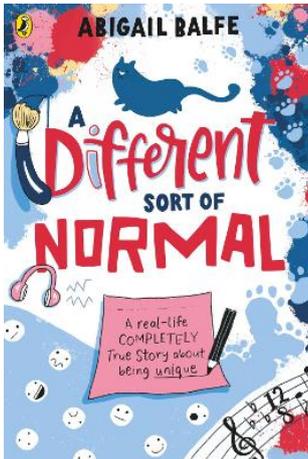


## A selection of books especially selected for children in Year 5 (9 - 10 year olds) of average reading ability for the 2021/22 academic year.

If your child is a competent reader or has read all these titles then try the books from the Year 6 list. Alternatively if these books are a little challenging try books from the Year 4 list. Our overall mission is to promote reading for pleasure with quality texts that are perfectly pitched for the age group and the curriculum. We have particularly avoided blockbusters, classic or set texts, known to everyone, so that we can include poetry, stunning information texts and inspirational books in which all children and young people can find themselves reflected.



### A Different Sort of Normal

**Author:** Abigail Balfe **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 22/07/2021  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

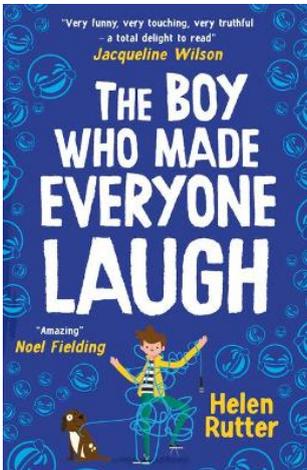
Abigail Balfe is autistic and has written this honest, amusing and very useful book about some of the things she was aware of as she was growing up. Balfe knew she was different all the way through her childhood and youth – and this book is full of observations on how she navigated her younger years. It was not until she was an adult that her diagnosis of autism was delivered – which suddenly explained a great deal of confusing issues from her youth. The book is full of all the milestones of a young life from changing schools to puberty to friendships to children’s birthday parties – and how someone who feels different coped with all those stages. Written with an honesty and openness that is refreshing – and full of quirky illustrations by the author – this is an information book one can sit and read like a novel, as well as using it to dip into for information on all sorts of topics to do with neurodiversity. It is packed full of useful descriptions and definitions, has a thorough glossary which doubles as an index in a very practical way whilst also signposting websites and information sources for further investigation. A book for everyone to read (adults too), not just for people with neurodiversity issues – this book is a great explainer, full of empathy for different situations, which explodes many misconceptions about autistic people along the way! I wish I had had this available many years ago when teaching an autistic child on a one-to-one basis.



## Twitch

**Author:** M.G. Leonard **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/06/2021  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

Can a birdwatcher outwit an escaped convict? Twitch has three pet chickens, four pigeons, swallows nesting in his bedroom and a passion for birdwatching. On the first day of the summer holidays, he arrives at his secret hide to find police everywhere: a convicted robber has broken out of prison and is hiding in Aves Wood. Can Twitch use his talents for birdwatching to hunt for the dangerous prisoner and find the missing loot?

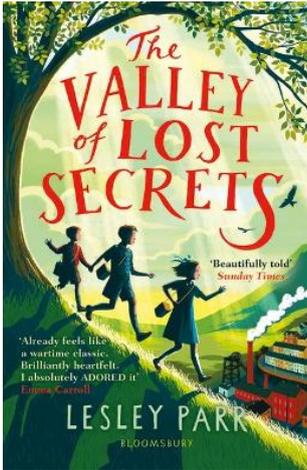


## The Boy Who Made Everyone Laugh

**Author:** Helen Rutter **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/02/2021  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

**A Julia Eccleshare Pick of the Month February 2021 | Selected for The Book Box by LoveReading4Kids | February 2021 Debut of the Month** Both touching and funny this is a brilliant story about being brave, being different and learning that being you is what really matters. Billy likes nothing more than making and performing jokes and dreams that one day he will be a famous stand-up comedian. But Billy has a stammer and it can be hard for him even to get a joke out quickly enough. Just now, Billy has a problem which will strike a chord with many: he is about to start secondary school and knows that it will be all too easy for him to become a target for bullies. Especially because of his stammer. Billy thinks of all kinds of schemes to avoiding speaking while also knowing that staying silent goes right against who he really is. How can Billy show his tremendous inner strength and especially his great sense of humour if he never dares to speak? Luckily Billy makes some good friends, meets a great teacher and, drawing on the support of his family and the work of his speech and language therapist, manages not only to survive but also to succeed! Find more books with Positive Images of Disability.

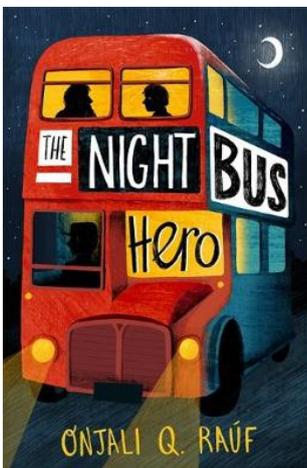
---



## The Valley of Lost Secrets

**Author:** Lesley Parr **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/01/2021  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

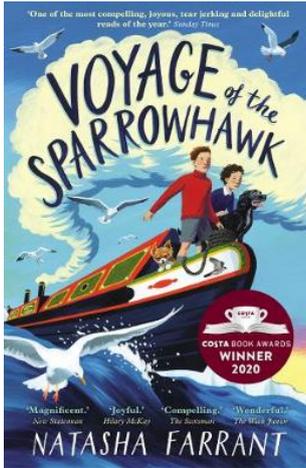
**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 7-10 | January 2021 Debut of the Month** Lesley Parr's story of evacuees is rich in atmosphere and a sense of place, and uses its wartime setting to explore themes of community, understanding and self-forgiveness. Along with other children at their school, Jimmy and his little brother Ronnie have been sent hundreds of miles away from London to the safety of a small mining town in South Wales, and it couldn't be further from what they know. Jimmy is determined they won't stay long, and that the place won't change him, even as it's transforming his classmates: Florence Campbell for example, who is free to become someone else, far away from her abusive family. The village has its secrets though, and the discovery of a set of bones in a tree leads Jimmy to solve a decades old mystery and, in the process, to help those living with loss and guilt. The place and its people are carefully and skilfully evoked, with the adults, particularly Jimmy and Ronnie's new 'family' of Aunty Gwen and Uncle Alun the miner, likely to be as fascinating to readers as the younger protagonists. The mystery will certainly keep readers gripped but it's the characters and the place that will stay with them. Evacuees are a rich source for children's adventure stories, examples include Michelle Magorian's classic Goodnight Mister Tom, and Jacqueline Wilson's more recent Wave Me Goodbye.



## The Night Bus Hero

**Author:** Onjali Q. Rauf **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 15/10/2020  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

I don't think Rauf has put a foot wrong so far with her novels to date – and this is no exception. Told from the interesting perspective of the bully in school, Hector gains our sympathy quite unexpectedly – we can see how and why he gets the blame, often deservedly, but also when it's not really his fault. But when a prank on a homeless person gets out of hand this leads to Hector being befriended – somewhat reluctantly at first, by Mei-Li – who introduces Hector to the shelter she helps in and thus to an understanding of some of the pressures and causes of homelessness. An important social message for all – but this book is also a who-done-it trying to solve mysterious, slightly odd crimes whilst the graffiti left at the scenes of these crimes seem to indicate that homeless people are involved in some way. Can Hector and Mei-Li get to the bottom of these crimes? Can Hector's new understanding help him be less of a bully? Could Hector turn out to be a bit of a hero? Written with great empathy, this book has themes of friendship and kindness whilst celebrating the fact people can change – and often for the better. Another success for Onali J Rauf.

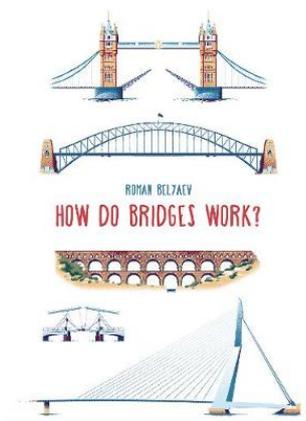


## Voyage of the Sparrowhawk

**Author:** Natasha Farrant **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/09/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3

**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Award 2022 ages 7-10 | Winner of the Costa Children's Book Award 2020 | September 2020 Book of the Month**

I challenge any reader, young or old, not to want to devour this book in one delicious sitting. Once started upon the story of Lotti and Ben, two orphans living in the aftermath of World War 1 and who could not be more different in temperament or background, it is impossible to put down. Initially and understandably wary, they gradually become each other's best friend and staunch allies in their respective quests for family and a safe haven for an increasing number of dogs. Their odyssey takes them, in the faithful old narrowboat which has been Ben's home, across the stormy channel to France, with a vengeful, deceitful uncle and a steadfast policeman hot on their heels. But there is nothing far fetched in their survival, they do need and even eventually welcome the support of friendly adults on both sides of the channel and they learn to work together and to counteract each other's failings. They never lose hope in even the darkest moments and neither does the reader, despite some heart-stopping tension. These are characters who will dwell long in your memory and indeed leave you wanting to know more, including about some of the fascinating minor characters. The authentic period detail and dialogue captures the spirit of an age where children may seem, to a modern audience, to have a thrilling level of agency and independence, but only because they are largely ignored or neglected rather than protected by society. A standalone, middle grade adventure that is as well written as this, is pure gold dust with which to captivate young readers and a perfect class read. But be warned, they may not want to go home!



## How Do Bridges Work?

**Author:** Roman Belyaev **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 01/09/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

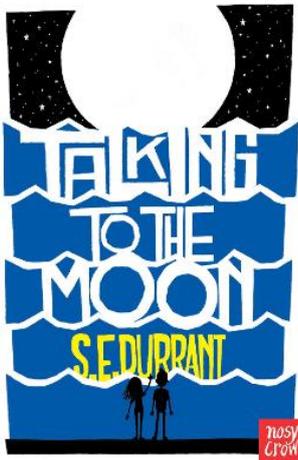
**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2022 Information Books 3-14** From architecture to engineering (and other STEM subjects!), scale new heights on an enchanting journey with the school children in this book to discover answers to these questions along with other fascinating facts about bridges and how they work.



## When Secrets Set Sail

**Author:** Sita Brahmachari **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 20/08/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 3

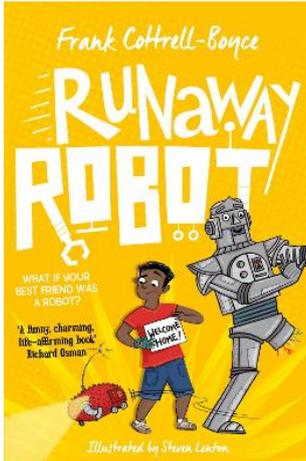
Set in a perfectly realised East London, the story begins as newly adopted Imtiaz arrives in Usha's home. Initially misunderstandings abound between the two girls. Sadly, Usha's beloved gran, Kali Ma has recently passed away. But when first Kali Ma and then other ghosts appear and task the girls to right a past wrong and reveal the hidden secrets of their house, which is also a refugee community centre and under imminent threat of closure, they and their new Roma friend Cosmo must work together. There is rich historical detail in this complex but very rewarding and thought-provoking story crafted in delicate and thoughtful prose. We learn about the fate of Indian Ayahs travelling to care for children of the British Raj on the long voyages back to the UK and then being abandoned here and also about the first female Asian GP's and the struggles of the Windrush generation. In an interview the author reveals that there has been a recent campaign for a Blue Plaque to commemorate the real-life House of the Ayahs. This is a skilfully woven narrative with a shameful look at just some of the racist colonial attitudes of Britain both past and present and real tension and adventure as the children race to unravel the mystery and save the refuge and a beloved family home.



## Talking to the Moon

**Author:** S. E. Durrant **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 05/03/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

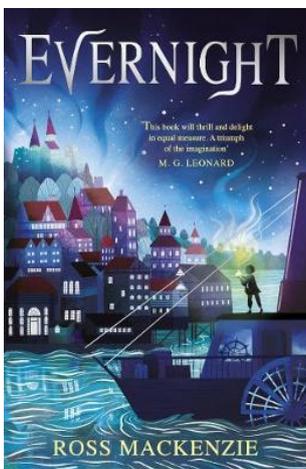
**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | March 2020 Book of the Month** Iris takes refuge with her grandma, Mimi, to escape the chaos at home, caused by her two-year old twin siblings and her dad's DIY repairs. There's a different kind of disorder in Mimi's house which is chock full of items collected over the years, chiefly boxes of photos she's taken and developed. Among the photographs of other people's weddings are family portraits and its one of these that sets Iris on a hunt to unravel an old mystery, even as Mimi's memories are fading. The story is beautifully told, as much about Iris and her search for order and happiness as it is about Mimi and her struggle with dementia. A poignant, thoughtful examination of family relationships, memory and loss, that ends on a note of hope and renewal.



## Runaway Robot

**Author:** Frank Cottrell Boyce **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/02/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

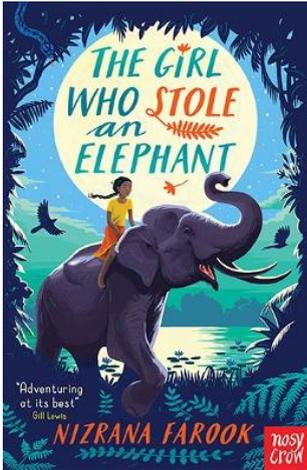
**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2020** No matter how exciting, zany and surprising the action, you can always be sure that Frank Cottrell-Boyce will build his stories on real human emotions, and that's as true of this brilliantly funny, original and touching novel as of any of its predecessors. Alfie 'swerves' both school and the Limb Lab, where he should be going to learn how to control his state-of-the-art new hand, by hanging out at the airport. But everything changes when, through various happy accidents, he finds an enormous robot called Eric in Lost Property. Eric holds the Allen key to the book's mysteries, both a generations-old legend, and the secrets that Archie is keeping from the reader and himself. Beautifully told and full of characters readers will love, this book will have you laughing out loud one minute, in tears the next. Robot Eric, unfailingly polite, kind and helpful and trying to explain himself through misremembered jokes is an iron man for our time. Unmissable. Once readers have finished this, point them in the direction of Frank Cottrell-Boyce's other books including The Astounding Broccoli Boy and books by Ross Welford. Peter Brown's story The Wild Robot is another great automaton adventure.



## Evernight

**Author:** Ross MacKenzie **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 06/02/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3

Larabelle Fox is an orphan, a tosher who searches the sewers for any 'treasure' she can find, in the sewer system under Kings Haven. She is ranged against rival toshing gangs who want to rob her, as well as the powerful King's Witch who wants to revive the Evernight in a bid to gain total power for herself. Unbeknownst to Lara she has found exactly what the King's Witch and her awesomely scary djinn Shadow Jack are looking for - a box, long lost in the sewers. Can Lara discover what she can do with the box and its contents before the world succumbs to the evil of the Evernight? This is a wild magical delight of a story. The bad guys are wickedly bad and seemingly undefeatable, whilst Lara and her friend Joe Littlefoot seem small and powerless. But they have quick wits and goodness on their side, as well as the witches, though it will mainly be down to Lara that a defence is put up to the Evernight. This is the sort of book that will create a buzz of enjoyment, the fantasy world is well built, believable, cinematic and child friendly. The magic is fun, the friendship believable, the story is refreshing, and the feisty heroine is a delight to follow. I shall look forward to more books in this series.

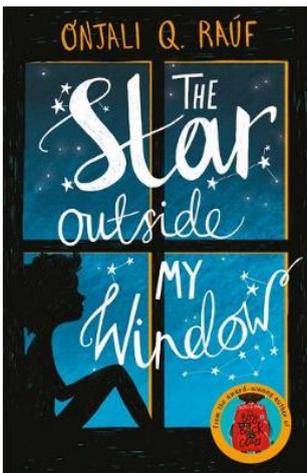


## The Girl Who Stole an Elephant

**Author:** Nizrana Farook **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 09/01/2020 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

**Shortlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021 | January 2020**

**Debut of the Month** Nizrana Farook sets her story on the island of Serendib, now known as Sri Lanka, and transports readers to a vivid, larger-than-life world where young people can be bold, true and have some extraordinary adventures. Twelve-year old Chaya is a thief with a heart of gold, stealing from the king's palace to help those in her village. She makes a mistake when she takes jewels from the queen's bedroom though, triggering a series of events that leads to Chaya and two friends, villager Neel and merchant's daughter Nour, fleeing into the rainforest on the king's elephant. There are brushes with death, but great camaraderie too and it all ends with a much-needed righting of wrongs. Great stuff! Readers swept up in Chaya's story - and who couldn't be? - will also enjoy Costa Book Award winner *Asha and the Spirit Bird* by Jasbinder Bilan.

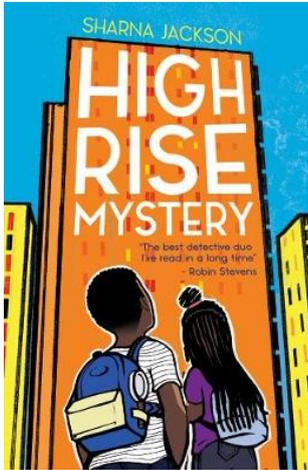


## The Star Outside my Window

**Author:** Onjali Q. Rauf **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 03/10/2019 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2021** The children are once again front and centre of this author's second book. But like multi-award winning *The Boy at The Back of the Class*, the foundations of the story are very dark indeed. In this case domestic violence and the murder of Aniyah and Noah's beloved mother. But this is not a grim YA novel. It is a book from the perspective of ten-year-old Aniyah and written for children of the same age so you can be reassured that there is nothing gratuitous or explicit. Aniyah and Noah are in foster care with the remarkable Mrs Iwuchukwu, alongside the grumpy, manipulative teenage Sophie and Travis and Ben who are the same age as her. Aniya has always been fascinated by astrology and she believes that when special people die, they become shining stars in the heavens. When a new star is spotted and behaves in an unexpected way, she believes that this is her Mum and she makes it her mission to ensure that the public competition to name this amazing new star will recognise that truth. Even though Ben and Travis know what really happened to her Mum they are wonderful steadfast friends and they vow to help the mission and not let the awful Sophie ruin the plans. So the madcap adventure begins and every reader will be rooting for the children through one disaster and crisis after another. The children are beautifully depicted, and their relationship and their dialogue is natural and funny. The reader gets gradual hints from flashbacks of what really happened as realisation dawns on Aniya and the reader becomes all too aware of the emotional cost of living in a home soured by domestic violence. But this happens within a safe context. Aniya and Noah have found a haven and a future. Once again this author has given us a

warm, funny and poignant read, with a thought provoking serious side, which is perfectly judged and accessible for its audience.

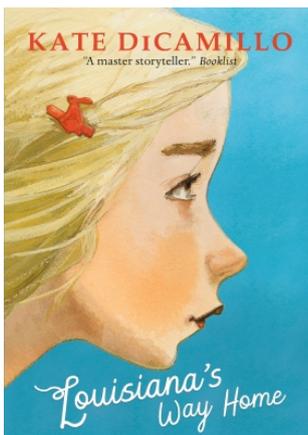


## High-Rise Mystery

**Author:** Sharna Jackson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 04/04/2019 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

**Winner of the Younger Readers' category of the Waterstones Children's Book Prize 2020 | Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2020 | Longlisted for the Branford Boase Award 2020**

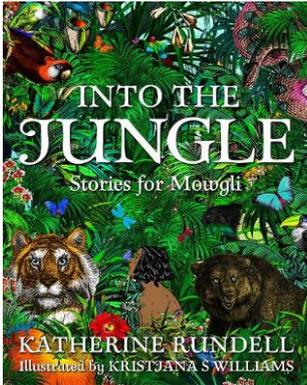
Sisters Nik and Norva would agree that they are slightly obsessed with murder mystery series on the television so, when a body is discovered in their block of flats, they are sure they are the right people to discover the truth. Balancing jokey dialogue and insights into the reality of city life, Sharna Jackson has written a very likeable, fast-paced book. Books in the High-Rise Mystery Series: 1. High-Rise Mystery 2. Mic Drop



## Louisiana's Way Home

**Author:** Kate DiCamillo **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 04/10/2018 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3

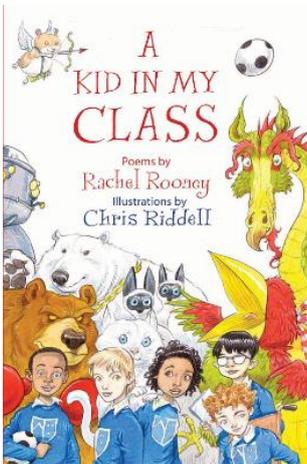
Readers first met Louisiana Elefante in Kate DiCamillo's unforgettable Raymie Nightingale, now she has her own story, and what a tale it is. Louisiana has always believed that her parents were high wire stars, killed in an accident when she was very young, but driven by terrible toothache and an urge to come to terms with her own past, her granny suddenly reveals that everything Louisiana knows about her life is a lie. Abandoned in a motel miles from her old home in Florida, Louisiana is left to decide who she wants to be. She is befriended by a boy called Burke Allen and his family including his seventeen cake baking mother, and the kindness of strangers helps her to new happiness and security. A story of grief and confusion becomes one of love, hope and resilience. DiCamillo writes with extraordinary sensitivity and perception, and readers of all ages will be touched and moved by Louisiana's story. Readers who enjoy this book should also read The Road to Ever After by Moira Young.



## Into the Jungle

**Author:** Katherine Rundell **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 20/09/2018 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

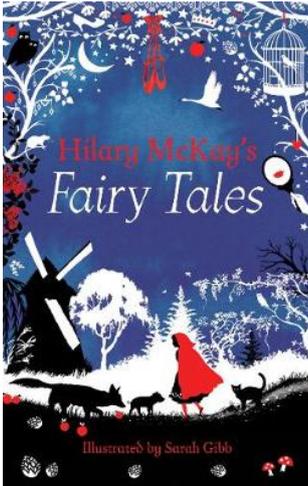
Award-winner Katherine Rundell has already taken readers on thrilling journeys over rooftops, across the Russian steppes and of course deep into the forest. She understands absolutely children's longing for wild adventure and no-one is better suited to write new stories for Kipling's Jungle Book characters. This very handsome book, which features beautiful colour illustrations by Kristjana S Williams, tells five different stories, and with each perfectly-imagined episode adds to what we love about Kipling's unforgettable characters, including Bagheera, Baloo, Shere Khan and Kaa. It opens too with a story about one of the most interesting characters, Mowgli's fierce wolf-mother Raksha, who has long deserved more time in the spotlight. These are stories of bravery and cunning, full of excitement and danger, but most of all they are stories of loyalty and community, and by the time they reach the end, readers will be daydreaming themselves into the jungle family. Mowgli links all the stories, and has his own of course, and is exactly the same impetuous, selfish, boasting but warm-hearted, generous boy drawn so vividly by Kipling. In fact the book does exactly what sequels should but seldom manage - it tells us new stories that grow out of the originals, and enhance and enrich them.



## A Kid in My Class

**Author:** Rachel Rooney **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 02/08/2018 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

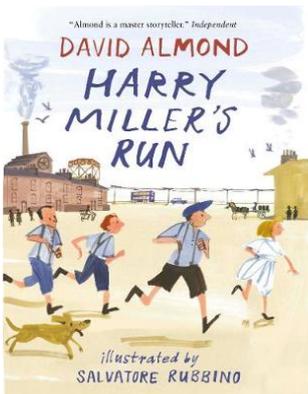
**Longlisted for the UKLA Book Awards 2020** Rachel Rooney brings a class to life with poems for all the different characters. There is a rich vein of understanding of children here: never sentimental, always intriguing. Children will delight in the ways in which the styles and patterns of the poems enhance the exploration of each child. The wonderful illustrations draw readers into this magical anthology.



## Hilary McKay's Fairy Tales

**Author:** Hilary McKay **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 05/10/2017  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

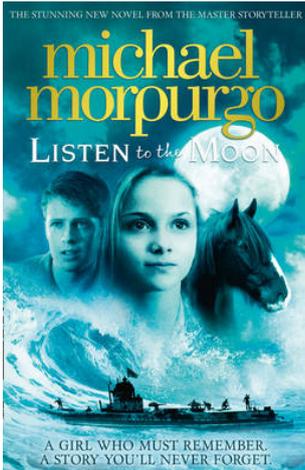
This is an absolutely stunning book. Not only is it an absolute treat visually but it's also a feast for the imagination for lovers of fairy tales and the ever elusive happy ever after. Hilary has brought her own unique touch to well known and loved fairy-tales. Fairy-tales that we know so well and yet with her refreshing, imaginative touch have been made new for us. The ten retellings including Rapunzel, Cinderella, Red Riding Hood, The Princess and the Pea, Rumpelstiltskin, The Pied Piper of Hamelin, The Swan Brothers, Hansel and Gretel, amongst others. This is a selection that lovers of fairy tales, old and young, will love to read again and again. Combined with beautiful illustrations by Sarah Gibb, this will be a collection to treasure. ~ Shelley Fallows - You can also find Shelley here.



## Harry Miller's Run

**Author:** David Almond **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/09/2016  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

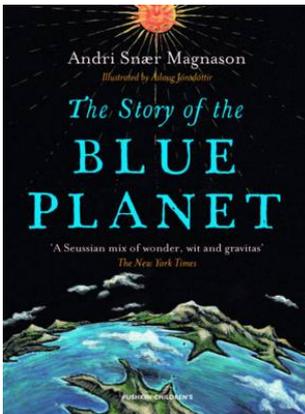
**Longlisted for the UKLA 2017 Book Award** Award-winning David Almond tells a lively story which captures the exuberance of a trio of lads and one girl who set off one hot summer morning to run from their homes in Newcastle to South Shields. There's no training, no special kit, no crowds – just the gang enjoying the freedom to run and the kindness of many who keep them fed and watered along the way. And it is a distance of thirteen miles so exactly half a marathon. Old Harry, now walking with a frame and on his way to a care home, tells young Liam, a boy in the present who has just got a place in the junior Great North Run, all about the trip and the magic of it. In doing so he shows a slice of a different kind of childhood set in David Almond's home ground of Newcastle and the surrounding area. In this beautifully produced new edition, Salvatore Rubbino's illustrations also capture the period and the sense of place brilliantly. ~ Julia Eccleshare



## Listen to the Moon

**Author:** Michael Morpurgo **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 27/08/2015 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3

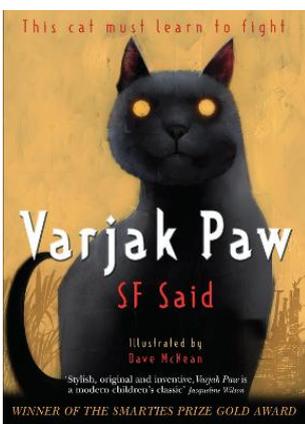
**Shortlisted for Children's Book Award 2016, Books for Older Readers category Shortlisted for the Costa Children's Book Award 2014 The Costa Judges described Morpurgo's novel, which begins in May 1915, as "a captivating, utterly transporting war novel that lives on powerfully in the memory".** A beautiful and captivating tour de force of family, love, war and forgiveness, this is a major new novel from the author of War Horse and Private Peaceful, Michael Morpurgo and is set in World War One on the Isles of Scilly. A tale in which things that were lost may still wash up, once again, on the shore. As ever with Michael it is always a story of family and stories.



## The Story of the Blue Planet

**Author:** Andri Snaer Magnason **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 07/05/2015 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

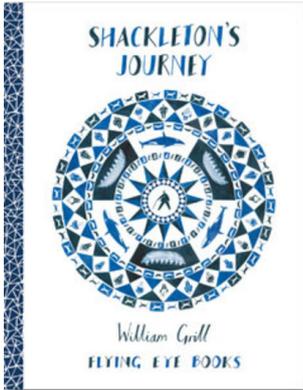
**Winner of the UKLA Book Awards 7-11 category 2014** A whimsical fairy tale that will appeal to fans of Maurice Sendak, Dr Seuss and Hans Christian Andersen, The Story of the Blue Planet is a critically acclaimed global hit being published in the UK for the first time. It's the story of two children who live on a planet inhabited only by children who never grow old but in other ways it's a world not unlike our own. There's a powerful underlying message about caring for our environment whilst at the same time telling a wonderfully entertaining story that is combined with bright, magical illustrations.



## Varjak Paw

**Author:** S. F. Said **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 13/03/2014 **Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

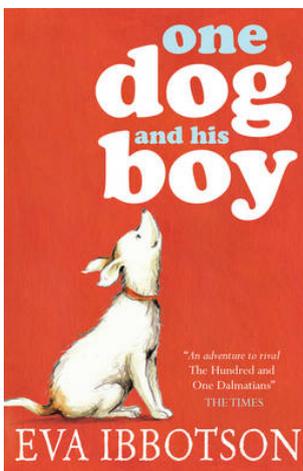
Beguiling and mysterious, thought provoking and as wise as the feline hero, this is becoming a modern classic.



## Shackleton's Journey

**Author:** William Grill **Format:** Hardback **Release Date:** 02/01/2014  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

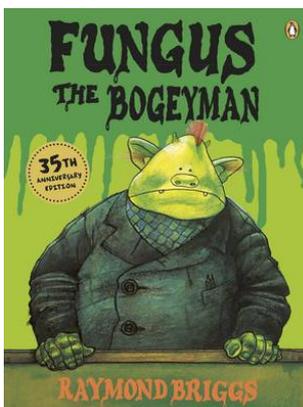
**Winner of the Kate Greenaway Medal 2015** Greenaway Medal winning debut from William Grill whose images range from tiny vignettes to sweeping frozen vistas which, together with an absorbing narrative, tells the powerful story of the ill fated voyage.



## One Dog and His Boy

**Author:** Eva Ibbotson **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 01/03/2012  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

**Shortlisted for the Galaxy Children's Book of the Year Award 2011.** Award winning Eva Ibbotson's poignant and beautiful last book celebrates a boy's passion for a dog. All Hal has ever wanted is a dog but his parents refuse to contemplate the idea. A dog would mess up their beautiful house and disturb their busy routine. When they discover East Pets, they hire Hal a dog for a weekend thinking that will do the trick. But they don't know Hal! Hal takes matters into his own hands. Soon Hal and all the dogs he has released from Easy Pets are out on the road - with a price on their head. How Hal makes his escape is both thrilling and moving as it marks his growth from sadness to great happiness. \*\*\*Eva's son, Toby Ibbotson, is now continuing the tradition of storytelling with his debut novel Mountwood School for Ghosts which is based on an original idea by Eva Ibbotson.



## Fungus The Bogeyman

**Author:** Raymond Briggs **Format:** Paperback **Release Date:** 29/03/1990  
**Year Groups:** Key Stage 2

This is a book that is enduringly funny, wonderfully poignant and at times quite rude. Beautifully described through stunning illustrations and hand written text is the story of the bogey men - and in particular Fungus - who live underground and whose day starts as we all go to bed, is a story that will live long in the memory of all those who read it, or indeed dip into from time to time. Living long in my memory is the food eaten by them - Scab and matter Custard, Snot and Bogey Pie, Dead Dog's Giblets, Green Cat's Eyes - how can one ever forget names like this!!!