



Reading with your child in Year 1



The National Curriculum

Year 1

Children need to develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, an increased vocabulary and an improved level of understanding. They will do this by listening to, and discussing, a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction texts at a level beyond that which they can read independently.

By frequently listening to stories, poems and information texts that they cannot yet read for themselves, children begin to understand how written language can be structured in order, for example, to build surprise in narratives or to present facts in a non-fiction piece.

By reading together, children can also be shown some of the processes for finding out information within a book, e.g. modelling the use of a contents page or index.

Simple Tips for Whilst You Read

- Initially, reading with your child is about reading to them. Model clear reading with fluency and expression. Model how to read unknown words.
- Discuss the meaning of words. Use a dictionary together to get your child used to exploring words for themselves.
- Discuss alternative words. For example, 'Which word could the author have used that's a bit more exciting than big?'
- What is happening? Talk about what is happening in the pictures before you read the text. What can you see?
- Read a range of different texts - recipe books, nursery rhymes, instruction manuals, leaflets for places you wish to visit, traditional tales.
- Show your child how to find information in a book rather than quickly finding it for them.
- Encourage your child to use expression when reading, especially for the voices of different characters.

Questions To Ask Your Child

Year 1 children are expected to:	To support this, you could say:
identify words which appear again and again in a text	Can you put your finger on the word 'the'?
recognise and join in with predictable phrases	Come on, say it with me... I bet you can't remember the next bit.
relate reading to their own experiences	Wow, look at that castle. Do you remember when we went to...?
re-read a word or sentence if reading does not make sense	Does... make sense? It didn't sound quite right. Let's try again.
become very familiar with key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, retelling the main events of a story with considerable accuracy	What happened in that story again? Silly me, I've forgotten. What happened after that?
discuss the significance of a title and events	So, why do you think it's called Jack and the Beanstalk?
make predictions on the basis of what has been read	So if....., what might happen next?
make inferences on the basis of what is being said and done	Look at that picture – how do you think... is feeling? What makes you say that? Look at the words the author has used to describe...; what sort of place do you think it will be?
read aloud with pace and expression, e.g. pausing at a full stop; raising their voice for a question	What kind of voice can we read that in? What do you need to do when you reach a full stop?
recognise capital letters, full stops, question marks, exclamation marks and elipses (...) within texts	I bet you can't find three capitals letters on this page before I can.
know why the writer has used the above punctuation in a text	What is that? (Point to a piece of punctuation.) What does that do?

know the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts	Is this a story or is it an information text? How do you know?
learn rhymes and poems off by heart	I'd love it if you could sing Humpty Dumpty whilst I put my shoes on.
be encouraged to say whether or not they like the text, giving reasons why	Did you enjoy that story? What was your favourite part?

Ninja Vocabulary Bookmark

Encourage your child to bank any amazing vocabulary or challenging words they do not know on their ninja bookmark.

Vocabulary Ninja
Build a word bank during a visit to
the library



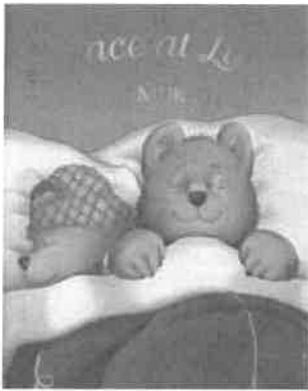
Write any amazing words that wow you from your reading book. You might need to discover their meaning... You might mappie them for your writing!



Suggested
books to
share with
your child...

Pie Corbett's Reading Spine

The picture books in Year 1 offer deeper exploration of emotions and wonder. They are mainly rooted in the everyday crises of life. Again, most of these books lend themselves to setting up a variety of play situations – using toys, costumes and puppets – but the children also need to be involved in careful reading of the books, paying close attention to the detail and entering imagined worlds to experience the stories deeply – then talking it all through.



Peace at Last

Jill Murphy (Macmillan)

Ask the children: *What is peace?* Make a list of peaceful times (*I am peaceful when...*). You might need to explain 'snore' before reading the book! Ask: *Why can Mr Bear not sleep?* Make a list of all the noises he can hear. Turn this into a list poem and add other ideas. For example: *At night, I hear the cats fighting outside. I can hear the buses driving by. I hear the kitchen tap dripping.*



Can't You Sleep Little Bear?

READ & RESPOND

Martin Waddell (Walker Books)

Follow both bears and talk about what they feel or are thinking. Ask: *Is Little Bear really trying to go to sleep? How does Big Bear comfort Little Bear?* Re-read this book many times, as it is about comfort and feeling safe. (See the *Read & Respond* title for further ideas.)

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

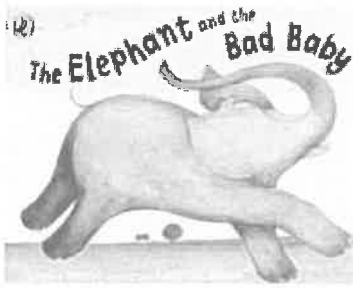


STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE SENDAK

Where the Wild Things Are

Maurice Sendak (HarperCollins)

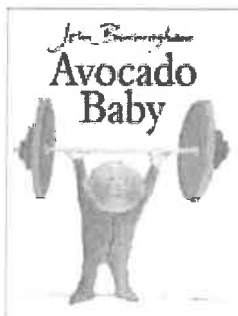
Look at the cover. Ask: *What might happen? Who is creating mischief? What really happened in Max's room that night?* Create a 'Wild Things' dance – 'be still' and then 'let the wild rumpus begin'. Make masks for the dance and music to accompany the movement. Create large monster paintings. Ask: *What are the monsters and why does Max send them to bed? What do you think his parents are like?*



The Elephant and the Bad Baby

Elfrida Vipont and Raymond Briggs (Puffin)

This wonderful cumulative tale has been around for almost 50 years. Enjoy the story with everyone joining in. Ask: *Is the baby really a 'bad' baby?* Draw long maps so that the children can see the story pattern. Act the story out for an assembly. Retell the tale, visiting different places (perhaps local to you) and with different characters. Ask: *What other book has a similar ending where they all go home for tea? (Mr Gumpy).*



Avocado Baby

John Burningham (Bloomsbury)

Of course, start with a discussion about babies – and bring in an avocado for tasting (marvel at the huge seed and plant it). Enjoy the ridiculous humour (the Popeye theme) and talk about being strong and weak. Ask: *What do you think the baby will do next?* Watch the bullies get their come-uppance! Create new stories based on the same idea featuring babies that will only eat one food and gain a superpower, such as a 'Banana Baby' that can fly!

The Tiger Who
Come to Tea



The Tiger Who Came to Tea

Judith Kerr (HarperCollins)

Role-play the scene where Daddy returns and they tell him the story of what happened when the tiger came to tea. Ask: *What can you spot in the scene in which the family is walking to the café?* (A cat appears that looks like the tiger.) Apparently, the tiger never came again – but retell the story of when a different animal came to tea! Create a collage of an enormous tiger.



Lost and Found

Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins)

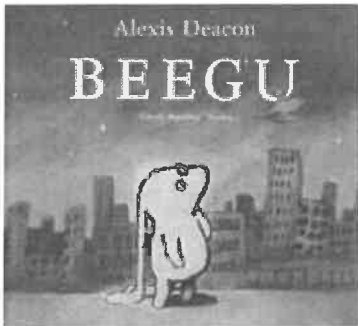
Tell the children some things about penguins... and about a 'lost and found office'. Then, read and enjoy this strange tale. Ask: *What interests you in the tale? Why does the penguin follow the boy?* Role play the scene in which they go to the office. Ask: *What is 'disappointment'?* Tell stories to the penguin – make a boat in the class and provide a cuddly penguin to tell stories to and 'talk about wonderful things'. Ask: *Why is the penguin sad when they reach the South Pole? What was the 'big mistake'?*



Knuffle Bunny

Mo Willems (Hyperion Books)

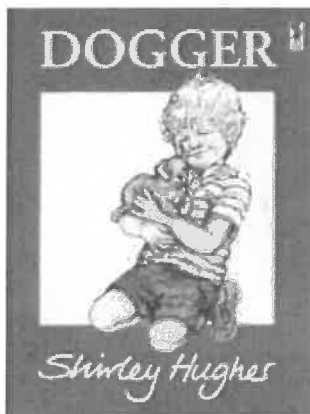
Yet another story about loss, but this time it is the loss of a cuddly bunny and not a mother (*Dogger* has a similar plot). The key to the story involves knowing what an 'errand' and a 'Laundromat' might be! The inside title page provides some interesting background detail worth discussing. Discuss the moment of realisation. Ask: *Why doesn't Dad understand and what advice would you give him? Why is it that Mum understands immediately?* Practise going 'boneless' and showing Trixie's emotions with just your faces! Collect baby, family or made-up class words. Ask: *How do you think the images were created?* (Ink sketches and digital photography.) Try the same technique!



Beegu

Alexis Deacon (Random House)

Read slowly and give time for children's spontaneous comments. Re-read and track the ups and downs of what happens and what Beegu feels and might be thinking. Role play conversations between the characters that Beegu meets and a new character, explaining what happened. Role play conversations between Beegu's parents. Write letters from Beegu to the children and from the children to Beegu. Ask: *What would Beegu want to know or be interested in?* Create small worlds or larger areas into which a Beegu/ET character arrives and tries to make friends.



Dogger

Shirley Hughes (Random House)

This is a classic and necessary picture book for infants. It is about sacrifice or giving things up for other people to make them feel OK – though the moral doesn't need spelling out as the children will instinctively understand this truth. Obviously, this does however call for a big talk about special cuddly toys, mementoes and objects. Bring in your own cuddly toy! Track and discuss the ups and downs of the characters – Bella, Dave, Mum and Dad and of course the little girl. Everyone is feeling different! Ask: *What would you say to Bella?* Write a thank you letter from Dave to Bella.

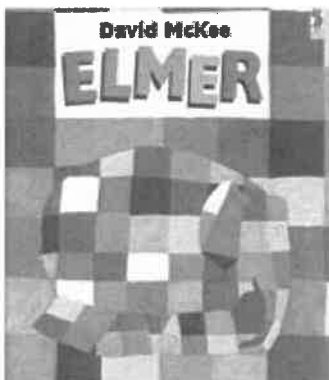
Cops and Robbers



Cops and Robbers

Alan and Janet Ahlberg (Puffin)

Draw the street map that appears in the book. Collect a box of the missing toys. Read in conjunction with *Burglar Bill* (Puffin). Read and chant together the story many times. You will need many copies of the book for the children to spot and talk about all the details in the drawings. Quite a lot of vocabulary will need discussing – from crowbars to truncheons! Create huge WANTED posters. Get a plastic helmet for play and for reading the story in role as Officer Pugh!

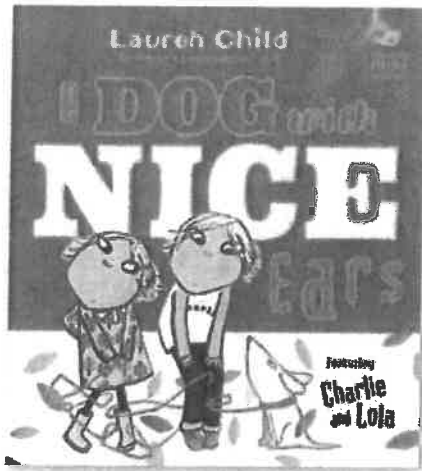


Elmer

David McKee (Andersen Press)

After reading the book ask the children: *What is the best thing about Elmer? Why is Elmer feeling worried? Were the animals really laughing because he was different? In what way was Elmer different? How do we feel different?* This book offers plenty to discuss. Draw the outline of large elephants and design a multi-coloured patchwork Elmer with tissue paper, felt, paint, crayons or different materials, using squares or triangles or rectangles or other patterns.

Age 4-5



A Dog With Nice Ears

Lauren Child

Orchard Books

Lola and Charlie spend a lot of time talking about the sort of dog they'd have, if only Mum and Dad would let them. Sometimes Lola imagines she has a dog, or even pretends Charlie is one!

A delightful story about how brilliant pets are – and why it's also OK not to have one.



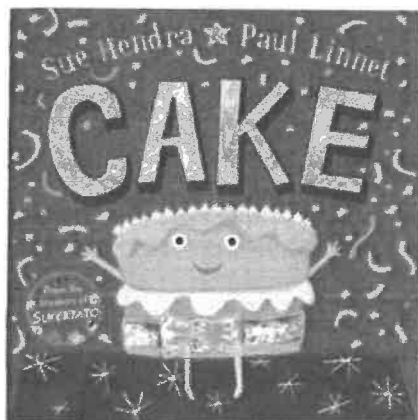
Billy and the Beast

Nadia Shireen

Jonathan Cape

When Billy and her friend Fatcat are kidnapped while walking in the woods, it transpires that a hungry Beast is collecting ingredients for a terrible soup. Can Billy save her friends from the Beast's cruel culinary agenda?

Funny and empowering, this is a fantastic friendship story about being smart and kind.



Cake

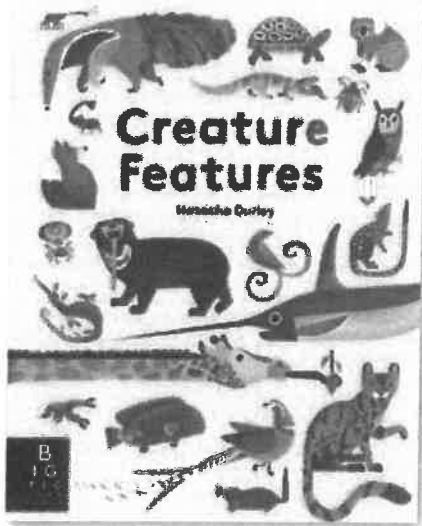
Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet

Macmillan Children's Books

Keen to look his best for a party, Cake buys a new hat for the occasion, which makes him look irresistible. However, he begins to feel uneasy when the other guests advance on him, singing 'Happy Birthday'...

Silly humour and vibrant illustrations will have children giggling as they wait to discover Cake's fate.

Age
4-5



Creature Features
Natasha Durley

Big Picture Press

Animals come in all shapes and sizes. Some have nice noses, and some have excellent ears.

This large format book about nature features tough card pages full of brightly illustrated animals, organised by their special features. Excellent for young readers building their vocabulary and learning about the natural world.

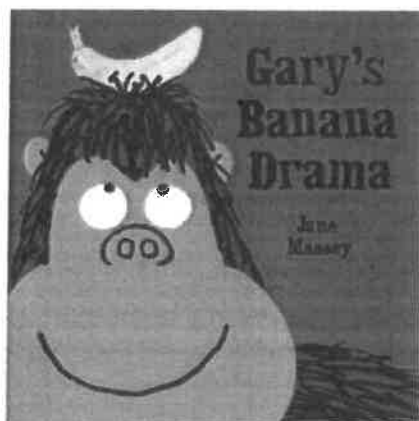


Cyril and Pat
Emily Gravett

Two Hoots

Cyril is Lake Park's only squirrel, and he's lonely. When he meets Pat the big, grey other squirrel (a rat!), his life is transformed. But no-one else seems to approve of their friendship...

A colourful, rhyming story about friendship against the odds. Funny and endearing, Cyril's experience celebrates independent thought and the joy of difference.

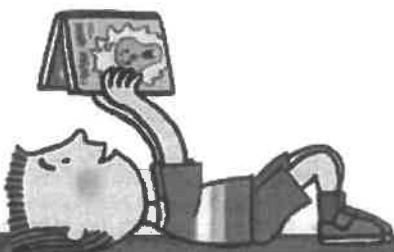


Gary's Banana Drama
Jane Massey

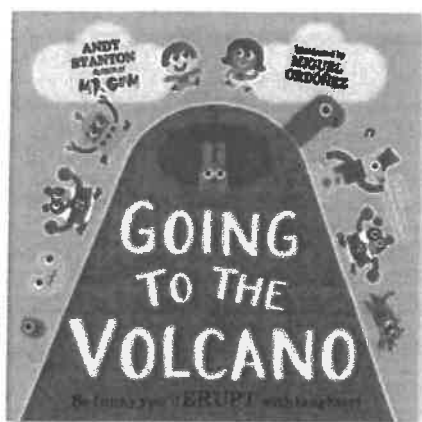
Simon & Schuster

When Gary the gorilla runs out of bananas, his favourite food, he's forced to go out and find more. Although he sees bananas everywhere he goes, Gary can't eat a single one of them!

An engaging central character and bold illustrations packed with visual puns will make this comical story an instant favourite.



Age
4-5



Going to the Volcano
Andy Stanton, Illustrated by
Miguel Ordóñez

Hodder Children's Books

Dwayne is heading off with Jane to look at the volcano. Yet when they reach the volcano, they get a bit of a shock!

This hilarious and anarchic picture book features a brilliant rhyming call-and-response format, which makes it ideal for reading aloud and will have children in fits of laughter.



Hello, Hot Dog!
Lily Murray, Illustrated by Jarvis

Lincoln Children's Books

Hot Dog is having a lovely snooze on a comfy bread roll when he suddenly realises he's about to become...LUNCH!

A quirky tale told in a delightful conversational style, with deceptively simple illustrations that convey a sense of jeopardy as well as humour. Likely to induce fits of giggling in young readers.



How to Be a Lion
Ed Vere

Puffin

Leonard is a gentle lion, and even though the other lions don't like him being friends with Marianne the duck, Leonard is determined that there has to be a better way to be a lion than roaring and chomping.

A wonderful book about friendship and gentleness.



Age
4-5



Julian is a Mermaid

Jessica Love

Walker Books

When Julian spots three women in lavish mermaid costumes it fires his imagination, and all he can think about is becoming a mermaid himself – with a little help from his Nana's soft furnishings!

Sparse text and imaginative, vibrant illustrations celebrate Julian's individuality in a story of acceptance, joy and living your dreams.



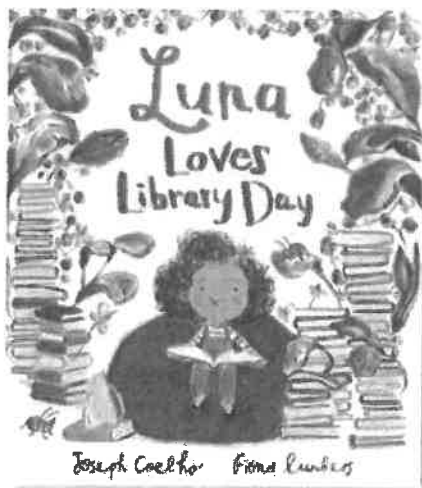
Juniper Jupiter

Lizzy Stewart

Lincoln Children's Books

Juniper Jupiter is a real-life superhero. But something's missing – what's a hero without an amazing sidekick?

Lizzy Stewart's bold and delightful illustrations bring a real warmth to this special picture book that children will keep revisiting. A witty and earnest story about the quest for friendship.



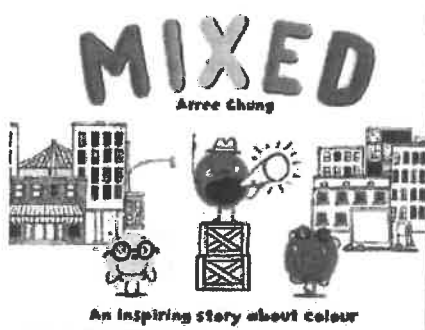
Luna Loves Library Day

Joseph Coelho, Illustrated by Fiona Lumbers

Andersen Press

Every week, Luna looks forward to library day, when she discovers magic among the library shelves with her dad. They discover all sorts of things here – dinosaurs, mummies and unexplained mysteries.

From the talented poet Joseph Coelho, this charming picture book highlights the wonders of libraries for families and communities.



Mixed

Arree Chung

Macmillan Children's Books

Reds, Yellows and Blues have always lived happily together, but when a renegade Red causes conflict, the colours divide. Is the love of a cool Blue and a bright Yellow be enough to restore harmony?

A funny, vibrantly illustrated, allegorical tale that celebrates individual talents and has an inspiring message about understanding and acceptance.

Age
4-5



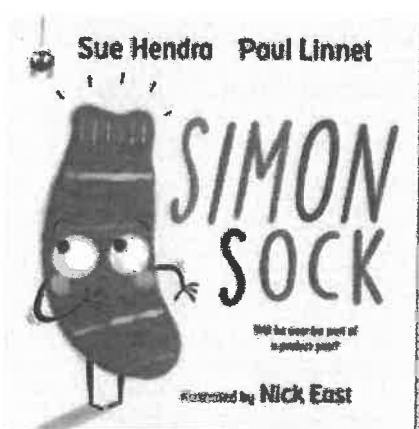
Planet Awesome!

Stacy McAnulty, Illustrated by David Litchfield

Faber & Faber

Planet Awesome (sometimes known as Earth) presents the story of her first 4.54 billion years, from her birth as a hot, gassy baby planet to the lush, life-giving world we now inhabit.

A humorous and entertaining introduction to astronomy, geology, natural history and ecology from the point of view of planet Earth herself.



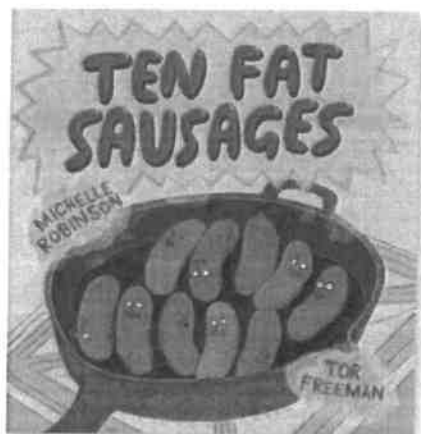
Simon Sock

Sue Hendra & Paul Linnet, Illustrated by Nick East

Hodder Children's Books

Simon Sock lives in the drawer with all the other socks, who often go on adventures. Problem is, you have to be in a pair of socks to be chosen, and Simon is on his own. Yet when he finds his pair, it's not as straightforward as he expected...

A lovely, bright and sweet book about relationships and belonging.



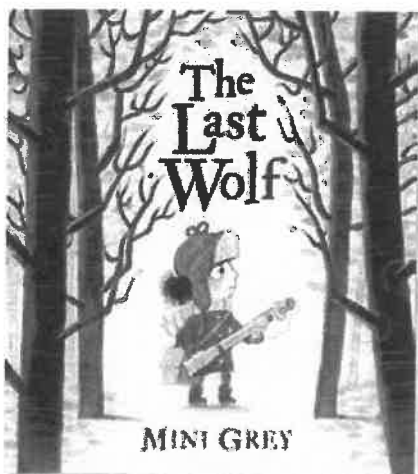
Ten Fat Sausages

Michelle Robinson, Illustrated by Tor Freeman

Andersen Press

Ten sausages jump out of a frying pan only to encounter a series of unfortunate kitchen-related mishaps – will they manage to struggle free, or is their sausage well and truly cooked?

The bold illustrations and rhyming works well for a range of ages, all of whom will love the silly humour.



The Last Wolf

Mini Grey

Jonathan Cape

One day, Little Red heads into the woods to catch a wolf. Yet when Red meets the Last Wolf, the Last Lynx and the Last Bear, she starts to understand why hunting is not the answer.

Rich, characterful illustrations, quirky humour and perfect pacing present a touching but non-preachy environmental message.

Age
4-5



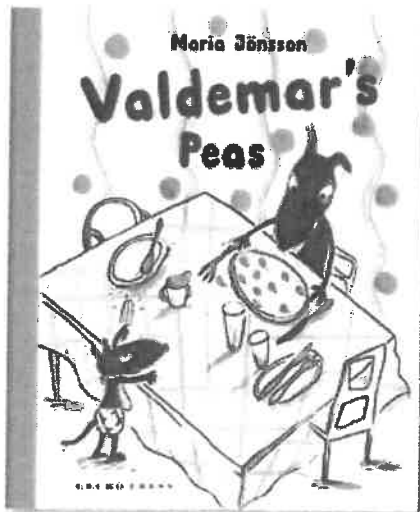
The New Neighbours

Sarah McIntyre

David Fickling Books

In Pickle Rye, rats have moved into the ground-floor flat, and the other residents have convinced themselves that they're going to bury everyone in rat poo. Yet Bertram and Natasha aren't quite what anyone expected – and they have cake!

A clever, detail-rich and funny book about tolerance and not believing gossip.



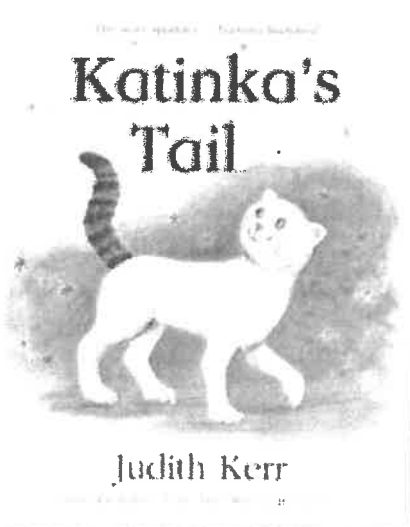
Valdemar's Peas

Maria Jönsson

Gecko Press

Valdemar knows that all his peas must be eaten before he can have ice cream. How unfair! Yet a brilliant idea makes sure he gets his ice cream without eating a single pea...

Simple, expressive illustrations bring to life a little wolf character who is as ingenious as he is cheeky. Funny, familiar and satisfying.



Katinka's Tail

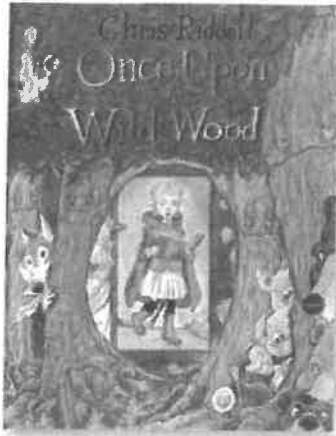
Judith Kerr

HarperCollins

Katinka is an ordinary white cat – apart from her tail, which is stripy. Her owner always denies that there's anything odd about her cat with its stripy tail – but is she right?

A beautiful, funny, warm and tender picture book, with a magical twist in the tale.

Age
6-7



Once Upon a Wild Wood

Chris Riddell

Macmillan Children's Books

Meet Little Green Rain Cape as she sets off through the wild woods on her way to Rapunzel's birthday party. On the way, she meets a host of beloved fairy tale characters, from the Beast to Thumbelina.

A truly delightful book, with illustrations that will set children's imaginations alight.



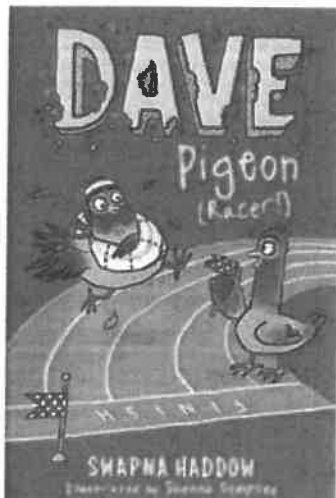
Bad Nana: Older Not Wiser

Sophy Henn

HarperCollins

Bad Nana is quite unlike Jeanie's other two grandmas: she dresses entirely in black, with an occasional sparkly pink turban that makes her look like an alien overlord. She's also been banned from the line-dancing club...

A delightful and laugh-out-loud book about an unusual grandma's adventures with her granddaughter.



Dave Pigeon (Racer!)

Swapna Haddow, Illustrated by Sheena Dempsey

Faber & Faber

Dave Pigeon needs his wing fixed, so it's off to Pawsville Pets for him and Skipper. However, when a rather unpleasant pigeon challenges Dave to a flying contest, he can't say no.

Packed with puns and jokes, and the final message about believing in yourself is perfect for younger children.



Age
6-7



Dogs in Space: The Amazing True Story of Belka and Strelka

Vix Southgate, Illustrated by Iris Deppe

Wren & Rook

Belka and Strelka were stray dogs that were chosen by a scientist at the Moscow Space Centre to become part of the Soviet space exploration programme in the 1950s and 60s.

This informative and appealing picture book details the space dogs' journey through training to orbiting the earth and returning home safely.



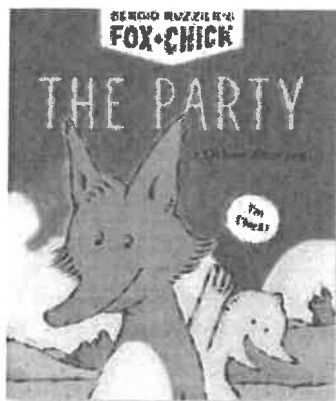
Everything You Need for a Treehouse

Carter Higgins, Illustrated by Emily Hughes

Chronicle Books

Everything you need for a treehouse starts with looking up and imagining...

Glass houses, ghost-like tents hung above rivers and a treehouse library are just a few of the treasures within – surely there can be no better imaginary treehouses than the incredible ones in this lyrical and beautiful book.



Fox & Chick: The Party

Sergio Ruzzier

Abrams & Chronicle

Explore the unique friendship and everyday adventures of mild-mannered Fox and excitable Chick. Chick has a party in Fox's bathroom, the friends gather ingredients for soup and Fox attempts to paint Chick's portrait.

The charming watercolour illustrations in this delightful three-story collection are full of personality and humour.

Age
6-7



Hansel & Gretel
Bethan Woolvin

Two Hoots

Willow is a good witch, and it's the horrendously naughty Hansel and Gretel who wreck her house and her magic spells. As well as gobbling all Willow's yummy food, they also smash her potion bottles – and even change her cat so it's the size of a house!

A delightful twist on the classic fairy tale.



I Say OOH You Say AAH
John Kane

Templar Books

It's really very simple: when I say OOH, you have to say AAH. When you see an ANT, you say UNDERPANTS, and if you see the colour RED, pat your HEAD.

This brilliant call-and-response book is perfect for fun with kids who can remember and relish all its chaotic rules.



Joan Procter, Dragon Doctor
Patricia Valdez, Illustrated by Felicita Sala

Andersen Press

From a young age, Joan Procter loved reptiles. In the early 20th century, she became the first female Curator of Reptiles at the Natural History Museum, and designed London Zoo's Reptile House.

Atmospheric illustrations accompany informative text in this inspirational picture book biography of a pioneering female scientist.



Age
6-7



Read the Book, Lemmings!

Ame Dyckman, Illustrated by Zachariah OHora

Andersen Press

According to First Mate Foxy's book *Everything About Lemmings*, lemmings don't actually jump off cliffs. There's just one problem: the lemmings haven't read it...

A laugh-out-loud story of Foxy's many failed attempts to get lemmings to read the book rather than jump ship, it's a sweet and simple tale about communication.



The Wildest Cowboy

Garth Jennings, Illustrated by Sara Ogilvie

Macmillan Children's Books

Only the toughest folks live in the dour Wild West town of Fear, but that's not going to discourage Bingo B Brown, purveyor of fancy dress! Yet when he comes face to face with a scary cowboy, it's going to take all Bingo's zany goodies to vanquish the source of Fear's negativity.



The Goozillas!: Escape from the Monstrous Maze

Dexter Green, Illustrated by Jake Dash

Oxford Children's Books

When Max sneezes himself into his favourite app, World of Slime, he meets the Goozillas. Unfortunately, Max's sneeze shatters the goo-producing Golden Glob, and without it, the Goozillas' volcano home will dry out.

This fast-paced, accessible series will appeal to fans of computer games, comics and all things slimy.



Magical Kingdom of Birds:

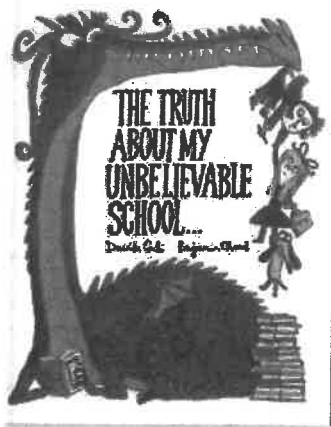
The Sleepy Hummingbirds

Anne Booth, Illustrated by Rosie Butcher

Oxford Children's Books

When Maya receives a colouring book called The Magical Kingdom of Birds, she is transported to a beautiful realm filled with magnificent birds. But the hummingbirds are in trouble – can Maya help?

Great for those advancing to chapter books, this magical adventure story with added facts about birds will delight fans of animal stories.



The Truth About My Unbelievable School...

Davide Cali, Illustrated by Benjamin Chaud

Chronicle Books

When Henry is asked to show a new pupil around the school, he takes her to see the class pet (a giant jellyfish), the science room (featuring what appears to be a space rocket being built) and a rather reptilian swimming instructor...

A fantastically quirky book which is a quick read but still feels super cool.



The Variety of Life

Nicola Davies, Illustrated by Lorna Scobie

Hodder Children's Books

Did you know there are 400,000 species of beetle – but only eight species of bear? Jam-packed with fun facts and figures – and stunning illustrations – this book not only encourages children to treasure the world's biodiversity, but also indicates which species are threatened by extinction, to help children understand the importance of looking after our planet.



The Bad Guys: Episodes 1 and 2

Aaron Blabey

Scholastic

Everyone is wrong about Mr Wolf. Just because he's got big pointy teeth and razor-sharp claws doesn't make him a bad guy. No, he's a good guy – and so are his friends. They are definitely NOT criminals.

In comic book format, this is a very funny story full of action and crazy characters.



The Zoological Times: The Animal Kingdom's Wildest Newspaper

Stella Gurney, Illustrated by Matthew Hodson

Lincoln Children's Books

Read all about it! Published in association with the Natural History Museum, this funny newspaper-style non-fiction book features tons of facts, puzzles, jokes and activities about all manner of animals, from giraffes to lions.

With its fun format, young readers can dip in and out when they like.

Age
6-7

Age
6-7



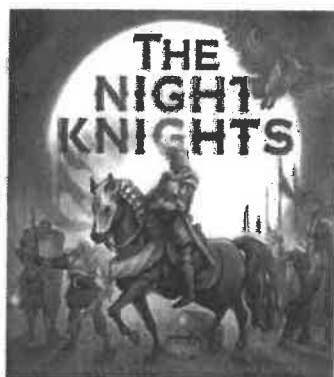
Rose's Dress of Dreams

**Katherine Woodfine, Illustrated by
Kate Pankhurst**

Little Gems (Barrington Stoke)

It's France in the mid-1700s, and Rose loves beautiful dresses. After seeing a fortune teller, Rose decides that she must move to Paris if she's to realise her dream of being a dressmaker.

Perfect for young fashion fans moving away from picture books, and resplendent with historical and dressmaking detail.



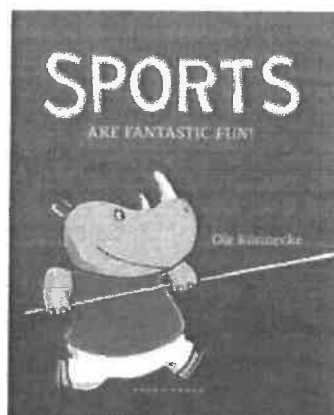
The Night Knights

Gideon Sterer, Illustrated by Cory Godbey

Abrams Books for Young Readers

Night time might be considered a time for monsters, but why haven't they ever actually been seen? Heroic Night Knights are the ones guarding children's houses when darkness falls, and fighting monsters at sea and in the air.

Beautifully redolent of classic fantasy imagery, this is a magically reassuring book for bedtime.



Sports are Fantastic Fun!

Ole Könnecke

Gecko Press

Football, rugby and windsurfing are so much fun! Full of brilliant detail about a vast range of sports – from horse riding to ice hockey, fishing to climbing – this humorously illustrated picture book gives children a good introduction to the rules and ethos of all manner of sports, in a highly entertaining way.



Illustration © Erika Meza

Age 8-9



**Ade's Amazing
Ade-ventures:
Battle of the Cyborg Cat**
Ade Adepitan, Illustrated
by David M Buisán

Studio Press

Nine-year-old Ade and his family move from Nigeria to London, where they encounter both hostility and kindness. Ade is self-conscious about his leg caliper, but with the support of his new friends, he embraces his individuality.

Written by the well-known Paralympian, this amusing childhood memoir is an uplifting tale of hope, friendship and determination.

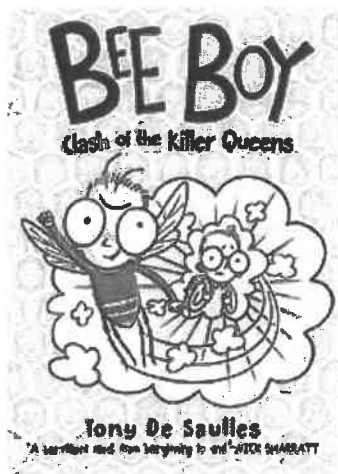


Amelia Fang and the Barbaric Ball
Laura Ellen Anderson

Egmont

Prince Tangine always gets what he wants, so when he takes her pet pumpkin Squashy, vampire Amelia Fang is heartbroken. But when she embarks on a rescue mission, Amelia is shocked to discover some glittery secrets about her nemesis.

A ghoulishly funny chapter book about friendship, with fabulous gothic illustrations.



Bee Boy: Clash of the Killer Queens
Tony De Saulles

Oxford Children's Books

When Mel discovers he can transform into a honeybee, he enjoys an amazing bee's-eye view of life inside a hive. But then he must protect his buzzy friends, not only from predators, but also from bully Norman, who vandalises the hive and nicknames Mel 'Bee Boy'.

This funny illustrated chapter book incorporates fascinating facts about these invaluable insects.