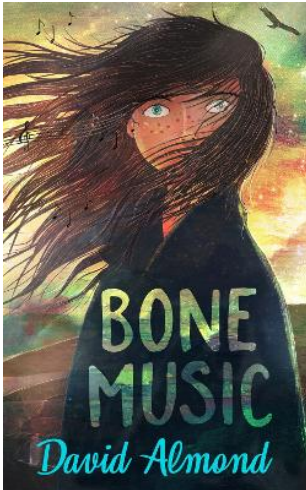


A selection of books especially selected for children in Year 7 (11 - 12 year olds) of average reading ability for the 2021/22 academic year.

If your child is a competent reader or has read all these titles then try the books from the Year 8 list. Alternatively if these books are a little challenging try books from the Year 6 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.



Bone Music

Author: David Almond **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/09/2021

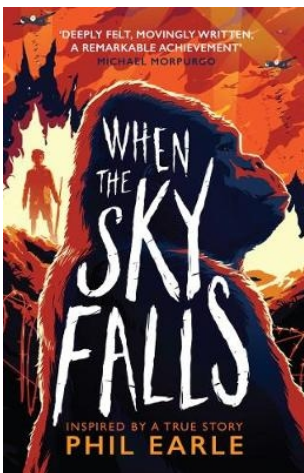
September 2021 Book of the Month Unrivalled in his capacity to conjure soulful truths that transcend time and place, David Almond's writing never fails to get to the very heart of what it is to be human and, though its setting is modern, *Bone Music* is a sublimely timeless masterpiece - a raw, pure, measuredly lyrical story of a girl discovering deep bonds to nature and the distant past. Underpinned by a belief that the world can be made a better place, it will appeal to a broad range of 11+-year-olds (and adults), from dedicated bookworms, to more reluctant readers. "Why had her bliddy mother brought her here?" city girl Sylvia complains. There's no phone signal in the wilds of Northumberland, where her mother was born, where they're currently staying. On her first night here, Sylvia is disturbed by haunting music: "It was like something she'd dreamed before, like something coming from inside her as well as from outside her, like something she'd heard before." Then she meets a young musician, Gabriel, who wisely remarks - out of the blue - that "the world's bloody awful, isn't it? ... It's bloody awful and it isn't bloody awful. It's bloody marvellous". Through their forest wandering and fashioning of a bone flute from the wing of a dead buzzard, Sylvia sees the world anew and experiences life's "bloody marvellous" aspects. As Gabriel explains, bone flutes "were used to charm the living. They were used to call the dead", and they were used in ancient rites of passage. The magic of bone music and nature casts an unceasing spell on Sylvia ("the beauty of the world poured into her"), as does Gabriel. His wisdom has timely, timeless resonance: "Something's wrong, isn't it? Look at the state of the bliddy world. Look at all the anxious, troubled kids. We need more, don't we?" And that, perhaps, gets to the heart of this remarkable book - it's a story that stimulates reflection, provokes questions and prompts us to ask what we really need (and don't need) while celebrating primal connections to the earth and the ancient past. What a joy.



Be Resilient: How to Build a Strong Teenage Mind for Tough Times

Author: Nicola Morgan **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/07/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

This is a book that was inspired by the issues teens were facing as a result of the lockdowns and lack of contact with peers and school. Nicola Morgan, known for her no-nonsense very approachable way with incredibly difficult and important subjects for teenagers set herself the task of writing this very readable guide to growing their own resilience. The pandemic was not a situation any one person could control – but this book sets out lots of strategies for dealing with whatever the world throws at you – be it pandemic, personal crisis, or just navigating that difficult time we call teenage! The book is arranged into five specific areas that will work in different combinations for individuals. Not every reader will need every section, but there is definitely something in here for everyone. Reading this book will give everyone a set of tools – whether to build your personal network, or in coping strategies or other areas with an approach that uses character studies, simple activities, as well as giving lots of space and time for reflection on what has been read. Knowing Nicola is an expert on the teenage brain and mental health you know the subject is well researched and based on the latest scientific research. The topic I had not encountered before in any other book was the idea of ‘heartsong’ and knowing what your heartsong is. Heartsong is defined by Nicola as a feeling of joy, of satisfaction, of fulfilment, of happiness – different from well-being – a positive emotion just for the individual. It’s the ‘I’m glad I did that’ of life. I’m glad I read this – and I know just the right person who will value this, too. Meanwhile, every school with teenagers in it should have this book available in multiple copies for their students – so many will get benefit from it.

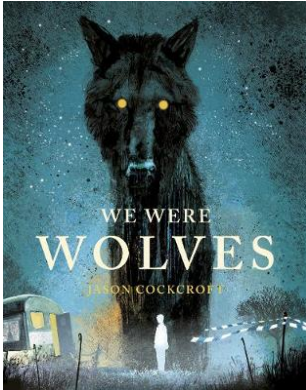


When the Sky Falls

Author: Phil Earle **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/06/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month June 2021 | Shortlisted for the Yoto Carnegie Medal 2022 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? In this deeply moving story of Joseph’s journey of self-discovery Phil Earle not only tells a brilliant story

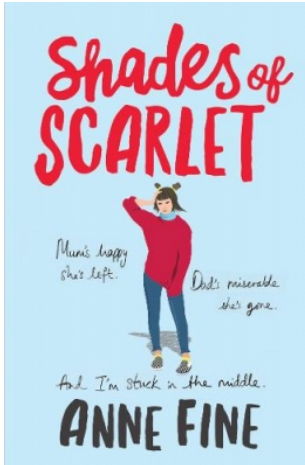
of a child's emotional development but also added an important and true dimension to World War 2 stories.



We Were Wolves

Author: Jason Cockcroft **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 06/05/2021 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

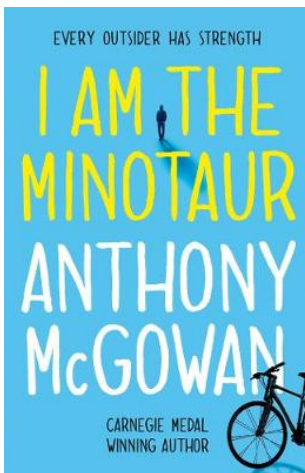
Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 11-14 Raw, haunting and elemental, Jason Cockcroft's *We Were Wolves* is a beautifully-written, atmospherically illustrated tour de force. Multi-layered, rich in symbolism, and suffused in the wild majesty of the natural world, it explores love, loss, father-son bonds and PTSD with devastating power. Boy lives in the woods in John's caravan. "John was my dad's name," Boy explains. "He never liked me calling him Dad and didn't call me son, not even when I was young and he was away in the desert making sure we were all safe." During duty as a soldier, John witnessed "men turned to red dust in a gunflash, and flames that spewed up from the black sand, straight like fountains". On returning, he retreated to the caravan and ended up in prison, leaving Boy alone in the woods. Sagely, Boy realises that "what happened was set out before I was born even, and before John and my mam met, and before the war, too. Before the beasts that had laid quiet under that wood for thousands of years finally climbed up out of the soil. It was all set like a sleeping stone in the earth beneath our feet long before any of us were here, like the bones of bears and wolves and wild bulls that are there if you dig deep enough." This is typical of Boy's voice - it cuts to the soul with brutal power, at once wise beyond his years and sorely young. Now alone, Boy has been instructed to keep himself hidden - especially from the Bad Man - as he awaits his father's promised imminent return. He's even lied to Mam about John's imprisonment. But trouble encroaches Boy's place in the woods like expectant vultures. Utterly unique (though reminiscent of David Almond in its brilliant bone-deep evocation of primary emotional states and of-the-moment situations, and its transcendence of age boundaries), *We Were Wolves* is a tense and timely triumph.



Shades of Scarlet

Author: Anne Fine **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 04/03/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

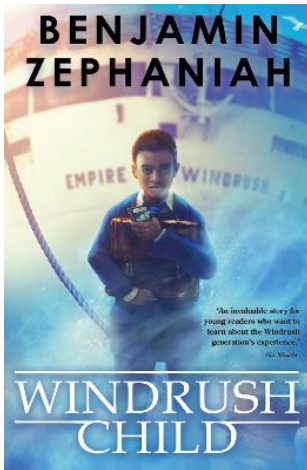
A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month April 2021 Award-winning author and former Children's Laureate Anne Fine has a rare gift for revealing family relationships accurately and painfully but with laugh out loud humour. She is at her best unpicking the complicated feelings around family break up and exploring the devious means all parties have of keeping secrets and uncovering the truth. When Scarlet's dynamic mother decides to leave her quieter father Scarlet has to go with her. Luckily, she can still see her dad at weekends and she still has her best friend Alice to share everything with. Gradually Scarlet finds that there are other people to think about too including her mother's new boyfriend and the possible new partner for her father. She also finds she has a lot to learn about her parents as individuals as well as in relationship to her. Anne Fine is as full of family insight and humour as ever.



I Am The Minotaur

Author: Anthony McGowan **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/01/2021
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

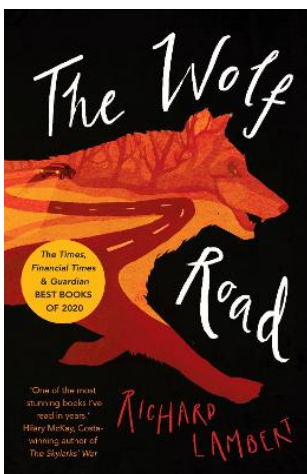
Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 11-14 This is a gritty yet touching story of one teenager's struggles with bullying and isolation, written by Carnegie Medal Winning author Anthony McGowan, and is perfect for less-confident readers.



Windrush Child

Author: Benjamin Zephaniah **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/11/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

This novel, by Birmingham born poet Zephaniah, is the fifth book in the Scholastic Voices series – highlighting the situation and stories behind the myriad of people who have arrived from all over the world to the UK. Leonard’s father is one of the many Jamaican born men who came to Britain at the request of the UK government to help rebuild the country after the second World War. So, when Leonard and his mother arrive in Southampton the 10-year-old had to get to know a father he barely remembers and learn to live in a climate, both physical and social, that was alien to him. This is a carefully written account which does not shirk from exploring the society and the racism that Leonard encounters in his school and in being a part of 50’s and 60’s society in Manchester – where Leonard’s father was a bus driver. It’s aimed at KS2 children and the language, plus seeing everything through Leonard’s often confused eyes makes it a valuable lesson for children to read. The book takes Leonard’s story to the present day where he is one of the Windrush generation who now struggle to prove his right to be in the UK – making this a strong story on which to base vital lessons on the morality of government policies. Highly recommended.

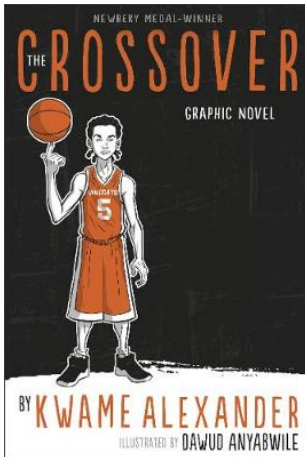


The Wolf Road

Author: Richard Lambert **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 28/10/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 11-14 | November 2020 Debut of the Month Nimbly navigating a fine thread between real-world tragedy and elemental inner demons, Richard Lambert’s *The Wolf Road* is a stunning coming-of-age thriller about a boy’s battle with bereavement, and the wolf that holds the key to his healing. It’s un-put-down-able and emotionally haunting in perfectly balanced measures. Fifteen-year-old Lucas’s life unravels when he discovers his parents were killed in a car crash caused by a dog. In an instant “the world didn’t make sense”, and now he must live with his nan, an “odd woman in purple DMs” (and socially-conscious solicitor) he’s only met twice in his life. Despite his angry protests, Lucas has no choice but to move to Nan’s cottage in the Lake District, certain the offending dog was, in fact, a wolf. It’s not long before wolves infiltrate all aspects of his life - at school he reads *The Call of the Wild* (a book “about a dog that really wants to be a wolf”). Local TV news reports on a local farmer who believes his livestock is being killed by a wild wolf. And then lupine menace encroaches on Lucas’s reality when he hears and glimpses what must be the wolf. As he wonders whether it’s coming for him, to “finish off the family after Mum and Dad,” he confronts his wildest pains in the wilds of the mountains. While the theme of loss - and Lambert’s inventive handling of it - will chime with readers who loved Patrick Ness’s *A Monster Calls*, this also has great appeal for fans

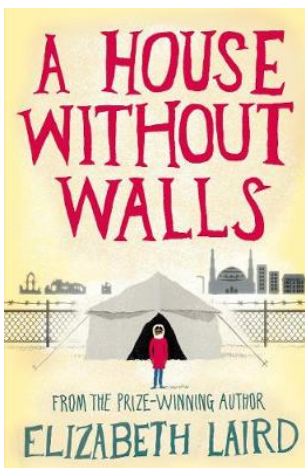
of emotion-driven adventures, such as Piers Torday's nature-rich novels. Other plot strands skilfully untangle the complex relationship between Lucas and his Nan. The faltering understandings reached between grandmother and grandson are a joy to witness, as is the bond Lucas forms with Debs, a Sylvia Plath-reading goth-punk.



The Crossover Graphic Novel

Author: Kwame Alexander **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/03/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

March 2020 Book of the Month The novel of The Crossover is a Newberry Medal Winner, and a Coretta Scott King Award Winner in the US and was Shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal in the UK. This graphic novel version is the whole story complete with large and small two-coloured illustrations gracing every page. This is a deceptively simple read – a novel in verse about siblings getting through middle school, their lives, their crushes, their family interactions, and basketball. The boys are twins Josh and Jordan Bell, sons of a famous basketball player, and aiming to make a mark in the world of basketball. There are rivalries between the boys, they revel in their differences, but family holds them together whatever the world throws at them. The words and pictures work so well together, you will be on the edge of your seat, rooting for the team as they play and crying with the twins when things go awry. To tell such a complex story with so few words, with such emotional depth – Alexander is a master of devastating and uplifting storytelling. Anyabwile's illustrations enhance a superb story – adding expressions and movement to an already great novel.



A House Without Walls

Author: Elizabeth Laird **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 22/08/2019 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

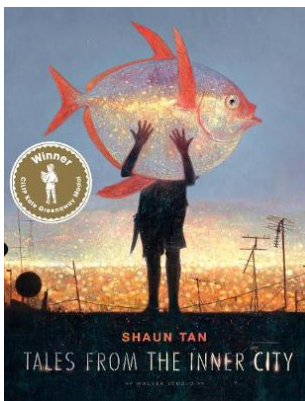
Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month September 2019 Award winning Elizabeth Laird brilliantly brings to life thirteen year old Safiya's new world as a refugee after her family flee from their comfortable home in Damascus because of the war in Syria. Safiya, her brother and father arrive in Jordan with nothing and must turn to relatives for help. Safiya has to adjust to living in a tent without running water. Suddenly, she is cleaning and washing and finding clever ways of making do on very little rather than going to school. But resourceful Safiya never gives up hope of going back to a better way for life or of finding her missing twin sister. A House without Walls is a vivid picture of a family facing an extreme experience with courage and imagination.



The Afterwards

Author: A. F. Harrold **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 01/11/2018
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

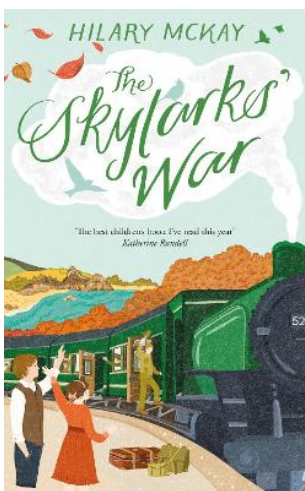
November 2018 Book of the Month A powerful, poignant, darkly comic and deeply moving story about friendship at its most extraordinary.



Tales from the Inner City

Author: Shaun Tan **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 04/10/2018
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

Winner of the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2020 In this mind-blowingly beautiful book comprising twenty-five tales, visionary artist and writer Shaun Tan turns his attention to the relationship between humans and animals in varied urban contexts. A rhino on a motorway. An owl at the side of a hospital patient. An eagle spied at multiple international airports. Giant snails declared “indecent” by the public. Dreamlike, mysterious and poignant, this is a book to pore over. Both words and illustrations lend themselves to multiple readings, each experience unearthing alternate interpretations, new discoveries, fresh ways of seeing the world. What a sublimely strange feat this is.



The Skylarks' War

Author: Hilary McKay **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 20/09/2018
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

Winner of the Costa Children's Book Award 2018 | A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month October 2018 | One of our 2018 Books of the Year Award winning Hilary McKay tells a captivating and deeply moving story of three young people growing up in the years before and during World War One. How their lives were totally changed by the War, how what really happened to the soldiers could never be talked about and how a girl like Clarry suddenly had opportunities because of the war are all touched on in a story that is also about universal adolescent relationships and the timeless concerns of being a teenager. Following their mother's death at her birth, Clarry and her older brother Peter live a joyless life with their gloomy father. The pair live for their summer holidays in Cornwall with their grandparents which they share with their older cousin Rupert. Here, the trio are free to be themselves and to begin to break away from the constraints of family expectations. When war is declared Rupert enlists: his family is horrified

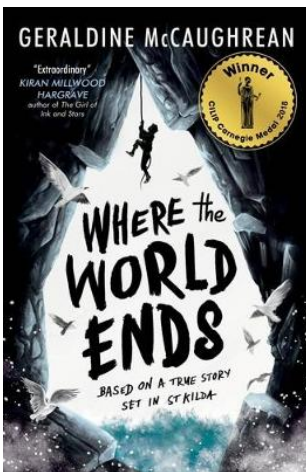
and Clarry and Peter are left trying to work out where he might be, how they themselves should react to the war and, above all, whether Rupert is safe. Hilary McKay has a rare gift for novels about families and their interplay. Here, she weaves her story round one of the most powerful backdrops in history. And she does so with the lightest of touch which makes her history come alive. The Costa Judges said: 'Chime, resonance and sparkle – a truly great read.'



Freedom

Author: Catherine Johnson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/08/2018 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

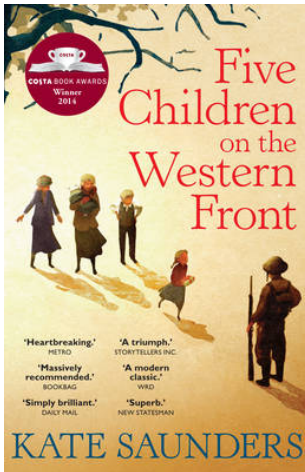
Winner of the Little Rebels Children's Book Award 2019 An action-packed and pacy story about a boy's experience of slavery in Britain. Nathaniel doesn't want to move to England with his master's family, leaving behind his mother and sister on the Jamaican plantation. But then he remembers what his mother told him: once a slave sets foot on English soil, they're free. Perhaps he can earn his fortune and buy his family's freedom, too. For more books on this theme head over to our sister site, LoveReading4Schools topic list - The Slave Trade



Where the World Ends

Author: Geraldine McCaughrean **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 01/05/2017 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

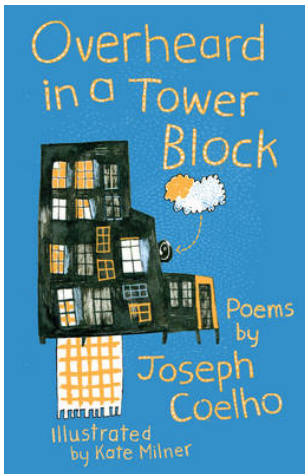
In the summer of 1727 a group of men and boys, there to harvest birds and eggs, were stranded on Warrior Stac, a pinnacle of rock that pitches out of the Atlantic, 'as black and fearful as one horn of the Devil himself'. It was nine months before anyone came to collect them. Geraldine McCaughrean has taken these bare facts and imagined the story of those terrible months and the characters of those who endured them. Yes, it's a mesmerising story of survival, but McCaughrean takes it in different and surprising ways too and, both terrifying and full of dark comedy, it becomes an elemental story of love and faith; of myth and imagination. Indeed, in the hands of one of our very finest writers this bleak, isolated rock becomes a microcosm for the whole world and all its stories. Unmissable. Readers should also seek out Geraldine McCaughrean's novels *The White Darkness* and *The Stones are Hatching* and will also enjoy David Almond's *A Song for Ella Grey*.



Five Children on the Western Front

Author: Kate Saunders **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 02/04/2015 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

Witty, tender and full of insights into life love and politics, this is a brilliant book in its own right as well as a worthy tribute to E. Nesbit's classic Five Children and It. The year is 1914. Anthea, Robert, Jane and Cyril, who has just enlisted, are now grown up, the Lamb is a schoolboy and even Edie, an addition to the family since the original, is old enough to meet the extraordinary and magical Psammead when he re-enters their life. All the children are longing for some new adventures but has the Psammead still got his magical powers? As befits the serious times, the Psammead plays an invaluable role in helping the family understand the First World War while also sorting out problems from his own past. Action-packed, funny and thoughtful this is a book to fall in love with.



Overheard in a Tower Block

Author: Joseph Coelho **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/07/2017 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3

UKLA Longlist Book Awards - 2019 | Shortlisted for the Centre for Literacy in Primary Poetry Award 2018 This second solo collection from Joseph Coelho, *Overheard in a Tower Block*, explores further some of the themes from *Werewolf Club Rules* (which won the CLIPPA in 2015). More suited to an older reader than that first collection, this is an extraordinarily powerful and moving book. Each poem offers us glimpses into the life of the main character as he grows, over the course of the collection, from young boy through adolescence to adulthood. The ingenious threading of fantasy, story, myth and magic throughout the poems only illuminates further the challenges and hardships of this young man's life, but ultimately concludes in moments of optimism, joy and possibility.

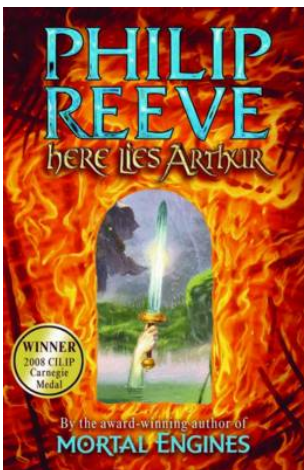


The Island at the End of Everything

Author: Kiran Millwood Hargrave **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/05/2017 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

One of Our Books of the Year 2017 | Shortlisted for the 2018 Blue Peter Awards - Best Story | Shortlisted for the Costa Children's Book Award 2017 | Longlisted for the UKLA 2018 Book Award

Kiran Millwood Hargrave follows up her award-winning debut *The Girl of Ink and Stars* with a story set in the real world, though one still filled with a sense of wonder and the extraordinary. Set in the Philippines at the beginning of the last century it tells the story of a girl forcibly removed from her mother, as many were, because her mother has leprosy, or as those with the disease preferred, is touched. With the help of her friends Ami makes her way back to her mother and it's a story of love, courage and hope, all of these symbolised by the butterflies that fill the pages and that are so important to the story. It's passionately told, full of memorable scenes and characters, and the writing is beautiful.



Here Lies Arthur

Author: Philip Reeve **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/05/2009 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

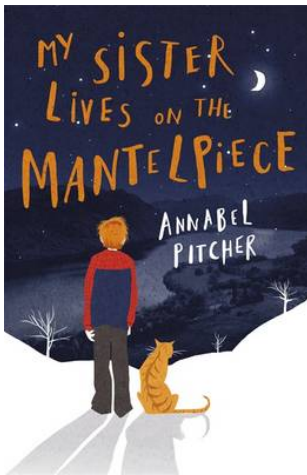
Prize-winning author Philip Reeve gives a brilliant new take on the legend of King Arthur. Myrddin rides with Arthur spinning tales for and about him but what is the truth and can Gwyna discover it? Bridging the past and present *Here Lies Arthur* is the story of how heroes and the legends about them are made. Winner of the prestigious 2008 CILIP Carnegie Medal. On winning the CILIP Carnegie Medal he said "I didn't believe it at first, but as I got over the shock and it began to sink in, I felt totally honoured. It is very special to win the CILIP Carnegie Medal. It has such a history and I admire so many past winners' work it is quite humbling to be ranked alongside them." "Here Lies Arthur is an outstanding book, and deserving winner," said Tricia Adams, Chair of the 12 strong librarian judging panel. 'Reeve's is a consistent story-telling voice that brings us a subtle and credible retelling of the King Arthur myth. It is both a page turning adventure story and a clever historical novel. It also has clear political resonance for our times, demonstrating humanity's need to sustain hope and optimism, and our tendency to favour myth over reality to achieve that end.'



The Sleeper and the Spindle

Author: Neil Gaiman **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 08/09/2016
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

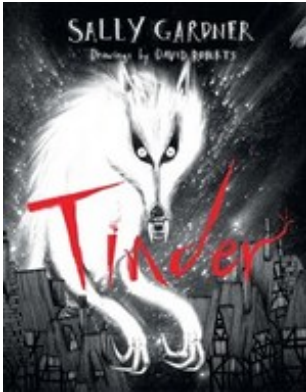
Winner of the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal 2016. A deluxe edition of the thrillingly reimagined fairy tale by the magical partnership of award-bedecked, bestselling Neil Gaiman and Children's Laureate Chris Riddell. Award-winning Neil Gaiman shows all his story telling skills in this gripping fusion of familiar fairy tales told in a dark-hearted version with some original characters. Especially a bold-hearted queen. Not far from where the queen lives, a princess is under the spell of an enchantress who has put a whole country to sleep. Despite it being the eve of her wedding day, the bold queen decides to take action. Slipping into her mail shirt she arms herself with her sword and sets off out of the palace accompanied by the three dwarves who will lead her through the tunnels...The dark magic, great courage and spell-binding imagination that power this story is perfectly realised in Chris Riddell's awesome illustrations.



My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece

Author: Annabel Pitcher **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 10/12/2015
Year Groups: Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

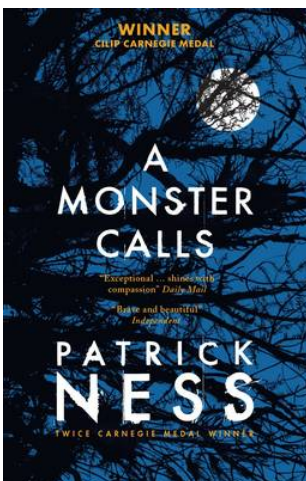
Winner of the 2012 Branford Boase Award for an outstanding debut novel Heartbreaking and funny in equal measure, 10-year-old Jamie's direct and wide-eyed account of the emotional chaos he and his family live through following the death of his sister in a terrorist attack is poignant and warm-hearted. Beginning a new life in the Lake District with his older sister and his father, who mourns his daughter through alcohol and a wild rage against her killers, Jamie knows he should feel sadder than he does. The truth is, he can hardly remember his sister; and what is happening with his new school and new friends, especially Sunya, is more urgent – as is his yearning for his absent mother. Emotionally charged, this is a wonderfully touching story which never slips into worthiness.



Tinder

Author: Sally Gardner **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/10/2015
Year Groups: Key Stage 3

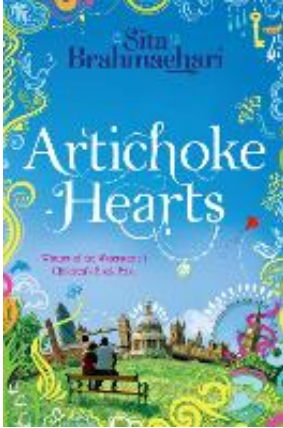
Shortlisted for the 2015 CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal - Shortlisted for the 2015 CILIP Carnegie Medal Award-winning Sally Gardner tells a gripping, bloody and bold story drawing on the traditions of fairy stories of all kinds and especially Hans Christian Andersen's *The Tinder Box*. *Tinder* tells how a young and romantic soldier finds true love by overcoming every kind of magic and trickery in the world through a mixture of bravery and cunning while also trying to hold fast to goodness and truth. Behind him and almost all he meets lie the horrors and the excitement of serving as a soldier; all of them long for a peaceful life they cannot resist the heady excitement of living with danger an urge that leads them all into violence with all the terrible attendant consequences. ~ Julia Eccleshare



A Monster Calls

Author: Patrick Ness **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/05/2015
Year Groups: Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

Winner of the 2012 Carnegie Medal AND 2012 Kate Greenaway Medal. This is the first time one book has won both prizes! Prize-winning Patrick Ness displays brilliant new skills of sensitivity in this hauntingly touching story of how a boy deals with the looming threat of his mother's death from cancer. Haunted by a monster in his dreams, denied much information by his family and treated as a weirdo by his class mates and a 'special case' by his teachers, Conor struggles to get to grips with the devastating emotions which threaten to overwhelm him. How he finds the courage and strength to face the end when it happens is both utterly shattering and deeply satisfying. Costa Award winner Patrick Ness spins a tale from the final idea of much-loved Carnegie Medal winner Siobhan Dowd, whose premature death from cancer prevented her from writing it herself. Winner of the Red House Children's Book Award 2012. Winner of the Galaxy Children's Book of the Year Award 2011.



Artichoke Hearts

Author: Sita Brahmachari **Format:** Paperback / softback **Release Date:** 07/01/2011

Twelve-year-old Mira comes from a chaotic, artistic and outspoken family where it's not always easy to be heard. As her beloved Nana Josie's health declines, Mira begins to discover the secrets of those around her, and also starts to keep some of her own. She is drawn to mysterious Jide, a boy who is clearly hiding a troubled past and has grown hardened layers - like those of an artichoke - around his heart. As Mira is experiencing grief for the first time, she is also discovering the wondrous and often mystical world around her. An incredibly insightful, honest novel exploring the delicate balance, and often injustice, of life and death - but at its heart is a celebration of friendship, culture - and life. Winner of the 2011 Waterstone's Children's Book Prize.
