

Reading Spine 2022-2023



CHIRTON C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL
The Little School with a Big Heart



EQUA
Multi Academy Trust

Chirton School Reading Spine

This whole school reading spine covers a wide range of genres and themes which we believe all children should have access to by the time they leave us in Year 6. The books have been carefully selected to ensure that they allow each child to see themselves within the stories and to enjoy listening to them. Children equally have the opportunity to read them for their own enjoyments and are actively encouraged to do so, with teachers recommending similar style books which may interest them (www.thereaderteacher.com) This is an ever evolving reading spine as new and exciting books emerge and the need to cover challenging themes continues to be of relevance.

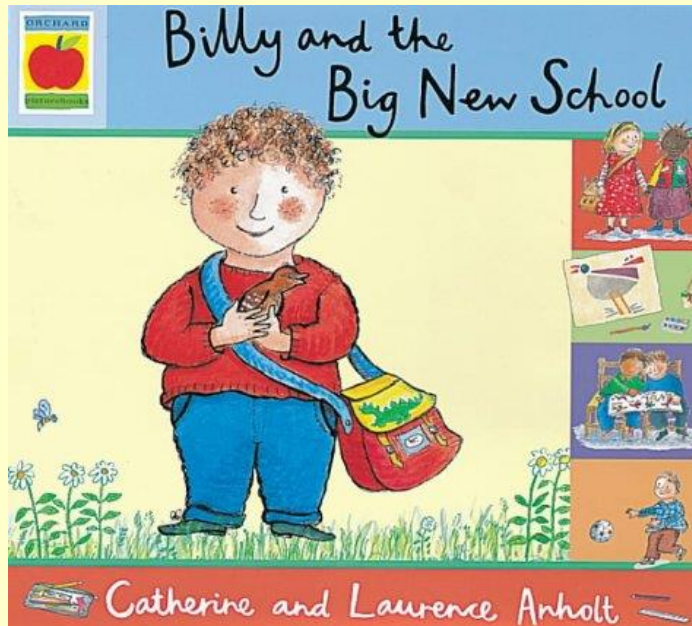


KS1

Billy and the Big New School

A classic picture book story to reassure children who are nervous about starting school.

Billy is not at all sure about starting school. In fact, he wishes he could stay at home with his mum. But with some gentle encouragement and the help of a new friend, Billy soon discovers that school can be a lot of fun!



Genre	Fiction
Themes	New beginnings, friendship



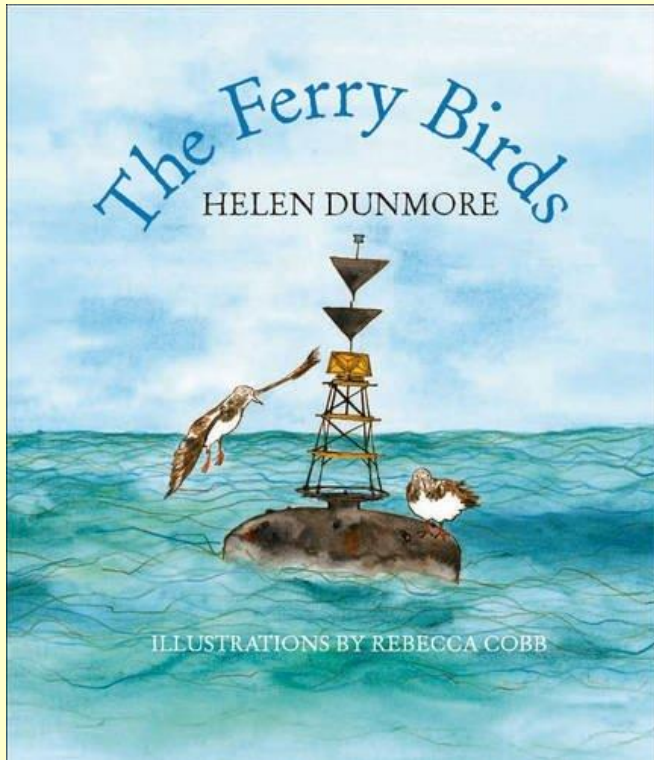
KS1

The Ferry Birds

Dunmore has spun a magical story to show how a small boy in a remote island setting who misses his Dad, is reassured by a make-believe trip with the local turnstones to visit him in the Far North.

Readers may assume that Jago's dream is inspired by his Gran (a former World War II Air Transport Auxiliary pilot (attagirl), who flew Spitfires from the factory to airfields), his first trip on his own to visit her, and his yearning for his father, often absent on trips far away in Canada.

The illustrations extend the narrative, with much detail to be explored by the reader, both young and old, who can profitably research the wider story of both birds and pilots.



Genre	Adventure
Themes	Family, friendship, grandparents

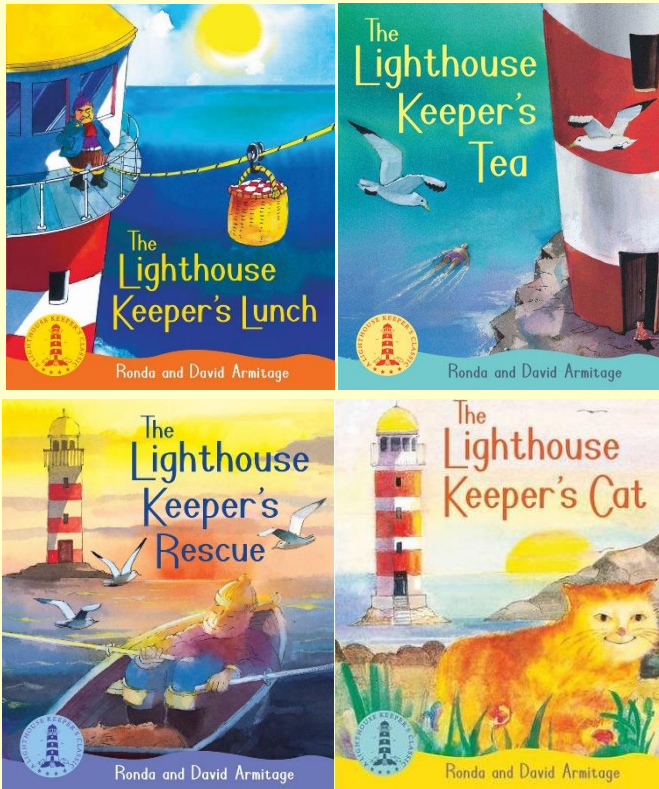


KS1

The Lighthouse Keeper's ...

Once there was a lighthouse keeper called Mr. Grinling. At night time he lived in a small white cottage perched high on the cliffs, and in the daytime he rowed out to his lighthouse to clean and polish the light. The Lighthouse Inspectors have decided that it's time for Mr Grinling to retire.

But when a stranded whale desperately needs the Grinlings' help, the Lighthouse Inspectors realise that Mr Grinling is still the best man for the job.



Genre

Adventure, action

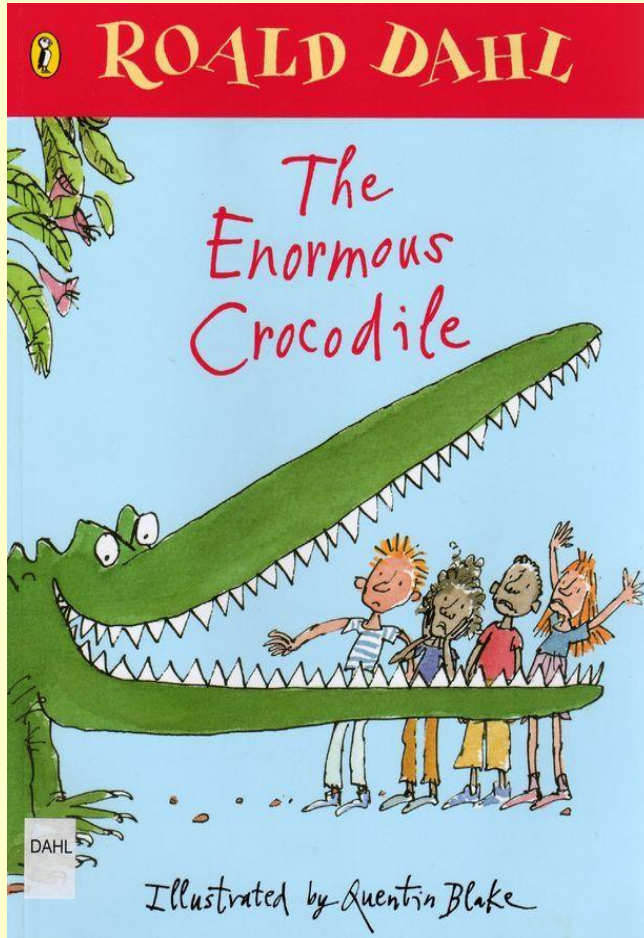
Themes

Friendship, perseverance



KS1

The Enormous Crocodile



The Enormous Crocodile is planning what to have for his lunch. This foul fiend - the greediest croc in the whole river - wants to eat something juicy and delicious. His teeth sparkle like knives in the sun and he's getting hungrier and hungrier.

But what can the greedy grumptious brute guzzle up? Beware - he's looking for someone ...someone who looks a lot like YOU!

Genre	Adventure
Themes	Trust, friendship,

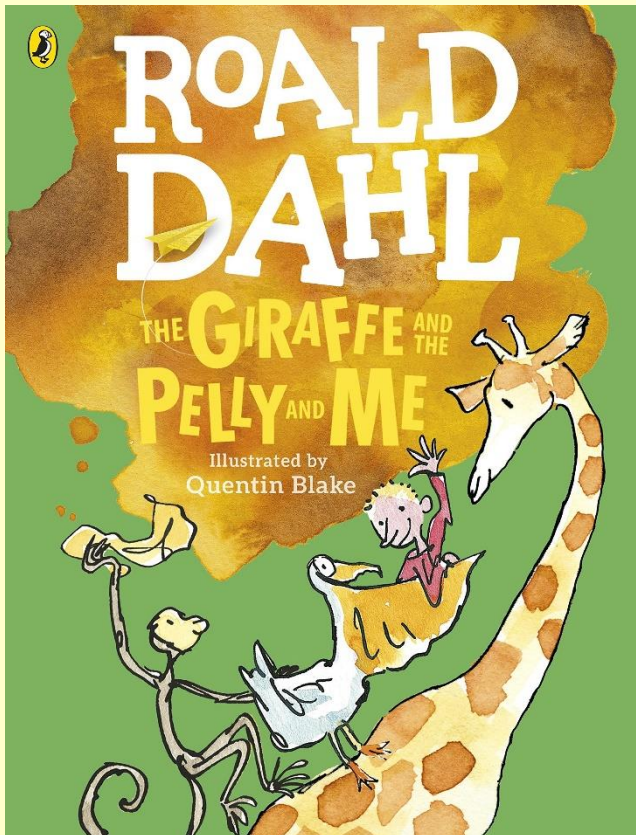


KS1

The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me

The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me is a classic Roald Dahl story.

Billy's biggest wish is to turn a weird old wooden house into a wonderful sweet shop. But then he finds a giraffe, a pelly and a monkey living inside - they're the Ladderless Window Cleaners! Who needs ladders when you've got a giraffe? They become best friends and when they meet the richest man in all England, there's a chance Billy's scrumptious-galumptious dream just might come true...



Genre

Animals, humour

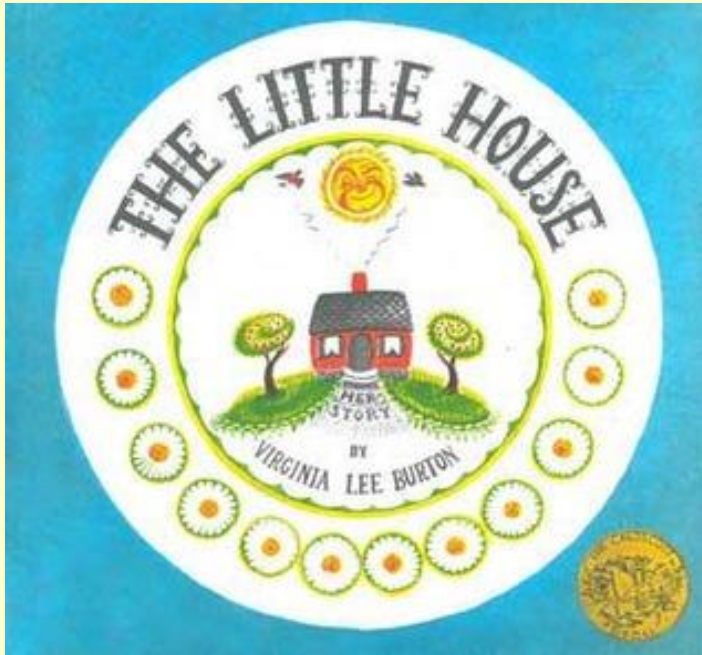
Themes

Friendship, wishes, money



KS1

The Little House



The Little House, a poignant story of a cute country cottage that becomes engulfed by the city that grows up around it. The house has an expressive face of windows and doors, and even the feelings of a person, so she's sad when she's surrounded by the dirty, noisy city's hustle and bustle: "She missed the field of daisies / and the apple trees dancing in the moonlight."

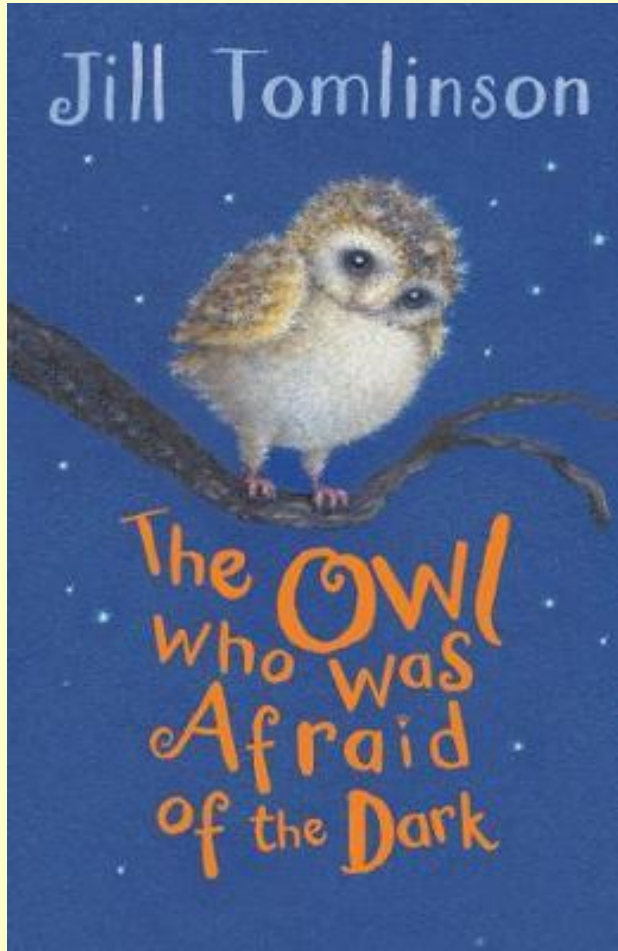
Fortunately, there's a happy ending, as the house is taken back to the country where she belongs.

Genre	Fiction
Themes	Seasons, feelings, belonging



KS1

The Owl who was afraid of the dark



Plop the baby Barn Owl is afraid of the dark. He's sure dark is nasty! Then Mrs Barn Owl sends him down from his nest-hole to ask about the dark, and he meets a little boy waiting for the fireworks to begin, an old lady, a scout out camping, a girl who tells him about Father Christmas, a man with a telescope and a black cat who takes him exploring.

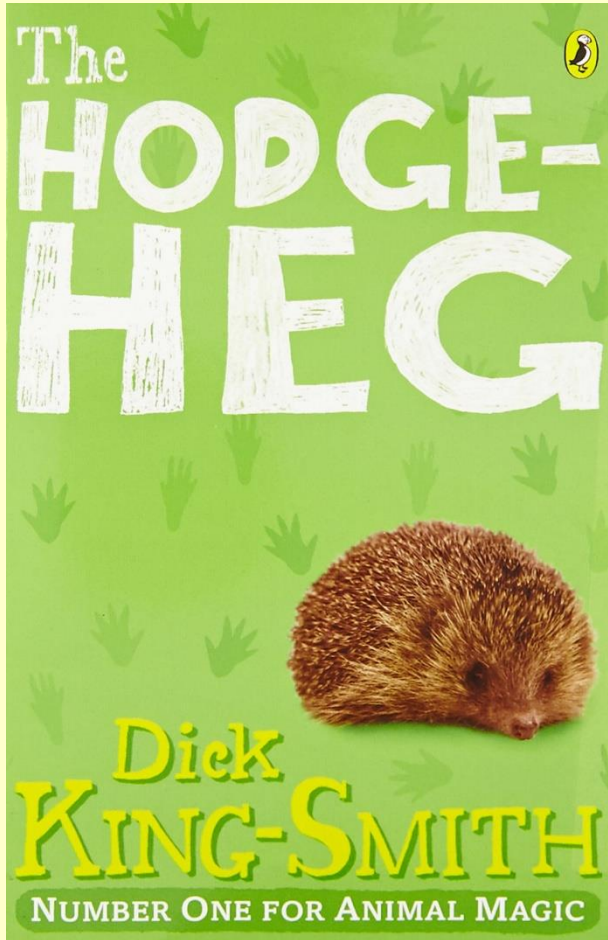
Is Plop a night bird after all?

Genre	Comedy, adventure, family
Themes	family, safety, bravery, facing fears



KS1

The Hodgehog



Max, the hedgehog
who becomes a hodgehog,
who becomes a hero!

Max's family dreams of reaching the Park. But no one has ever found a safe way of crossing the very busy road. Young Max, who is brighter than the average hedgehog, is determined to solve the problem.

Genre	Comedy, adventure
Themes	heroism, safety, family

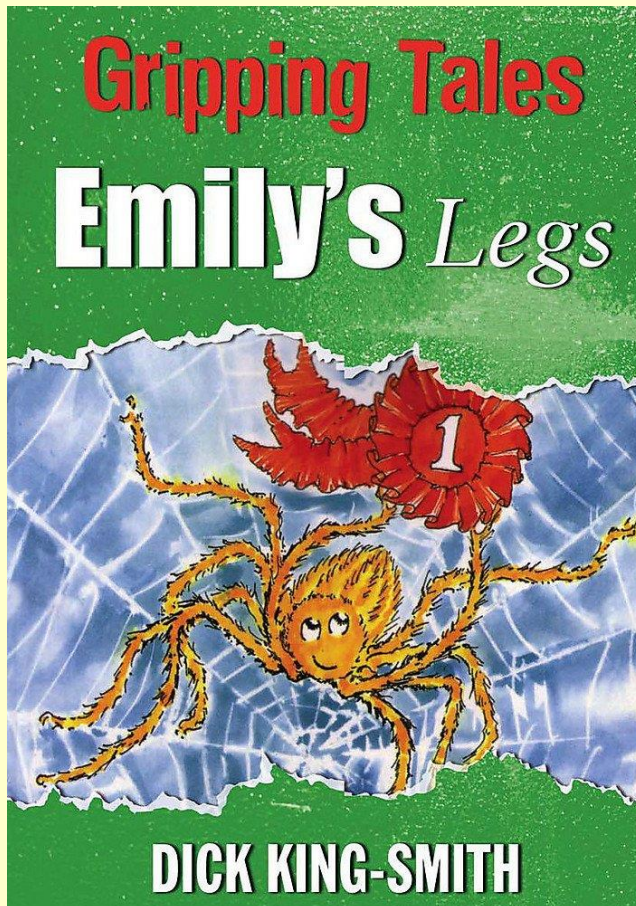


KS1

Emily's Legs

In four chapters, King-Smith tells the tale of Emily, the spider who wins all the Spider Races and discovers it's because she has not eight but TEN legs!

Rejected by her parents and siblings, she ends up being sucked up by a Hoover... will she ever find someone who accepts her for who she is?



Genre

Fiction

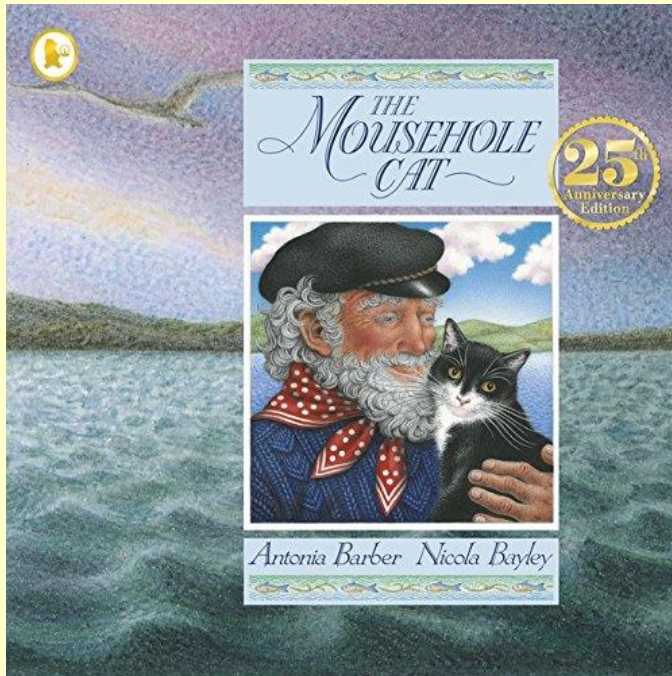
Themes

Acceptance, animals



KS1

The Mousehole Cat



A much-anticipated, beautiful new edition of a modern classic, this is the stunningly illustrated story of the seaside village of Mousehole Cornwall, where Mowzer the cat lives happily with old fisherman Tom - Tom who rocks the rocking chair just right, and catches fresh fish for dinner every night. Their life is a happy one - until one terrible winter, the Great Storm-Cat comes clawing and snarling and leaping at the harbour walls, so that no boat can go out to sea to fish.

Soon, with Christmas coming, there is no food left in Mousehole. It is then that Mowzer and Tom set out to brave the fury of the waves together, and discover that it might just need a cat's perspective to understand - and tame - the ferocious ways of the Great Storm-Cat sea...

Genre	Fiction, action
Themes	Friendship, bravery, oceans, storms

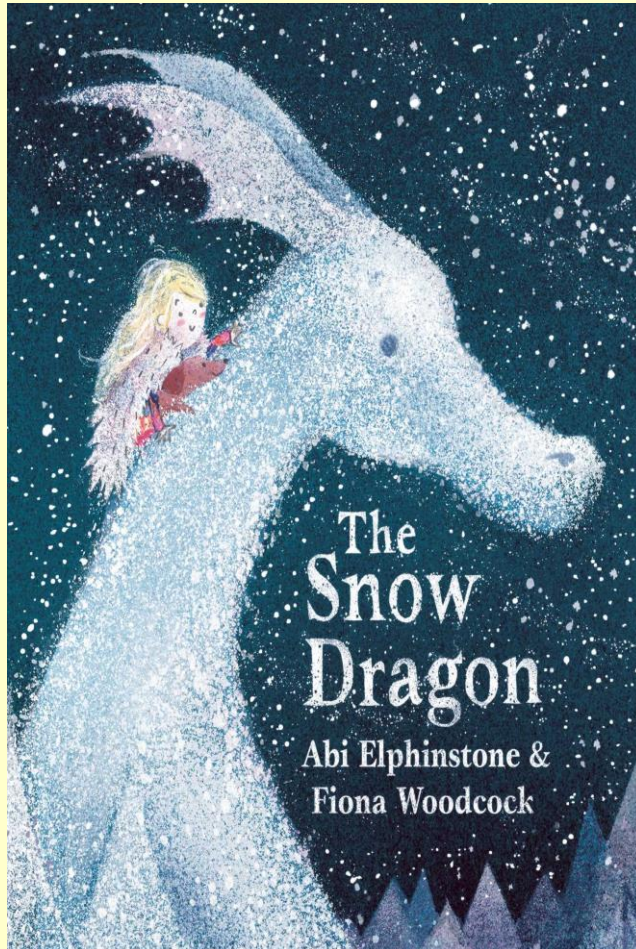


KS1

The Snow Dragon

You can be late for many things in life, but you should never keep an adventure waiting...

In Griselda Bone's gloomy orphanage, daydreaming is banned, skipping is forbidden and Christmas is well and truly cancelled. But for Phoebe and her sausage dog, Herb, is it possible that magic awaits in the swirling, snow-filled air?

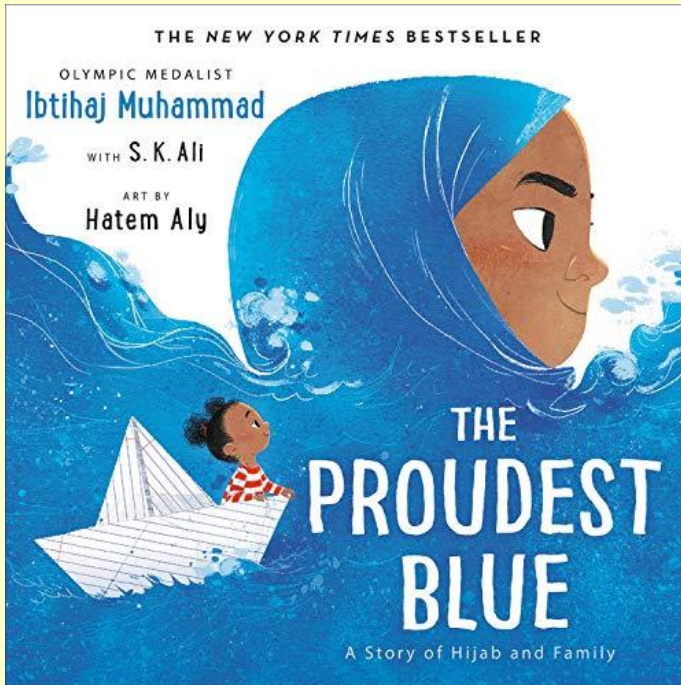


Genre	Adventure, magic,
Themes	Animals, friendship, magic, Christmas



KS1

The Proudest Blue



It's Faizah's first day of school and she's got a brand-new backpack and light-up shoes. For her older sister, Asiya, it's her first day of wearing a hijab at school. Faizah sees her sister as a princess wearing her beautiful blue hijab, but not everyone at school sees it this way. Instead, they are confused and say hurtful things to Asiya. But with wise words from their mother and understanding from their friends, Faizah and Asiya find new ways to be strong.

Inspired by the experiences of Olympic medallist Ibtihaj Muhammad, this is a beautiful and powerful story about the bond shared between siblings and being proud of yourself and your beliefs.

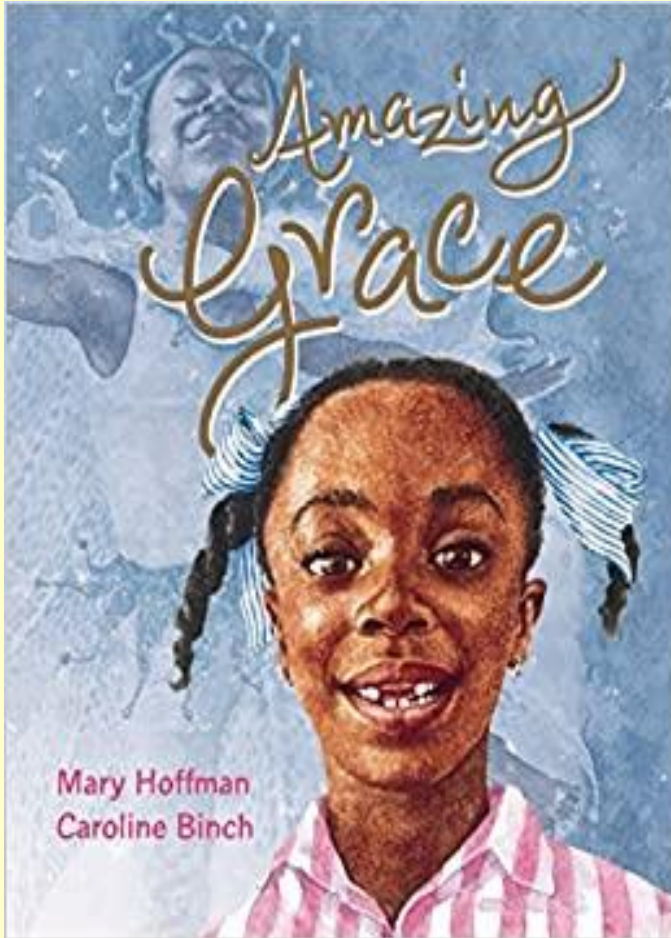
The playful illustrations capture the imagination of the younger sister and complement the poetic text. There is a message at the end from the authors about the background of the story, which will promote questions and discussion with young readers about living in a multicultural world.

Genre	Picture book, diversity
Themes	Religion, spirituality, bullying, siblings



KS1

Amazing Grace



Grace loves to act out stories. Sometimes she plays the leading part, sometimes she is 'a cast of thousands.' When her school decides to perform Peter Pan, Grace is longing to play Peter, but her classmates say that Peter was a boy, and besides, he wasn't black...

But Grace's Ma and Nana tell her she can be anything she wants if she puts her mind to it...

Genre	Picture book, Diversity
Themes	Following your dreams, school, BAME, feelings

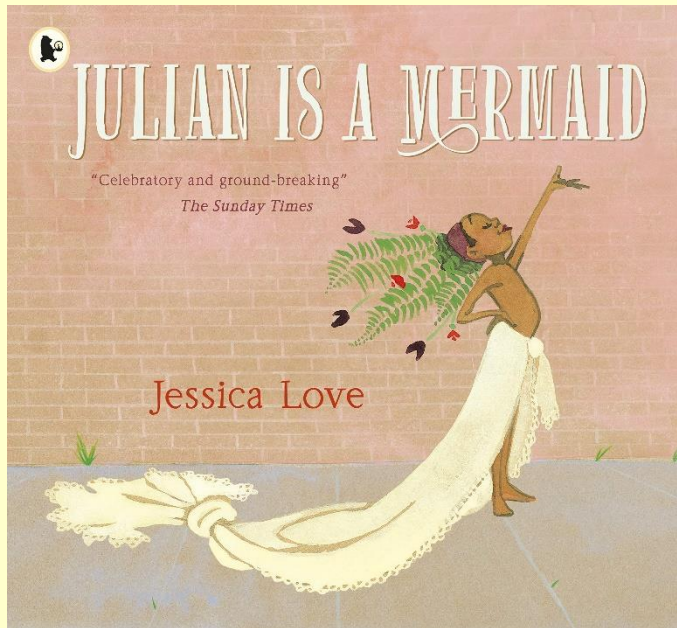


KS1

Julian is a mermaid

Julian is out with Nana when he notices three women dressed as mermaids. In his heart of hearts – we see it described over three fabulous wordless spreads – Julian knows he is a mermaid too and while Nana takes a bath he sets out to transform himself into one.

Nana's response is life-affirming and the two head out to join the mermaid party. The illustrations dazzle and as a celebration of individuality, the imagination, freedom and love, it can't be beaten.



Genre	Picture book, Diversity
Themes	Inclusivity, Family, BAME

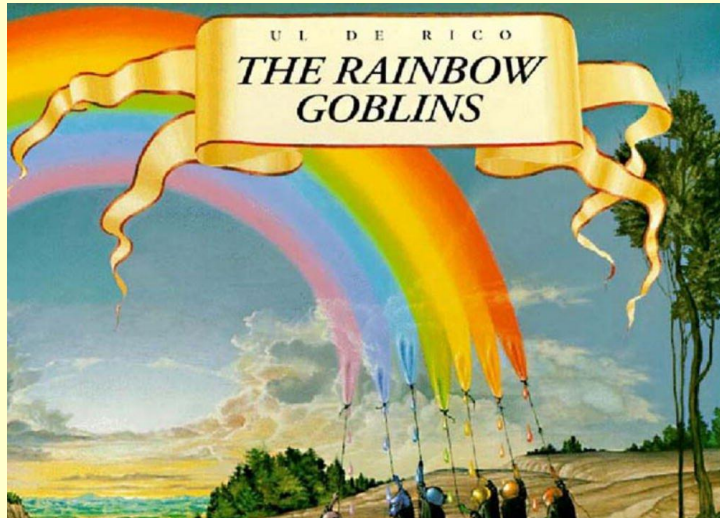


KS1

The Rainbow Goblins

Goblins who feast on the colours of the rainbow come to the valley where rainbows are born to steal the rainbows away and eat them.

The valley knows of the goblins arrival and make a plan to thwart the wicked creatures. Led by the devious Yellow, the goblins take their rainbow-catching nets and move stealthily through the grass to where a rainbow is forming. Just as they throw their nets into the air, the rainbow disappears. The nets, empty of their prey, fall back on the goblins and ensnare them. When the goblins are well and truly caught, the flowers release the colours of the rainbow that they have hidden from the goblin. The colours pour out and drown the goblins and the rainbow, to thank the flowers who have saved it, turn them into beautiful rainbow birds who fly across the valley in freedom.

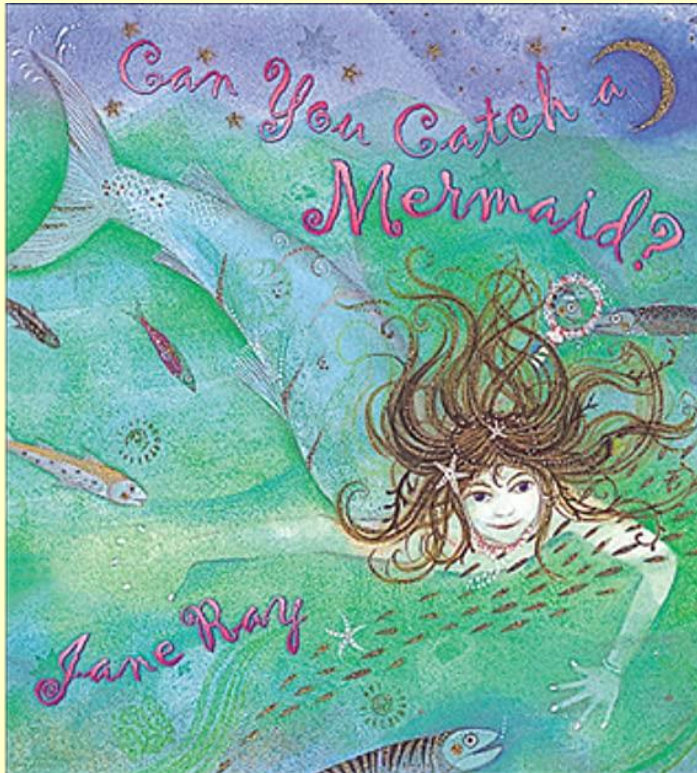


Genre	Fantasy
Themes	Nature, rainbows,



KS1

Can you catch a mermaid?



Have you ever seen a mermaid? Eliza has! And this is the bewitching tale of how she and a little mermaid became the most inseparable of friends . . . Eliza lives next to the sea, with her father, a fisherman. Eliza doesn't know why, but she's always felt different from the other children... So when her father goes fishing, Eliza plays alone.

Until one day, a mysterious new girl appears on the beach, with long greeny-gold hair and pale, pale skin. The two soon become inseparable. But when the time comes, can Eliza let her new friend return to her home under the sea?

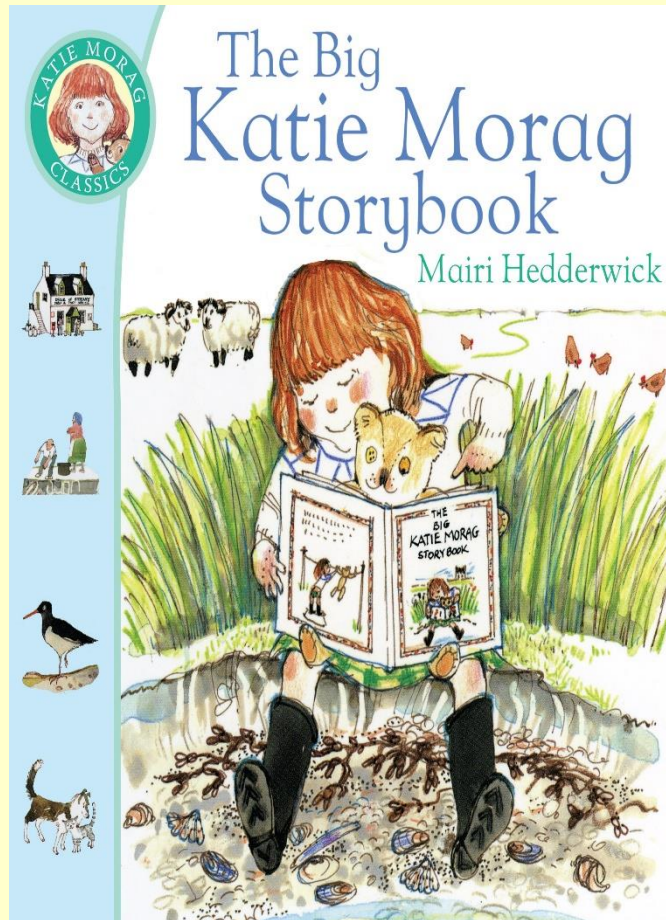
An enchanting, touching tale about friendship, filled with a wonderful sense of magic, myth and mystery.

Genre	Fantasy
Themes	Friendship, oceans/seas, myth and mystery



KS1

Katie Morag...



Delivers the mail:

One of a series of picture books featuring the ever-resourceful Katie Morag and her family and friends on the Isle of Struay. When the village mail gets muddled up, it's up to Katie to sort things out - with a little help from Grannie Island and her tractor.

The 2 Grandmothers:

Grannie Island doesn't think much of Granma Mainland's fancy ways, but when a prize sheep gets stuck in Boggy Loch on Show Day, it's up to the ever-resourceful Katie Morag to save the day - with a little help from her two grandmothers...

The Dancing Class:

Everyone is excited about the new ballet and tap classes. Everyone, that is, except Katie Morag! But the two grandmothers have decided - she will go to ballet and she will wear a frilly skirt! What is Katie Morag going to do?

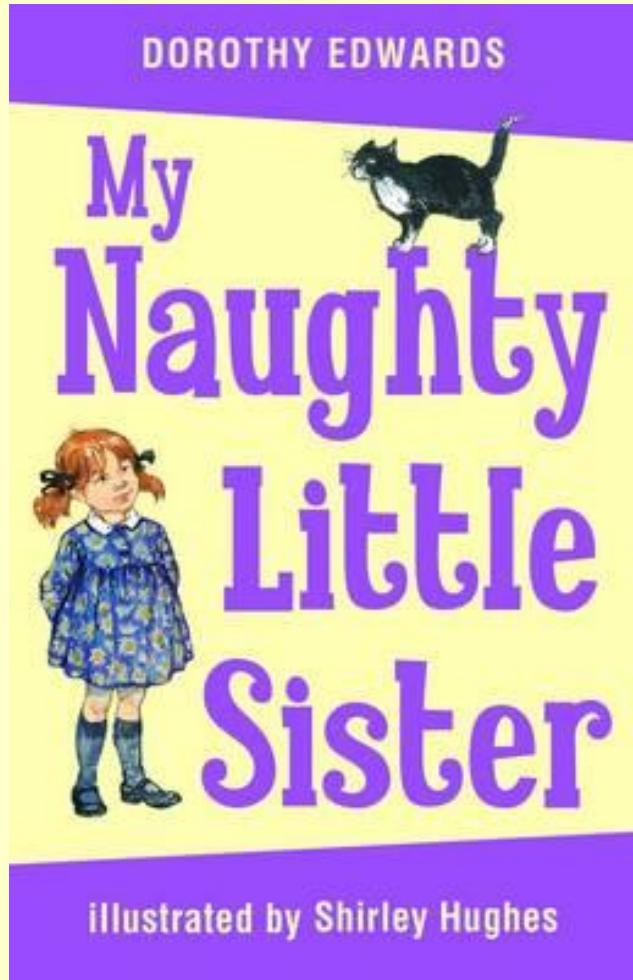
Genre	Fiction
Themes	Family, friends, activities



KS1

My Naughty Little Sister

My naughty little sister is stubborn and greedy and full of mischief. She tries to cut off the cat's tail and eats all the trifle at Harry's party! How much bother can one little sister be?



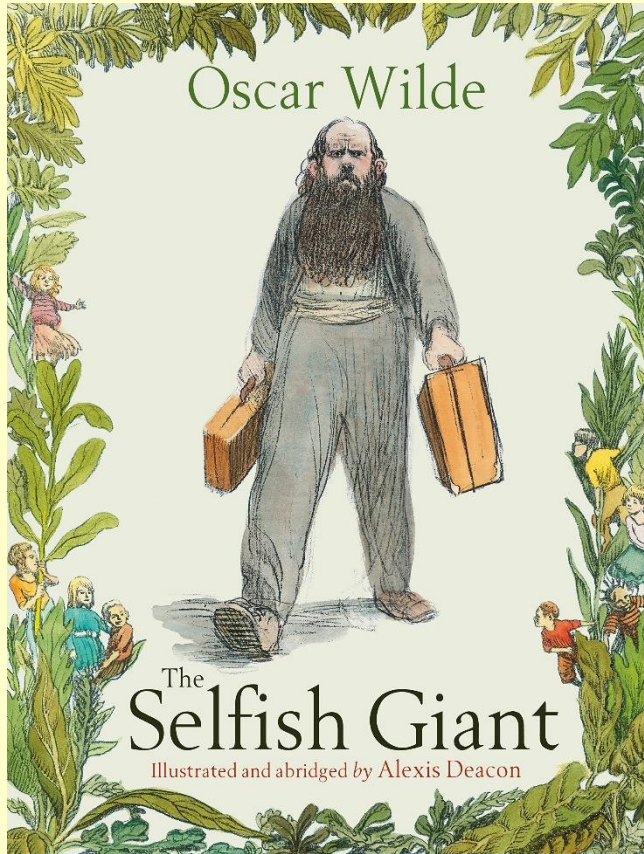
Genre	Fiction
Themes	Real life, relationships



KS1

The Selfish Giant

The Selfish Giant has a beautiful garden, but he won't let any of the children play in it. Winter comes and never leaves, until the power of love brings Spring and joy into the Giant's garden and his heart...

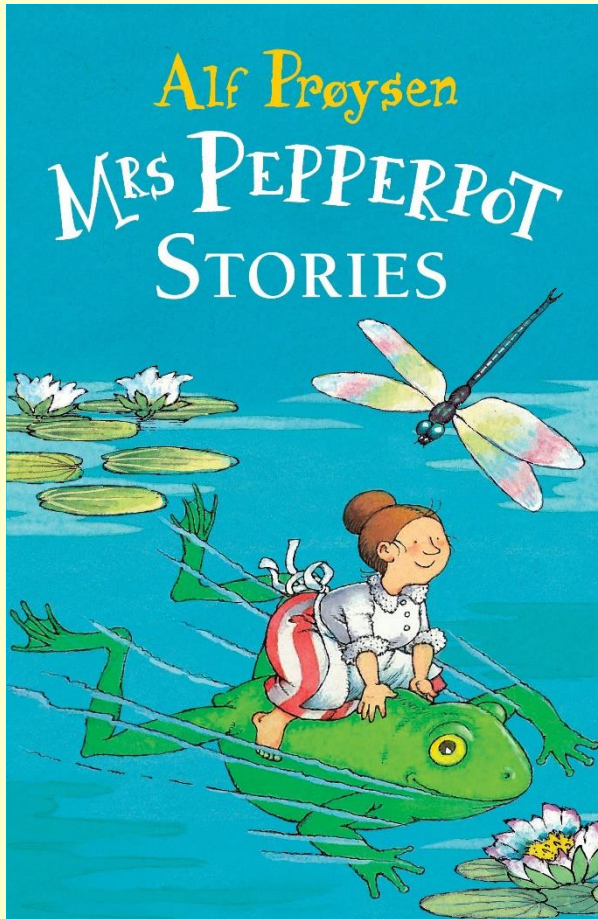


Genre	Fiction
Themes	Religion, seasons, sharing, forgiveness



KS1

Mrs Pepperpot



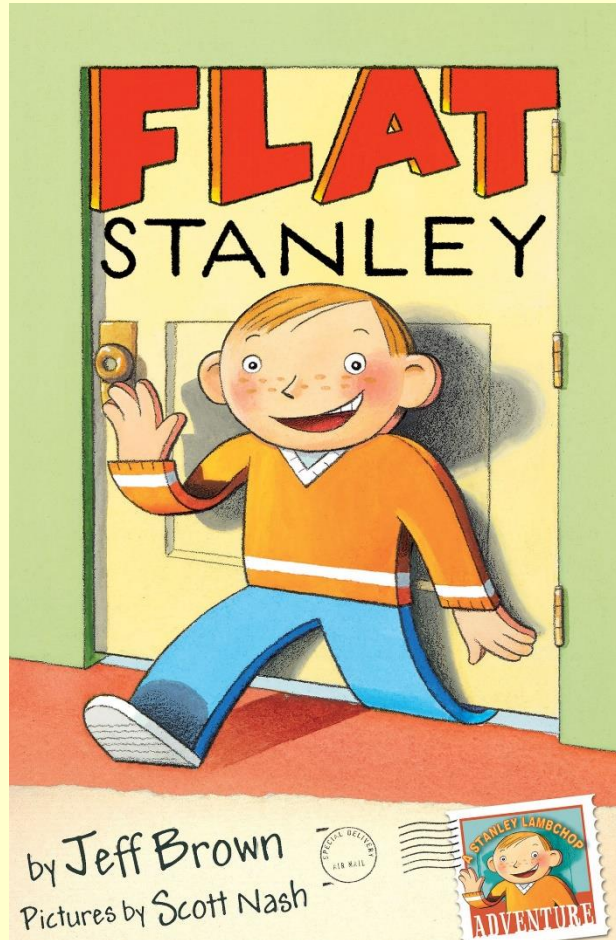
Mrs Pepperpot has a problem - a huge problem - she shrinks! And when she shrinks she finds herself in all sorts of trouble...Mrs Pepperpot is determined to practise her swimming, so when all the village children go for a picnic in the mountains she goes to the pool in the wood. But disaster strikes - just as Mrs Pepperpot jumps into the water she shrinks! Now the pool seems as big as an ocean. Luckily there's a friendly frog nearby to rescue her and give her swimming lessons. When Mrs Pepperpot agrees to mind baby Roger from next door, she doesn't know that she's going to shrink. How can she look after him when she's only as tall as a pepperpot? Baby Roger thinks she's a doll and jiggles and joggles her and throws her high in the air. Will Mrs Pepperpot be able to keep the baby out of mischief until his mother comes to get him?

Genre	Fantasy
Themes	Adventures, transformation



KS1

Flat Stanley



Stanley Lambchop was just an ordinary boy until a large notice board fell on him and made him flat - only half an inch thick! Stanley gets rolled up, sent in the post, flown like a kite, and helps catch dangerous criminals! Then, he becomes invisible and discovers he can do amazing things like perform magic and foil a daring robbery!

But, things get even more exciting when the President of the United States chooses Stanley and his family to become the first humans aboard a new top-secret spaceship! Stanley gets to have his birthday in outer space and meet aliens! Being flat is fantastic fun!

Genre	Fantasy
Themes	Right and wrong, jobs, differences, acceptance

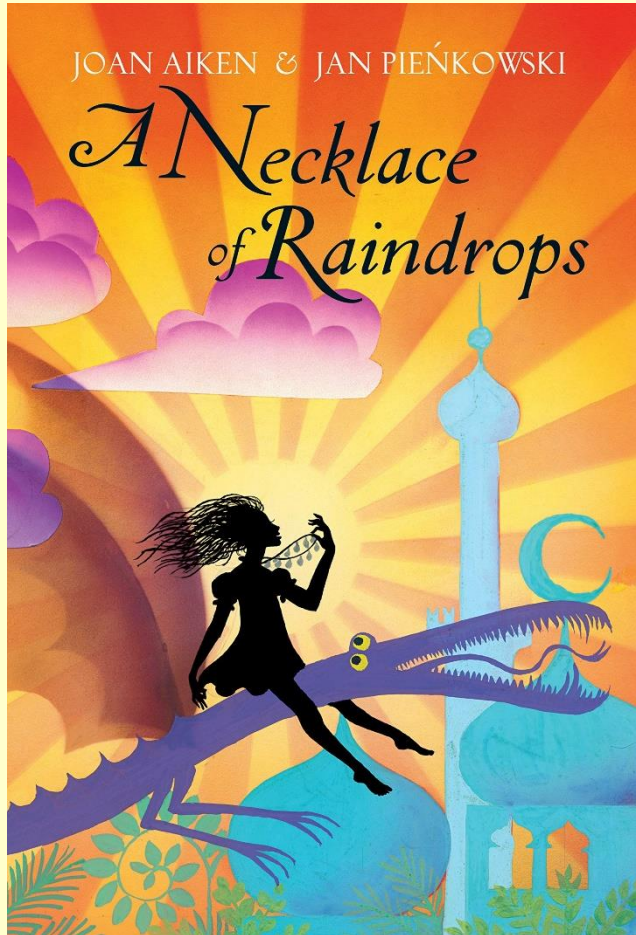


KS1

A Necklace of Raindrops

Beginning and ending with a birthday, this spell-binding collection conjures up a world filled with magic, where wishes can come true.

A necklace of raindrops that keeps its owner dry in the heaviest rainstorm; a tiger that runs faster than the wind; a huge floating apple pie with a piece of sky in it; a baker's cat who swells to the size of a whale when his mistress feeds him yeast; a house that stands on one leg - these are just some of the objects and characters that figure in these delightful stories.



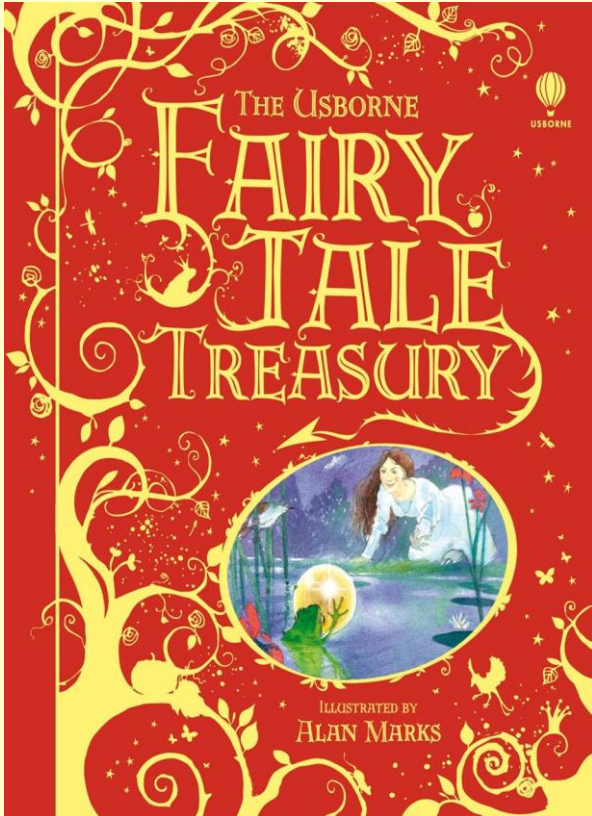
Genre	Fantasy, adventure
Themes	Magic, wishes,



KS1

Fairy tales

Various fairy tales chosen by teacher and children.

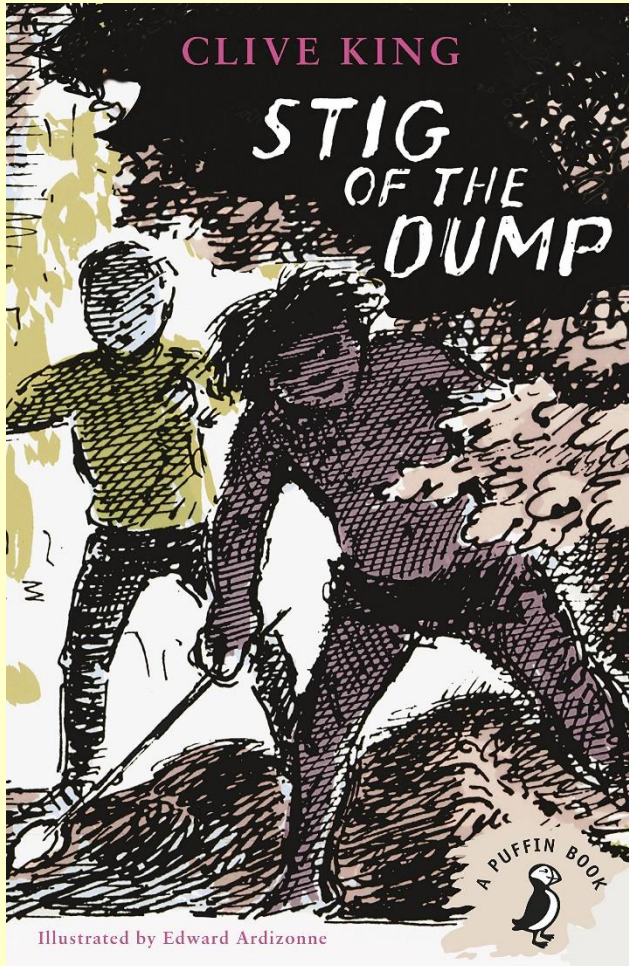


Genre	Fantasy, adventure
Themes	Various



Year 3

Stig of the Dump



Barney is a solitary little boy who often wanders off by himself in the countryside. Exploring an old chalk pit, he finds himself in a cave where he meets a strange boy who wears a rabbit skin and speaks in grunts. His grandparents don't believe Barney when he tells them about his new cave boy friend - but nevertheless, the two enjoy plenty of fun together.

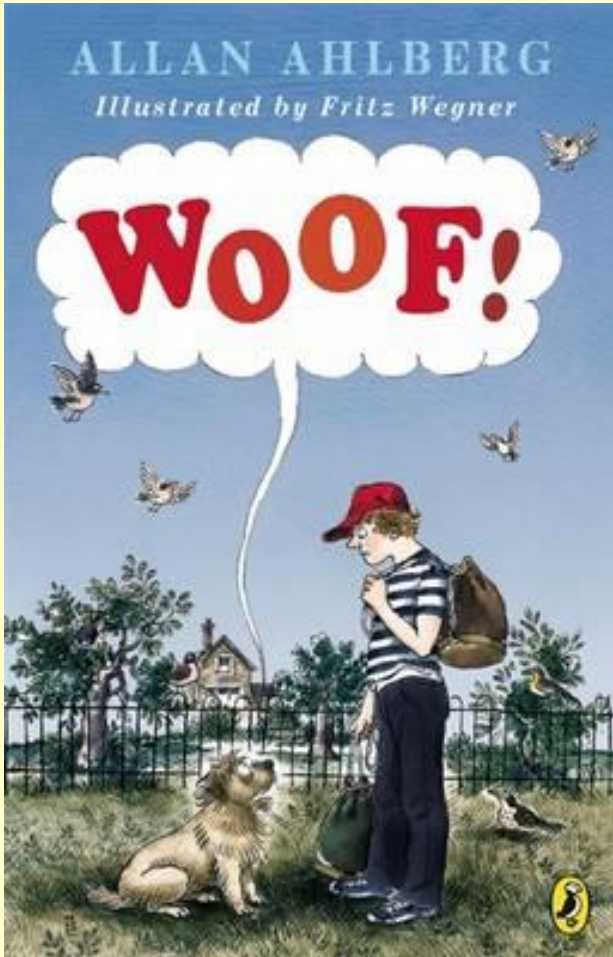
Genre	Adventure
Themes	Friendship, countryside



Year 3

Woof

When ten-year-old Eric Banks is suddenly transformed into a playful Norfolk terrier, he must discover the reasons for the change and adapt to life as a dog

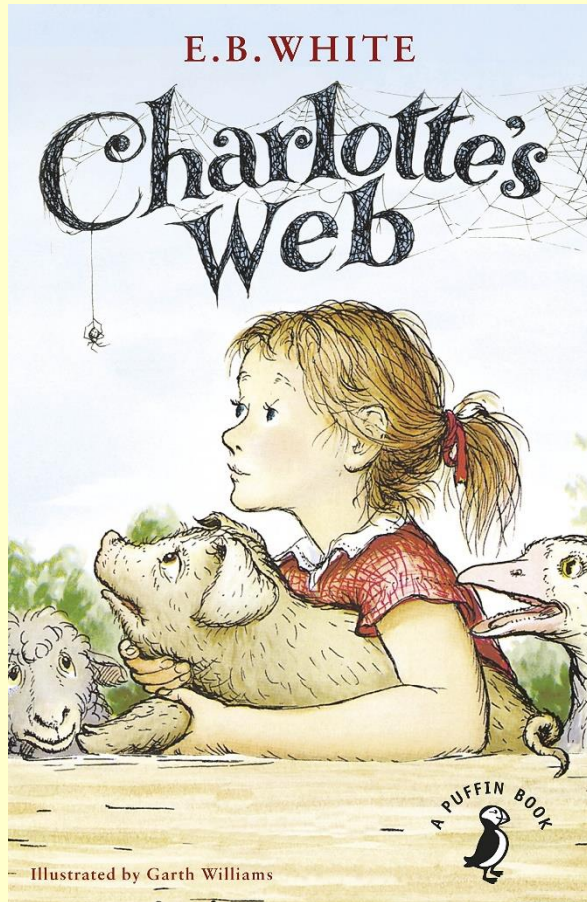


Genre	Adventure
Themes	Adaption, discovery



Year 3

Charlotte's Web



Wilbur the pig's life has already been saved by Fern, but when he is sold to her uncle he realises his life is in even more danger.

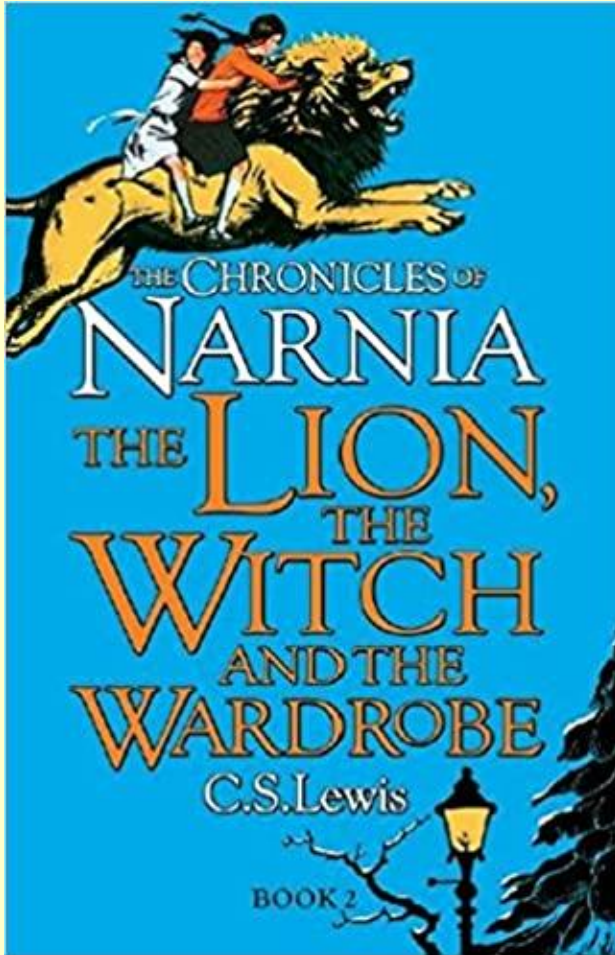
Enter Charlotte A. Cavatica, a beautiful large grey spider. Charlotte is determined to keep Wilbur from the chopping block, and comes up with an ingenious way to do just that.

Genre	Friendship
Themes	Friendship, family, animals, love, bravery



Year 3

The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe



Four adventurous siblings—Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy Pevensie—step through a wardrobe door and into the land of Narnia, a land frozen in eternal winter and enslaved by the power of the White Witch.

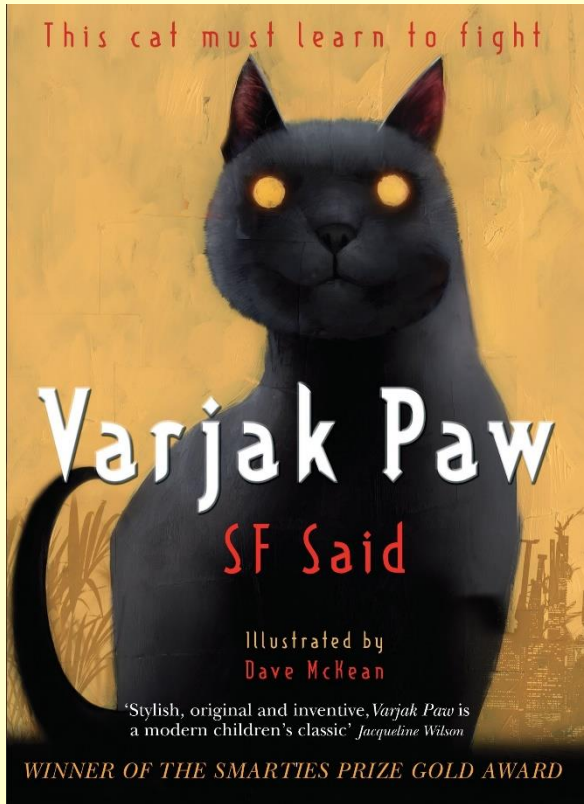
But when almost all hope is lost, the return of the Great Lion, Aslan, signals a great change . . . and a great sacrifice.

Genre	Adventure, fantasy
Themes	friendship, bravery, magic, other worlds



Year 3

Varjak Paw



Varjak Paw is a Mesopotamian Blue kitten. He lives high up in an old house on a hill. He's never left home, but then his grandfather tells him about the Way - a secret martial art for cats.

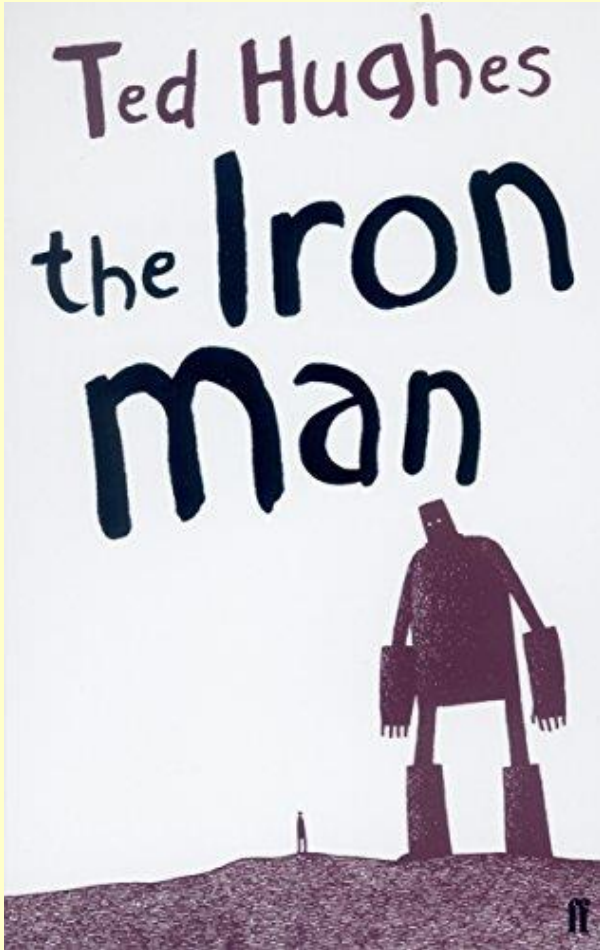
Now Varjak must use the Way to survive in a city full of dangerous dogs, cat gangs and, strangest of all the mysterious Vanishings.

Genre	Adventure, science fiction
Themes	Friendship, family, animals, bravery, martial arts



Year 3

The Iron Man



The Iron Man came to the top of the cliff.

Where had he come from? Nobody knows.

How was he made? Nobody knows.

Mankind must put a stop to the dreadful destruction by the Iron Man and set a trap for him, but he cannot be kept down. Then, when a terrible monster from outer space threatens to lay waste to the planet, it is the Iron Man who finds a way to save the world.

Genre	Adventure, science fiction
Themes	bravery, science fiction, robots, monsters, mystery



Year 3

The Nothing to see Here Hotel



When a goblin messenger arrives at The Nothing to See Here Hotel, announcing the imminent arrival of the goblin prince Grogbah, Frankie and his family rush into action to get ready for their important guest.

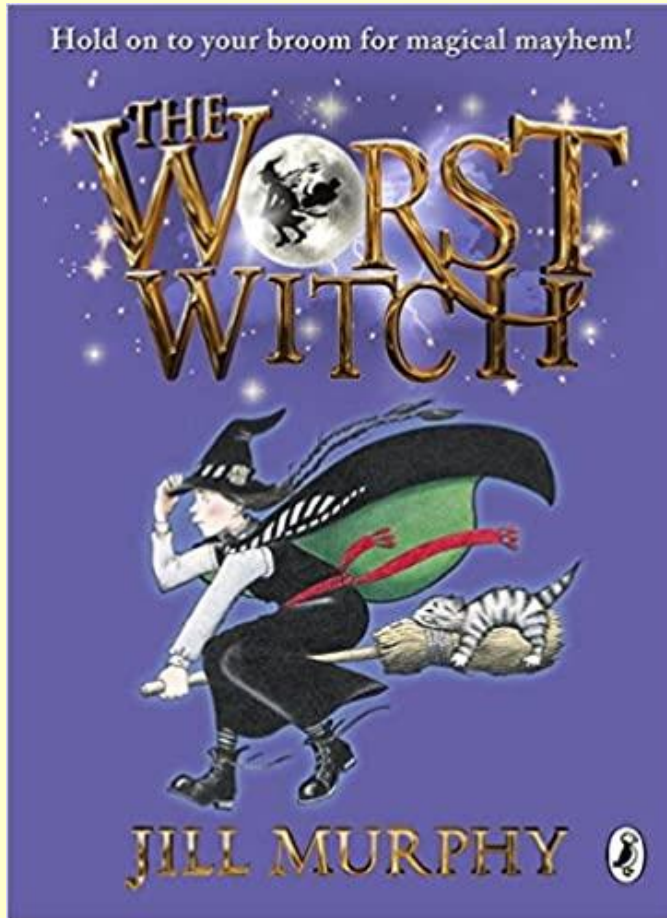
But it soon becomes obvious that the Banister family are going to have their work cut out with the demanding prince and his never-ending entourage, especially when it turns out the rude little prince is hiding a secret...

Genre	Adventure, comedy
Themes	family, monsters, mystery



Year 3

The Worst Witch



Mildred Hubble is a trainee at Miss Cackle's Academy for Witches, but she's making an awful mess of it.

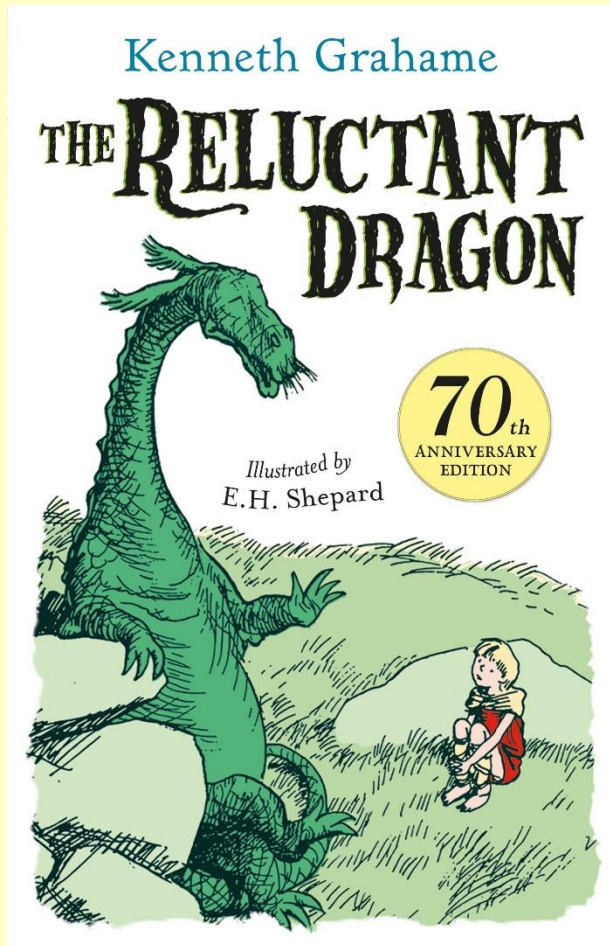
She keeps getting her spells wrong and crashing her broomstick. And when she turns Ethel, the teacher's pet into her worst enemy, chaos ensues...

Genre	Adventure, comedy
Themes	Friendship, bravery, school, magic



Year 3

The Reluctant Dragon



This is a funny story of bravery, friendship and derring-do between a young boy and a dragon who he finds living above his home.

The two become close companions but the town folk are scared and call upon St George to kill the dragon in combat.

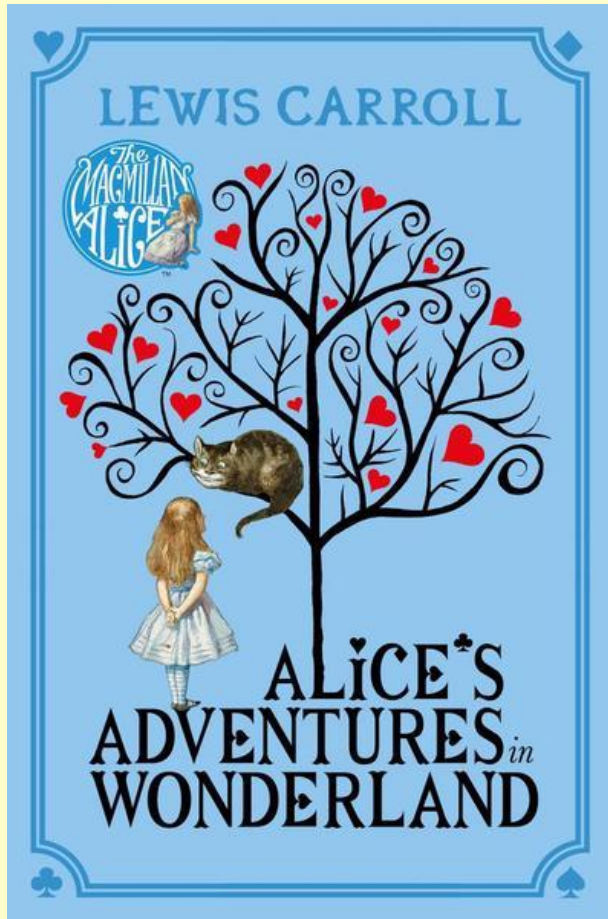
This however, proves rather tricky when the dragon simply won't fight!

Genre	Traditional tales
Themes	Friendship, bravery, comedy, dragons



Year 4

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland



Down the rabbit hole away little Alice goes.

Follow her at your own peril, but beware of the world you are about to enter.

One with a decapitation-crazed queen, an unintelligible duchess, a sleepy dormouse, a chronically late rabbit, a witty Cheshire cat, a blue hookah-smoking caterpillar, a Hatter and a March Hare hosting a mad tea party, and a caucus race so bewildering that the best way to explain it is just to do it.

Genre	Adventure, mystery, fantasy
Themes	bravery, sanity, animals, fantasy



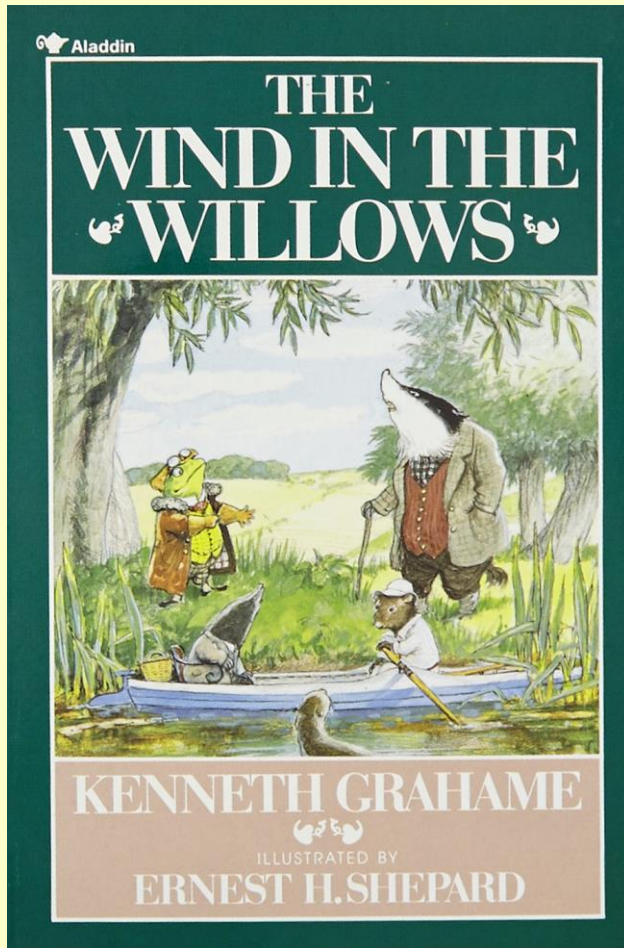
Year 4

The Wind in the Willows

The Wind in the Willows is a children's novel by Scottish novelist Kenneth Grahame, first published in 1908.

Alternatingly slow-moving and fast-paced, it focuses on four anthropomorphised animals: Mole, Rat (a European water vole), Toad, and Badger.

They live in a pastoral version of Edwardian England. The novel is notable for its mixture of mysticism, adventure, morality, and camaraderie, and celebrated for its evocation of the nature of the Thames Valley.

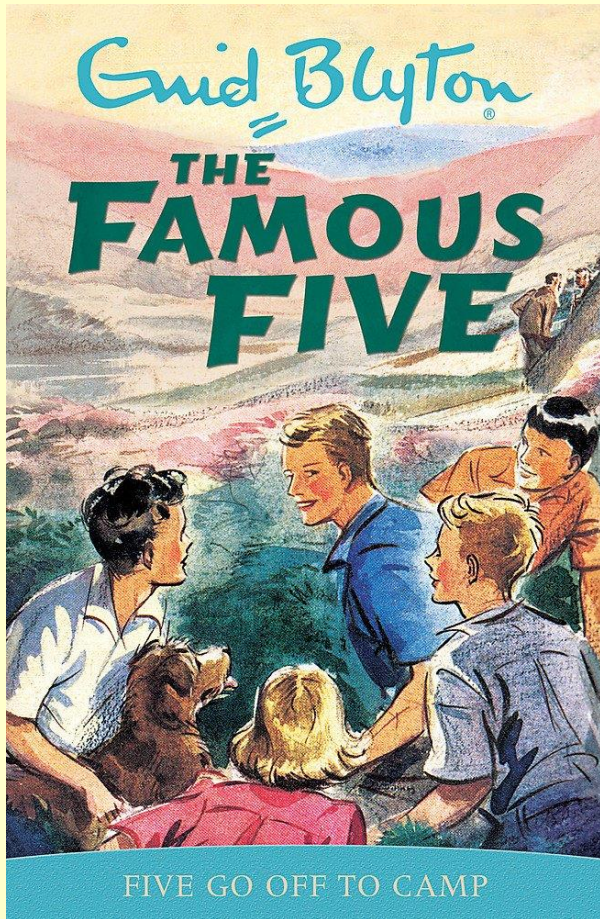


Genre	Comedy
Themes	Friendship, animals,



Year 4

The Famous Five



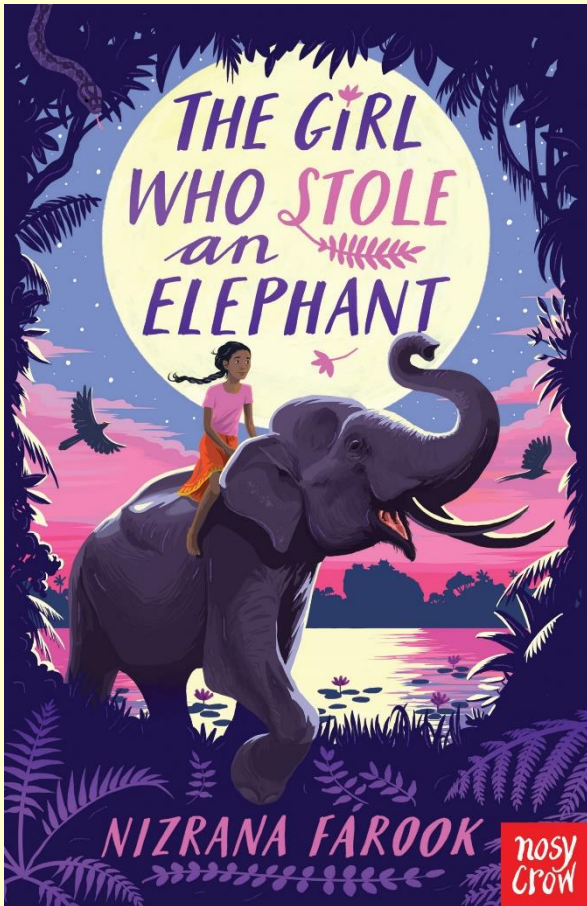
The Famous Five can't wait to explore peculiar-sounding Mystery Moor. But after spending a night on the heath, they begin to realise it's not just the moor's past that is shrouded in secrets. Could its treacherous mists hide the answer to a brand-new mystery? Five Have Plenty of Fun (Book 14) George is not pleased when a spoilt American girl turns up at Kirrin Cottage. But George hasn't got time to be jealous - Berta is in hiding from kidnappers! The Famous Five are the only ones who can protect her - but will they take on dangerous criminals to help out a stranger? Five On a Secret Trail (Book 15) Anne and George are on a camping trip, waiting for the boys to arrive. One night they see a face at the window of an abandoned cottage close by - and then the Five wake to find ghostly lights... Anne wants to go home but the others are determined to stay. Who could be snooping around the cottage - and why is a nearby gang trying to make them leave?

Genre	Adventure
Themes	Friendship, family, mystery



Year 4

The Girl who Stole an Elephant



Chaya, a no-nonsense, outspoken hero, leads her friends and a gorgeous elephant on a noisy, fraught, joyous adventure through the jungle where revolution is stirring and leeches lurk.

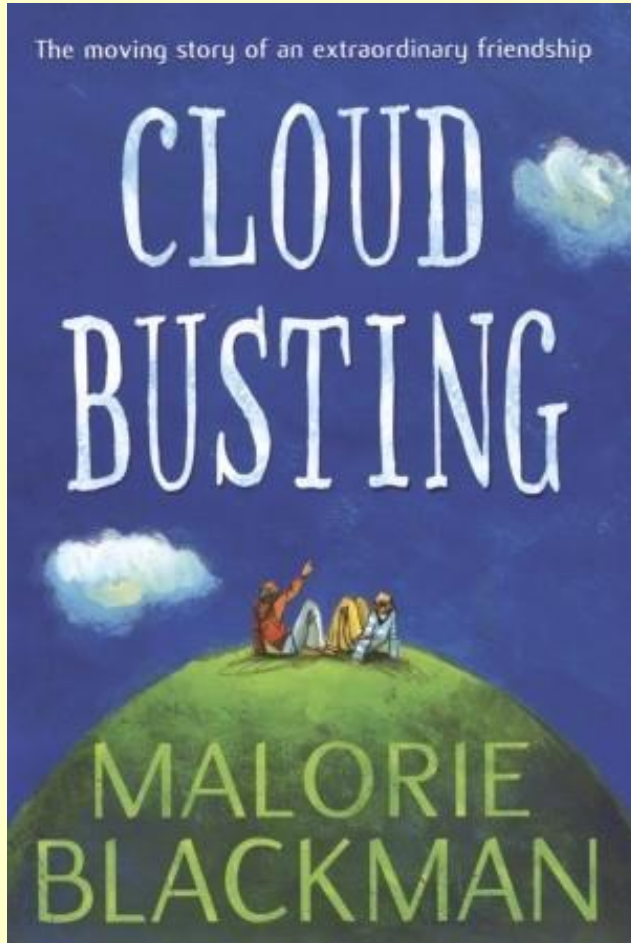
Will stealing the queen's jewels be the beginning or the end of everything for the intrepid gang?

Genre	Adventure, drama
Themes	friendship, bravery, diversity



Year 4

Cloud Busting



Despite his Mum's insistence, Sam doesn't want to be friends with Davey, he thinks Davey's a first class, grade A, top of the dung heap moron. But one day Davey saves Sam's life and a bond is formed between them. Sam is still embarrassed to be seen with Davey, but little by little he has to admit, when it's just the two of them, Davey is a lot of fun. But then something terrible happens to Davey. . . Told in verse, in first person, this is the touching story of an extraordinary friendship, that changes two boys lives for ever.

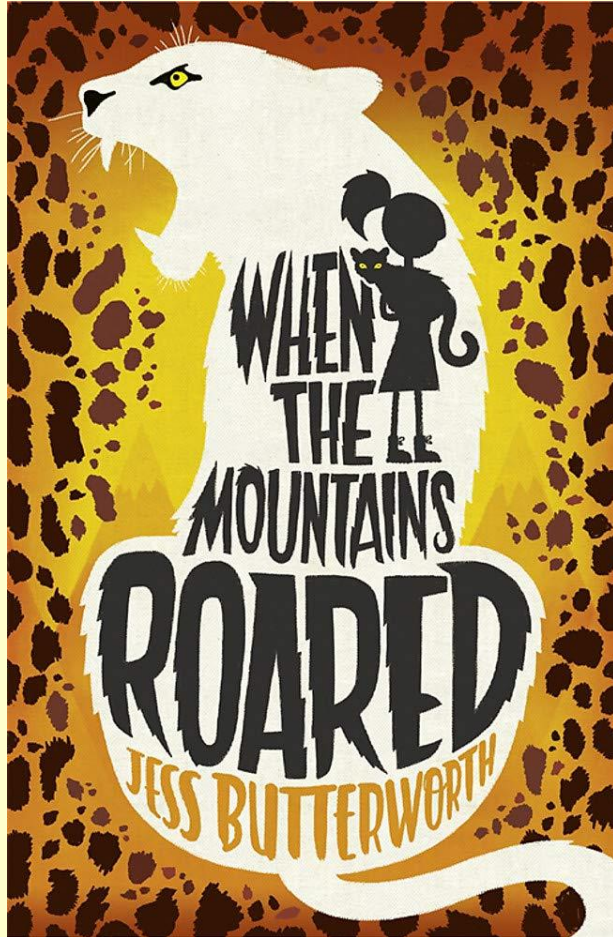
An uplifting tale that truly sings out.

Genre	Verse, novel
Themes	friendship, school, acceptance



Year 4

When the Mountains Roared



When Ruby's dad uproots her from Australia to set up a hotel in the mountains of India, Ruby is devastated. Not only are they living in a run-down building in the middle of the wilderness surrounded by scorpions, bears and leopards, but Ruby is sure that India will never truly feel like home - not without her mum there.

Ever since her mum died, Ruby has been afraid. Of cars. Of the dark. Of going to sleep and never waking up.

But then the last remaining leopards of the mountain are threatened and everything changes. Ruby vows to do all she can to protect them - if she can only overcome her fears...

Genre	Adventure
Themes	conservation, animals, friendship



Year 4

Roald Dahl

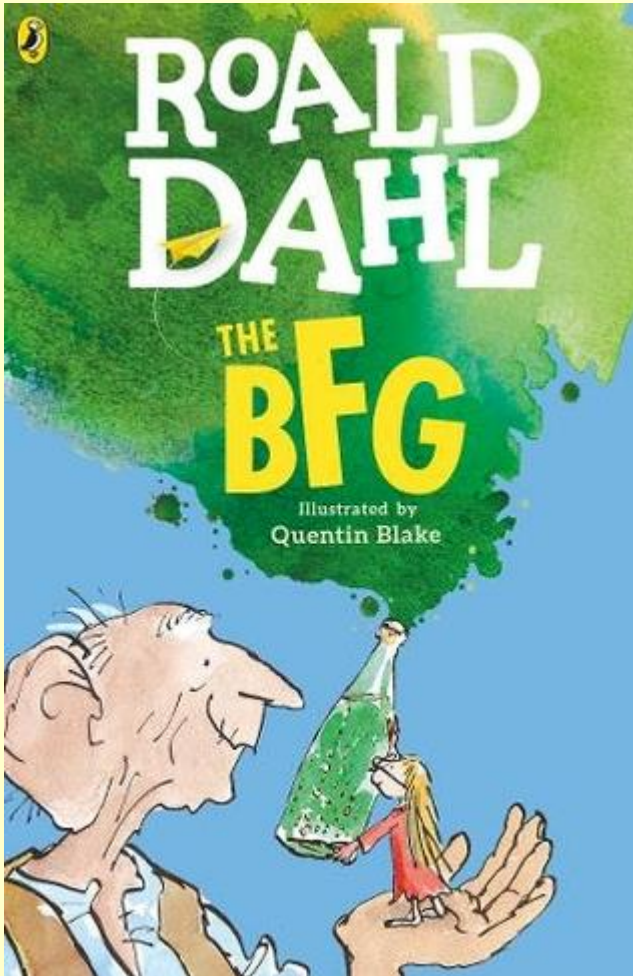
A selection of Roald Dahl stories selected by the teacher:

Matilda

The BFG

Boy

James and the Giant Peach

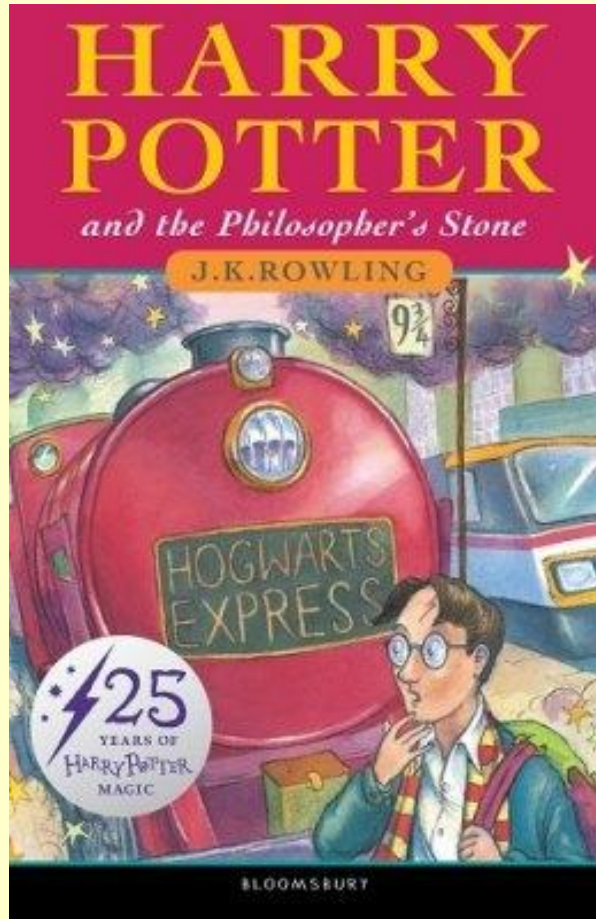


Genre	Adventure, fantasy
Themes	Friendship, mystery



Year 4

Harry Potter



This is where the adventure begins, as Harry Potter discovers that he is no ordinary boy but a wizard of great renown, as well as expected at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Moreover, at Hogwarts, he encounters "He Who Must Not Be Named", a master of magic whose ambition is more dark and terrifying than Harry can possibly imagine.

Genre	adventure, fantasy, magical,
Themes	friendship, good and bad, family



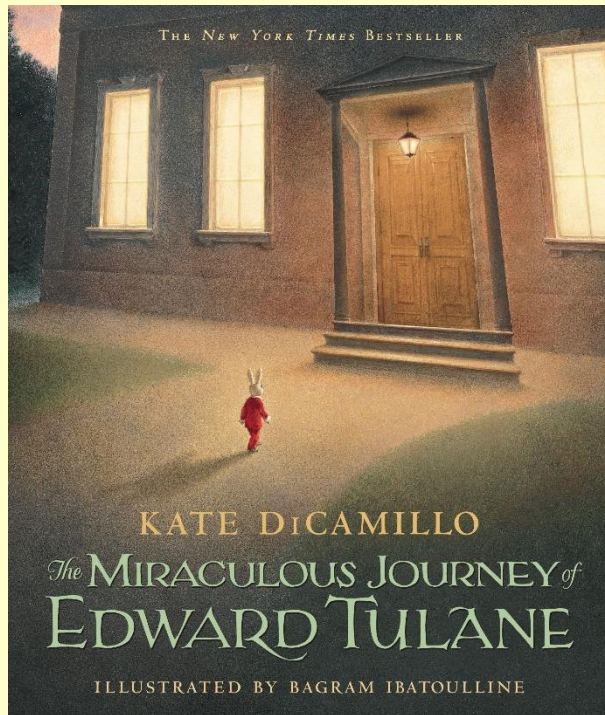
Year 4

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane

Once, in a house on Egypt Street, there lived a china rabbit named Edward Tulane. The rabbit was very pleased with himself, and for good reason: he was owned by a girl named Abilene, who adored him completely. And then, one day, he was lost...

Kate DiCamillo takes us on an extraordinary journey, from the depths of the ocean to the net of a fisherman, from the bedside of an ailing child to the bustling streets of Memphis.

Along the way, we are shown a miracle--that even a heart of the most breakable kind can learn to love, to lose, and to love again.

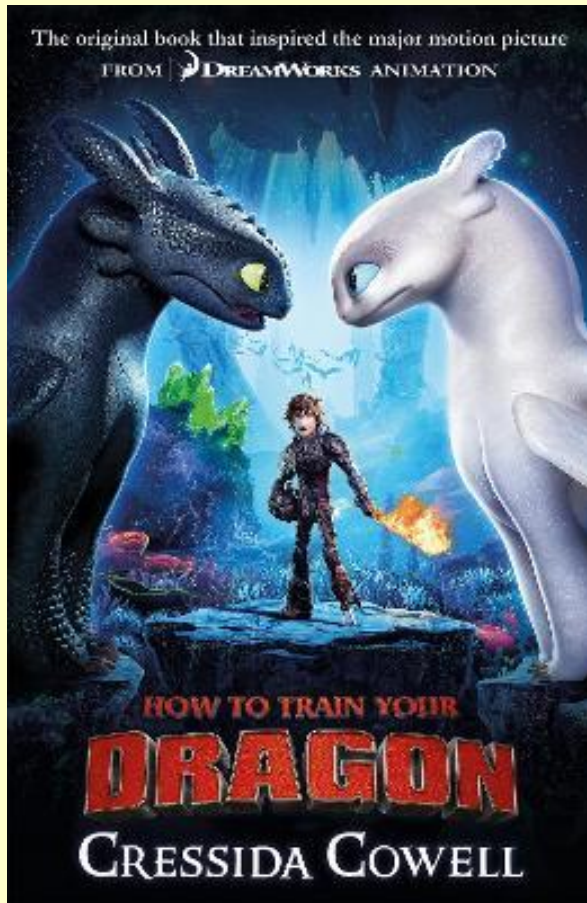


Genre	Adventure, drama
Themes	loss, grief, bravery, friendship, love



Year 4

How to Train your Dragon



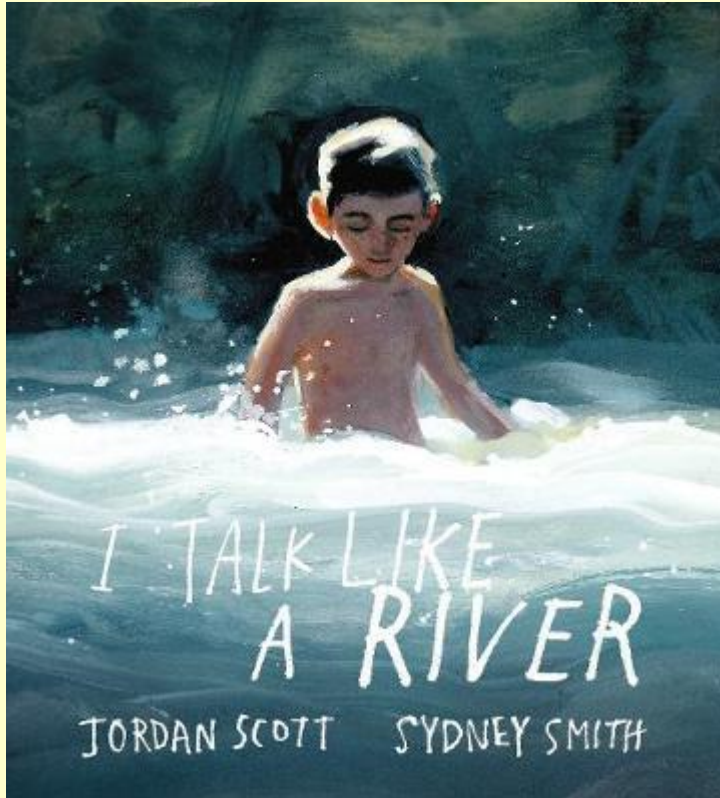
Jokes flow thick and fast from this most original and inventive Viking adventure, which launched the career of a Viking with a difference. Hiccup Horrendous Haddock grew up at a time of dragons but he was not always a hero. He had to learn to fight them. To do so he had to pass the Dragon Initiation Programme, an awesome schedule run by Gobber the Belch, idiot in charge of initiation on the Isle of Berk. Hiccup was by no means a natural high achiever when it came to dragon training but after many hilarious mishaps, he soon got the hang of it and was on the way to becoming a Hero.

Genre	fantasy, magical,
Themes	friendship, courage, family, historical,



Year 4

I Talk Like a River



What if words got stuck in the back of your mouth whenever you tried to speak? After a day of being unable to speak when asked, and of being stared at, a boy and his father go to the river for some quiet time.

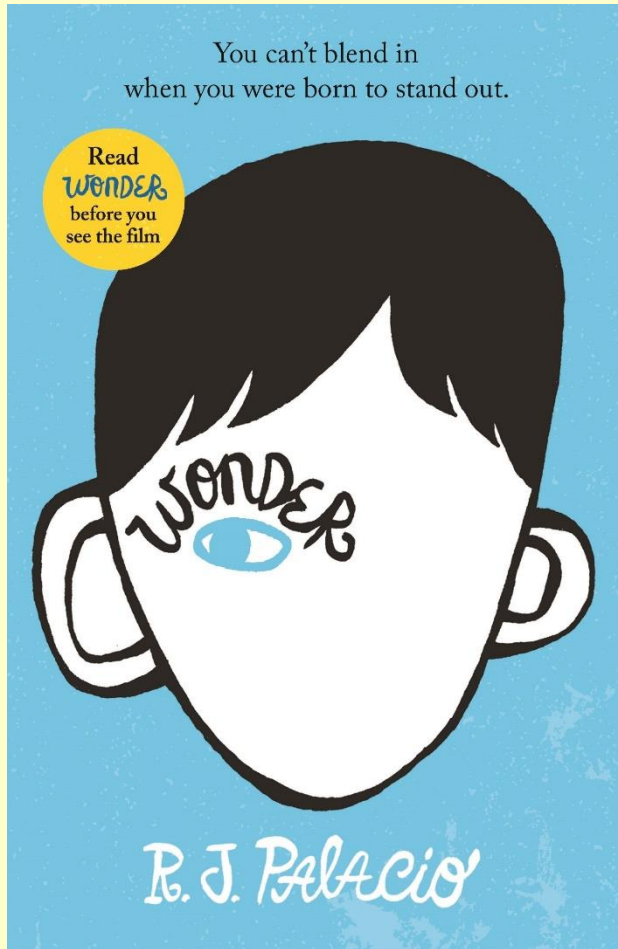
It's just a bad speech day, says Dad. But the boy can't stop thinking about all the eyes watching his lips twisting and twirling. When his father points to the river bubbling, churning, whirling and crashing, the boy finds a way to think about how he speaks. Even the river stutters. Like him. I talk like a river, he says.

Genre	drama
Themes	Speech and language, acceptance



Year 5

Wonder



'My name is August. I won't describe what I look like. Whatever you're thinking, it's probably worse.'

Auggie wants to be an ordinary ten-year-old. He does ordinary things - eating ice cream, playing on his Xbox. He *feels* ordinary - inside. But ordinary kids don't make other ordinary kids run away screaming in playgrounds. Ordinary kids aren't stared at wherever they go.

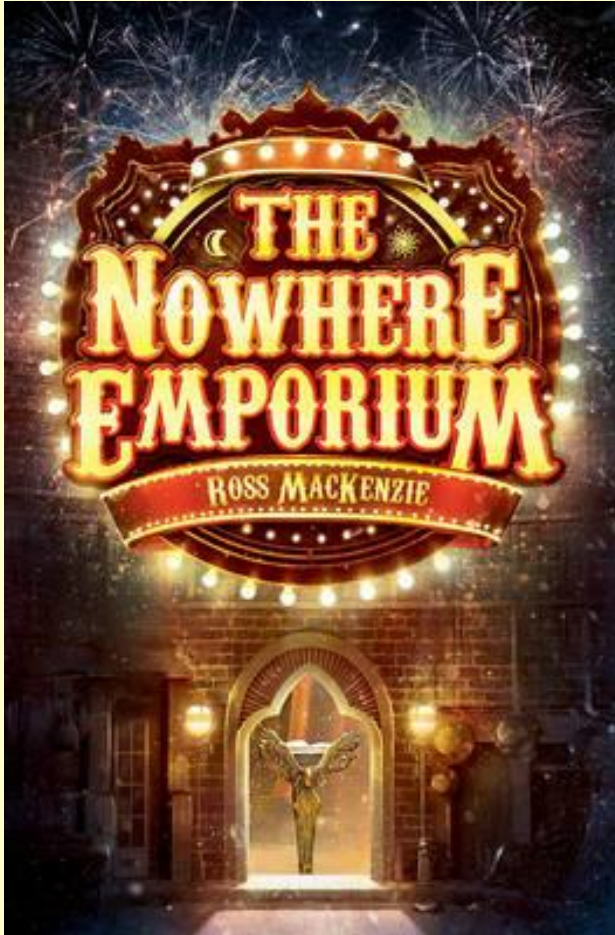
Born with a terrible facial abnormality, Auggie has been home-schooled by his parents his whole life. Now, for the first time, he's being sent to a real school - and he's dreading it. All he wants is to be accepted - but can he convince his new classmates that he's just like them, underneath it all?

Genre	friendship, acceptance, bravery, school
Themes	drama, comedy



Year 5

The Nowhere Emporium



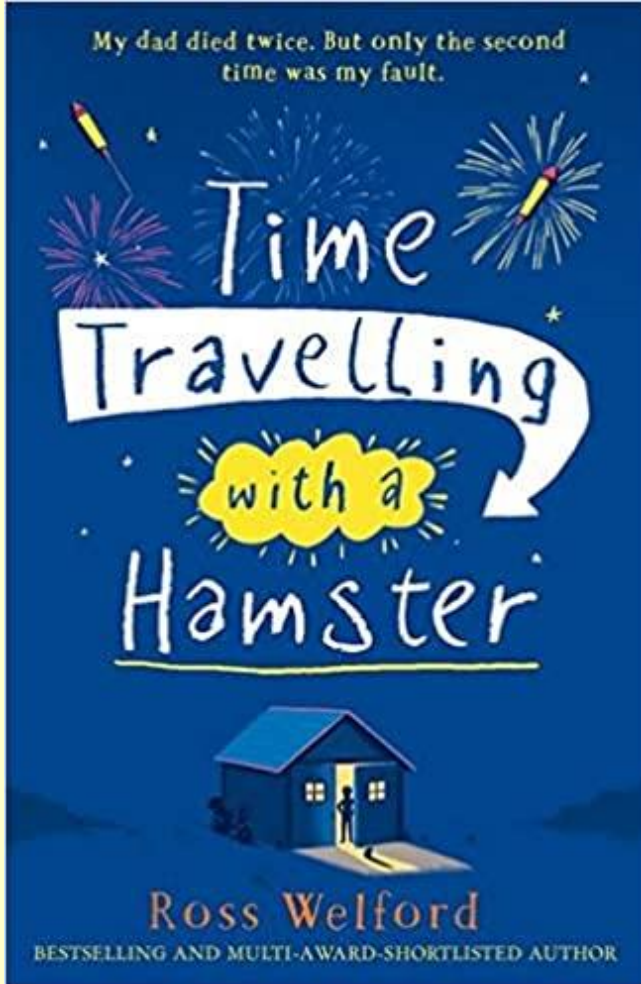
When the mysterious Nowhere Emporium arrives in Glasgow, orphan Daniel Holmes stumbles upon it quite by accident. Before long, the 'shop from nowhere' -- and its owner, Mr Silver -- draw Daniel into a breathtaking world of magic and enchantment. Recruited as Mr Silver's apprentice, Daniel learns the secrets of the Emporium's vast labyrinth of passageways and rooms -- rooms that contain wonders beyond anything Daniel has ever imagined. But when Mr Silver disappears, and a shadow from the past threatens everything, the Emporium and all its wonders begin to crumble. Can Daniel save his home, and his new friends, before the Nowhere Emporium is destroyed forever?

Genre	fantasy, adventure
Themes	magic, fantasy, belief, mystery



Year 5

Time Travelling with a Hamster



When 12-year-old Al Chaudry learns there is a time machine, made by his father, sitting in the garage of his old house, he has to go and get it - doesn't he? Then he can travel back in time and save his father's life.

With his pet hamster Alan Shearer for company, Al is determined to follow his dad's instructions. But time travel can be tricky and there are strict rules. Can Al race against time to change the past *and* the future, while keeping hold of Alan Shearer and not arousing suspicion?

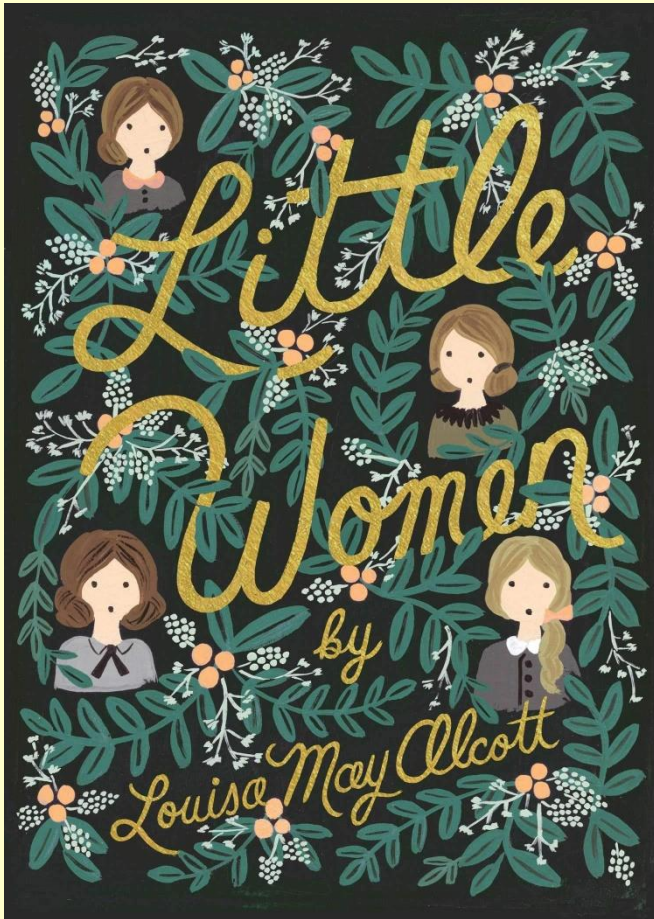
The reader is rooting for Al all the way, as he bravely confronts every possible obstacle in the hope of having his dad back. Both hilarious and heart-warming, this is a brilliant and clever adventure story

Genre	Family, humour
Themes	Friendship, fathers, adventure,



Year 5

Little Women



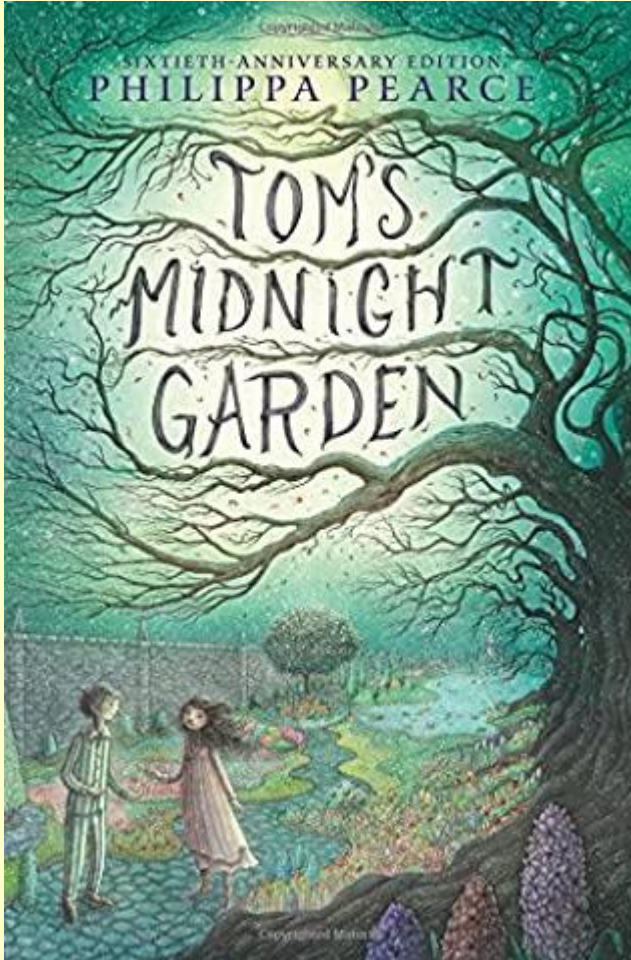
LITTLE WOMEN is set in Boston during and just after the Civil War and follows the four March sisters as they struggle to overcome poverty and grow into proper young ladies. Meg, the oldest, is pretty but swayed by material temptations. Jo is a good-hearted tomboy and writer. Beth is a shy, sweet music lover. And Amy, the youngest, is a little selfish but very social and elegant. Even as the girls bicker like all siblings, they keep their loving home together as they wait for their father to return from the war.

Genre	Coming of age
Themes	Family, marriage, American Civil war, illness, poverty, failure



Year 5

Tom's Midnight Garden



Tom is sent away to stay with his aunt and uncle for the summer holidays. With no garden or children to play with, he feels lonely and unhappy, until one night he hears the clock striking thirteen and discovers a secret garden where he makes a new friend, Hatty.

Yet it soon becomes clear that his new-found friend is living in another time altogether, and to her, Tom is a sort of ghost. Each time he visits the garden, Hatty has grown older.

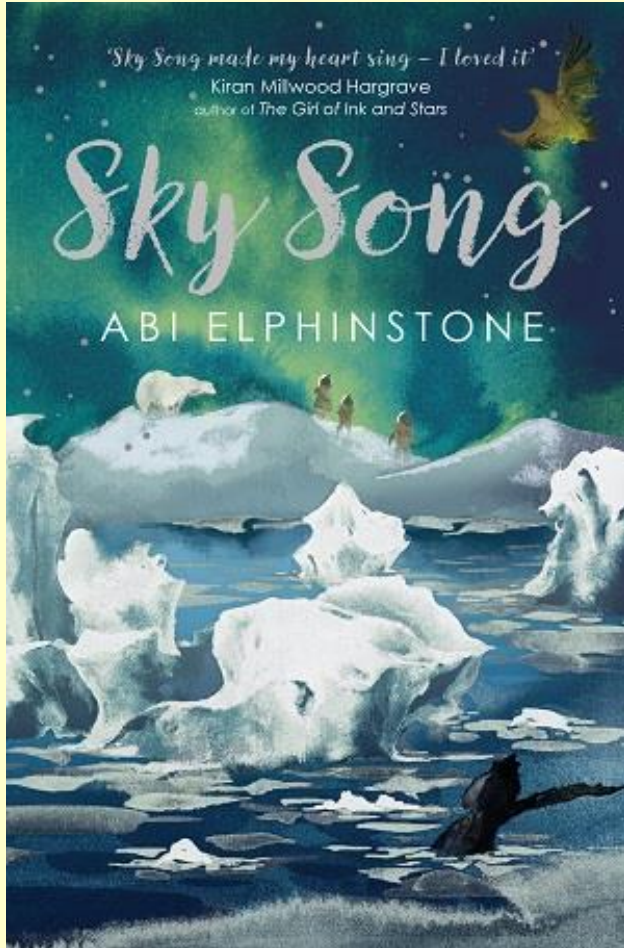
Finally, on a skating trip up the frozen river in the garden, Hatty and Tom begin to fade and become invisible to each other once more.

Genre	Classic, fantasy, magical
Themes	Relationships, friendship,



Year 5

Sky Song



'Once an adventure digs its claws in, there is not an awful lot you can do about it. Especially when magic is involved . . .'

In the snowy kingdom of Erkenwald, whales glide between icebergs, wolves hunt on the tundra and polar bears roam the glaciers. But the people of this land aren't so easy to find - because Erkenwald is ruled by an evil Ice Queen and the tribes must stay hidden or risk becoming her prisoners at Winterfang Palace. Join Eska, a girl who breaks free from a cursed music box, and Flint, a boy whose inventions could change the fate of Erkenwald forever, as they journey to the Never Cliffs and beyond in search of an ancient, almost forgotten, song with the power to force the Ice Queen back.

This is a story about an eagle huntress, an inventor and an organ made of icicles. But it is also a story about belonging, even at the very edges of our world . . .

Genre	Myths and Legends, fantasy, adventure
Themes	Downs syndrome, animals, magic, nature, monsters



Year 5

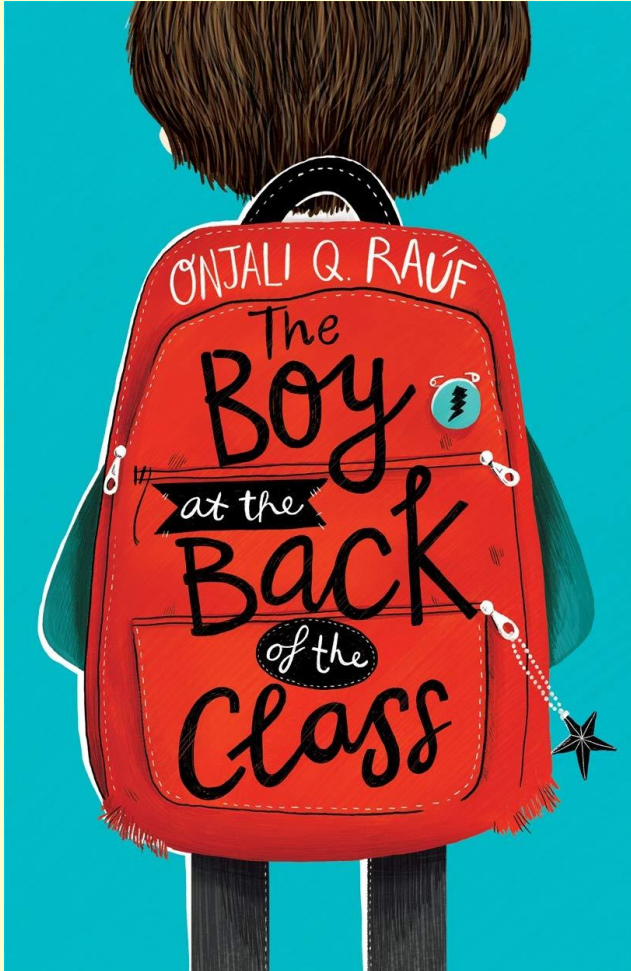
The Boy at the Back of the Class

There used to be an empty chair at the back of my class, but now a new boy called Ahmet is sitting in it.

He's nine years old (just like me), but he's very strange. He never talks and never smiles and doesn't like sweets - not even lemon sherbets, which are my favourite!

But then I learned the truth: Ahmet really isn't very strange at all. He's a refugee who's run away from a War. A real one. With bombs and fires and bullies that hurt people. And the more I find out about him, the more I want to help.

That's where my best friends Josie, Michael and Tom come in. Because you see, together we've come up with a plan. . .



Genre

drama, adventure

Themes

friendship, acceptance, bravery, school, refugees

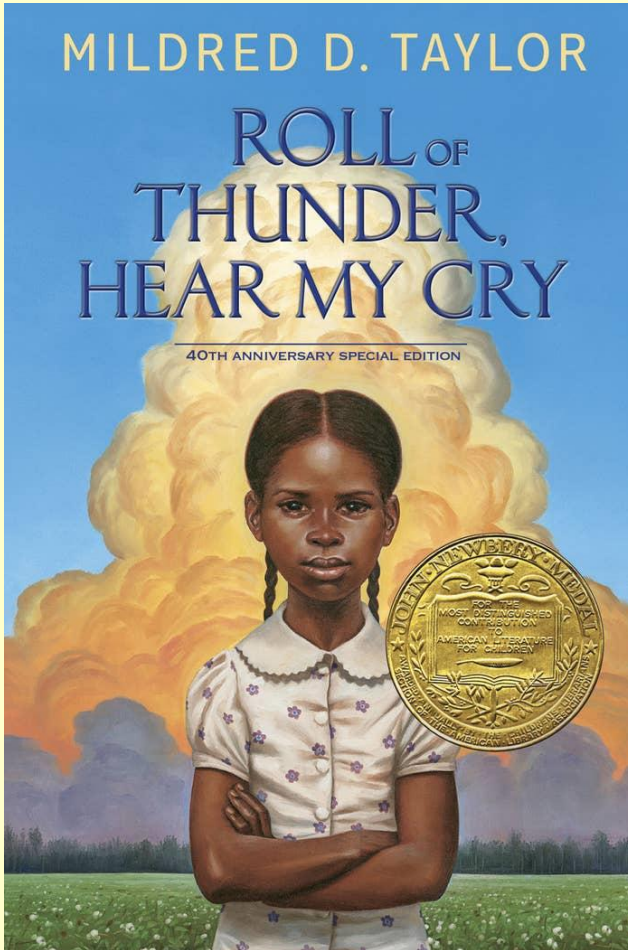


Year 5

Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry

'We have no choice of what colour we're born or who our parents are or whether we're rich or poor. What we do have is some choice over what we make of our lives once we're here.'

The Mississippi of the 1930s was a hard place for a black child to grow up in, but still Cassie didn't understand why farming his own land meant so much to her father. During that year, though, when the night riders were carrying hatred and destruction among her people, she learned about the great differences that divided them, and when it was worth fighting for a principle even if it brought terrible hardships.

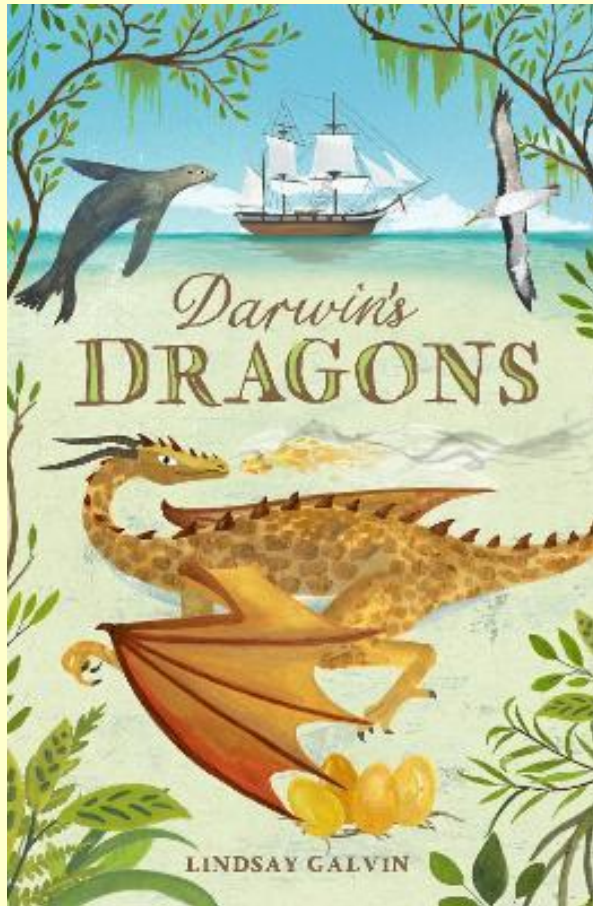


Genre	Classic
Themes	Racism, poverty, historical, civil rights movement



Year 5

Darwin's Dragons



Syms Covington has landed the job of a lifetime - cabin boy and fiddler on Charles Darwin's Beagle - but when he is separated from the crew during a storm, his life takes a truly extraordinary turn.

Shipwrecked on a Galapagos island, he makes a discovery that could change the world - and make his fortune. But should he share his find, or will it lead to the extinction of a legendary species? There's one person who could help, but he's busy writing a book ...

Based on a true story and Charles Darwin's real journal! Perfect for fans of Cornelia Funke's Dragon Rider or Cressida Cowell's How to Train Your Dragon series. Effortlessly blends exciting adventure with a rip-roaring historical story and non-fiction elements.

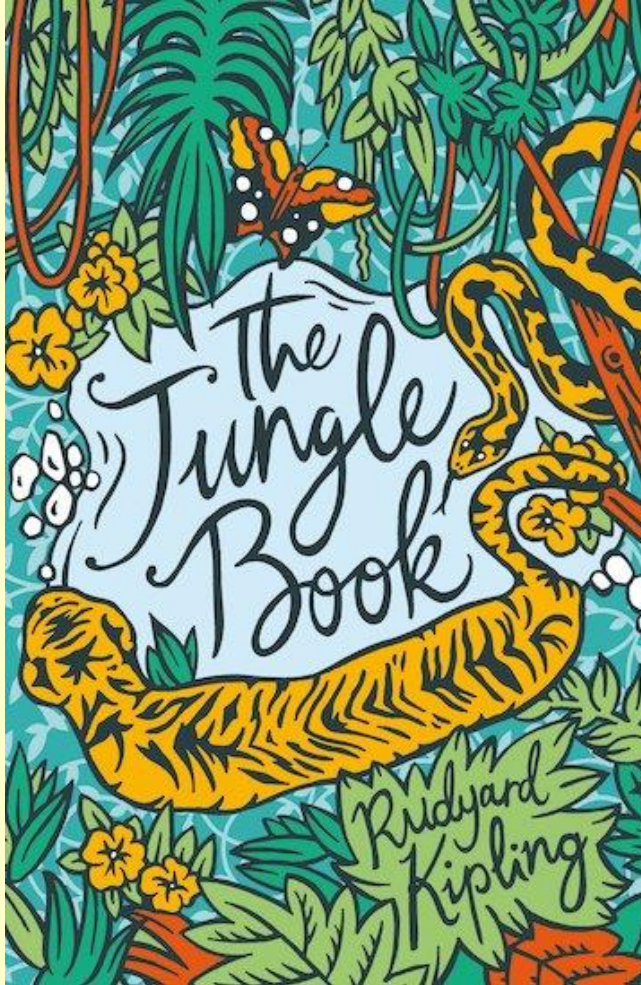
Genre	Historical, adventure, nature
Themes	Journey, nature, exploration, friendship



Year 5

The Jungle Book

The Jungle Book introduces a lush, colorful world full of adventure and danger. The first three tales include some of the most charming and unforgettable characters in literature the man-cub Mowgli, the black panther Bagheera, the wise brown bear Baloo, and the ruthless tiger Shere Khan. The other four tales each tell the story of a different animal, such as the travels of the white seal Kotick; the battle between the courageous mongoose Rikki-Tikki-Tavi and the deadly cobra Nag; Toomai and the elephant dance; and the camp animals of the queen's guard.



Genre	fantasy, adventure
Themes	animals, friendship, acceptance, bravery

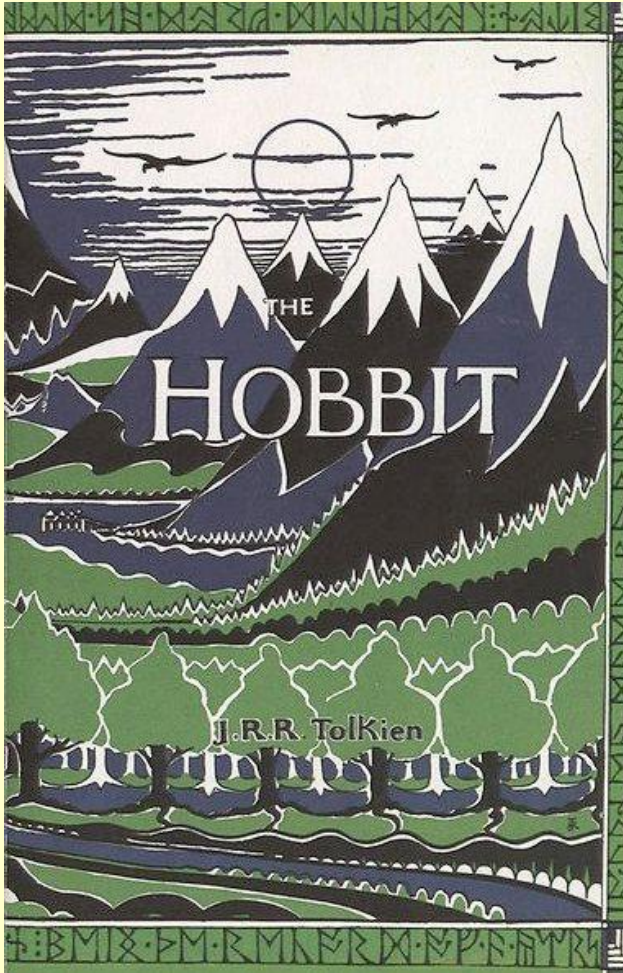


Year 5

The Hobbit

This is the classic story of Bilbo Baggins - a home-loving hobbit who enjoys a quiet and contented life in his cosy hobbit hole and has no desire to travel afar.

But then the wizard Gandalf and a band of dwarves arrive unexpectedly and enlist his services, and soon Bilbo finds himself part of an extraordinary expedition to raid the treasure-hoard of Smaug the Dragon - and on the way becomes the possessor of a very unusual ring.

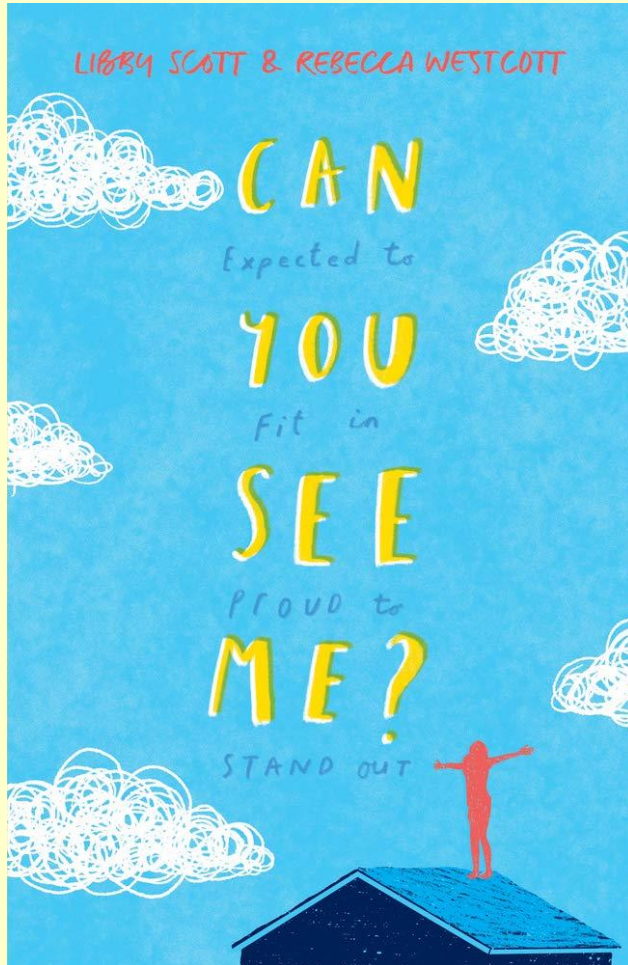


Genre	Fantasy, adventure
Themes	Journey, friendships



Year 6

Can you see me?



Tally is **ten years old** and she's **just** like her friends. Well, **sometimes** she is. If she tries **really hard** to be. Because there's something that makes Tally **not** the same as her friends. Something she can't cover up, no matter **how** hard she tries: Tally is **autistic**.

Tally's autism means there are things that **bother** her even though she **wishes** they didn't. It means that some people **misunderstand**, her and feel **frustrated** by her.

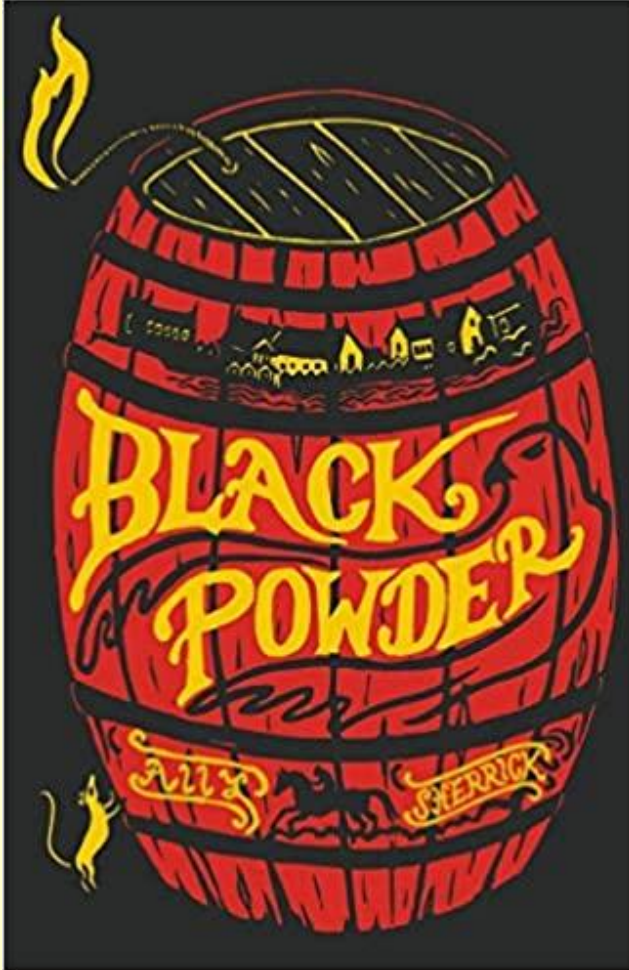
People think that because **Tally's autistic**, she doesn't realise what they're thinking, but Tally sees and hears - and *notices* - **all of it**. And, honestly? That's not the easiest thing to live with.

Genre	Drama
Themes	childhood, transition, autism, mental health, bullying, friendship



Year 6

Black Powder



The year is 1605 and if you are a Catholic in England it is a very dangerous time to be alive, so Tom and his family try their best to avoid being noticed. When his father helps a Catholic priest to escape the authorities their lives are turned upside down. Suddenly Tom finds himself on an adventure that takes him through the mansions of rich relatives to the dark back streets of London. He must do all he can to save his father from the gallows - even if it means allying himself with the mysterious Falcon and his gunpowder plot.

This historical tale is steeped in intrigue, mystery and danger. Tom is driven by guilt, faith and determination, making him an interesting and believable protagonist. Sherrick refuses to let her characters be purely good or evil, instead she lets the complexity of the time explain why good people might be forced to consider violent acts.

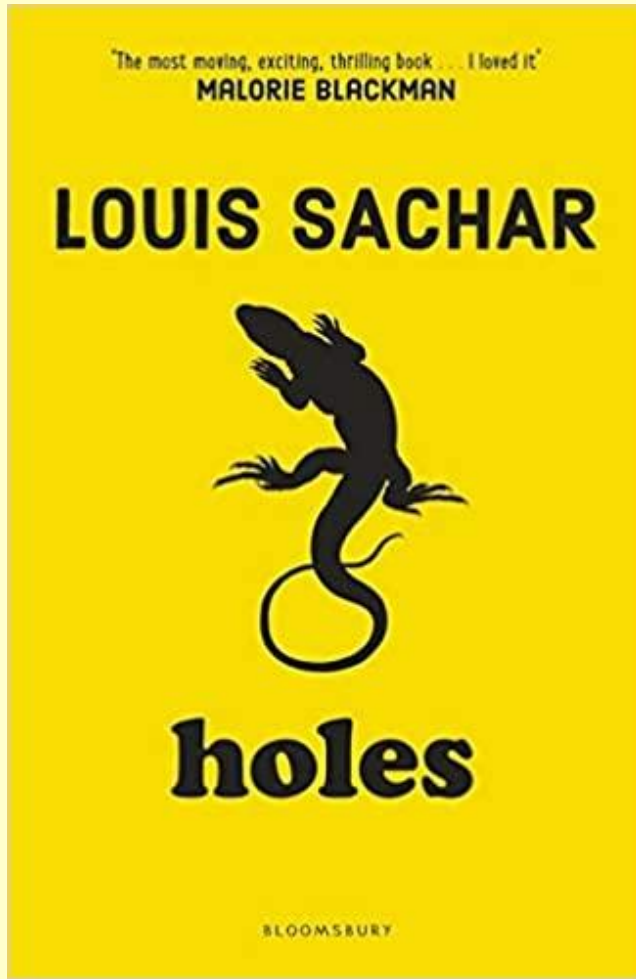
Genre	Adventure, historical, mystery
Themes	Religion, personal/social issues



Year 6

Holes

Stanley Yelnats' family has a history of bad luck, so when a miscarriage of justice sends him to Camp Green Lake Juvenile Detention Centre (which isn't green and doesn't have a lake) he is not surprised. Every day he and the other inmates are told to dig a hole, five foot wide by five foot deep, reporting anything they find. The evil warden claims that it is character building, but this is a lie and Stanley must dig up the truth.

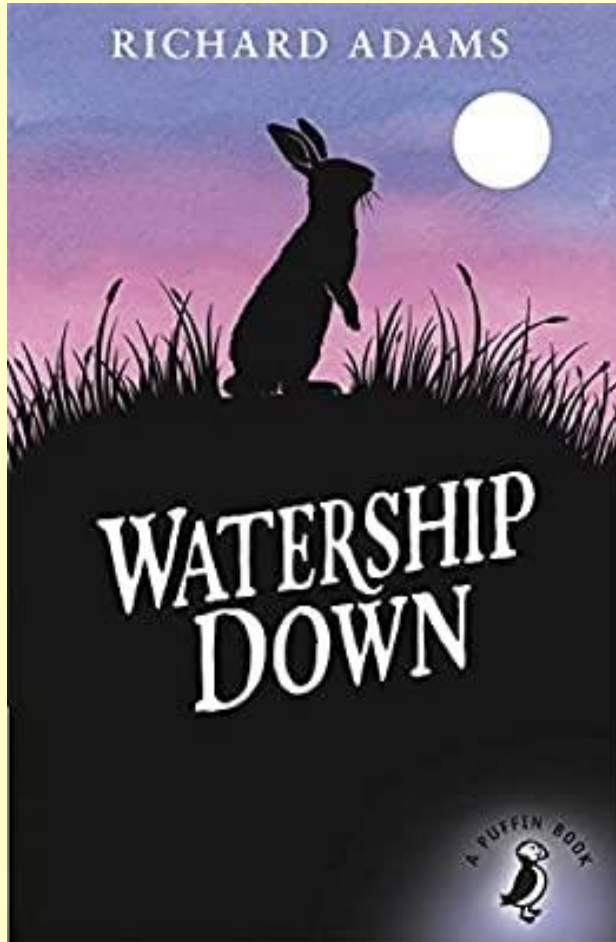


Genre	drama, mystery, comedy
Themes	childhood, crime, mystery, treasure, racism



Year 6

Watership Down



Young rabbit Fiver is convinced that a great evil is about to befall the warren where he lives - but no one will listen to him. At last he manages to persuade his brother Hazel and a few other brave rabbits to leave behind the safety of the warren, before its too late.

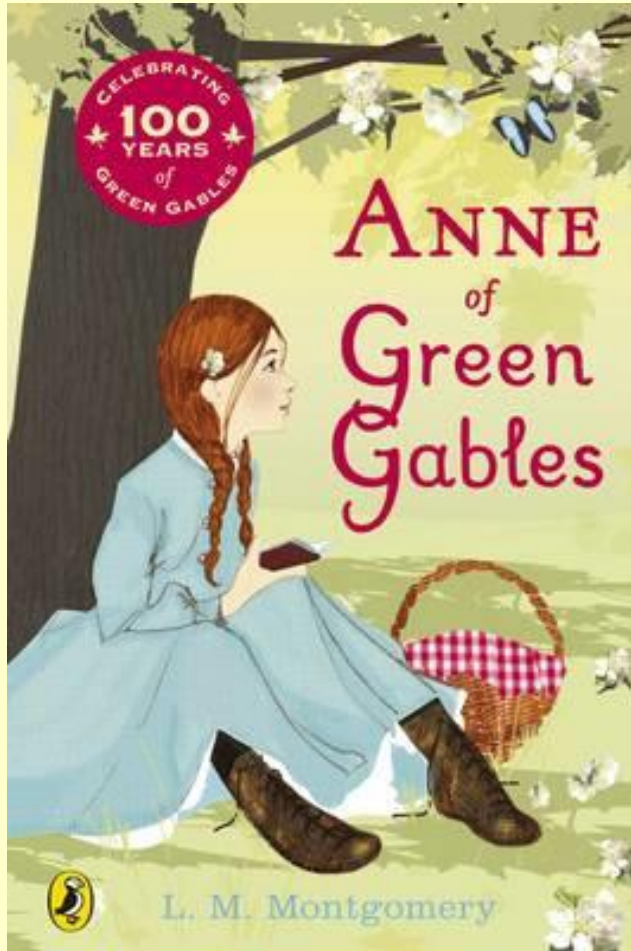
Chased by former friends, under threat from humans and hunted by dogs and foxes, their journey is a dangerous one - but the rabbits can still dream of a peaceful and safe new life at Watership Down.

Genre	Classic, adventure
Themes	Animals, environment, fear, illness, nature



Year 6

Anne of Green Gables



Anne Shirley, an opinionated and decidedly red-haired 11-year-old orphan, is mistakenly sent to Nova Scotia to live with a middle-aged brother and sister, Matthew and Marilla, at their farm, Green Gables.

At first, stern Marilla is set to send Anne back to the orphanage. However, as Anne brightens up their quiet life, Marilla reconsiders...

The bond that grows between Anne, Marilla and Matthew is incredibly touching. Anne's friendship with the shy and more conventional Diana is also full of warmth, as Diana provides the (mostly) sensible foil to Anne's madcap schemes. Anne's relationship with the initially hated Gilbert Blythe, her rival at school, develops beautifully into a friendship in the tradition of a classic romance.

Meanwhile, the beautiful wildness of Nova Scotia, the location for this much-loved story, complements Anne's dreamy imagination perfectly.

Genre	Classic, romance
Themes	Family, foster care, friendship



Year 6

The Tale of Podkin One

Stories aren't all about fighting and revenge. You have to have a bit of character development. Some suspense, some atmosphere'.

So says the bard telling the story of rabbit hero Podkin One-Ear, and his tale certainly has all those things. Podkin is son of the chieftain of the Munbury warren but forced to flee with his baby brother and capable big sister Paz when their home is invaded by the terrifying Gorm, iron-clad monster rabbits turned evil by greed and enchantment. The story of how their little band grows to start the fight back against the Gorm is full of magic, narrow escapes and heroic deeds.

Written in a very engaging style, regular breaks when the bard discusses the story with his audience both building and easing tension, this is a great bit of storytelling. Readers will hope for more adventures for Podkin and Paz.



Genre	Fantasy, magical
Themes	Family, friendship, animals, leadership

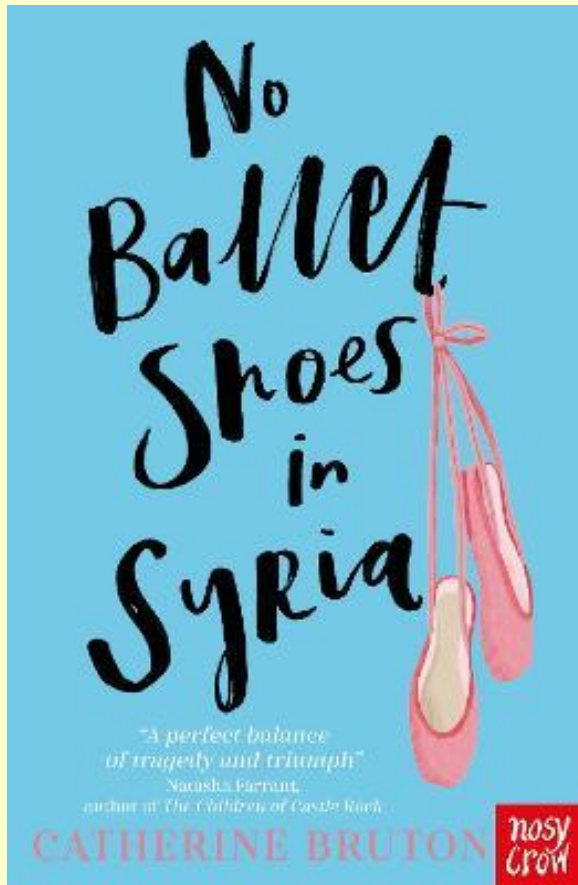


Year 6

No Ballet Shoes in Syria

Aya is eleven years old and has just arrived in Britain with her mum and baby brother, seeking asylum from war in Syria. When Aya stumbles across a local ballet class, the formidable dance teacher spots her exceptional talent and believes that Aya has the potential to earn a prestigious ballet scholarship. But at the same time, Aya and her family must fight to be allowed to remain in the country, to make a home for themselves and to find Aya's father - separated from the rest of the family during the journey from Syria.

With beautiful, captivating writing, wonderfully authentic ballet detail, and an important message championing the rights of refugees, this is classic storytelling - filled with warmth, hope and humanity. Wise and kind and unputdownable.



Genre	Journey, fiction
Themes	Family, home, asylum, refugees



Year 6

Cogheart



When 13-year-old Lily's inventor father vanishes after a Zeppelin crash, Lily's determined to hunt down the truth behind his disappearance, helped by Robert, the local clockmaker's son, and her wily mechanical fox Malkin.

But shadowy figures are closing in and treachery lurks among the smoky spires of London - along with a life-changing secret. Be swept away by airships and flabbergasted by dastardly plots in this extraordinary and wildly imaginative debut, bursting with invention and adventure.

Genre	Adventure, fantasy
Themes	Journey, inventions, magic

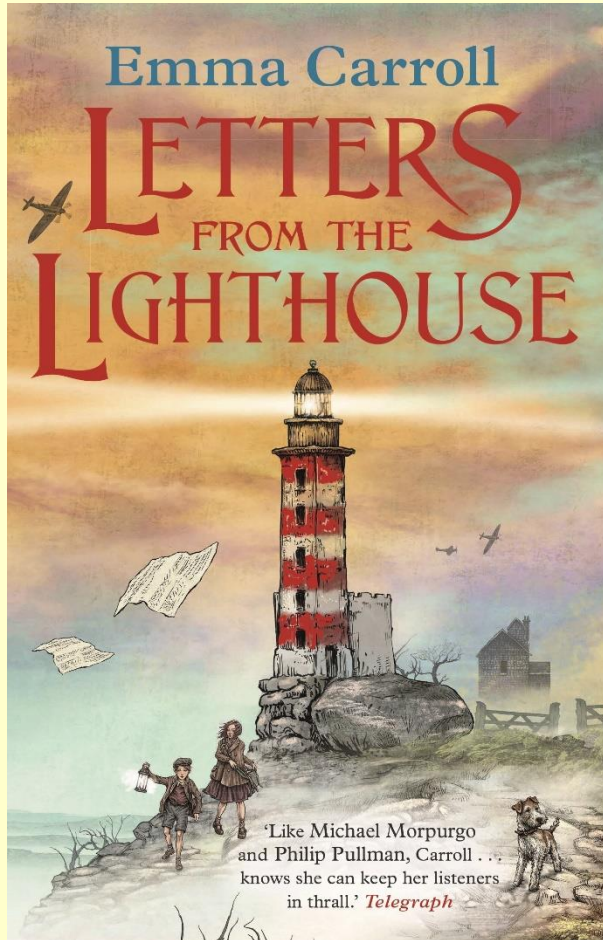


Year 6

Letters from the Lighthouse

February, 1941. After months of bombing raids in London, twelve-year-old Olive Bradshaw and her little brother Cliff are evacuated to the Devon coast. The only person with two spare beds is Mr Ephraim, the local lighthouse keeper. But he's not used to company and he certainly doesn't want any evacuees.

Desperate to be helpful, Olive becomes his post-girl, carrying secret messages (as she likes to think of the letters) to the villagers. But Olive has a secret of her own. Her older sister Sukie went missing in an air raid, and she's desperate to discover what happened to her. And then she finds a strange coded note which seems to link Sukie to Devon, and to something dark and impossibly dangerous.



Genre

Mystery, war

Themes

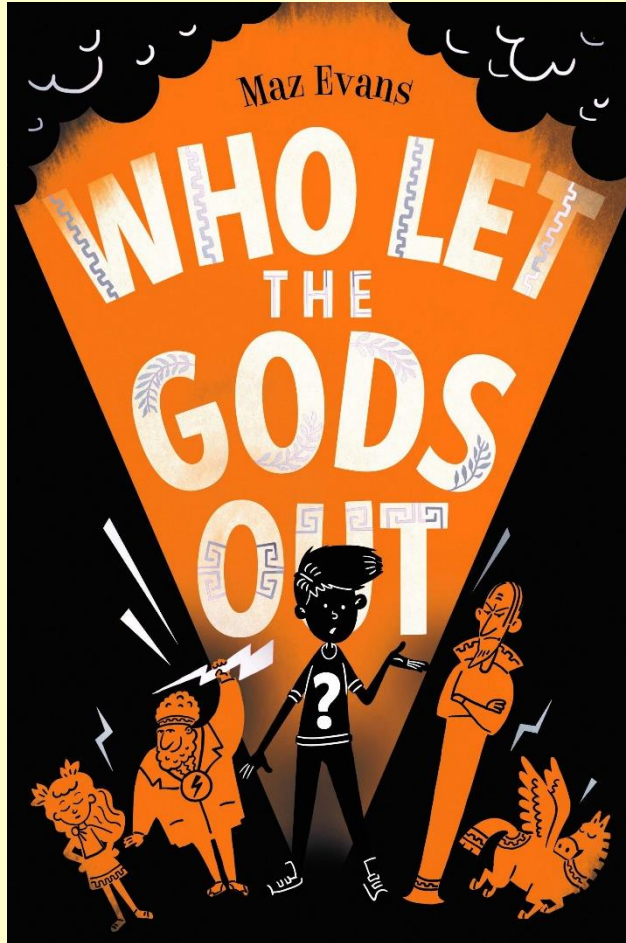
world war 2, mystery, childhood, community



Year 6

Who Let The Gods Out

Elliot's mum is ill and his home is under threat, but a shooting star crashes to earth and changes his life forever. The star is Virgo - a young Zodiac goddess on a mission. But the pair accidentally release Thanatos, a wicked death daemon imprisoned beneath Stonehenge, and must then turn to the old Olympian gods for help. After centuries of cushy retirement on earth, are Zeus and his crew up to the task of saving the world - and solving Elliot's problems too?

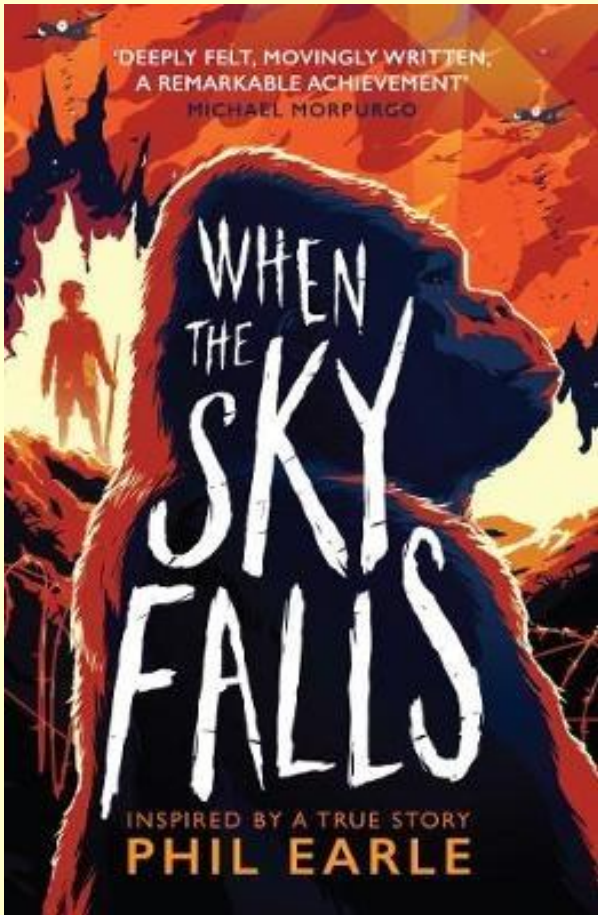


Genre	Comedy, adventure
Themes	comedy, childhood, mental illness, ancient greece



Year 6

When the Sky Falls



No wonder he is angry! Bombs are raining down on the city that Joseph is sent to as an evacuee. And anyway, who came up with the stupid idea that he should live with Mrs F. who doesn't even like children! He knows he should just run away but where would he go? Instead, he finds himself inexorably drawn into Mrs F's life and the zoo and the animals she is fighting to keep safe – in particular, Adonis, the powerful silverback gorilla. Every night when the bombs fall, Mrs F rushes to the zoo. She risks her life to be with her animals safe knowing that, if the very worst happens and the zoo is bombed she will have to take exceptional and radical action.

Will she be brave enough? And would Joseph be?

Genre	Animals, Historical fiction
Themes	World War II, bravery,



Year 6

Peter Pan

Desperate to hear bedtime stories, Peter Pan waits outside the nursery window of Wendy, John and Michael Darling. When Peter asks Wendy to fly with him to Neverland, the Darling children are whisked away to a world of adventure – of daring fairies, wondrous mermaids and The Lost Boys. But there is danger in Neverland too: the villainous Captain Hook is out for revenge and will stop at nothing to take it.

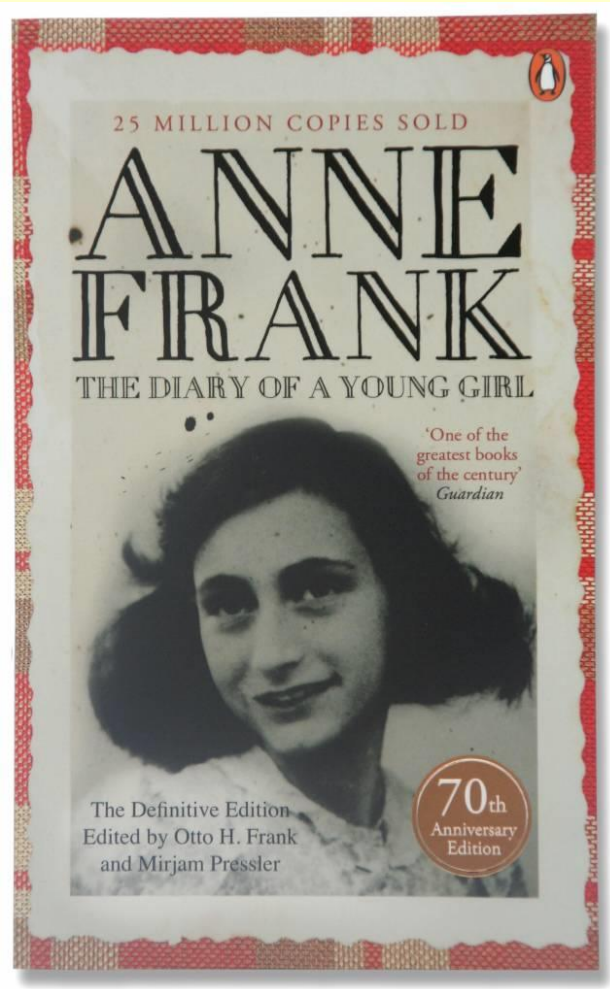


Genre	adventure
Themes	magic, friendship, family, revenge



Year 6

Anne Frank



This account of the Nazi persecution of the Jews and Anne Frank's family's hiding in a secret annexe to escape them, is sensitively told. We are introduced to Anne, her father, his assistant, and others, as characters in a story.

As the narrative progresses we are encouraged to identify with the spirited Anne as 'someone you might sit next to in class' – learning of her joys and sadness. Readers will understand something of how Hitler was able to create such a situation in Germany after World War I; the impact on Jew's at this time and undoubtedly they will be forced to think about bigotry.

From the subdued browns and greys of the beautifully realised illustrations, to the thorough research and the careful choice of language, this book resonates with truth.

Genre	Non Fiction, historical
Themes	War, resilience, survival

