



Sandroyd

Great Books
2017-2018

This collection was born out of a list compiled by a great librarian friend of mine and is intended to be a guide to some of the best, and the most popular, books available for students in Years 5 to 8. The aim is to help students and parents choose reading material that is – whether new or old – challenging, rewarding or just plain fun. Those in the higher years may already have read many of the titles, but we hope everyone will find something to interest them.

We have not tried to steer the different year groups or genders towards particular books, but we have marked with an asterisk (*) those books that we think are less suitable for those below Year 8.

As there are limits on the number of books that can be included in this list, we have often chosen just one title by a particular author. The librarian or your English teacher can always give you advice on other books by an author you have enjoyed.

As any book recommendations are subjective, there will be some books in this list you try but don't enjoy. We hope there will be many you love. If you think we have missed out any great books that should be in the list, please let Madam Cournil or Miss Adkin know. Perhaps you'll see them on the list next year!

We are a small school library and so, whilst the majority of the books on this list are available in the school library, if you cannot find a particular title, just ask! You can also have a look at www.lovereading4kids.co.uk which is a great literary platform, full of reviews and recommendations. There's no excuse not to be reading!

Miss Adkin

Head of English

Contents

Action and Adventure	4
Animals	6
Classic Reads	8
Different Countries and Cultures	11
Dragons and Other Mythical Creatures	13
Fairy Tales and Magic	15
Fantasy and Other Worlds	17
Fantasy Thrillers	19
Historical Fiction	21
Humour	23
Memoirs	25
Modern Life	27
Mysteries and Detection	30
Myths and Legends	32
Recent Award Winners	34
Science Fiction	36
School Stories	38
Short Stories	39
Spies and Special Agents	40
Spooky Stories	42
Sports Stories	44
Steampunk	46
Time Travel	47
Vampires, Zombies, Demons and Monsters	48
Wartime Stories	50
Index of Authors	52
Acknowledgements	54



Action and Adventure

Lynne Reid Banks

Tiger, Tiger

This is set in Ancient Rome and follows the life of two tiger cubs that are captured - one for the Emperor Caesar's daughter and the other for the circus. (And by 'circus' they mean the place where gladiators fight and Christians are fed to lions. Not quite the kettle corn and Ferris wheel kind!) A book full of intrigue and danger, wonder and fun.

Tracy Alexander

Hacked

Followed by *Alias*

Dan is a computer whiz, and hides from his parents the full extent of his online - sometimes illegal - activity. When he is contacted online by Angel, he is at first eager for the challenge of creating tricky code, but later suspects that something evil may be involved. He must decide whether to protect himself, or prevent a deadly terror attack.

Peter Jay Black

Urban Outlaws

Followed by *Blackout*, *Lockdown*, *Counterstrike* and *Shockwave*

Jack, Charlie, Slink, Obi and Wren are a group of super-skilled children who, from a bunker deep beneath the city of London, plan their missions to steal money from the rich to give to those in need. The combination of children living a life free from rules, with adventures full of the latest gadgets is a marriage made in heaven!

Chris Bradford

Bodyguard: Hostage

Followed by *Bodyguard: Ransom*, *Ambush* and *Target*

With the intense media focus on celebrity families, children have now become targets for hostage-taking. That's why they need a young bodyguard like 14-year-old Connor Reeves to protect them. This is fast-paced, believable and totally gripping escapism!

Eoin Colfer

Artemis Fowl

12-year-old villain, Artemis Fowl, is the most ingenious criminal mastermind in history. His adventures may be in the fairy world – but there's enough high-speed action to satisfy any reader looking for adventure and seven further books to keep you happy! The eighth and final book is ***Artemis Fowl and the Last Guardian***.

Matt Dickinson

Mortal Chaos

Also *Deep Oblivion* and *Speed Freaks*

A butterfly startles a young rabbit in a quiet English wood and then, in short, pithy chapters, the author weaves interlinked tales of different people whose lives are about to be changed as a result of this single event. The sense of foreboding is palpable throughout the book and the chaos knows no bounds.

Tom Hoyle

Thirteen

Followed by *Spiders*

Born at midnight in London, on the stroke of the new millennium, Adam is the target of a cult that believes boys born on this date must die before the end of their thirteenth year. Twelve boys have been killed so far, and Coron, the crazy cult leader, will stop at nothing to bring in his new kingdom. A roller-coaster plot and nail-biting action!

Josh Lacey

The Island of Thieves

Followed by *The Sultan's Tigers*

Tom Trelawney was looking for excitement, but he got more than he bargained for! When his parents left him with his eccentric uncle Harvey for a few days, they had no idea that he would immediately set off for South America on a quest for hidden gold. This is a good, old-fashioned treasure hunt, set in the modern day.

M.G.Leonard**Beetle Boy**

When Dr. Bartholomew Cuttle mysteriously disappears from a windowless vault that contains a rare beetle collection, it's up to his 12-year-old son, Darkus, to figure out what happened. After Darkus develops an unexpected friendship with a rhinoceros beetle, he learns that other rare beetles can understand and work together with humans. It's a skill that Darkus takes full advantage of in this fabulous adventure.

Simon Mayo**Itch**

Followed by *Itch Rocks* and *Itchcraft*

Itchingham Lofte - known as Itch - is an element-hunter. He is trying to collect all the elements in the periodic table...which leads to some rather destructive results in his bedroom! It is when he gets hold of a peculiar rock from a shadowy contact that things really start getting out of control.

Sophie McKenzie**The Set-Up**

Followed by *The Hostage*, *The Rescue*, *Hunted*, *Double Cross* and *Hit Squad*

Fourteen years ago, a scientist implanted four babies with the 'Medusa' gene for psychic abilities. Only now becoming aware of their powers, the teenagers are brought together by government agents to create a secret crime-fighting force - The Medusa Project.

Helen Moss**The Mystery of the Whistling Caves**

If you enjoy Enid Blyton adventures, then you'll love the 'Adventure Island' series. Set on the fictional island of Castle Key, off the coast of Cornwall, the books follow Scott, Jack, Emily and her super-smart dog, Drift as they investigate a series of baffling mysteries. There are 14 books to read, but you can read them in any order.

James Patterson**The Angel Experiment**

Followed by *School's Out Forever*, *Saving the World and Other Extreme Sports*, *The Final Warning*, *Max, Fang, Angel*, *Nevermore* and *Maximum Ride Forever*

Max Ride and her five friends grew up in a science lab/prison where they had been created as an experiment. They ended up as only 98% human...and that other 2% had a big impact.

Dan Smith**Boy X**

An exciting adventure story set on a remote island where the jungle and all that's within is affected by the experiments that happen there. When Kronos, a virus that could destroy the world, falls into the wrong hands, Ash must try to stop the virus leaving the island, save his mum and the other doctors trapped in the biosphere, and figure out what is happening to him. He's changing in some way, and it's linked to the island.

Timothee de Fombelle**Toby Alone**

Toby Lolness is just one and a half millimetres tall, and he's the most wanted person in his world, the Great Oak Tree. When Toby's father makes a ground-breaking discovery, tapping into the very heart of the Tree's energy, he also realises that exploiting it - as some tree dwellers are doing - could do permanent damage to their world...

Mark Walden**H.I.V.E: Higher Institute of Villainous Education**

Followed by *The Overlord Protocol*, *Escape Velocity*, *Dreadnought*, *Rogue*, *Zero Hour*, *Aftershock* and *Deadlock*

H.I.V.E. is a secret school where children with a gift for wrongdoing are sent to develop into criminal masterminds. The children cannot leave until training is complete, six years later, so there is plenty of time for lots of thrilling - and often amusing - action.

Danny Wallace**Hamish and the Worldstoppers**

Followed by *Hamish and the Neverpeople*

Hamish is a normal boy living in the fourth most boring town in Britain when one day everyone and everything around him stops. When this happens again, Hamish needs to figure out what's going on with the world, especially as there are monsters creeping about... Exciting adventure, sweet shops, great illustrations, and plenty of jokes!

Animals

David Alric

The Promised One

Followed by *Valley of the Ancients* and *African Pursuit*

An 11-year-old girl finds that the animals of the world have been expecting her for more than a million years. She is 'the Promised One' - the only person on earth with powers of communication with all living creatures - and her destiny is to save the planet. A book that totally captures the imagination (who *wouldn't* want to have this power?) but written with such ecological and scientific authority that it almost feels believable!

Sam Angus

Soldier Dog

Set in 1917, this is the story of Stanley who runs away from home and enlists in the army as a messenger dog handler. Despite being too young he's sent to France with a Great Dane called Bones by his side. This is a moving evocation of the chaos of trench warfare, as Stanley realises that the loyalty of his dog is the one thing he can rely on.

Andrew Cope

Spy Dog

Lara, or GM451 as she is known to the government, is a highly-trained special agent, bred by the British Secret Service for use on missions around the world. Now she must go undercover as a normal dog, but can she keep her true identity a secret? The 13th book in the series, ***Gunpowder Plot***, is now out, but you can read them in any order.

Matt Haig

To Be a Cat

Barney thinks his life couldn't get worse: he's weedy, being bullied, and head teacher-from-hell Miss Whipmire seems determined to make his life a complete misery. Worst of all, Dad has been missing for almost a year. Yet, in this darkly comic book he learns the hard way that you should never wish to be anything other than yourself...

Erin Hunter

The 'Warrior Cats' Series

Six titles set in a rich and exciting feline fantasy world, where epic battles for territory and honour are played out. Start with ***Into the Wild***. If you like this series, there are four more 'Warriors' series, plus series about bears ('Seekers') and dogs ('Survivors'). All immensely readable - and you could spend the whole year just reading this author!

Eva Ibbotson

One Dog and His Boy

Hal has everything a boy could wish for, but no one to really love him. When his parents rent him a dog for his birthday, they think that he'll tire of having to look after it, so won't mind having to give it back. They couldn't have been more wrong, and Hal embarks on a classic adventure to reclaim his pet.

Josh Lacey

A Dog Called Grk

Tim is very lonely until the day he finds a bedraggled little dog outside his house. When this turns out to be Grk, the pet of the recently-departed ambassador of Stanislavia, Tim decides to reunite them, little guessing that he will become embroiled in dangerous politics! There are seven more titles in this witty adventure series.

Tom Moorhouse

The River Singers

Followed by *The Rising*

This is a debut novel, but one with a classic feel. If you love nature and animals, but also want page-turning excitement, then this is the one for you. It captures the desperate adventures of a family of water voles struggling to survive as their habitat changes.

Michael Morpurgo**Shadow**

At first, Aman is wary of the dog that shows up outside the caves in Afghanistan where he lives with his mother. Yet when Aman and his mother finally decide to flee from the horror of war, 'Shadow' will not leave their side. This award-winning book is just one of many wonderful stories about animals written by this author, such as **War Horse**, **Born to Run**, **Running Wild** and **Kaspar: Prince of Cats**.

Kenneth Oppel**Silverwing**

Followed by *Sunwing* and *Firewing*

Shade, a young bat and the runt of his colony, is determined to prove himself on the perilous winter migration, but his boldness leads him into great danger. This award-winning trilogy has recently been reprinted with brand new covers; do give it a try!

Rachel Campbell-Johnston**The Child's Elephant**

The story of how an African herd-boy finds and nurtures a baby elephant, learns to communicate with her and lets her go when adult is a multi-layered, moving and very vivid story. It was described in The Times as "without doubt the best children's novel of 2013".

Gill Lewis**Gorilla Dawn**

Deep in the heart of the African jungle, a baby gorilla is captured by a group of rebel soldiers. Imara and Bobo are two children also imprisoned in the rebels' camp. When they learn that the gorilla is destined to be sold into captivity, they swear to return it to the wild despite the terrible consequences of getting caught. This author has the rare ability to write about humans and animals with equal empathy and moral argument, and you should also try **White Dolphin**, **Sky Hawk** or **Moon Bear** by the same author.

Megan Rix**The Runaways**

Shanti and her calf Tara are part of a circus that is forced to close during WWI. Shanti is sent to help on a farm, and Tara, separated too soon from her mother, is in danger. Only old Harvey, the circus collie dog, can help her find her mother. So dog and elephant set out on a journey across England. If you love dogs as much as this author does, then try her other titles such as **Bomber Dog**, **The Hero Pup** or **The Victory Dogs**.

Katherine Rundell**The Wolf Wilder**

Twelve-year-old Feo has grown up in the wilds of Russia, helping her mother to teach tamed wolves to fend for themselves once more. When her mother is captured and the wolves she loves become the targets of the murderous Russian Army, Feo gathers her pack of wolves and heads for St. Petersburg, on a journey that will change all of Russia.

S.F. Said**Varjak Paw**

Followed by *The Outlaw Varjak Paw*

This is a delightful story about finding your true strengths by learning to trust your instincts and think for yourself. The unlikely hero is a dreamy, pampered cat who demonstrates that his difference is his power.

Lauren St John**The White Giraffe**

Followed by *Dolphin Song*, *The Last Leopard*, *The Elephant's Tale* and *Operation Rhino*

When Martine's parents are killed, she has to move to South Africa to live with her grandmother. An extraordinary adventure begins as she befriends a legendary white giraffe and subsequently discovers she has some mysterious powers over animals.

Piers Torday**The Last Wild**

The story of 12-year-old Kester, who discovers he can telepathically communicate with animals – and finds the last ones left alive in the world after a mysterious plague has almost wiped them out. It's a wonderful book, followed by **The Dark Wild**, which won the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize 2014, and **The Wild Beyond**.

Classic Reads

Louisa May Alcott

Little Women

Little Women is the heart-warming story of the March family that has thrilled generations of readers. It is the story of four sisters--Jo, Meg, Amy and Beth-- and of the courage, humour and ingenuity they display to survive poverty and the absence of their father during the Civil War.

Frances Hodgson Burnett

The Secret Garden

When spoiled and rude Mary Lennox is sent to live in her uncle's lonely house on the moors, she is miserable and alone. Then one day she discovers the key to a locked garden, and she discovers the beauty that life can offer...

Michael Bond

A Bear Called Paddington

This book, the first in the Paddington series, was published over 50 years ago, but it genuinely is 'timeless'. The humour and charm will win you over just as it did your parents (and perhaps your grandparents!). Watch the film, but read the books too!

Lucy M. Boston

The Children of Green Knowe

The recent DVD release of a classic BBC series of these books has prompted me to include this wonderful book in the list. The first of the six-book series about Green Knowe is a perfectly crafted story of a lonely little boy who spends the Christmas holidays with his great grandmother, and who meets some ghostly companions from long ago.

Agatha Christie

And Then There Were None

A classic murder mystery from a master of the genre. This was her 26th title, but one of her best and most ingenious. It would be a great place to start!

Lewis Carroll

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Curious Alice, the bossy White Rabbit, the formidable Queen of Hearts and the Mad Hatter are among the best-loved, most iconic literary creations of all time. Now that Alice has been in print for over 150 years, and a new film of *Alice Through the Looking Glass* has just come out, perhaps it is time to read it if you haven't already done so?

Roald Dahl

The BFG

In one of Roald Dahl's best-loved tales, a little girl is taken from her orphanage by a twenty-four foot giant in the middle of the night. Luckily, he is a very friendly giant... The new film of this glorious book has just come out, but read the story first!

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

The Little Prince

The story of a little prince who falls to earth from a star, and of an airman, crash-landed in a desert, who seeks to understand the prince's secret. It's a wise fable about what is important in life that some believe is the most beautiful book of the twentieth century.

***Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**

The Hound of the Baskervilles

Sir Charles's mysterious death in the grounds of Baskerville Hall brings Sherlock Holmes to the scene of one of his most famous and intriguing cases. Try this classic of crime fiction, or start with the Sherlock Holmes short stories.

Alan Garner***The Weirdstone of Brisingamen***

Followed by *The Moon of Gomrath*

Colin and Susan have to spend six months with an elderly couple in their old-fashioned farm house in the heart of Cheshire. Here, they get sucked into a world of old and new magic in a scary tale that combines fantasy, a real landscape and an ancient legend.

Kenneth Grahame***The Wind in the Willows***

When Mole goes boating with the Water Rat he discovers a whole new world of adventure on the river. The writing may seem old-fashioned at first, but prepare to be won over by the quiriness of the characters, particularly the irrepressible Mr Toad.

Norton Juster***The Phantom Tollbooth***

Milo is bored to tears until the sudden and curious appearance of a tollbooth in his bedroom. Having nothing better to do, he dusts off his toy car, pays the toll, and drives through. What ensues is a brilliantly funny journey of mythic proportions.

Susan Coolidge***What Katy Did***

Part of the *What Katy Did* series

Katy Carr intends to be beautiful and beloved and as sweet as an angel one day. For now, though, her hair is forever in a tangle, her dress is always torn and she doesn't care at all for being called 'good'. But then a terrible accident happens and Katy must find the courage to remember her daydreams and the delightful plans she once schemed; for when she is grown up she wants to do something grand...

Noel Streatfield***Ballet Shoes***

Pauline longs to be an actress. Petrova is happiest playing with cars and engines. And if she could ...Posy would dance all day! But when their benefactor Great-Uncle Matthew disappears, the Fossil girls share a future of a dazzling life on stage, where their dreams and fears will soon come true...

L.M. Montgomery***Anne of Green Gables***

Part of the *Anne of Green Gables* series

Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert are in for a big surprise. They are waiting for an orphan boy to help with the work at Green Gables - but a skinny, red-haired girl turns up instead. Feisty and full of spirit, Anne Shirley charms her way into the Cuthberts' affection with her vivid imagination and constant chatter.

Harper Lee**To Kill a Mockingbird***

Scout, the keen-eyed narrator, and her brother Jem interrupt their games to champion their lawyer father when, in a racist town in the American South, he battles to defend Tom, who is black and accused of rape. You could also try the recent 'sequel', *Go Set A Watchman* - only the second book the author ever published, 55 years after her first.

C.S. Lewis***'The Chronicles of Narnia'***

When Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy first step into the world behind the magic wardrobe, they little realise what adventures are about to unfold. And as the story of Narnia begins, so does a classic tale that has enchanted readers for over half a century.

E. Nesbit***Five Children and It***

First published in 1902, this book was brought back into the limelight in 2014 when a new 'sequel' by Kate Saunders, *Five Children on the Western Front*, won the Costa Book Award. It's the story of a wonderfully grumpy sand fairy, or Psammhead, who grants the children wishes just for one day, and then is unsympathetic when their often silly wishes end in disaster!

Mary Norton

The Borrowers

Pod, Homily and daughter Arrietty, are a family of tiny people, who live under the floorboards and “borrow” scraps and oddments from the “human beans” above. In 2007 this book was selected by judges of the Carnegie Medal as one of the ten most important children’s novels of the past 70 years.

***George Orwell**

Animal Farm

In uncomplicated language, this fable brings to life the reality of Russian Communism. The animals, led by the pigs Napoleon and Snowball, drive out Framer Jones and set up an Animals’ Republic. Yet, as one form of tyranny is replaced by another, the animals soon realize that “all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others.”

Arthur Ransome

Swallows and Amazons

Four young children in the Lake District set out in their boat to an island of adventure. Camping under open skies, swimming in clear water, fishing and exploring is the stuff of childhood dreams, which makes this such an enduring classic. A new BBC film of the book is released in 2016, so it’s a good time to try the first in this 12-book series.

***John Steinbeck**

Of Mice and Men

Streetwise George and his childlike friend Lennie are searching for work in the fields, sustained by their loyalty to each other and their dream that one day they’ll find a place of their own. Simple to read, yet full of tension, drama and emotion.

Rosemary Sutcliff

The Eagle of the Ninth

Followed by *The Silver Branch* and *The Lantern Bearers*

A young Roman officer sets out to discover the truth behind the disappearance of the Ninth Legion, who marched into the mists of Northern Britain and never returned. This wonderfully vivid story may tempt you to read other books by the same author.

J.R.R. Tolkien

The Hobbit

Wizards, dwarves and dragons may be the stuff of fairy tales, but this book is in a class of its own - light-hearted enough for younger readers, yet with a dark edge that may intrigue you enough to want to tackle Tolkien’s masterpiece, *The Lord of the Rings*.

A. A. Milne

Winnie the Pooh

‘Once upon a time, a very long time ago now, about last Friday, Winnie-the-Pooh lived in a forest all by himself under the name of Sanders’. Curl up with a true children’s classic by reading A.A. Milne’s Winnie-the-Pooh.

Jane Austen

Pride and Prejudice

Strong willed Elizabeth Bennett is determined not to be impressed by her family’s wealthy new neighbour, Mr Darcy. Her first impressions of him are that he is proud and arrogant. Despite being renowned for her wit and beauty, Mr Darcy is apparently equally unimpressed by Elizabeth on first acquaintance. But things change between the two of them in one of the most romantic of all courtships.

Charles Dickens

Great Expectations

A small boy called Pip is in a graveyard just as it’s getting dark. He’s looking at the grave where his parents and five brothers are buried. An escaped convict jumps out from behind a grave and grabs him. It’s the best start to a novel ever, and the rest of the book lives up to its start! If you enjoy this novel, why not try *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield* next?

Different Countries and Cultures

***Sherman Alexie**

The Absolutely True Story of a Part-Time Indian

Arnold "Junior" Spirit, lives on the Spokane Indian Reservation. He is used to being picked on, but it's only when he realizes that he has to leave the reservation in order to get a good education that things start getting complicated. Part humour, part tragedy, this is a thought-provoking book.

Frank Cottrell Boyce

The Unforgotten Coat

The story of two brothers from Mongolia who go to school in Merseyside, before being forced to return to their homeland is told by their friend Julie, also in Year 6. This heart-warming story with a serious message won the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize in 2012.

Nicola Davies

Whale Boy

Michael, a young boy growing up on the tropical island of Rose Town, has been saving up for his own fishing boat for years. But when a terrible storm wrecks his home, Michael is forced to take a job working for a rich, mysterious newcomer named Spargo. Spargo asks Michael to search for one thing in the deep waters around Rose Town - whales...

Sarah Crossan

The Weight of Water

This coming-of-age story, which won the 2013 UKLA Book Award, tackles the alienation experienced by many young immigrants. Despite being written entirely in verse, it is utterly page-turning as the reader shares the experiences of a young girl who demonstrates how quiet courage prevails.

Matt Dickinson

The Everest Files

Followed by *North Face*

Ryan is on a gap year in Nepal when a local girl begs him to investigate why her 16-year-old friend Kami never returned from Everest. What emerges is a shocking story of human errors as seen through the eyes of a young Sherpa - a stark reminder of the dangers involved at altitude and the true price paid for standing on top of the World.

Deborah Ellis

The Breadwinner

Followed by *Parvana's Journey* and *Mud City*

This story of a young girl trying to support her family is an inspirational story about the plight of a family living under the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

Sally Grindley

Spilled Water

When her husband dies, Lu Si-Yan's mother is encouraged to sell her young daughter into domestic service. Nearly two years will pass before she can get back home. This powerful novel, which won the Nestlé Children's Book Prize, portrays a harsh childhood with a rare dignity and beauty.

Eva Ibbotson

Journey to the River Sea

This award-winning story of an orphaned London schoolgirl and her formidable governess's journey to South America has already achieved 'classic' status. It's a magical adventure story imbued with the heat and mystery of the Amazon rain forest.

Elizabeth Laird

The Fastest Boy in the World

Elizabeth Laird's fiction is always rooted firmly in the real world; and in parts of the world that we may not know much about. In her latest book she tells the story of 11-year-old Solomon who loves to run and longs to emulate the gold-medal-winning athletes of the Ethiopian national Olympic team. It is an easy read, but one with a real impact that was shortlisted for the 2015 Carnegie Medal.

Irfan Master***A Beautiful Lie***

Set in India in 1947, the backdrop to this touching book is the Partition of India – a key event in Indian history. Bilal is determined to protect his dying father from the news of Partition, as he knows it will break his father's heart.

Geraldine McCaughrean***The Middle of Nowhere***

A vivid story of life in Australia's outback during the 19th century. After her mother dies from a snakebite and her father becomes reclusive, Comity turns to Fred, the Aboriginal yard boy, who becomes her only friend. Then Fred becomes the target of a new assistant's cruel games and events begin to spiral dangerously out of control.

Andy Mulligan***Trash***

Raphael spends his days wading through mountains of steaming trash: sifting it, sorting it, breathing it, sleeping next to it. Until the day he finds a small leather bag, and his world turns upside down. With his friends Gardo and Rat, he finds himself running for his life as he tries to fulfil a dead man's mission to right a terrible wrong.

Beverley Naidoo***The Other Side of Truth***

Followed by *Web of Lies*

This Carnegie Medal-winning book tells the story of Sade and her brother Femi, who have to flee their home in Nigeria after an assassination attempt on their father's life. When the children are abandoned by their escort in London they find themselves alone in a new, often hostile, environment. Also try *Journey to Jo'burg* or *No Turning Back* by the same author.

Anna Perera**Guantanamo Boy***

Khalid, a 15-year-old Muslim boy from Rochdale, is abducted from Pakistan while on holiday with his family. He is taken to Guantanamo Bay and held without charge, where his hopes and dreams are crushed. This powerful book shows that hatred is never an answer, and proves the danger of thinking of anyone as 'other'.

William Sutcliffe***The Wall***

The "Wall" separates Amarias, the new Israeli settlement town in which 13-year old Joshua lives, and the Palestinian town on the other side. Joshua's experiences after he discovers a tunnel under the wall give him a devastating insight into the lives of the populations living so close together, and yet so bitterly divided. Shortlisted for the 2014 Carnegie Medal, this is highly recommended for thoughtful readers.

Jason Wallace**Out of Shadows***

Robert Jacklin is an unassuming 13-year-old who grows to maturity in this coming-of-age novel set in Zimbabwe in the 1980s. Robert Mugabe is now Prime Minister, and Zimbabwe is no longer ruled by white people, but the divisions remain and tensions are high. At times chilling and dark, this excellent book has won several awards.

Michael Williams**Now is the Time for Running***

Deo is a great footballer and a fierce protector of his older brother, Innocent, who has the mind of a child. When Mugabe's soldiers destroy their home they face terror and violence as they attempt to flee to South Africa with nothing but a football stuffed with worthless dollars. A thought-provoking book which won the 2014 UKLA Book Award.

Benjamin Zephaniah***Refugee Boy***

Alem's mother is Eritrean, his father Ethiopian, and with both countries at war his family is not safe anywhere. For his own safety, Alem is left in London by his father, where he becomes a refugee – with only the social services and the Refugee Council to protect him. The author shows how every refugee has a unique story to tell.

Dragons and Other Mythical Creatures

J. R. Castle

Dragon Knights: The Flame Dragon

Followed by *The Shadow Dragon* and *The Storm Dragon*

After an epic battle, when the evil Emperor Vayn defeated the Dragon Knights and trapped them in their human forms, the empire is at the mercy of Vayn and his bullying Black Guard, and any connection with dragons is punishable by death. 12-year old Quinn discovers that he has inherited dragonblood and could be the heir to the throne, so vows to track down the Dragon Knights and, with their help, claim what is rightfully his.

Cressida Cowell

How to Train Your Dragon

This first book in a wonderfully witty series of stories about Hiccup the Useless, and his dragon, Toothless, is guaranteed to appeal to even the most reluctant reader! ***How to Fight a Dragon's Fury*** is the twelfth in the series, and the last—so far!

Chris d'Lacey

The Wearle

Many boys will already know and love this author's 7-book 'Last Dragon Chronicles', which begin with ***The Fire Within***, but here is a brilliant new series for all dragon lovers. The Wearle came to Erth to find out what happened to their previous group, who never returned. They have an uneasy relationship with the 'homs' who usually stay outside the dragons' scorch line boundary, but Ren, a young hom boy, is fascinated by the 'skalers' and creeps into their territory....This inspiring dragon saga of friendship and wisdom will continue later this year in ***Dark Wyng***, the second in the 'Erth Dragons' series.

Jasper Fforde

The Last Dragonslayer

Followed by *The Song of the Quarkbeast* and *The Eye of Zoltar*

15-year-old Jennifer Strange runs an employment agency for soothsayers and sorcerers, but magic is fading and times are hard - even magic carpets are reduced to pizza delivery. This witty and satirical book can be read at many levels, so it's a 'must-read' for fantasy fans of any age!

Charlie Fletcher

Dragon Shield

Followed by *The London Pride* and *The City of Beasts*

Something dark has woken in the British Museum, and it has stopped time, literally freezing the city in its tracks. Only Will and Jo seem immune; everyone else is unmoving, unseeing - like statues. The statues, on the other hand, *can* move, and some must come to the aid of Will and Jo who are pursued by murderous dragons as they try to escape the evil that stalks the streets of London.

Cornelia Funke

Dragon Rider

Firedrake, a brave young dragon, his loyal brownie friend Sorrel and a lonely boy called Ben embark on a magical journey to find the legendary place where silver dragons can live in peace for ever. Along the way, they discover new friends in unlikely places and a courage they never knew they had. A classic dragon fantasy from a renowned author.

Julia Golding

Secret of the Sirens

Followed by *The Gorgon's Gaze*, *Mines of the Minotaur* and *The Chimera's Curse*

'The Companion's Quartet' is set in the modern world but with mythological creatures hiding in every corner. Connie is a 'Universal': the first person in a century who can communicate with every type of beast. Power corrupted the previous Universal, but now he's back and determined to turn Connie to the dark side!

Christopher Paolini**Eragon**

Followed by *Eldest*, *Brisingsr* and *Inheritance*

Begun when the author was only 15, this compelling story of a boy and his dragon has enough new ideas and twists and turns to make it stand out among its competitors in the genre of quest fantasy.

Lucinda Hare**The Dragon Whisperer**

Followed by *Flight to Dragon Isle*, *Dragon Lords Rising* and *The Stealth Dragon Services*

Quenelda has a magical bond with dragons, and her greatest wish is to fly one in the brutal war against the hobgoblins. Root's greatest wish is to avoid fearsome dragons at all costs. Yet an unlikely friendship is forged when Root becomes Quenelda's esquire, and together they must find a way to defeat the dark forces. Highly recommended.

Janis Mackay**Magnus Fin and the Ocean Quest**

Followed by *Magnus Fin and the Moonlight Mission* and *Magnus Fin and the Selkie Secret*

On his eleventh birthday Magnus, a bit of a misfit, throws a message in a bottle out to sea, wishing for a best friend and to be more brave - and he gets a lot more than he bargained for. Magnus discovers that he is half selkie - part seal, part human - and his selkie family urgently need his help. The story of his battle to save the ocean's creatures from an evil tyrant is a really engaging adventure with a strong environmental theme.

Brandon Mull**Fablehaven**

Followed by *Rise of the Evening Star*, *Grip of the Shadow Plague*, *Secrets of the Dragon Sanctuary* and *Keys to the Demon Prison*

Kendra and her brother, Seth, have no idea that their grandfather is the current caretaker of Fablehaven, where ancient laws keep order among the legions of mythical creatures. So when they break the rules, Kendra and her brother are in great danger.

Kate O'Hearn**Pegasus and the Flame**

Followed by *Pegasus and the: Fight for Olympus*, *New Olympians*, *Origins of Olympus* and *Rise of the Titans*

When Pegasus crashes onto her roof in the middle of a storm that blacks out New York City, 13-year-old Emily's life becomes that of legend: epic battles with gruesome monsters, desperate chases from a corrupt governmental agency, and one heroic quest to save Olympus before the flame burns out. A great mix of modern adventure and epic fantasy!

Mark Robson**Dragon Orb: Firestorm**

Followed by *Shadow*, *Longfang* and *Aurora*

Dragons in Areth each have a predestined rider and a life mission, given to them by the Oracle. Nolita discovers she is the rider of Firestorm, and must seek the first of four Orbs, whose combined power can restore the Oracle - which is fatally damaged. To claim the orb she must face her worst fears, as she is terrified of dragons!

Paul Stewart & Chris Riddell**Wyrmewald: Returner's Wealth**

Followed by *Bloodhoney* and *The Bone Trail*

Seventeen-year-old Micah, enters the Wyrmewald full of hope, hoping to return home having made his fortune. But this is a land where wyrmes, fabulous dragon-like beasts, roam wild and reign supreme. In Wyrmewald man is both hunter and hunted - and Micah may never return alive, let alone a hero...

Tui T. Sutherland**Wings of Fire: The Dragonet Prophecy**

Followed by *The Lost Heir*, *The Hidden Kingdom*, *The Dark Secret*, *The Brightest Night* and *Moon Rising*

The seven dragon tribes have been at war for generations, but a prophecy tells of five dragonets that will bring an end to the fighting. Five special eggs are stolen from different tribes, and the dragonets are hatched and raised in captivity in a hidden cave - until they escape their captors to look for their original homes and tribes. The resulting saga is exciting, funny and moving in equal measure. Highly recommended.

Fairy Tales and Magic

Neil Gaiman

Coraline

There is something strange about Coraline's new home. It's not the mist, or the cat that always seems to be watching her, nor the signs of danger that Miss Spink and Miss Forcible, her new neighbours, read in the tea leaves. It's the other house - the one behind the old door in the drawing room...

Celia Rees

Witch Child

When Mary sees her grandmother accused of witchcraft and hung for the crime, she is silently hurried to safety by an unknown woman. She is taken in a boat to Plymouth and from there sails to the New World where she hopes to make a new life among the pilgrims. But old superstitions die hard.

Liz Kessler

Has Anybody Seen Jessica Jenkins?

Jessica Jenkins is missing ... Jessica Jenkins has always thought she was a perfectly ordinary girl, until the day that part of her arm vanishes in the middle of a Geography lesson! Her best friend Izzy is determined to help Jessica realise what a great opportunity the power to turn invisible could be, but where has her new ability come from?

Michelle Harrison

The Thirteen Treasures

Fifty years ago a girl vanished in the woods nearby - a girl Tanya's grandmother will not speak of. Fabian, the caretaker's son, is tormented by the girl's disappearance. His grandfather was the last person to see her alive, and has lived under suspicion ever since. Together, Tanya and Fabian decide to find the truth. But Tanya has her own secret: the ability to see fairies. And, after disturbing an intruder in the night, it emerges that someone else shares her ability... The manor's sinister history is about to repeat itself...

Holly Black & Cassandra Clare

Magisterium: The Iron Trial

Followed by *The Copper Gauntlet* and *The Bronze Key*

There's more than a hint of Harry Potter about this story of a boy with a tragic past, who gets called up to attend a school of magic. Except, unlike Harry, Call has always known about magic - and he doesn't want anything to do with it. When he has to take the entrance test to become a student at the Magisterium he fails at failing...

Sage Blackwood

Jinx: The Wizard's Apprentice

Followed by *Jinx's Magic* and *Jinx's Fire*

Jinx is rescued by Simon the wizard when he's left in the Urwald forest by his horrid stepfather and almost eaten by trolls. Now he has a new home and guardian in a forest where magic is swirling all around - and soon Jinx begins to realise that he has some magic powers of his own.

Vivian French

The Robe of Skulls

Followed by *The Bag of Bones*, *The Heart of Glass*, *The Flight of Dragons*, *The Music of Zombies* and *The Snarling of Wolves*

The sorceress Lady Lamorna has her heart set on a very expensive new robe. She will stop at nothing to get the cash, but she reckons without the heroic Gracie Gillypot, a gallant, if rather scruffy prince, two chatty bats, the wickedest stepsister ever and a troll with a grudge (whose head keeps falling off).

Cornelia Funke

Inkheart

Followed by *Inkspell* and *Inkdeath*

Meggie is the daughter of a revered bookbinder called Mo who, when his past catches up with him, is forced to reveal to his daughter his terrible secret: he has the ability, or curse, to breathe life into any story he reads and make the characters come alive.

Matt Haig

Shadow Forest

Followed by *The Runaway Troll*

When a giant log falls from the sky it changes Samuel Blink's life forever; and he and his sister Martha have to move to Norway next to a forest full of one-eyed trolls, deadly Truth Pixies and a witch who steals shadows... This magical and quirky book won both the Nestlé Gold Medal and Blue Peter Book of the Year on publication.

Eva Ibbotson

The Secret of Platform 13

Four magical figures arrive through a door under Platform 13 at King's Cross Station to rescue their prince, stolen as a baby nine years before. Unfortunately, the prince has become a horrible boy called Raymond Throttle, who doesn't want to be rescued! This author was delighting readers long before Harry Potter discovered Platform 13½!

Diana Wynne Jones

Howl's Moving Castle

Followed by *Castle in the Air* and *House of Many Ways*

In the land of Ingary, where seven league boots and cloaks of invisibility exist, Sophie Hatter is cursed by the wicked Witch of the Waste. Deciding she has nothing more to lose, she tries to get help from the dreaded Wizard Howl, whose appetite, they say, is satisfied only by the hearts of young girls. This very funny novel is a fantasy classic!

John Lenahan

Shadowmagic

Followed by *Prince of Forest and Oak* and *Sons of Macha*

His father only had one hand and spoke to him in ancient languages but, other than that, Conor thought life was normal, until the day two Celtic warriors on horseback appear at his front door and try to kill him. After that, things get pretty weird. This gripping, fast-paced fantasy is also very funny - a great combination!

Maile Meloy

The Apothecary

Followed by *The Apprentices*

Set during the 1950s Cold War, this is a seamless blend of reality and magic. 14-year-old Janie Scott is new to London and she's finding it dreary - until she meets Benjamin Burrows who dreams of becoming a spy. When Benjamin's father, the mysterious apothecary, is kidnapped the two friends must use his sacred book, full of ancient spells and potions, to find him and keep one step ahead of the Russian spies.

Justin Fisher

Ned's Circus of Marvels

Ned Waddlesworth has always considered his world to be exceptionally ordinary. Until the day he discovers it ISN'T. AT ALL. Because on Ned's thirteenth birthday he discovers that everything magical he's ever read about or imagined is REAL.

Terry Pratchett

The Wee Free Men

Followed by *A Hat Full of Sky*, *Wintersmith* and *I Shall Wear Midnight*

The first in a quartet of titles for younger readers set in the author's world famous Discworld and featuring Tiffany Aching, whose life begins to change when creatures out of fairy tales begin to appear. Tiffany's hilarious adventures with a group of tiny blue men, with bright red hair and kilts, are completely irresistible.

Sarah Prineas

The Magic Thief

Followed by *The Magic Thief: Lost*, *The Magic Thief: Found* and *The Magic Thief: Home*

Conn should have dropped dead the day he stole a wizard's 'locus magicalus', a stone of immense magical strength, but miraculously he survives. Intrigued, the wizard takes him on as his apprentice and Conn becomes embroiled in his master's plan to save the city, whose magic is slowly dying.

Philip Reeve

Goblins

Followed by *Goblins vs. Dwarves* and *Goblin Quest*

The squabbling goblins who live in Clovenstone spend their time fighting and looting. Only young Skarper, an intelligent (untypical!) goblin, understands that dark magic is rising again. His unlikely alliance with an accident-prone hero, a friendly giant and a middle-aged Princess sets the scene for a wonderfully witty adventure.

Angie Sage

Magyk

Followed by *Flyte*, *Physik*, *Queste*, *Syren*, *Darke* and *Fyre*

A baby girl is rescued. A baby boy is stillborn. An ExtraOrdinary Wizard mysteriously resigns. These seemingly unconnected events converge ten years later, when the Heap family receive a knock at the door. The engrossing story of Septimus Heap is full of twists and turns, good and evil, 'magyk' and mayhem and is highly recommended!

Fantasy and Other Worlds

Peter Bunzl

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.

Malorie Blackman

Noughts and Crosses

Followed by *Knife Edge*, *Checkmate* and **Double Cross*

In this renowned fantasy quartet, Callum is a Nought, a second-class citizen, and Sephy is a Cross, the daughter of a powerful man. Their friendship crosses the boundaries of race and society and proves – ironically – that life is never black and white.

Suzanne Collins

Gregor the Overlander

Followed by *The Prophecy of Bane*, *The Curse of the Warmbloods*, *The Marks of Secret*, *The Code of Claw*

11-year-old Gregor and his little sister, Boots, fall through a grate in their New York apartment building and land in the Underland, where giant talking spiders, rats and cockroaches coexist with humans. Gregor embarks on life-changing adventures in this absorbing series which has won several awards in the United States.

James Dashner

The 13th Reality

Followed by *The Hunt for Dark Infinity*, *The Blade of Shattered Hope* and *The Void of Mist and Thunder*

Atticus Higginbottom, a.k.a. Tick, is an average thirteen-year-old boy until the day he receives a strange letter informing him that he will be sent twelve riddles that, when solved, will allow him to prevent the destruction of reality itself. A great combination of clever clues, quirky characters and a touch of quantum physics!

Tonke Dragt

The Letter for the King

Followed by *The Secrets of the Wild Wood*

When 16-year-old Tiuri answers a desperate call for help, he finds himself on a perilous mission that could cost him his life. He must deliver a secret letter to the King - a letter upon which the future of the entire realm depends. This is a fast-moving, pure fantasy quest – a European classic at last available in English.

John Flanagan

The Ruins of Gorlan

Will has always dreamed of becoming a great knight, so he is devastated when he is apprenticed to Halt, the mysterious Ranger. Reluctantly, Will learns to use a Ranger's secret weapons, and when he sets out on a desperate mission he finds that Rangers are not so useless after all. The twelfth book in the series is **The Royal Ranger**. Look out too for **The Tournament at Gorlan**, the first in a new series of 'Ranger's Apprentice: The Early Years'.

Frances Hardinge

A Face Like Glass

In the underground world of Caverna magic is a part of everyday life, and everything is potentially deadly. But the people of Caverna are even more dangerous - for they are born with faces devoid of any expression, and have to be taught what Faces to wear by the clever (and expensive) Facesmiths. Rather gothic, fantastical whimsy!

Sam Gayton

The Snow Merchant

Lettie Peppercorn lives in a house on stilts near the wind-swept coast of Albion. Nothing incredible has ever happened to her, until one winter's night, when the night the Snow Merchant comes. He claims to be an alchemist - the greatest that ever lived - and in his suitcase, he carries his newest invention: snow.

Derek Landy**Skulduggery Pleasant**

Meet the great Skulduggery Pleasant: wise-cracking detective, powerful magician, master of dirty tricks and burglary. Oh yes - and he's a skeleton! Everyone should try this award-winning mixture of magic, humour, adventure and a little bit of horror. The 9th and final book in the series is ***The Dying of the Light***.

Ursula Le Guin**A Wizard of Earthsea**

Followed by *The Tombs of Atuan*, *The Farthest Shore* and *Tehanu*

Ged lives in the island archipelago of Earthsea, a land populated by strange magic and dragons, where young wizards like him are sent to hone their powers. After accidentally unleashing some of the most powerful magic ever to scar the face of the earth, Ged clearly has a lot to learn! This unforgettable trilogy is a benchmark of fantasy writing.

Patrick Ness*The Knife of Never Letting Go**

Followed by *The Ask and the Answer* and *Monsters of Men*

Imagine you're the only boy in a town of men. Imagine you can all hear what each other thinks. Now imagine you don't fit in with their plans. Each book in this extraordinary trilogy was shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal, which was eventually won by the final title, *Monsters of Men*. A must read.

Brian Jacques**The 'Redwall' series**

These are not just books about a group of animals; they are stunning tales of good battling against evil, taking the reader on roller-coaster adventures. There are 22 titles, which you can read in any order, but it is probably best to start with ***Redwall***.

William Nicholson**The Wind Singer**

Followed by *Slaves of the Mastery* and *Firesong*

In the walled city of Aramant, exams are everything. When Kestrel Hath dares to rebel, the Chief Examiner sentences the family to the harshest punishment. Desperate to save them, Kestrel and her twin brother, Bowman, set out on a terrifying journey - to the true source of the evil that grips Aramant. Don't miss the classic fantasy trilogy!

Garth Nix*Sabriel**

Followed by *Lirael*, *Abhorsen*, and prequel *Clariel*

The (very) long-awaited fifth instalment of The Old Kingdom series is published in October, so it is time to re-introduce this epic fantasy! An Abhorsen is someone who puts the dead back to rest, but it's in only one storyline, and Sabriel is the Abhorsen-in-waiting. When her father goes missing, Sabriel has to leave her school and plunge into a world of danger in this hugely imaginative good vs. evil fantasy.

Michelle Paver**Wolf Brother**

Followed by *Spirit Walker*, *Soul Eater*, *Outcast*, *Oath Breaker* and *Ghost Hunter*

The multi-award-winning 'Chronicles of Ancient Darkness' series takes its readers back in time 6000 years to an atmospheric world of snowy wilderness, hunter-gatherer clans and unearthly superstitions. Fantasy - and yet the author's deep research into primitive peoples makes the books utterly believable. Also read her absorbing 'Gods and Warriors' series, beginning with ***The Outsiders***.

Philip Pullman**Northern Lights**

Followed by *The Subtle Knife* and *The Amber Spyglass*

Lyra, the heroine of this award-winning trilogy, has to battle against the dark powers that hold her world in thrall. Her adventures with witches, armoured bears, angels and daemons create a classic fantasy world in which to lose yourself.

Paul Stewart & Chris Riddell**The 'Edge Chronicles'**

Currently consisting of 4 sequences of titles, but each book is a stand-alone adventure, full of humour and fantastically illustrated by Chris Riddell. The series covers a 600-year period, divided into three "Ages of Flight" and is set in the Edge - a vast outcropping into the sky, with a river pouring over the tip.

Fantasy Thrillers

Books set in a futuristic world, often after an apocalyptic event. These dystopian novels are often quite dark, so probably more suitable for Years 7 and 8.

Malorie Blackman

Noble Conflict

Years after a violent war destroyed much of the world, Kaspar has grown up in a society based on peace and harmony, protected by a force of highly trained Guardians. But after he joins this elite group he begins to suspect that all he has been told about their history, and about the 'rebels' beyond the city walls, is not absolutely true.

Suzanne Collins

The Hunger Games

Followed by *Catching Fire* and *Mockingjay*

In a dark vision of the future a terrifying reality show is taking place. To punish citizens for an earlier rebellion twelve boys and twelve girls are forced to fight like gladiators in a futuristic arena. The event is broadcast live, but for the contestants there is only one rule: kill or be killed. This exciting book, recently made into a film, is unputdownable!

Sarah Crossan

Breathe

Followed by *Resist*

This interesting dystopian thriller is set in a treeless world, where oxygen levels have plunged and only a lucky few live inside the Pod, while the outsiders suffocate. Now the regime is taxing oxygen, so only the rich are healthy and strong. Anyone who opposes the regime is labelled a terrorist and ejected from the Pod to die.

James Dashner

The Maze Runner

Followed by *The Scorch Trials*, *Death Cure* and *The Kill Order*

Thomas arrives in the 'Glade', in the centre of a vast stone maze populated by deadly 'Griever', with no memory of anything except his first name. Each morning the doors to the maze open and a few 'runners' desperately search for a way out before nightfall, when the doors close again. The film is good, but the book is better - read it first!

Jeanne DuPrau

City of Ember

Followed by *The People of Sparks*, *The Prophet of Yonwood* and *The Diamond of Darkhold*

The city of Ember was created by the Builders to contain everything needed for human survival. Yet now the storerooms are almost out of food, corruption is spreading, and, worst of all, the lights are failing. This intriguing thriller is set in an all-too-possible future - a world where the lights have gone out for ever.

Sarah Govett

The Territory

Chosen by the *Daily Telegraph* as one of the 21 best YA books of 2015, this story is set in a flooded world of dwindling resources where the richest children have a node inserted on the back of their necks so they can download information without studying. Yet those without nodes - the Norms - have to struggle to compete, as anyone who fails the exams will be shipped off to the Wetlands and a life of misery, if not certain death.

Michael Grant

Gone

Followed by *Hunger*, *Lies*, *Plague*, *Fear* and *Light*

In the blink of an eye, the world changes: the adults vanish without a trace, and those left must do all they can to survive. But everyone's idea of survival is different. Some look after themselves, some look after others, and some will do anything for power...even kill. This book offers a chilling portrayal of a world with no rules.

David Hofmeyr**Stone Rider**

In a future world that is dusty, desolate and reminiscent of the old 'Wild West', life on Earth is tough and fraught with violence. Pollution has destroyed the air quality and there's an ever-present threat of radiation. For those on the ground, the only options are to work in the mines or to risk their lives as they take to their bykes and compete to win a one way ticket to the mysterious Sky Base. Fantastically atmospheric.

Lois Lowry**The Giver**

Followed by *Gathering Blue*, *Messenger* and *Son*

Perhaps the forerunner of the dystopian genre, this American classic imagines a community where there is no war, no hunger, no pain. Along with his peers, Jonas has his profession chosen for him at the age of 12 - but when he is selected as Receiver of Memory he soon discovers that their community is not as perfect as it seems.

Gemma Malley**The Declaration**

Followed by *The Resistance* and *The Legacy*

Anna Covey is a 'Surplus'. In a society which has conquered death by the use of longevity drugs, children are a waste of resources. Anna accepts her fate until, one day, she meets someone who challenges everything she has been taught. This is a compelling futuristic story about two children daring to defy the adult rules.

Jeff Povey**Shift**

Followed by *Delete*

A hugely inventive, fast-paced thriller about a group of bickering teens who find themselves totally alone in the world after a strange power surge hits their classroom during detention. With no answers as to why or how the rest of the world has disappeared, they are soon facing an even bigger nightmare: lethal duplicate versions of themselves; super powered teenagers who will kill anyone who gets in their way.

Jon Robinson**Nowhere**

Followed by *Anywhere* and *Somewhere*

Alyn, Jes, Ryan and Elsa are Nowhere. They're imprisoned in a concrete cube in the middle of a forest with other teenagers. They're all criminals, but none of them remember committing a crime. Who has put them there? What do their captors want? How will they ever break free . . . ?

Veronica Roth**Divergent**

Followed by *Insurgent* and *Allegiant*

Divergent is set in a world divided into five factions, whose members have unique personality traits. At the age of 16 all children must undertake an aptitude test to determine their faction - Candor, Erudite, Abnegation, Dauntless or Amity - unless they are a divergent like Tris. This dark thriller teaches us that life is never black or white.

Alexander Gordon Smith**Escape from Furnace: Lockdown**

Followed by *Solitary*, *Death Sentence*, *Fugitives* and *Execution*

It is the future. Youth crime has reached epic heights and there is now a zero tolerance policy. Young offenders go straight to Furnace Penitentiary, buried a mile beneath the earth's surface. Sentenced to life without parole, Alex knows he has two choices: escape, or resign himself to a death behind bars, in darkness at the bottom of the world.

Scott Westerfeld**Uglies**

Followed by *Pretties*, *Specials* and *Extras*

Tally can't wait until she's 16 and changed by plastic surgery into a Pretty, with a life filled with parties and fun. However, after Shay runs away to live with the rebel Uglies, Tally is told by the secret police that she will never be made Pretty unless she follows her friend and spies on the rebels. This pertinent dystopian fantasy asks whether we would want to give up our individuality to become a blandly perfect being.

Historical Fiction

Jacqueline Wilson

Clover Moon

Clover Moon's imagination is her best escape from a life of hardship in poverty-stricken Victorian London. When tragedy plunges her into a world of grief, Clover realizes that everything she loved about the place she called home is gone. Clover hears of a place she could run to, but where will she find the courage - and the chance - to break free? And could leaving her family be just what she needs to find a place that really feels like home?

Lucy Strange

The Story of Nightingale Wood

In the midst of a terrible tragedy, Henry and her family move to the stunning Hope House to begin anew – but as her happy home life begins to unravel, Henry finds herself drawn to the dark and mysterious wood in the grounds, where she discovers the enigmatic Moth

Chris Bradford

Young Samurai: The Way of the Warrior

Followed by *The Way of the Sword*, *The Way of the Dragon*, *The Ring of Earth*, *The Ring of Water*, *The Ring of Fire*, *The Ring of Wind* and *The Ring of Sky*

When Jack Fletcher is shipwrecked off the coast of Japan in 1611, his beloved father slaughtered by ninja pirates, he is rescued by the legendary sword master Masamoto Takeshi and taken to train as a samurai warrior. Life at the samurai school is a constant struggle, however, as Jack is singled out by bullies and treated as an outcast.

Bernard Cornwell

The 'Sharpe' series

Set in the early 19th century, each of the more than 20 books in this series contains vivid scene setting and pithy historical detail, exhilarating action, and the larger-than-life figure of Richard Sharpe of the Light Company.

*Bernard Cornwall

This gripping account of the Agincourt campaign, seen through the eyes of a simple archer, highlights this author's astonishing ability to bring to life the minutiae of warfare in centuries past. Violent, yet utterly gripping.

Christian Darkin

The Skull

It is hard to know where to classify this book, but as it starts with the death of a Megalosaurus, over 144 million years ago, and then follows the Marchant family through history as different generations discover the dinosaur's skull, historical fiction is one option! In fact, it is a blend of science, history and philosophy, mixed in with drama, intrigue and even some space travel in a sequence of wonderful fictional vignettes.

Berlie Doherty

Treason

Will Montague is a page to Prince Edward, son of Henry VIII, but after his father is accused of treason, Will is forced to flee Hampton Court and go into hiding in the back streets of London. The story of Will's brave attempts to free his father, by a two-times Carnegie medallist, brings the Tudor period vividly to life.

Paul Dowswell

Sektion 20

The cold war is raging but Alex is no longer pretending to be a model East German, and the Stasi has noticed. He needs to leave East Berlin, but getting across the Wall is practically impossible. This is a tense, page-turning historical thriller that builds towards a terrifying showdown as powerful forces from the East and West converge.

Sally Gardner

The Red Necklace

Followed by *The Silver Blade*

Despite containing elements of magic and fantasy, this book is an action-packed, historically accurate story set in the middle of the bloody French Revolution. It tells the story of Yann Margoza, a gypsy boy entangled in the follies of the aristocracy and the sufferings of ordinary people as their lives move relentlessly towards the tragic and horrific days of the Terror.

Jamila Gavin**Coram Boy**

In the late 1700's the circumstances of birth meant everything. Toby and Aaron may both be living at Coram's Hospital for orphans, but Toby has been rescued from a life of slave labour in a faraway country, while Aaron is the illegitimate son of the heir to a large estate. Despite only being published in 2000, this gripping book has already achieved 'classic' status.

Conn Iggulden**Wolf of the Plains**

Followed by *Lords of the Bow*, *Bones of the Hills*, *Empire of Silver* and *Conqueror*

A man without a tribe on the harsh Mongolian plains is at great risk, so the young boy abandoned with his siblings struggles to survive by gathering together a group of outsiders like him. Hunted and alone, he dreams of uniting the tribes into one nation, under his leadership. He will become Genghis Khan.

Elizabeth Laird**Crusade**

When Adam's mother dies unconfessed, he pledges to save her soul with dust from the Holy Land, so he grabs the chance to join the Crusade to reclaim Jerusalem. Salim is apprenticed to a travelling doctor from Jerusalem, but his employment leads him into Sultan Saladin's camp – and into battle with the barbaric invaders. Gradually, the two boys' lives converge, with life-changing consequences for both.

Caroline Lawrence**Roman Quests: Escape from Rome**

It's a cause for celebration when the renowned expert on all things Roman, whose 'Roman Mysteries' have captivated readers for many years, begins a brand new series. It is AD 94. When the evil Emperor Domitian sends soldiers to seize his family's home in the middle of the night, Juba must escape with his brother and sisters and journey to distant Britannia to find a safe haven for the family.

Kevin Sands**The Blackthorn Key**

It's the 17th century and a dangerous time to be the apprentice of Master Apothecary Benedict Blackthorn, as a wave of mysterious murders has sent shockwaves through London. Christopher has a coded message from his master, and he must uncover its secret, or become the next victim. This enjoyable mix of adventure, science, humour and clever codes is also steeped with the sights and smells of the period.

C. J. Sansom*Dissolution**

Followed by *Dark Fire*, *Sovereign*, *Revelation*, *Heartstone* and *Lamentation*

Henry VIII is king, and under Cromwell's orders a team of commissioners is sent to investigate the monasteries. At Scarnsea monastery the commissioner has been horribly murdered, but when Dr Matthew Shardlake is sent into this treacherous atmosphere, his investigation soon forces him to question *everything* he hears.

Simon Scarrow**Gladiator: Fight for Freedom**

Followed by *Street Fighter*, *Son of Spartacus* and *Vengeance*

Rome, 61 BC. Recruited as a gladiator, young Marcus Cornelius Primus faces a new life of brutal training as he learns the skills of an elite warrior. Yet Marcus cannot forget that his father was murdered by soldiers, and his mother kidnapped and forced into slavery. He is determined to seek justice for his family and set his mother free.

Mildred D. Taylor*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry**

Followed by *Let the Circle be Unbroken* and *The Road to Memphis*

This American classic tells the story of the black Logan family living in rural Mississippi during the Depression. The children are happy in their stable family, but outside is racial fear and tension.

Humour

Pamela Butchart

Petunia Perry has decided to write her memoirs. She wants the world to know what it's like to start secondary school with a best friend who stages one-person flash mobs in the canteen, a mother who over-shares at parents' evenings and an unwelcome suitor who draws pictures of her as a unicorn. But it's when she decides to start a band with a spoon-player and a lead-singer who's a cat that things take a turn for the truly crazy...

Petunia Perry and the Curse of the Ugly Pigeon

Chris Riddell

Part of the *Goth Girl* series

Ada's mother is dead and her father is very, very strange! Surrounded by a motley crew of servants and many ghosts, Ada's life is lonely until she meets Ishmael, a ghostly mouse. Soon Ada and Ishmael are off on some very special adventures! Magic and invention pour forth in this splendidly entertaining story which is also packed full of jokes.

Goth Girl and the Ghost of a Mouse

David Baddiel

Barry has had enough. He's made a list of things he doesn't like about his parents when he suddenly finds himself transported to the 'Parents Agency' to find new parents who all meet his criteria. ..Who will he pick? Full of humour and silly puns, it will make you feel grateful for your own parents.

The Parent Agency

Julian Clery

Followed by *The Bolds to the Rescue*

Mr and Mrs Bold are just like you and me: they live in a nice house (in Teddington), they have jobs (like writing Christmas cracker jokes) and they love to have a bit of a giggle. The only difference is they're hyenas; they're covered in fur and they really, really like to laugh. This sounds like a completely silly book, but is actually surprisingly charming.

The Bolds

Frank Cottrell Boyce

As usual, this author has written a book full of silliness but with serious themes of self-belief and tolerance. It's about a boy who turns green and acquires superpowers, such as the ability to "slightly teleport"! If you enjoy this quirky book then try the author's other books *Millions*, *Framed*, *Cosmic* or his latest: *Sputnik's Guide to Life on Earth*.

The Astounding Broccoli Boy

Phil Earle

Also *Superhero Street*

George spends all week knocking down buildings ... and all weekend knocking down wrestlers. He's the Demolition Man, and Jake couldn't be prouder. So when Jake hears about a pro-wrestling competition in the USA, he persuades his beloved dad to apply... This is a very funny, but also poignant and tender story about a father and son.

Demolition Dad

Jo Franklin

Daniel looks different from the rest of his family, so when his older sister tells him that he is actually an abandoned alien, it makes complete sense. He works out that he's actually from Keppler 22b and he needs to get back there. But interstellar space travel isn't easy to organise when you're 10, and he's not even sure he wants to go 'home'!

Help! I'm an Alien

Clive Goddard

Followed by *Fintan Fedora Explores Again* and *Fintan Fedora and the Diamond Mask*

Fintan Fedora has the brains of a damp sock but a heart of gold. Determined to prove that he can take over the family food business, Fintan sets out with his long-suffering butler to find the elusive chocoplum - the rarest treat known to man. Little does he know that there is a pair of incompetent kidnappers and an evil businessman on his tail.

Fintan Fedora: The World's Worst Explorer

Pete Johnson***How to Train Your Parents***

Followed by *My Parents are Out of Control*, *My Parents are Driving Me Crazy* and *How to Update Your Parents*

These comic romps through the life of almost-teenager Louis are always deeply satisfying. His battles with his endlessly embarrassing parents are always very funny but also ring very true.

Jeff Kinney***Diary of a Wimpy Kid***

The first book in a series that needs no introduction, save that to say that in 2013 it was voted - by

children - the Blue Peter Best Children's Book of the Last 10 Years. The 11th in the series, ***Double Down***, is published in November 2016.

Tom McLaughlin***The Accidental Prime Minister***

When Joe tells a news reporter exactly what he would do if he were leader of the country, the video goes viral and soon people are calling for Joe to take over. Now the fun can really start: pet pigs for all; banana shaped buses; swimming pools on trains... Slapstick humour, but with a serious undercurrent about making the right decisions in life – and in politics! You'll also love ***The Accidental Secret Agent***.

Jonathan Meres***The World of Norm: May Contain Nuts***

Norm is a 12-year old boy who has recently moved house, has two extremely annoying younger brothers and is broke. As we follow Norm's quest to 'pimp up his bike' we learn why life, according to Norm, is just so 'flipping' unfair. It is also very funny! The 11th title in the series, ***May be Recycled***, is published in October.

Stephan Pastis***Timmy Failure: Mistakes Were Made***

Followed by *Now Look What You've Done*, *We Meet Again* and *Sanitized for Your Protection*

Timmy Failure, with the help of his polar bear, Total, runs the "best" detective agency in town – Total Failure, Inc. .Timmy already has plans for world domination, despite his decidedly unorthodox methods. Perfect for fans of ***Wimpy Kid*** and ***Big Nate***.

L. Pichon***The Brilliant World of Tom Gates***

Tom Gates' exercise books are full of his doodles, cartoons and thoughts, as well as comments from his long-suffering teacher. The hilarious results, now in ten volumes, have won many awards!

Jim Smith***I Am Not a Loser***

There are now seven of Jim Smith's hilarious illustrated books with their distinctive style that make him (and Barry, Loser of course) the coolest – or 'keelest' – author in town. If you have a kindle, there are also two free Barry Loser e-books you can download.

David Solomons***My Brother is a Superhero***

Followed by *My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord*

Luke is a comic-mad 11-year old whose only mistake is to go for a wee at the wrong time. While he's gone, an alien gives his geeky, never-read-a-comic-in-his-life brother superpowers and tells him to save the universe. Luke is (naturally) massively annoyed about this, but when Zack is kidnapped, Luke has his own chance to save the world...

Jeremy Strong***My Brother's Famous Bottom***

Nicholas's dad has a plan to make some fast cash. Some disposable-nappy people are looking for a beautiful botty for their new advert and all his baby brother has to do is pass the audition! This author's daft humour is perfectly pitched for the younger reader, and older readers should try ***Weird*** and ***Stuff*** by the same author.

Jamie Thomson***Dark Lord: The Teenage Years***

Followed by *A Fiend in Need* and *Eternal Detention*

Imagine an evil Dark Lord, defeated and hurled into the Pit of Uttermost Despair...and landing in a supermarket car park in the body of a 13-year old schoolboy! This hilarious book, which won the 2012 Roald Dahl Funny Prize, follows Dirk Lloyd (as he is known on earth), as he struggles to reconcile his evil soul with his puny human body.

Memoirs

Zlata Filipovic

Zlata's Diary

It begins as the day-to-day record of the life of a typical eleven-year-old girl, preoccupied by piano lessons and birthday parties. But as war engulfs Sarajevo, Zlata Filipovic becomes a witness to food shortages and the deaths of friends and learns to wait out bombardments in a neighbor's cellar. Yet throughout she remains courageous and observant.

Lawrence Anthony

The Elephant Whisperer

When Lawrence Anthony was asked to accept a herd of 'rogue' elephants on his wildlife reserve at Thula Thula, he knew they would all be killed if he didn't take them. As he battled to create a bond with the traumatised elephants and save them from execution, he began to see that they had a lot to teach him about love, loyalty and freedom. A moving and inspiring book.

Johnson Beharry, VC

Hero

As an army private, Johnson Beharry served in Kosovo, Northern Ireland and Iraq. In Iraq in 2004, his actions in rescuing his wounded comrades while under heavy fire led to him becoming the youngest person ever to receive the Victoria Cross. Here, with the help of children's author Jim Eldridge, he tells how a boy who started with nothing became a man admired by so many.

James Bowen

Bob: No Ordinary Cat

James Bowen was living rough on the streets of London when he found an injured cat - and the last thing he needed was a pet. Yet soon the two were inseparable and their companionship would transform their lives. This children's edition of a best-selling memoir is a heart-warming tale of friendship, and a glimpse of life on London's streets.

Bill Bryson

The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid

This is a very funny memoir of the author's childhood in mid-1950s Iowa. Though some of his experiences are unfamiliar to someone born in another decade and another continent, the book relates what growing up is like for an average boy in an average family: making friends, going to school, imagining yourself to be a superhero...

Roald Dahl

Boy: Tales of Childhood

Roald Dahl would have turned 100 this year, and his wonderful memoir recounts the story of his childhood – the funny stories and the tragedies, the glorious holidays and the grisly days at boarding school. His later experiences as a fighter pilot in World War II are told with equal brilliance in ***Going Solo***.

Matt Dickinson

The Death Zone

1996: Ten expeditions from around the world were preparing for their push on the summit of Mount Everest. Yet 24 hours later, eight of those climbers were dead, victims of a devastating storm. Against all odds, film-maker Matt Dickinson managed to battle through hurricane-force winds to reach the summit and this gripping book is the result.

Gerald Durrell

My Family and Other Animals

Followed by *Birds, Beasts and Relatives* and *The Garden of the Gods*

This ever-popular classic contains the amusing memoirs of an English boy growing up on Corfu. Gerald collects all kinds of animals and insects and brings them back to the house, much to his family's dismay.

***Ann Frank**

Diary of a Young Girl

Anne Frank kept a diary from June 1942 to August 1944 whilst hiding from the Nazis. It has now become one of the most famous memoirs ever published, and a living testimony to the senseless slaughter that took place in the Nazi concentration camps.

Bear Grylls

Mud, Sweat and Tears

Bear Grylls has survived in dangerous environments few would dare to visit. From secret childhood missions to climb the town's school buildings, to starring in his own TV series and becoming Chief Scout, this is the thrilling story of everyone's favourite real-life action man. The Junior edition of this book is the one to read.

***Alastair Humphreys**

Moods of Future Joys

Followed by *Thunder and Sunshine*

After leaving university, and with nothing better to do, the author decided to cycle around the world. He faces loneliness and harsh conditions on the road, but his experience is ultimately one of joy and triumph. For younger readers, he has also drawn on his experience for *The Boy Who Biked the World*.

Judith Kerr

When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit

Followed by *The Other Way Round* and *Small Person Far Away*

This largely autobiographical trilogy is also one of the best books written about World War II. It is a touching story of how a child's innocence was stolen by Hitler and the Nazis - along with her pink rabbit.

Adeline Yen Mah

Chinese Cinderella

The author grew up in a relatively wealthy Chinese family in the 40s and 50s, yet the privileges that money would normally give such a child passed her by as she grew up in a family who simply did not love her.

Michael Morpurgo

Singing for Mrs Pettigrew

Interspersing short autobiographical reminiscences with delightful stories, this is not just a memoir, but a book of short stories and a guide to writing from a master of the art. It should appeal to everyone - of whatever age.

Eva Schloss

The Promise

The remarkable story of a young Jewish girl and her brother growing up in a world turned upside down by World War II. Eva describes how her happy childhood in Vienna was shattered when the Nazis marched into Austria, but she was always guided by her father's words: "Everything you do leaves something behind; nothing gets lost".

***Joe Simpson**

Touching the Void

During an ascent of the 21,000ft Siula Grande peak in the Peruvian Andes, Joe Simpson and his climbing partner, Simon Yates, had achieved the summit before the first disaster struck. What happened next is the subject of this riveting book.

Bradley Wiggins

My Story

In 2012, Bradley Wiggins became the first ever British cyclist to win the Tour de France. Ten days later he became Britain's most decorated Olympian. In this junior edition of his best-selling autobiography you can follow 'Wiggo' on his remarkable journey from childhood to cycling champion, national hero and knighthood.

Malala Yousafzai & Patricia McCormick ***I Am Malala***

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley, one girl fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday, 9 October 2012, she almost paid the ultimate price when she was shot in the head at point-blank range. Malala Yousafzai's extraordinary journey has taken her from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations. She has become a global symbol of peaceful protest and is the youngest ever winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. This is the junior edition of her best-selling autobiography.

Mary Hoffmann

Daughters of Time

Look through fresh eyes at the stories of some of history's most remarkable women, in this inspiring collection of short stories by the finest female authors writing historical fiction for children today - The History Girls. Subjects include: Queen Boudicca, Aethelfled, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Julian of Norwich, Lady Jane Grey, Elizabeth Stuart, Aphra Behn, Mary Wollestonecraft, Mary Anning, Mary Seacole, Emily Davison, Amy Johnson and the Greenham Common women.

Modern Life

Roddy Doyle

A Greyhound of a Girl

Scarlet, Mary, Tansey, Emer. Mothers and daughters heading off on a car journey. one of them dead, one of them dying, one of them driving, one of them just beginning. They're going back to the past on a matter of life and death. Meet 12 year old Mary and her beloved grandmother who is nearing the end of her life. Letting go is hard - until Granny's long-dead mammy appears at Mary's door, returning to help her dying daughter say goodbye.

Vanessa Curtis

The Baking Life of Amelia Day

Can Amelie win the Britain's Best Teen Baker of the Year competition? She's got through to the quarter-finals and must now go to London to compete in the competition. Amelie has no fears about the quality of her baking; she loves to bake and knows that her cakes are extra-specially good. But Amelie has Cystic Fibrosis. Will she be able to manage the pressure of the competition?

***Tim Bowler**

Game Changer

Mikey is frightened of open spaces and would much rather curl up in his room. In an attempt to overcome his fear he decides to accompany his sister to a noisy, public place, but things go badly wrong when he encounters a gang and witnesses something terrible... Like other titles by this author, this taut thriller is well-suited to Year 8 readers who want a short read but a powerful one.

Elen Caldecott

How Kirsty Jenkins Stole the Elephant

Just before her grandfather dies, Kirsty promises that she will look after his precious allotment for him. So when the council insists that it must go to the next person on the waiting list, Kirsty decides to take matters into her own hands. Try also other great books by this author, such as ***Operation Eiffel Tower*** or ***The Great Ice-Cream Heist***.

***Keren David**

When I Was Joe

Followed by *Almost True* and *Another Life*

When Ty witnesses a stabbing, his own life is in danger from the criminals he's named, and he and his mum have to go into police protection. With a cool new image, life as Joe is good. His mum can't cope with her new life, however, and Joe is cracking under the pressure, until he meets a girl with dark secrets of her own.

Phil Earle

The Bubble Wrap Boy

Charlie Han is known as Tiny Charlie to most. His mother is over-protective to the extreme, which makes it hard for Charlie to embark on his new passion: skateboarding. It's only when a family secret comes to light that things really start to change for him. This delightful book is filled with totally believable characters and relationships.

***Alan Gibbons**

An Act of Love

Childhood friends Chris and Imran celebrate the Millennium as inseparable blood brothers, but by 2011 their lives have taken very different paths - one has served the Army in Afghanistan, the other is a potential jihad recruit. The author clarifies but never simplifies the issues as he explores the very real issue of terrorism that affects us today.

Holly Goldberg Sloan

Counting by 7s

Willow Chance's world falls apart when her adoptive parents are killed in a car crash. Yet as a twelve-year-old genius, who finds it comforting to count by 7s, she has her own unique methods of finding a new family. This story of unexpected friendships has already won numerous awards in America, and is highly recommended.

Mark Haddon***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time***

This famous book has won many awards including the Whitbread Book of the Year Award 2003. The narrator is Christopher Boone who has Asperger's Syndrome: he knows a lot about maths and very little about human beings.

Erin Lange**Dead Ends***

This is a powerful tale of the unlikely friendship between Dane - a school bully with principles (he doesn't hit girls or special ed kids) - and Billy D, who has Down's syndrome. ("He's not a retard. And he's not my friend.") There's a great plot, a road trip, a little romance - but ultimately it's a story about how two outsiders become a team.

Ann M. Martin***How to Look for a Lost Dog***

11-year-old Rose is autistic, passionate about prime numbers and homonyms, and rather adrift at school. When her father gives her a stray dog, which she names Rain, the dog becomes her anchor in a confusing world. So when Rain goes missing during a storm, Rose becomes fixated on finding her. Bittersweet and perfectly pitched.

Patrick Ness***A Monster Calls***

The monster arrives after midnight, but it isn't the monster from Conor's recurring nightmare since his mother started her cancer treatment. This monster wants something different and dangerous: the truth. A highly moving short novel that won numerous awards on publication, including the Carnegie Medal.

Andrew Norriss***Jessica's Ghost***

Francis has never had a friend like Jessica before. She's the first person he's ever met who can make him feel completely himself. Jessica has never had a friend like Francis before. Not just because he's someone to laugh with every day - but because he's the first person who has ever been able to see her. This is a book which covers difficult subjects such as childhood depression and even suicide with the lightest of touches.

R. J. Palacio***Wonder***

August Pullman was born with a rare facial abnormality. After years of home schooling he is now 10 years old and starting proper school for the first time. This is the life-affirming story of an ordinary boy with an extraordinary face, and the way he changes the lives of everyone around him. Many boys also go on to enjoy ***Auggie & Me***, three more stories about Auggie from the perspective of bully Julian, oldest friend Christopher and classmate Charlotte.

Annabel Pitcher***My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece***

Five years after she was killed by a terrorist bomb, Jamie's sister Rose is just a memory to him. He is far more interested in his Spiderman T-shirt, and in keeping his new friend Sunya a secret from his dad. Narrated by Jamie, this moving story about a family's struggle to cope won the Branford Boase Award in 2012.

Louis Sachar***There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom***

Bradley Chalkers is a bully. He tells lies and picks fights. The teachers say he has "serious behaviour problems." Yet the new school counsellor thinks Bradley could change, if only he wasn't afraid to try. A deft and funny book about a serious issue.

Ali Benjamin***The Thing About Jellyfish***

Twelve year old Suzy's confusion following the death of her best friend fuels this roller-coaster debut novel. When Franny drowns in a freak accident during the school holiday Suzy finds herself dealing not with the death of her best friend as her mother thinks but with the far more devastating loss of their friendship sometime earlier. Suzy copes by becoming electively mute and by constructing a story to explain what happened to Franny. Perfect for fans of ***Wonder***, ***Counting By 7s*** and ***My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece***.

Kim Slater***A Seven Letter Word***

Since Finlay's mother vanished two years ago his stutter has become almost unbearable. Bullied at school and ignored by his father, the only way to get the words out is by writing long letters to his ma which he knows she will never read, and by playing Scrabble online. Like this author's debut novel, ***Smart***, this is a heart-warming book which takes a sideways look at characters struggling against the odds.

Rebecca Stead***Liar and Spy***

When Georges moves into a new apartment block he meets Safer, a 12-year-old self-appointed spy, and they begin to track the mysterious Mr X, who lives in the flat upstairs. As Safer becomes more demanding, Georges starts to wonder: what is a game and what is a lie? This unusual book won the 2013 Guardian Children's Fiction Prize.

Lara Williamson***The Boy Who Sailed the Ocean in an Armchair***

As with her previous book, ***A Boy Called Hope***, the author walks a fine line between humour and sadness. Here she tells the story of 10-year-old Becket Rumsey, who is all at sea. He is struggling to find the answers to some important questions: how to properly say goodbye to his mum, who died when his little brother was born, and why his dad has suddenly left their 'second mum' Pearl.

Mysteries and Detection

Julia Lee

Nancy Parker's Diary of Detection

When Nancy Parker gets her first position as a housemaid to Mrs Bryce, it's not exactly her dream job - she'd rather be out solving mysteries. But she soon discovers there are plenty of suspicious occurrences going on beneath her very nose ... Time for Nancy to set to work not just with her mop but also with her Theory of Detection!

Kiran Millwood-Hargrave

The Girl of Ink and Stars

Joya is a place of limited horizons and hidden stories: the governor has closed its ports and banned travel by sea; half the island is out of bounds to the population. When her friend the governor's daughter gets lost in those Forgotten Territories, Isa accompanies the search party as a cartographer and, unknowing, follows the path of a girl whose brave defence of Joya has long since turned into myth.

Kevin Brooks

The Ultimate Truth

Followed by *The Danger Game* and *The Snake Trap*

After his parents die in a car crash, Travis starts to look into their last case at the private investigation agency they ran. But what starts as a minor distraction soon becomes a sinister mystery. This Carnegie Medal-winning author usually writes for older teens, so this terrific series for younger readers is very welcome.

H. L. Dennis

Secret Breakers: The Power of Three

Followed by *Orphan of the Flames*, *The Knights of Neustria*, *Tower of the Winds*, *The Pirate's Sword* and *Circle of Fire*

The Voynich Manuscript is an ancient manuscript no one has ever been able - or allowed - to decipher. However, Brodie Bray likes a challenge, so when she receives a coded message she sets out with two friends to break the rules in order to break the code.

Siobhan Dowd

The London Eye Mystery

Ted and his sister Kat don't usually get along, but when their cousin vanishes whilst riding on the London Eye they become sleuthing partners to follow a trail of clues across London in a desperate bid to find their cousin. Ultimately it comes down to Ted, whose brain works in its own unique way, to find the key to the mystery.

Lissa Evans

Small Change for Stuart

Followed by *Big Change for Stuart*

Stuart Horten - 10 years old and small for his age - is swept up in a quest to find his great-uncle's lost magic workshop. There are clues to follow and puzzles to solve in this fast-moving blend of comedy and magic which was shortlisted for three major awards.

Rohan Gavin

Knightley & Son

Followed by *Knightley & Son: K-9* and *Knightley & Son: 3 of a Kind*

Darkus Knightley is not your average thirteen-year-old: ferociously logical, super-smart and with a fondness for tweed, detective work is in his blood. His private investigator father has been in a mysterious coma and, as Darkus tries to find out what really happened, the mystery starts getting weirder by the minute.

Sam Hepburn

If You Were Me

Not long after Aliya's family escapes Afghanistan for Britain, her brother is accused of a bomb attack. Aliya is sure of his innocence, but when plumber's son Dan finds a gun in their bathroom, what's she to think? Dan has his own reasons for staying silent; he thinks the gun might have something to do with his dad. The two set out to uncover a tangled and twisted truth in this highly topical crime mystery.

Gareth P. Jones

The Thornthwaite Inheritance

Ovid and Lorelli Thornthwaite have been trying to kill each other for so long that neither twin can remember which act of attempted murder came first. So how can they work together to solve the mystery of their parents' deaths? Darkly comic, as sibling rivalry is taken to a fantastic extreme!

Tanya Landman***Mondays are Murder***

The first in a rather addictive series of ten well-plotted murder mysteries featuring super-sleuth Poppy Fields and her friend Graham. Be warned: there IS a lot of murder in these books, so they are not for the very sensitive or squeamish – but for any boy who wants a book with a bit of substance but not too much length, this should fit the bill.

Andrew Lane***Young Sherlock Holmes: Death Cloud***

Followed by *Red Leech*, *Black Ice*, *Fire Storm*, *Snake Bite*, *Knife Edge*, *Stone Cold* and *Night Break*

This series imagines the iconic detective as the brilliant but troubled teenage son of an army officer. When his father is posted to India, Sherlock is sent to stay with his eccentric aunt and uncle, where he uncovers his first murder and meets his first villain!

Rob Lloyd Jones***Wild Boy***

Followed by *Wild Boy and the Black Terror*

Set in London in 1841, this is the story of a boy covered in hair and condemned to life in a travelling freak show. Wild Boy has extraordinary powers of observation, so when he is falsely accused of murder he is determined to uncover the truth behind the crime.

Ross Montgomery***Alex, the Dog and the Unopenable Door***

Alex has problems - one of which is that his father, once a celebrated explorer, has gone mad and disappeared. Now, with the help of a talking dog and a girl with unfeasibly sharp teeth, Alex embarks on a strange, surreal and sometimes barking mad adventure to discover what really lies at the heart of the mysterious Forbidden Lands.

Louis Sachar***Holes***

Stanley Yelnats' family has always been unlucky, so he is not too surprised when he is sent to Camp Green Lake Juvenile Detention Centre and told to dig holes, five foot wide by five foot deep. The evil warden claims that it is character building, but this is a lie and Stanley must dig up the truth. Also read ***Small Steps***, the sequel to this famous book.

Cate Sampson***Splintered Light***

At four years old, Leah Martens was the only witness to the murder of two women in a London park. Now, twelve years later, as the man imprisoned for the murders walks free, and as Leah desperately tries to remember exactly what she saw that day, two teenage boys are also sucked into the treacherous investigation around the murders.

Ali Sparkes***Frozen in Time***

1956. Freddy and Polly know their father's experiment will only freeze them for an hour or two...In 2009, Ben and Rachel find an underground vault containing two frozen figures... You can imagine what happens! Can Polly and Freddy adapt to the 21st century, and what happened to their father to cause him to leave them frozen in time?

Lauren St John***Dead Man's Cove***

Followed by *Kidnap in the Caribbean*, *Kentucky Thriller* and *Rendezvous in Russia*

When orphaned Laura Marlin moves to live with her uncle in Cornwall, she longs for a life of excitement just like the characters in her favourite detective novels. Her chance comes sooner than she expects... This first book won the 2011 Blue Peter Book of the Year Award, and all the books in the series are well written and enormously gripping.

Trenton Lee Stewart***The Mysterious Benedict Society***

Followed by *The Perilous Journey* and *The Prisoner's Dilemma*

"Are You a Gifted Child Looking for Special Opportunities?" Four children who respond to the advertisement pass all the tests and are put to work to solve a mystery that threatens the world. If you enjoy these exciting mysteries, then you will also love the stand-alone prequel - ***The Extraordinary Education of Nicolas Benedict***.

Myths and Legends

J.P. Buxton

I am the Blade

Followed by *A Heartless Dark*

It is the Dark Ages, and a boy called Tog is running for his life. All he has to survive are his wits, a rusty knife, and a garbled message – his guardian's last, gasped words: *stone, orchard, moon*. This ingenious reworking of the Arthurian legend has adventure, comedy, heroes, villains and oddballs - and is highly recommended!

Sarwat Chadda

Ash Mistry and the Hidden Fortress

Followed by *Ash Mistry and the City of Death* and *Ash Mistry and the World of Darkness*

Ash Mistry hates India – which is a problem since his uncle has taken him there for his holidays. However, our reluctant hero soon has bigger problems as he finds himself in a desperate battle, struggling to prevent the freeing of a monster that has been locked away for millennia. An action-packed story, full of gory battles and Indian mythology.

Susan Cooper

'The Dark is Rising' Sequence

If you enjoy myths and legends, you'll love this classic fantasy series. Magic, evil, kings and wizards, the Holy Grail, and the power of the 'Old Ones' to infect the modern world... It's all here in a sequence that starts with ***Over Sea Under Stone***.

***Bernard Cornwell**

The Winter King

Followed by *Enemy of God* and *Excalibur*

This brilliant trilogy, written from the perspective of one of King Arthur's oath-bound warriors, presents an historically plausible version of the familiar tales. It's the story of a warlord struggling to unite the British kingdoms in the wake of the collapse of Roman rule, and the growing influence of a cult called Christianity.

Kevin Crossley-Holland

Arthur: The Seeing Stone

Followed by *At the Crossing Places* and *King of the Middle March*

Set on the Welsh borders in the closing months of the 12th century, and written in diary form in 100 short chapters, this tells the tale of 13-year-old Arthur de Caldicot, who is given a mysterious obsidian stone by the wise man of the village, and soon discovers its magic as it shows him the story of his namesake, the King Arthur of legend.

Alan Garner

The Owl Service

From the moment Alison discovers the dinner service in the attic, with its curious pattern of floral owls, she is drawn relentlessly into a replay of the tragic Welsh legend of Blodeuwedd. This spooky, sparsely written drama, played out against a background of ancient jealousies, won the Carnegie Medal in 1967, and remains a must-read for an ambitious reader who is interested in legends.

Alan Gibbons

Shadow of the Minotaur

Followed by *Vampyr Legion* and *Warriors of the Raven*

Phoenix is a death-defying hero of the Greek myths, battling Medusa and the invincible Minotaur...but only when he's not being bullied at school. Real life meets mythology meets fantasy in this story about a virtual reality game that becomes all too real.

Julia Golding

Young Knights of the Round Table

Followed by *Pendragon* and *Merlin*

Since they stole him as a baby, the Fey Folk in Avalon have taught Rick that humans are the enemy, and trained him as part of an elite force of warriors. When rumours start that a new generation of knights are re-forming the Round Table, the Fey entrust Rick with a mission: go to Earth, find the knights, and stop them. Sounds simple, right?

Michael Morpurgo**Outlaw: The True Story of Robin Hood**

This ever-reliable author presents Robin as a young man enduring the pain of separation from his family and, with the help of his friends, finding the courage to become a legendary hero. If you enjoy this re-telling, then try others by this author, such as *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, or *Sparrow: The Story of Joan of Arc*.

Philip Reeve**Here Lies Arthur**

Gwyna is just a small girl when she is bound in service to Myrddin the bard, yet she is an integral part of his plan to build the very human Arthur into the mythical hero his people need him to be. The triumph of this award-winning book is its ability to tell the story of Arthur in realistic terms without spoiling the charm of the myth.

Rick Riordan**Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief**

Followed by *The Sea of Monsters*, *The Titan's Curse*, *The Battle of the Labyrinth* and *The Last Olympian* "Look, I didn't want to be a half-blood." So begins one of the most popular children's series in recent years, as Percy Jackson learns that he is not just an ordinary teenager, but a 'demigod' who must help avert a war among the gods of Olympus. Those feeling bereft at the end of this brilliant series can read on in the 'Heroes of Olympus' series.

Rick Riordan**The Red Pyramid**

Followed by *Throne of Fire* and *The Serpent's Shadow*

Percy Jackson fought Greek gods. Now the gods of Egypt are waking in the modern world, and the three books in 'The Kane Chronicles' contain the author's trademark action, suspense and humour! If you prefer Norse mythology, then the author's got that covered too - in his new series about Magnus Chase, beginning with *The Sword of Summer* and continuing this October with *The Hammer of Thor*.

Katherine Roberts**Sword of Light**

Followed by *Lance of Truth*, *Crown of Dreams* and *Grail of Stars*

'The Pendragon Legacy' tells the story of King Arthur's daughter, Rhianna Pendragon, who was smuggled away as a baby by her father's druid, Merlin, and brought up in secret in enchanted Avalon. Now Arthur is dead, and Rhianna has to return to the mortal realm to quest for Excalibur and her father's other talismans. She's a feisty heroine, and there are enough gruesome battles and exciting adventure to satisfy any reader!

Michael Scott**The Alchemyst**

Followed by *The Magician*, *The Sorceress*, *The Necromancer*, *The Warlock* and *The Enchantress*

The renowned alchemist Nicholas Flamel was said to have discovered the secret of eternal life. Records show that he died in 1418, but sometimes legends are true... and 21st century twins Sophie and Josh Newman are about to find themselves in the middle of the greatest legend of all time.

Rosemary Sutcliff**Beowulf: Dragonslayer**

In this thrilling re-telling of the Anglo-Saxon legend, Rosemary Sutcliff recounts Beowulf's most terrifying quests: against Grendel the man-wolf, against the hideous sea-hag and, most courageous of all - his fight to the death with the monstrous fire-drake.

Philip Womack**The Double Axe**

Dark forces are at work in the House of the Double Axe. In this fascinating reworking of the myth, Stephan, the 13-year-old son of King Minos of Crete, stumbles across a terrifying conspiracy. Is the Minotaur, a half man-half bull who eats human flesh, real? Or is something even more dangerous threatening to engulf both the palace and the world? Stephan must race to save his family from a terrible fate and find out what really lurks inside the labyrinth.

Recent Award Winners

Pamela Butchart

My Head Teacher is a Vampire Rat

Federation of Children's Book Groups Book Awards 2016 (Younger Readers)

Izzy and her friends have decided that their new head teacher is a vampire rat, based on him being slightly scary, having the blinds drawn in his office during the day and the fact he's banned garlic bread at lunchtimes. Now they just have to come up with a plan to vanquish him... Also try other immensely readable books by this author, such as ***The Spy Who Loved School Dinners***, which was voted *Blue Peter Book of the Year in 2015*.

Horatio Clare

Aubrey and the Terrible Yoot

Branford Boase Award 2016

Aubrey is "a rambunctious boy who tries to run before he can walk and has crashed two cars before he can drive one". He is also able to talk to animals! This short, apparently easy-read book actually tackles the dark subject of depression in a rather wonderful way. When his father is weighed down with a terrible sadness, the animals help and advise Aubrey on how to find and tackle the cause itself – the Terrible Yoot.

Sarah Crossan

One

Carnegie Medal 2016

Grace and Tippi are conjoined twins, united in blood and bone. It's a situation that most of us could never begin to understand, and yet the story of their lives – as narrated by Grace – seems almost normal as they make friends and deal with everyday family life. Heart-wrenching and heart-warming in equal measure, this unusual book is also written entirely in free verse. If you enjoy this, also look out for this author's ***Apple and Rain*** which won the *Federation of Children's Book Groups Book Award 2016* for older readers.

Kate DiCamillo

Flora and Ulysses

IBW (Independent Bookshop Week) Book Award 2014, Newberry Medal (USA) 2014

10-year-old Flora is a passionate fan of comic book superheroes, who unexpectedly finds herself the confidante of a super-squirrel named Ulysses – who can type poetry, lift heavy weights and fly! It is a quirky, delightful book, full of - to quote Flora - "holy unanticipated occurrences".

Frances Hardinge

The Lie Tree

Costa Book Award 2015

This atmospheric, rather gothic book is part horror story, part detective story and part historical novel. Its heroine is Faith, a precociously intelligent 14-year-old girl and is set in Victorian scientific society, where even women were not meant to speak out, let alone young girls. It is an ingenious and original book that thoroughly deserves its success.

***Tanya Landman**

Buffalo Soldier

Carnegie Medal 2015

At the end of the American Civil War, Charlotte, a young slave, is ostensibly freed. Yet her first experiences of freedom are terrifying and, in desperation, she disguises herself as a man and joins the US army. This compelling adventure, based on a true story, is believable, very sad, and important to learn from. A powerful read for Year 8s.

Gill Lewis

Scarlet Ibis

Little Rebels Children's Book Award 2015

This new award is for books which celebrate diversity, equality and inclusion, and this uplifting book is a worthy winner. Scarlet is used to looking after her brother, Red. He's special - different. So when Scarlet and Red are split up and sent to live with different foster families, Scarlet knows she's got to do whatever it takes to get her brother back.

Ross Mackenzie***The Nowhere Emporium***

Blue Peter Book of the Year 2016, Scottish Children's Book Award 2016 (8-11)

Daniel Holmes is on the run from the bullies in his children's home when he ducks into a mysterious 'Emporium'. The next day, intrigued, he makes his way back there - but the owner is amazed, as no-one is supposed to remember visiting the shop. So begins Daniel's magical adventure in a shop that offers wonders to people across the globe and over the centuries.

Cathy Macphail***Mosi's War***

Scottish Children's Book Award 2015 (12-16)

Patrick has only ever known the Glasgow council estate where he lives; Mosi has only just arrived and needs to start his new life without any trouble. As the two boys strike up an unlikely friendship Patrick finds out that there is much more to Mosi than at first appears, and they have to face situations that are both terrifying and dangerous.

Sophie McKenzie***Split Second***

Federation of Children's Book Groups Book Award 2015 (Older Readers)

Bound together by the devastating consequences of a terrorist attack on a London market, teenagers Charlotte and Nat appear at first to have much in common. But, as Charlie gets closer to Nat and his family, she begins to wonder if perhaps he knows more about the attack than he has let on. Read on in **Every Second Counts**.

Sally Nicholls***An Island of Our Own***

IBW Book Award 2015

Holly and Davy, raised by their older brother Jonathan, are struggling to live on very little income. When their rich Great Aunt dies, leaving them her jewellery, they think their problems are over. But first they have to find the inheritance, armed only with a photo album of clues, and it looks as if they aren't the only ones following the trail.

Katherine Rundell***Rooftoppers***

Waterstone's Children's Book Prize 2014 (5-12), Blue Peter Best Story Award 2014

In this utterly charming, rather quirky book, one-year-old Sophie is found floating in a cello case after a shipwreck, and is taken in by her rescuer - a generous and very polite Englishman, who lives by his own rules. It's a fairy tale of sorts (but without any fairies) about what can happen when you never ignore life's 'possibles'.

David Walliams***Demon Dentist***

Federation of Children's Book Groups Book Awards 2015 (Younger Readers)

Stella Saxby is the sole heir to Saxby Hall. But awful Aunt Alberta and her giant owl will stop at nothing to get it from her. Luckily Stella has a secret - and slightly spooky - weapon up her sleeve! Another wonderful Walliams book - full of funny lists, silly words and wicked humour.

Danny Weston***The Piper***

Scottish Children's Book Award 2016 (12-16)

At the beginning of World War II Peter and Daisy are evacuated to a remote farmhouse inhabited by an elderly gentleman, his invalid daughter and their housekeeper. Despite being told not to go out alone into the surrounding marshland, each night they hear music that Daisy feels compelled to follow. This genuinely scary story has a sense of evil waiting that will send shivers down your spine!

Science Fiction

***Douglas Adams**

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

When Earth is destroyed to make way for a Hyperspatial express route, his friend Ford Prefect takes Arthur Dent on a hair-raising tour of the Galaxy and its very strange inhabitants. A brilliantly wacky trilogy in five parts!

Tom Becker

The Traitors

After betraying his best friend, Adam Wilson is kidnapped and taken to the Dial – a prison outside time where teenage traitors are forced to atone for their treachery in century-long sentences. It's a terrible place, and soon Adam is caught up in a deadly plan to escape, but who can he possibly trust in a world full of traitors?

Emma Clayton

The Roar

Followed by *The Whisper*

12-year old twins, Mika and Ellie, live in a devastated future world, behind a wall to protect them from the plague animals beyond. When they begin to discover that their concrete world is built on lies, a strange sound in their heads grows to a roar, and they find out that children and the planet have never mattered more.

Eoin Colfer

The Supernaturalist

A funny and futuristic novel set in Satellite City, a vast satellite-controlled metropolis in the third millennium. Cosmo is a 14-year-old orphan living in an Institute for Parentally Challenged Boys. There are only three ways out of such a miserable establishment: adoption, death or escape.

***Michael Crichton**

Jurassic Park

Followed by *The Lost World*

In the light of the recent *Jurassic World* movie, it is well worth having a go at reading the original novel on which the first *Jurassic Park* film was based. It's a real page-turner, and for those scientists amongst you, it contains more scientific information which makes it just that bit more believable. Be warned though - it's pretty scary.

Christopher Edge

The Many Worlds of Albie Bright

When Albie's mum dies, it's natural he should wonder where she's gone. His parents are both scientists and they usually have all the answers. Dad mutters something about Albie's mum being alive and with them in a parallel universe. So Albie finds a box, his mum's computer and a rotting banana, and sends himself through time and space to find her...obvious really!

Steve Feasey

Mutant City

Followed by *Mutant Rising*

In City Four all disease and genetic differences have been removed. Yet outside the city walls live the 'mutants' - the damaged legacy of the chemical warfare of the Last War. Set apart are five teenagers created in a lab, a mixture of pure and mutant, whose very existence threatens the status quo. The grim post-apocalyptic scenario is off-set by terrific characters in this exciting blend of sci-fi and super hero fantasy.

Lucy & Stephen Hawking

George's Secret Key to the Universe

Followed by *George's Cosmic Treasure Hunt*, *George and the Big Bang*, *George and the Unbreakable Code* and *George and the Blue Moon*

This rollercoaster ride through the vastness of space makes light work of the mysteries of physics, science and the universe with George, his new friends next door, and a super-intelligent computer called Cosmos, which can take them to the edge of a black hole and back again. Or can it?

Polly Ho-Yen**Boy in the Tower**

Ade loves living on the seventeenth floor of a tower block—until the day that other tower blocks on the estate start falling down around them and strange, menacing plants begin to appear. Now Ade and his mum are trapped and there's no way out. On the surface, this is classic sci-fi, yet this wonderful book is also about loyalty and courage, about friendship and family.

Madeleine L'Engle**A Wrinkle in Time**

Followed by *A Wind in the Door*, *A Swiftly Tilting Planet*, and *Many Waters*

When Charles goes searching through a "wrinkle in time" for his lost father, he finds an evil planet where all life is enslaved by a huge pulsating brain known as "it". This is the first book in the 'Time Quartet', a classic of children's science fiction.

S. J. Kincaid*Insignia**

Followed by *Vortex* and *Catalyst*

Tom Raines lives in a high tech future, where World War III is being fought in space by computerised machines controlled remotely by people back on earth. When he is recruited to join the team of children training to be the next generation of Virtual Reality soldiers he jumps at the chance; but as he is drawn into a world of corporate greed and corruption he begins to question the rules...

Jeff Norton**MetaWars: Fight for the Future**

Followed by *MetaWars: The Dead Are Rising*, *Battle of the Immortal* and *The Freedom Frontier*

The world's oil has all but run out; carbon rationing has limited travel; governments are going bankrupt; and millions of people prefer to live in the virtual world of the Metasphere rather than the real one. Against this backdrop 12-year-old Jonah finds himself caught up in a battle to control the virtual world - and in turn, the real one.

S.F. Said**Phoenix**

'One boy alone can save the galaxy' is what it says on the back of the book. That sounds unlikely but actually, in this immensely imaginative and exciting sci-fi novel, everything seems possible. In parts of the book the beautiful illustrations and the text work together like a graphic novel, to help bring this brilliant space adventure to life.

Paul Stewart & Chris Riddell**Scavenger: Zoid**

Followed by *Scavenger: Chaos Zone* and *Scavenger: Mind Warp*

A vast spaceship is on a century-long journey to find a new Earth. Highly advanced Zoids were created to serve the needs of the human passengers, but they rebelled and are now attacking the passengers. Survivors like York now have to risk life and limb to destroy zoids and scavenge the parts needed to keep their meagre technology running.

Mark Walden**Earthfall**

Followed by *Earthfall: Retribution* and *Earthfall: Redemption* (Jan. 2017)

Sam wakes to see strange vessels gathered in the skies around London and people streaming past towards the enormous ships, which emit a persistent noise. Only Sam seems immune to the signal. It is only when Sam is rescued by a band of other teen survivors that he discovers the truth behind the invasion and how he can fight back...

Rick Yancey*The 5th Wave**

Followed by *The Infinite Sea* and *The Last Star*

The 1st wave took out half a million people; the 2nd wave put that number to shame. The 3rd wave lasted a little longer - twelve weeks and 4 billion dead. In the 4th wave you can't trust that people are still people. And the 5th wave? No one knows...but it's coming. What it means to be human is at the heart of this gripping tale that won the 2014 Red House Children's Book Award for older readers.

School Stories

Jerry Spinelli

Stargirl

From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of colour and sound, hallways hum “Stargirl.” She captures Leo Borlock’s heart with one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. Until they are not. Leo urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her - normal.

Anthony Buckeridge

Jennings Goes to School

The books in which J.C.T. Jennings first made his debut over 60 years ago, are still fresh and funny for each generation of prep school boys! In this first title, Jennings and his best friend Darbshire are new boys at Linbury Court Prep School, and it’s not long before they start causing havoc!

Gillian Cross

The Demon Headmaster

Followed by *The Prime Minister’s Brain*, *The Revenge of the Demon Headmaster*, *The Demon Headmaster Strikes Again*, *The Demon Headmaster Takes Over* and *Facing the Demon Headmaster*

The children at Dinah’s new school are very robotic, and she soon realises that they are under the demonic power of the creepy Headmaster. Now she must try to stop his evil plan to dominate not just the school, but the nation. Although first published over 30 years ago, this series remains fresh and exciting - and not too creepy!

Anthony Horowitz

Groosham Grange

Followed by *Return to Groosham Grange*

Sent to Groosham Grange as a last resort by his parents, David Eliot soon discovers that his new school is a very weird place. New pupils are made to sign their names in blood, the French teacher disappears every full moon and the assistant headmaster keeps something very chilling in his room... A dark and witty read for all ages.

Jenny Nimmo

Midnight for Charlie Bone

Charlie doesn’t want to believe he can hear the voices of people in photographs, but his horrible aunts are delighted with his magical talent and pack him off to a school for children with ‘gifts’. This is the first in a wonderful series of eight books.

Gene Kemp

The Turbulent Term of Tyke Tiler

Wherever best-friends Tyke Tiler and Danny Price are, there is usually trouble – and it’s usually trouble that Tyke has to sort out. Their last term at Cricklepit Combined School is full of the usual fun and madness, until Tyke learns that much more is at stake. This former Carnegie Medal book is both entertaining and thought-provoking.

Andy Mulligan

Ribblestrop

Followed by *Return to Ribblestrop* and *Ribblestrop Forever!*

It’s hard to categorize this tale about a disastrous school whose pupils can be counted on the fingers of one hand, but it’s a hugely entertaining read, whose first sequel won the 2011 Guardian Children’s Fiction Prize. As one reviewer wrote: “Ribblestrop has the ‘crazy school’ appeal of Hogwarts and the grim humour of Lemony Snicket”!

James Patterson

Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life

Followed by *Get Me Out of Here!*, *My Brother is a Big, Fat Liar*, *How I Survived Bullies, Broccoli and Snake Hill*, *The Final Showdown*, *Save Rafe!*, *Just My Rotten Luck* and *Dog’s Best Friend*

Rafe has a plan to make his first year of Middle School the best year ever: he’s going to break every rule in his school’s oppressive Code of Conduct. When his game starts to catch up with him, he has to decide if he’s finally ready to face the rules, bullies, and truths he’s been avoiding. Hilarity, honesty and dozens of doodles - great fun!

Short Stories

Roald Dahl

Skin and Other Stories

Dahl's darkly funny stories were written for adults, but this selection has been chosen as an introduction for teenagers to his spellbinding stories with a twist at the end. If you don't think you like short stories, these will probably change your opinion!

Jim Eldridge

Stories of the First World War

There are many collections of war stories to be found, but this book tracks the story of the Great War through the fictional experiences of young people on both sides of the conflict. The stories bring the period to vivid life - from the efforts of the Home Front to the trenches of the Western Front.

Andy Griffiths

Just Annoying

This is *just* one of the very funny books of short stories by this author. You may also want to try ***Just Disgusting, Just Joking, Just Stupid, Just Wacky*** and ***Just Shocking!***

Anthony Horowitz

Horowitz Horror

Classy horror stories from a powerful writer. They manage to be subtle, imaginative, sometimes funny and always chilling. Also look out for ***More Horowitz Horror***.

Paul Jennings

Undone!

Also: *Unreal!, Unbelievable!* and many other titles

Paul Jennings's short stories are funny, moving and refreshingly unpredictable. They are a great choice for any reluctant readers and appeal to all ages.

Gareth P. Jones

Death or Ice Cream?

At first the stories seem unconnected: they jump around in time; some are philosophical, some are rather twisted and some just plain fun. As you read on, however, they begin to paint a complete picture... These interlinked short stories, set in the strange town of Larkin Mills, are dark and funny in equal measure.

Rudyard Kipling

Just So Stories

How did the camel get his hump? Why won't cats do as they are told? How did an inquisitive elephant change the lives of elephants everywhere? These are wonderful stories full of quirky, offbeat humour that should be part of every reader's library.

Alexander McCall Smith

The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency

This is the first book in a series of short detective stories set in Botswana and featuring Precious Ramotswe and her colleagues. These gentle stories are a real delight.

Ian McEwan

The Daydreamer

In seven interlinked stories Peter swaps bodies with the subjects of his daydreams and, in the final story, wakes up as a twelve-year-old inside his adult body. Often humorous; always surreal; this is a charming read from an author better known for adult books.

Terry Pratchett

Dragons at Crumbling Castle

These 14 funny stories were written when the author was only a teenager. They prove that Terry Pratchett must have been born with the brilliant wit that characterised all his later writing and that, with his death, the world lost a master storyteller.

Chris Priestley

Uncle Montague's Tales of Terror

Also: *Tales of Terror from the Black Ship* and *Tales of Terror from the Tunnel's Mouth*

Uncle Montague lives alone behind some dark, dense woods. His nephew, Edgar, braves this walk regularly, because he loves to listen to the scary stories his uncle tells him.

Spies and Special Agents

Lauren Child

Look Into My Eyes

Followed by *Take Your Last Breath, Catch Your Death, Feel the Fear* and *Pick Your Poison*

Ruby Redfort is an awesome super-detective, genius code-cracker and gadget-laden special agent. This witty and absorbing book, from a multi award-winning author, is quite long, and it's about a girl... but don't let that put you off; it's a terrific read.

Joe Craig

Jimmy Coates: Killer

Followed by *Jimmy Coates: Target, Revenge, Sabotage, Survival, Power* and *Blackout*

11-year-old Jimmy Coates seems like an ordinary boy, but he's not. He's genetically engineered to grow into the perfect government assassin. Speed, strength and deadly instincts are all in his blood. Now he has discovered these strange powers, and he has to fight *not* to kill. Clever and engaging, this series is highly recommended.

Ian Fleming

Casino Royale

This was the first James Bond novel and is a good one to start with as it introduces the long-standing Bond characters, such as 'M' and Moneyppenny. The 007 books are not great literature but they are far more believable than the films - Bond relies rather more on his wits and less on his gadgetry!

Stuart Gibbs

Spy School

Followed by *Spy Camp, Evil Spy School* and *Spy Ski School*

Ben Ripley imagines life as a secret agent would be pretty amazing - so when he learns he's been recruited to the CIA's top secret Academy of Espionage, it sounds too good to be true. And it is. From the moment he arrives Ben finds Spy School is going to be far more difficult and dangerous than he expected. A good mixture of action and humour.

M. G. Harris

Gemini Force 1: Black Horizon

Followed by *Ghost Mine* and *White Storm*

After the tragic death of his father, Ben Carrington's mother teams up with a wealthy entrepreneur to form an elite, top-secret rescue organisation - Gemini Force. Ben is determined to become part of the team, but can he prove he has what it takes to face dangerous situations and save lives?

Charlie Higson

Silverfin

Followed by *Blood Fever, Double or Die, Hurricane Gold* and *By Royal Command*.

This first book in a series of adventures about the young James Bond starts with Bond as a 13-year old at Eton in the 1930s. It is a page-turning adventure that introduces us to the future hero of millions of people around the world! If you enjoy these, you should read the new series which continues after James is expelled from Eton, beginning with ***Young Bond: Shoot to Kill***, written by Steve Cole.

Anthony Horowitz

Stormbreaker

The first in a gripping series that follows the super - if reluctant - young spy Alex Rider through his many adventures. Once you're hooked, you will want to read on to the ninth and final book in the series, ***Scorpia Rising***, and then, perhaps, the exciting prequel ***Russian Roulette***, which charts the journey of a young schoolboy into the hired assassin Yassen Gregorovich.

Andy McNab & Robert Rigby **Boy Soldier**

Followed by *Payback*, *Avenger* and *Meltdown*

Danny's grandfather was an SAS expert who betrayed his country for money. At least, that's what Danny is told when his hopes of becoming a soldier are destroyed for ever, and he sets out to track down his grandfather and expose him.

Tom Palmer **The Squad: Black Op**

Followed by *White Fear*

The Squad is a group of teenage spies with the perfect cover: they are also part of an English youth football team. Wherever trouble is kicking off, the Squad is sent in. They're more than a match for any kind of enemy. In the first book in an exciting series the Squad are sent to Krakow, Poland, just before the Euro 2012 tournament there.

Chris Ryan **Survival**

Alex, Li, Paulo, Hex and Amber are marooned on a desert island after a shipwreck, and they must combine all their knowledge and skills if they are to stay alive. Team 'Alpha Force' is born, and is ready to go anywhere in the world to help others in need. If you enjoy this, there are nine other books in this best-selling series from an ex-SAS hero.

Chris Ryan **Agent 21**

Followed by *Agent 21: Reloaded*, *Codebreaker*, *Deadfall*, *Under Cover* and *Endgame*

After Zak Darke's parents die in an unexplained mass murder he's recruited for a government agency and becomes Agent 21. What happened to the 20 agents before him he'll never know. What he does know is that his life is about to change for ever . . .

Craig Simpson **Special Operations: Dogfight**

Followed by *Death Ray*, *Wolf Squadron* and *Dead or Alive*

World War II is raging, German soldiers are invading a Norwegian village, and the Resistance movement is planning to reveal top-secret information to the British. Finn Gunnensen and his best friend, Loki, are desperate to lend a hand. However, talking about risking your lives and actually doing it are two different things...

Ali Sparkes **Finding the Fox**

Followed by *Running the Risk*, *Going to Ground*, *Dowsing the Dead* and *Stirring the Storm*

Dax Jones is a boy who one day, frightened for his life, inexplicably changes into a fox. He is persuaded by a government agent to join a secret school for children with strange powers. If you enjoy this highly exciting 'Shapeshifter' series, you can read more about the 'colas' (children of limitless ability) in the author's 'Unleashed' series, beginning with **A Life and Death Job**.

***Allen Zadoff** **Boy Nobody**

Followed by *The Mission* and *The Traitor*

He is always the new boy in school: always staying just long enough for someone in his new friend's family to die - of "natural causes." Mission accomplished, he disappears. Boy Nobody is a trained assassin for The Program, a government organization that uses brainwashed children as counter-espionage operatives. Deep inside Boy Nobody however, is a boy who just wants a normal life.

Spooky Stories

***Malorie Blackman**

The Stuff of Nightmares

When Kyle gets on the train that is taking him and his class on a school trip, he has no idea how close to Death he is going to come. Death enters the train and Kyle moves with him, past his friends, who are frozen in time, and finds that he can pick up on their deepest, darkest fears.

Emma Carroll

Frost Hollow Hall

Will dares Tilly to come ice-skating up at Frost Hollow Hall, a place rumoured to be haunted since the young heir, Kit Barrington, drowned there. Tilly never turns down a dare, yet her decision pitches her into the heart of a tragic family story. Hugely atmospheric, you feel the chill of the winter and the chill of fear as you read this very believable ghost story.

Chris d'Lacey

A Dark Inheritance

Followed by *Alexander's Army* and *A Crown of Dragons*

Michael Malone's life has not been the same since his father disappeared three years ago. Determined to find him, Michael gets unwittingly drawn into supernatural organisation UNICORNE, who claim to have vital information for his quest. But they want something in return. Something that is hidden in Michael's very bones... This is an excellent paranormal adventure from a best-selling author.

Joseph Delaney

The Spook's Apprentice

Thomas Ward is the seventh son of a seventh son and has been apprenticed to the local Spook. Somehow Thomas must learn how to exorcise ghosts, contain witches and bind bogbarts... The series has now reached its 13th and final book - *The Spook's Revenge* - but if you can't bear to leave it there you can continue with the new 'Starblade Chronicles', starting with *Spooks: A New Darkness*.

Berlie Doherty

The Company of Ghosts

Ellie finds herself left alone on a deserted island without a phone, or any means of getting help from the mainland - which is tantalisingly near. As she gradually realises her plight, her increasing fear and growing feeling that the island is haunted is mesmerising. Like all the best ghost stories, the tension builds up slowly and hypnotically.

Neil Gaiman

The Graveyard Book

When an infant's family is horribly murdered, he toddles to the safety of a local graveyard, where he's raised and educated by the resident dead. This truly out-of-the-ordinary book, by the author of the equally spooky *Coraline*, won the Carnegie Medal, the Booktrust Teenage Prize and the UKLA Children's Book Award on its publication in 2010.

Frances Hardinge

Cuckoo Song

Shortlisted for the 2015 Carnegie Medal, this book is creepy and highly atmospheric. When Triss wakes up after an accident, she knows that something is very wrong. She is insatiably hungry; her sister seems scared of her and her parents whisper behind closed doors. Soon she discovers that what happened to her is stranger than she could ever have imagined, and that she is quite literally not herself – she is a Changeling.

***Susan Hill**

The Woman in Black

When Arthur Kipps, a junior solicitor, is summoned to attend the funeral of the sole inhabitant of Eel Marsh House, he is unaware of the tragic secrets which lie hidden there. It is only when he sees a young woman, dressed all in black, at the funeral, that a creeping sense of unease begins to take hold. A classic, and very scary, ghost story.

Anthony Horowitz***Raven's Gate***

Eight guardians are protecting the world from the evil ones - beings banished long ago by five children. But devil worshippers want to let the evil ones back in. Can Matt, a foster child with special powers, manage to stop them? This sinister story of the supernatural is followed by ***Evil Star***, ***Night Rise***, ***Necropolis*** and ***Oblivion***.

Leo Hunt***13 Days of Midnight***

When Luke's estranged father dies unexpectedly, he leaves his son a dark inheritance: a collection of eight restless spirits, known as his Host, who want revenge for their long enslavement. Once they realise that Luke has no clue how to manage them, they become increasingly belligerent. Luke has just 13 days to work out how to send his unquiet spirits to their eternal rest or join their ghostly ranks himself.

Pete Johnson***The Ghost Dog***

Dan invents the story of the Ghost Dog to scare big tough Aaron who isn't scared of anything. Unfortunately, the plan backfires... This award-winning story is just one of several spooky titles from an author sometimes described as the children's Stephen King.

Gareth P. Jones***Constable & Toop***

Sam Toop lives in a funeral parlour, and is blessed (or cursed) with an unusual gift. While his father buries the dead, Sam is haunted by their constant demands for attention. Now something is mysteriously imprisoning ghosts into empty houses in the world of the living. Sam is caught in the middle - will he be able to bring himself to help?

Cliff McNish***Breathe: A Ghost Story***

Jack has an unusual gift: he can communicate with the dead. So when he and his mother move into a new house he soon senses spirits - mainly children - but one soul is much stronger than the rest. There are no vampires or monsters here, just a seriously spooky tale that will make the hairs on the back of your neck stand up.

Michelle Paver***Dark Matter***

It's 1937, and Jack is a wireless operator on an expedition to the Norwegian Arctic. His group set up camp in an uninhabited bay, but, as the Arctic night falls and Jack's companions leave, he realises that something else is out there. Told in the increasingly fearful words of Jack's journal, this is a truly chilling ghost story. If you enjoy this, then you should also try ***Thin Air***, the author's latest ghost story which is set on Everest.

Chris Priestley***Through Dead Eyes***

Whilst with his father in Amsterdam, Alex buys an ancient-looking mask from a flea market. He feels compelled to put the mask on and is sucked into a parallel, centuries-old Amsterdam, which begins to reveal the dark past of both the building he is staying in and the little girl who once lived there... edging stealthily towards the terrible twist. This is a brilliantly atmospheric ghost story by a master of the genre.

Jonathan Stroud***Lockwood & Co: The Screaming Staircase***

Followed by *The Whispering Skull*, *The Hollow Boy* and *The Creeping Shadow*

In this future version of England ghosts are everywhere and their touch can kill. As people grow older, their ability to see the ghosts fades away, so teenager Anthony Lockwood founded an agency of young people to help those with a Visitor problem. Despite some terrifying ghosts, the book still features the author's trademark humour.

Sports Stories

Noel Streatfield

Tennis Shoes

Tennis became important in the Heath Family's life early on - the twins were only nine, and the others younger when they started to play. But their grandfather and father before them had been top players - the four red-headed children had tennis in their blood. They join the competitive tournament circuit and battle hard to win! From the author of the long-loved classic, ***Ballet Shoes***.

Mal Peet

Keeper

In a newspaper office, Paul Faustino, South America's top football writer, sits opposite the man they call El Gato "the Cat", the world's greatest goalkeeper. In the hours that follow, El Gato tells the incredible story of the mysterious Keeper, the man who helped him rise from poor logger's son to World Cup-winning goalkeeper.

Christine Ohuruogu

Camp Gold: Going for Gold

Also: *Camp Gold: Running Stars*

Maxine can't wait to start at Camp Gold International! But the minute she arrives, things start going wrong - her training isn't going well and, worse, someone has been vandalising the plush building. Now fingers are pointing at Maxine and her friends. When it happens a second time, the principal makes it clear that if the vandals don't stop, the camp may have to be closed. For Maxine, Camp Gold means everything. Can she solve the mystery and focus on training ...and win?

Kay Woodward

Going for Gold: Skate School

Also: *Skate School: Ice Princess* and *Skate School: On Thin Ice*

Frankie's made it to the Olympics and she's going for gold. It's a dream come true. Frankie and her team mates enjoy the buzz and excitement of the opening ceremony, but all too quickly she realises that the competition is going to be fierce. And there's one competitor who will stop at nothing to win...

***Sarah Skilton**

Bruised

Imogen, a black belt in Tae Kwan Do, freezes up when she's a bystander in a hold-up at the local diner and blames herself for not acting before the gunman is shot and killed by the police. She always believed that her black belt made her better than everyone else -- more responsible, more capable. Now that this belief has been challenged, she has to rebuild her life, including her relationship with her family and with the boy who was at the diner with her during the shoot-out.

Bob Cattell

Glory in the Cup

Hooker, Cal, Erica and the rest are all big cricket fans. When a teacher suggests they form a proper team the Glory Gardens XI is born. This is the first title in the 'Glory Garden' series, which is recommended by the English Schools Cricket Association.

Dave Cousins

Charlie Merrick's Misfits: Fouls, Friends & Football

Followed by *I'm a Nobody*, *Get Me Out of Here!*

Charlie Merrick is captain of North Star Galaxy under-12s - a team which he admits is full of "misfits". In order to enter the team into a competition to take part in a special pre-World Cup tournament, Charlie has to keep a diary about his team's season. The result, in a charming mix of cartoons and text, is a story of friendship and teamwork.

Shamini Flint

Diary of a Cricket God

Also: *Rugby Champ*, *Super Swimmer*, *Golf Pro*, *Taekwondo Master*, *Track and Field Titan*, *Basketball Hero*, *Tennis Prodigy*
Marcus is a Maths whiz who is not good at sport. His dad thinks Marcus can achieve anything he sets his mind to yet the results, as set out in Marcus's diaries, are not encouraging! The gentle humour and comic drawings in this series will make you laugh while teaching you a surprising amount about the sports.

Dan Freedman

The Kick Off

Followed by *Shoot to Win*, *Golden Goal*, *Man of the Match*, *World Class*, *Final Whistle* and *Skills from Brazil*

Jamie Johnson is desperate to become his school's star football player (and in his dreams, a top professional too). He's got so much to prove, and not just on the pitch - so why aren't his Mum, teachers and best mate on his side?

Morris Gleitzman

Extra Time

This best-selling Australian author always manages to bring humour to serious topics, and this is no exception. In this charming, easy-to-read book, he introduces us to a marauding fluffy mascot, a wise-as-an-owl landlady and a WAG called Terrine, in an irresistible story of how one boy helps stressed-out top footballers find the fun in a kickabout again, with help from his fearsome agent (and little sister), Bridie.

Tom Palmer

Foul Play

Followed by *Dead Ball*, *Off Side*, *Killer Pass* and *Own Goal*

Danny Harte is obsessed with two things – watching football and tackling crime. So when his hero, the legendary footballer Sam Roberts is kidnapped, Danny gets on the case, and fast! Younger boys, or those who want an easier read, should also try the author's brilliant 'Football Academy' series, beginning with ***Boys United***. Also check out Palmer's ***Rugby Academy: Combat Zone***.

Simon Rae

Unplayable

When Tom Marlin is scrunched on the football field by the school bully, he needs a major operation on his shoulder. He comes out of hospital with his shoulder repaired - and the miraculous gift of being able to turn a cricket ball miles. For any cricket lover, this tale of a dizzying rise through the cricketer ranks is the stuff of dreams!

Robert Rigby

Goal! The Dream Begins

Followed by *Living the Dream* and *Glory Days*

A young Latino boy is spotted in Los Angeles by an ex-scout, and wins a trial at Newcastle United. Struggling to cope with the weather and player rivalries, he has only one shot at fulfilling his dream. He has the skill; does he have the stamina for success? Rigby has also written a series of stories around the Olympics: ***Parallel Lines***, ***Deep Waters***, ***Wheels of Fire***, ***Running in Her Shadow***.

Gerard Siggins

Rugby Spirit

Followed by *Rugby Warrior*, *Rugby Rebel* and *Rugby Flyer*

Eoin has just joined a new school where everyone is mad about rugby, yet he has never held a rugby ball before. With new rules to learn, new friends to make and new teachers to get a handle on, he really doesn't need to have Richie Duffy, the resident bully, picking him out as his latest target. There are relatively few rugby stories around (lots about football!), and this is a great read for any keen sportsmen.

Owen Slot

Running for Gold

Also *Cycling for Gold*

Everyone knows Danny Powell was born to run, but Danny's dreams seem impossible...except, what if Danny *could* be the next 100m world champion? With the Olympic Games on his doorstep, there's only one way to find out. This gripping page-turner has non-fiction figures and facts woven into an inspirational story.

Martin Smith

The Football Boy Wonder

Followed by *The Demon Football Manager* and *The Magic Football Book*

Charlie Fry is football mad. He wears his kit to bed, and plays football around the clock. But the 11-year old has a problem: he has bad lungs and can't run very far. Then one day a freak accident presents Charlie with a unique goal-scoring gift – it means he can't miss. Now all he has to do is convince his team to give him the chance to use his new found skill to deadly effect.

Theo Walcott

T.J. and the Hat-Trick

Followed by *T.J. and the Penalty*, *T.J. and the Winning Goal* and *T.J. and the Cup Run*

T.J. can't get enough of football, but he and his friends at Parkview School are worried that without anyone to coach them, or anywhere to play, they'll never have a proper team. Then Mr Wood arrives at school, and the game starts to look a whole lot more exciting! An entertaining and easy-read series.

Steampunk

Steampunk is a subgenre of fantasy usually set in a Victorian or quasi-Victorian setting. It could be described as: “What the past would look like if the future had happened sooner.”

Eoin Colfer

Airman

This historical fantasy, shortlisted for the 2009 Carnegie Medal, tells the story of Conor Broekhart, a boy who was born to fly. In an age of discovery and invention, many dreamed of flying, but for Conor flight was his destiny. In one dark night on the Island of Great Saltee, a cruel betrayal destroyed his life and stole his future.

Sharon Gosling

The Diamond Thief

Followed by *The Ruby Airship* and *The Sapphire Cutlass*

When 16-year-old circus performer Rémy Brunel is brought to London to steal a famous diamond on behalf of her evil circus master, she finds herself pitted against a young detective called Thaddeus Rec. This exciting book is part historical fiction, part fantasy, part steampunk - and well worth trying.

Kenneth Oppel

The Boundless

The hero of this thrilling book is a train, the Boundless, seven miles long, composed of almost a thousand carriages, built to cross Canada from west to east at the end of the 19th century. Will Everett is on its maiden voyage and, after witnessing a murder, must flee for his life through a train packed with chancers, entrepreneurs and enthusiasts.

Philip Reeve

Mortal Engines

Followed by *Predator's Gold*, *Infernal Devices* and *A Darkling Plain*

This multi-award winning quartet is set in a future world that relies on old technology and where mobile cities fight for survival. The first instalment introduces Tom, who falls from the fast-moving city of London and is forced to survive on the 'Bare Earth'.

Philip Reeve

Larklight

Followed by *Starcross* and *Mothstorm*

Art Mumby and his irritating sister Myrtle live with their father in a rambling house called Larklight that is travelling through space on a remote orbit far beyond the Moon. This exciting (and brilliantly illustrated) yarn is set in an alternative Victorian era, with the manners of the time overlaid ingeniously on an outer-space fantasy adventure!

Paul Stewart & Chris Riddell

Fergus Crane

Followed by *Corby Flood* and *Hugo Pepper*

Fergus Crane has an almost ordinary life until he is plunged into adventure when a steam powered mechanical winged horse brings him to his long-lost uncle to discover his true mission - to rescue his father.

Jules Verne

Around the World in Eighty Days

This book, along with other Verne classics, was written before the great scientific advances of the twentieth century. Yet, far from seeming dated, his exciting books prove him to have been a true visionary. If Steampunk is basically Victorian science fiction, then Jules Verne was its true founder!

Scott Westerfeld

Leviathan

Followed by *Behemoth* and *Goliath*

The Clankers, who put their faith in machinery, are at war with the Darwinists, who have begun evolving living creatures into tools. Prince Aleksandar is a Clanker, and travels the country in a fortified tank on legs, while Deryn Sharp works for the British Empire, on an airship made of living animals. Now their lives are about to collide...

Time Travel

K.A.S Quinn

The Queen Must Die

Part of *The Chronicles of the Tempus* series

Completely gripping, this rollercoaster time travel adventure takes Katie, a contemporary New York teenager, back right into the heart of Queen Victoria's reign. Landing unexpectedly in the Buckingham Palace bedroom of Alice, Queen Victoria's younger daughter, Katie is swiftly caught up in a terrifying world of dishonest courtiers plotting unspeakable acts with the help of powerful helpers with extra powers.

Penelope Lively

A Stitch in Time

Maria doesn't tell anyone about the mysterious noises she hears in the old, rented holiday house, the shrill barking of an invisible dog, the non-existent swing which creaks in the garden. But then she discovers a sampler, stitched by a girl who lived in the house over a hundred years ago, and Maria finds herself increasingly drawn into the life of the Victorian girl as past and present merge in a dramatic climax.

Niel Bushnell

Sorrowline

When Jack discovers he's a Yard Boy – someone with the ability to travel through the channels that connect every gravestone with the date of the person's death – he is quickly pulled into an extraordinary adventure. Finding himself in 1940s war-torn London, Jack soon realises that his arrival has not gone unnoticed. The evil forces of a secret world are determined to find out all he knows. Read more in *Timesmith!*

Marianne Curley

The Named

Followed by *The Dark* and *The Key*

Imagine if by altering one tiny fact of history you could start a chain of catastrophic events? Ethan is one of the Named, fated to stop this ever happening, although the forces of chaos have other ideas. He is also a normal schoolboy, whose life is rapidly becoming far too confusing.

N. M. Browne

The Warriors of Alavna

Followed by *The Warriors of Camlann* and *The Warriors of Ethandun*

Dan and Ursula are on a school trip when they slip back in time to AD75, and soon realize they must fight for survival before they can try to return to their real time. This brilliant mixture of fantasy and history is highly recommended.

Janis Mackay

The Accidental Time Traveller

Followed by *The Reluctant Time Traveller*

Saul is on his way to the corner shop when a girl appears suddenly in the middle of the road. She doesn't understand traffic, or the things in shops, and she's wearing old-fashioned clothes. Her name is Agatha Black and she has come from 1812. Now, with help from his mates Will and Robbie, Saul needs to find a way to get her back there. Set in Scotland around Christmas time, this is an atmospheric and charming adventure story.

Alex Scarrow

Time Riders

Followed by *Day of the Predator*, *The Doomsday Code*, *The Eternal War*, *Gates of Rome*, *City of Shadows*, *The Pirate Kings*, *The Mayan Prophecy* and *The Infinity Cage*

Liam O'Connor should have died at sea in 1912; Maddy Carter should have died on a plane in 2010; Sal Vikram should have died in a fire in 2029. Yet moments before death, a stranger appeared and said, 'Take my hand'... They have been recruited to protect the world from those who would go back in time and change the past.

Ross Welford

Time Travelling with a Hamster

Al Chaudhury must try to travel back in time to 1984 to alter the event that ultimately led to his father's death. 22 years later. It's a project that requires daring and imagination. It also requires lies, theft, setting his school on fire and ignoring philosophical advice from Grandpa Byron. All without losing his pet hamster, Alan Shearer... It's a children's story, but laced with thought-provoking science and philosophy.

Vampires, Zombies, Demons and Monsters

Shane Hegarty

Darkmouth

Followed by *Worlds Explode* and *Chaos Descends*

Legends (also known as terrifying, human-eating monsters) have invaded the town of Darkmouth. The last remaining Legend Hunter - 12-year-old Finn - tries really hard, but he's not a natural fighter and good intentions are not the best weapons against a hungry Minotaur. All the right ingredients are here: monsters, myths, a little bit of horror, a little more humour and a (very) reluctant hero trying to make his father proud of him.

Charlie Higson

The Enemy

Followed by *The Dead*, *The Fear*, *The Sacrifice*, *The Fallen*, *The Hunted* and *The End*

When the sickness came, every adult fell ill. The lucky ones died. The others are reduced to slaving zombies eager to kill and eat the children left behind. A gang of children, fighting to survive, begins a quest across London, where all through the city the grown-ups lie in wait. Gruesome stuff, and not for the faint-hearted.

***Will Hill**

Department 19

Followed by *The Rising*, *Battle Lines*, *Zero Hour* and *Darkest Night*

After Jamie Carpenter's mother is kidnapped by strange creatures, he finds himself involved with Department 19, the government's most secret agency. It can help him find his mother yet even Department 19 can't stand up against something much older that has begun to stir... An extra dash of classic literature and history bring depth to this vampire series!

Garth Jennings

The Deadly 7

A missing big sister, a mad Uncle Pogo, an accident in St Paul's Cathedral that releases his 7 Deadly Sins in the form of smelly monsters...life has become uncomfortably weird for Nelson. Looking on the bright side, the monsters may be ugly and smelly but at least they're fairly harmless (Nelson's sins are not very great) and they just could help him find his sister. Definitely wacky, and not as childish as the cover suggests.

Curtis Jobling

Wereworld: Rise of the Wolf

Followed by *Rage of Lions*, *Shadow of the Hawk*, *Nest of Serpents*, *Storm of Sharks* and *War of the Werelords*

16-year-old Drew Ferran knows he has certain unusual skills, but when a vicious beast invades his home, his flesh tears, his fingers become claws, and Drew transforms... Forced to flee the family he loves, Drew seeks refuge in the wilderness as he tries to master the animal within and prove he is not the enemy.

Curtis Jobling

Max Helsing: Monster Hunter

Followed by *The Beast of Bone Creek* (Jan. 2017)

Descended from a long line of monster hunters, Max Helsing does a pretty good job of being an eighth grader by day and keeping his town safe from demons, ghouls and the occasional mummy by night. That is, until he turns thirteen and discovers he's been cursed by an ancient vampire who wants him dead - at any cost. This brand new series from a brilliant author is a terrific blend of action, humour, appealing heroes and monsters (including a hellhound puppy) who are not all as evil as they look.

Pete Johnson

The Vampire Blog

Followed by *Vampire Hunters* and *Vampire Fighters*

He was convinced that vampires didn't exist but, on his 13th birthday, Marcus learns that his parents are half-vampire and he is about to become one too. Wise-cracking Marcus writes in his secret blog about his desperate resistance to the encroaching horrors of new fangs, bad breath and cravings for blood. Surprisingly fun!

Gareth P. Jones***The Considine Curse***

When her grandmother dies, 14-year-old Mariel returns to England for the first time since she emigrated as a baby, and discovers relatives she never knew about and some very strange goings-on. The cover gives little away, so this well-plotted and witty yarn, which won the Blue Peter Book of the Year Award in 2012, may not be what you expect!

Taran Matharu***Summoner: The Novice***

Followed by *The Inquisition*

Fletcher was nothing more than a humble blacksmith's apprentice, when a chance encounter leads to the discovery that he has the ability to summon demons from another world. Chased from his village for a crime he did not commit, he must travel with his demon to the Vocans Academy, where the gifted are trained in the art of summoning. This classic fantasy novel with strong characters and sweeping backdrop is perfect escapism.

Dave Rudden***Knights of the Borrowed Dark***

Followed by *The Forever Court* (Nov. 2016)

Denizen Hardwick doesn't even believe in magic – until he finds until he's ambushed by a monster created from shadows and discovers that, beyond the world he knows, there's another where an unseen enemy awaits. Fortunately for humanity, between us and the shadows stand the Knights of the Borrowed Dark. Unfortunately for Denizen, he's one of them. This classic demon story has humour, horror, thrills and a really creepy undertone.

Darren Shan***The 'Saga of Darren Shan'***

This massively popular 12-book series, which starts with *Cirque du Freak*, is the story of one boy's terrifying journey from human to Vampire Prince. If you want more, you can read on in the more gruesome 'Demonata' series (starting with *Lord Loss*) or go right back to the beginning with the prequel series – 'The Saga of Larten Crepsley'.

Robert Swindells***Room 13***

There is no room thirteen in the creepy Crow's Nest Hotel, where Fliss and her friends are staying on a school trip. Or is there? For at the stroke of midnight, something peculiar happens to the door of the linen cupboard next to room 12.

Di Toft***Wolven***

Followed by *The Twilight Circus* and *Bad Wolf Rising*

When Nat Carver takes home a strange and smelly mutt, his life is changed forever. Woody is the last of his kind, a Wolven, thought only to exist in legend. Then Nat discovers that Woody has escaped from evil scientists who are trying to breed werewolves as weapons – and they want him back!

Chris Wooding**Silver***

When a boy is bitten by a strange silver beetle, he becomes the first victim of a mysterious infection that turns flesh into metal, and people into machines. As the virus spreads and more terrifying, blood-thirsty machines appear, a small group of children manage to barricade themselves inside their school. But the virus is spreading and its victims are evolving and becoming stronger. The world is turning silver.

Wartime Stories

Michelle Magorian

A Spoonful of Jam

The war is over but Elsie is still fighting her own battles. She's bullied because she's the only scholarship pupil at the grammar school, and she has an awkward relationship with her father as he struggles to assume a normal life after fighting in the war. But when she begins working at the local theatre, Elsie discovers she can escape...

John Boyne

The Boy at the Top of the Mountain

Like the author's other novel set in World War II, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, this is a deceptively simple book with a very young protagonist. It is the story of Pierrrot, a young French boy who, after being orphaned, goes to live with his aunt who is a servant in Adolf Hitler's mountaintop home in Austria – the Berghof or 'Eagle's Nest'. As Pierrrot is taken under Hitler's wing, we watch with mounting unease his struggle between unquestioning devotion to Hitler and loyalty to his old friends and family.

Paul Dowswell

Bomber

Harry Friedman is the gunner on an American Flying Fortress stationed in East Anglia. World War II is raging and every air crew faces terrible odds on bombing missions. To stay alive, Harry will need luck on his side and courage. This is just the most recent of the author's brilliant wartime novels, which include *Eleven Eleven* and *Auslander*.

Morris Gleitzman

Once

Followed by *Then, Now, After* and *Soon*

It is 1942 and 9-year old Felix escapes from his orphanage in Poland in a desperate attempt to find his Jewish parents who, he believes, are still alive and in danger. The book brilliantly captures the thinking of a small boy in a frightening world.

James Holland

Duty Calls: Dunkirk

Also *Duty Calls: Battle of Britain*

Friday 24th May, 1940: Private Johnny Hawke, aged sixteen, awakens to artillery fire and Messerschmitt fighters roaring towards his regiment. What chance is there that he, and his fellow soldiers, can stop the German advance? This realistic portrayal of the events of Dunkirk is the first children's book by a well-known and respected historian.

Anne Holm

I am David

David escapes from a concentration camp and flees across Europe. He is utterly alone - whom can he trust? What will await him back home? And all the while he knows that *they* may catch up with him.

Shirley Hughes

Hero on a Bicycle

Paolo and Constanza are living in Italy during the WWII occupation by the Germans, and they long to do something for the fight to keep Italy free. Despite the fact that they are just children and their only asset is one ancient bicycle, their spirits are indomitable! This is a first novel from the internationally revered writer and illustrator Shirley Hughes.

Lois Lowry

Number the Stars

This American classic is set in 1943 in Copenhagen, where life is complicated for Annemarie. There are food shortages, curfews, and soldiers on every corner. It is much worse for her Jewish best friend, Ellen, however, whose life is in danger, so Annemarie must summon all her courage to help stage a daring escape.

Michelle Magorian

Goodnight Mister Tom

Willie is evacuated to the country at the start of World War Two. A sad, deprived child, he begins to flourish under the care of old Tom Oakley, but his happiness is shattered by a summons from his mother back in London. This touching children's classic deserves to be read by all.

Michael Morpurgo***Eagle in the Snow***

Drawing on the true story of Private Henry Tandey, VC, the author interweaves fiction and history in the way he does so well. In the middle of World War II a young boy and his mother are on a train when they come under attack from German aircraft. As the train waits in a tunnel for the attack to pass, a strange man tells a story about a young soldier in the First World War – a soldier who had the opportunity to kill Hitler but saved him with compassion...

Michael Morpurgo***Private Peaceful***

This brilliant book, which won the Red House Children's Book Award 2004, tells the poignant and moving story of a young soldier, Private Thomas Peaceful, as it charts the last eight hours of a young life, blending the innocence of a rural childhood with the horror of a World War I battlefield.

William Osborne***Hitler's Angel***

Otto and Leni have escaped to England from Nazi Germany, but now the British want them to go back on a secret operation codenamed Wolfsangel. Their mission is to kidnap a girl whose identity is such that if they succeed, it could change the course of the war. Packed with enthralling historical details, this is a riveting read.

Robert Rigby***The Eagle Trail***

Followed by *Codename Eagle*

In German-occupied Antwerp during World War II life is continuing almost as usual for Paul Hansen - until his father is shot and Paul learns that his parents had been resistance fighters. Now Paul is in danger, and must travel across Europe by himself to reach England and safety. This excellent historical novel is tense and compelling.

James Riordan***When the Guns Fall Silent***

The author was one of our most powerful writers of war stories, and this book has been re-published to mark the centenary of the start of WWI. Based on the now well-known story of the Christmas Day football game, it is an outspoken and moving book.

Ian Serraillier***The Silver Sword***

Alone in a Poland devastated by World War Two, Jan and his three friends cling to the silver sword as a symbol of hope as they search for their parents. This moving account of an epic journey gives a remarkable insight into the reality of life in war-torn Europe.

Sandi Toksvig***Hitler's Canary***

April 1940. German troops are pouring into Denmark, and the Danes decide to take action, Bamse and his family take part in one of history's most dramatic rescues: smuggling Denmark's Jewish population across the water to Sweden, and safety.

Markus Zusak**The Book Thief***

In Nazi Germany in 1939 Death has never been busier. Liesel, a nine-year-old girl, is living with a foster family, as her parents have been taken away to a concentration camp. Death narrates her story, and that of the other ordinary Germans around her, with a slightly confused, bemused air over the antics of humanity.

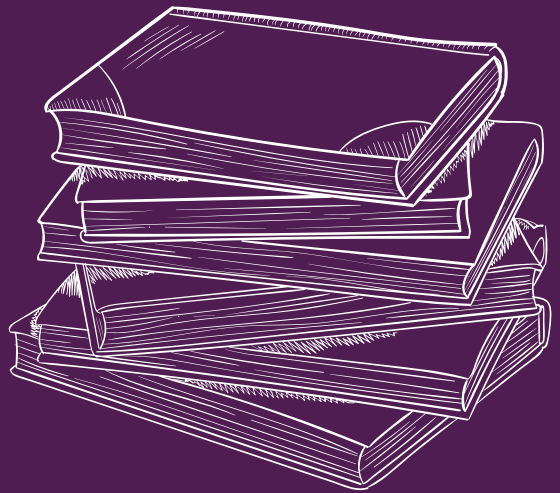
Sam Angus***School for Skylarks***

When Lyla is evacuated from her home in London to her great-aunt's enormous house in the West Country, she expects to be lonely. But with the house being used to accommodate an entire school of evacuated schoolgirls, there's no time to think about her old life. Soon there is a horse in a first-floor bedroom and a ferret in Lyla's sock drawer, hordes of schoolgirls have overrun the house, and Lyla finds out that friends come in all shapes and sizes.

Acknowledgements

Thanks must be paid to Katy Fletcher, Librarian, for a large number of these reviews – books, all of which, she has read! Thanks also to Waterstones (www.waterstones.com), Love Reading 4 Kids (www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk) for their many recommendations, as well as the many various publishers, whose synopses I have borrowed and shortened in the creation of this booklet.

We hope you enjoy it!





Sandroyd

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