they face many dangers as they travel through the land of Chroma, not least the villainous Mr. White, who wants to extinguish all colour and creativity. Chroma is a superbly imagined world and each district and many of the vivid characters have a distinctly artistic flavour – The Ink District, Warholia, Vincent Fields etc. Little Tail the magic pencil is also known Pencil Number One, the very first pencil created by inventor Nicolas-Jaques Conte. There is actually a glossary at the end of the book to give readers a mini education in Art History and ensure they can appreciate all the references- very useful for parents and teachers! This is a book suffused with the joy of art, by an artist and for budding artists everywhere, but most of all it is a hugely enjoyable, witty and exciting story that will captivate readers of all ages. Highly recommended.



Brand New Boy

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

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



Xanthe & the Ruby Crown

Author: Jasbinder Bilan **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/03/2023

A stunning new children's novel from the Costa Award-winning author of *Asha & the Spirit Bird*. Xanthe loves visiting her gran in her flat with its rooftop garden. But Nani is becoming forgetful - and Xanthe wishes she could help her, if only she knew how. A mysterious cat shows her a way. It leads Xanthe to clues about Nani's childhood, and how, long ago, she had to escape her old life in Africa for a new one in Britain ... The fourth novel by bestselling, Costa Award-winning author Jasbinder Bilan; author of *Asha & the Spirit Bird*, *Tamarind & the Star of Ishta* and *Aarti & the Blue Gods Follows* archaeology-obsessed Xanthe as she uncovers her family's secrets. A tale of secrets, family, refugees, belonging and love. Set in a tower block in Nottingham, bringing Jasbinder's trademark magical realism to an urban, everyday setting.