



# Reading with your child in Year 4



# The National Curriculum

## **Year 4**

By year 4, pupils should be able to independently, fluently and enthusiastically read books written at an age-appropriate interest level. They should be able to read them accurately and at a speed that allows them to focus on understanding what they have read, rather than on decoding individual words.

They should be able to decode most new words outside of their spoken vocabulary, making a good attempt at the word's pronunciation. As their decoding skills become secure, efforts should be made to introduce children to new words which will increase their vocabulary. This should be done through discussion and by introducing children to a wide range of texts, including stories, poems, plays and non-fiction pieces on a wide range of subjects. Children in year 4 should be securing the skill of reading silently to themselves.

## What the National Curriculum Means for Parents

- Give your child access to lots of books on many different topics and by a wide range of authors who write in different styles, e.g. Roald Dahl, Michael Morpurgo to Julia Donaldson.
- Encourage your child to attempt to pronounce new words they see in the environment around them. Discuss tricky parts and model the correct way.
- Broaden the vocabulary you use when speaking to your child and be prepared to clarify the meaning of a wider range of words.
- Encourage your child to read silently to themselves but check their understanding of what they have read after doing so.

# Questions To Ask Your Child

<b>Year 4 children are expected to:</b>	<b>To support this, you could say:</b>
apply their knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes, both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words they meet	Can you find a word which begins with the prefix dis-? What does the prefix anti- mean? So what could this new word mean?
develop positive attitudes to reading and an understanding of what they have read	What happened in your story?  What kind of text would you like to read next?
listen to and discuss a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books	What did you think about...?  Shall we go and watch a play about...?  Have you ever read a... poem?
use dictionaries to check the meaning of words they have read	I'm not quite sure what it means either – shall we use a dictionary?
increase their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retell some of these orally	What genre is this text?  What happens in the story of...?  Do you know any myths? Could you tell.... a bedtime story?
identify themes and conventions within texts	What message do you think this story is trying to tell us?
prepare poems and playscripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action	Would you like to read a poem to us after dinner?  This part of the script is a troll speaking; how might they say it?
discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination	What an interesting use of words; why do you think the author chose those?
recognise some forms of poetry, e.g. free verse, narrative poetry	Do you know what kind of poem this is?  What can you see?
check that the text makes sense to them	What do you think that is saying?
explain the meaning of new words in context	What does... mean?  I'm not quite sure. I thought it meant...
ask questions to improve their understanding of the text	Is there anything you want to ask that you're not sure about?

draw inferences, such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives	How do you think... is feeling? What makes you think that?  Why did he make that choice?
predict what might happen from the details stated and implied	If they...., what might they do next?  Who could it be? What makes you think that?
identify the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise these	So, what has this part of the story been about?  Have you spotted a theme in the story?
identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning	Why do you think the author has used... in the text?
retrieve and record information from non-fiction texts	Can you find the part where...?  Which part tells you about...?
participate in discussion about both books that are read to them and those they can read themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say	Would you like me to read this page? What did you think of...?  I thought that... Do you think... would like this book? What makes you think that?





**Suggested  
books to  
share with  
your child...**

# Pie Corbett's Reading Spine

This selection covers a range of stories that extends to fantasy as well as introducing Anne Fine's wonderful books. I came across *Perry Angel's Suitcase* by Glenda Millard in Australia. It is a deeply moving book, both sad, but also full of hope – a lovely book. Read it yourself before reading it with the children to judge whether it is right for your class.

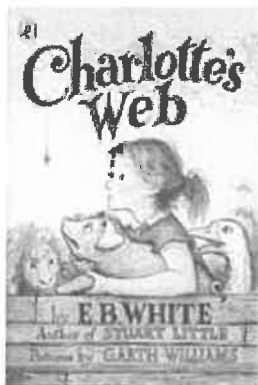


## Bill's New Frock

READ & RESPOND

Anne Fine (Egmont)

Read the first sentence and then discuss how might things be different for Bill. With the class list and discuss the various things that happen to Bill as a girl. The book was written in 1989, so together consider if anything has changed since then. Act out the classroom scene in Chapter 2. Discuss the line 'I am a person' in Chapter 7. Encourage the children to write an extra scene for the book. (See the *Read & Respond* title for further ideas.)

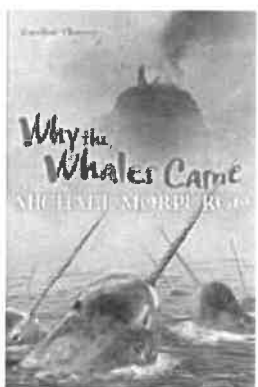


## Charlotte's Web

READ & RESPOND

E.B. White (Puffin)

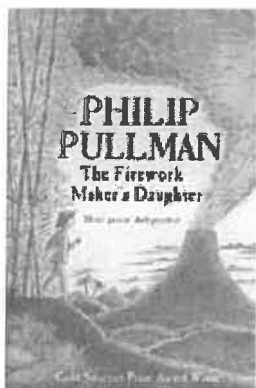
It is 63 years on, but it is still a great read, starting with such a startling opening: "Where's Papa going with that axe?" With the class track the different characters, gathering clues about their different natures. Also, chart with a character graph how Wilbur's character develops. Produce a class timeline to show the sequence of events, so the plot can be seen in one glance. Role play conversations between Fern and Avery about different events, revisiting what has happened and discuss the implications of the key events. (See the *Read & Respond* title for further ideas.)



## Why the Whales Came

Michael Morpurgo (Egmont)

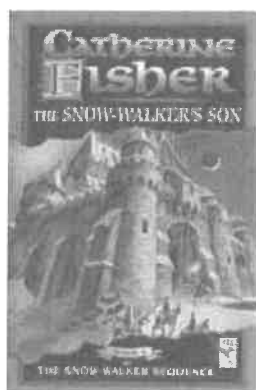
Provide the children with some information about Narwhals as they feature in the story. Also, check out Bryher on the Isles of Scilly, and Rushy Bay – which is a key setting – and research on the internet why families left Samson Island. On the board draw a map of Bryher and together label with events. Ask: *How do our views of the Birdman change and why?* Issues to discuss in class: fear, bullying, friendship and should whales be hunted. (See the *Read & Respond* series for further ideas.)



## The Firework-Maker's Daughter

Phillip Pullman (Random House)

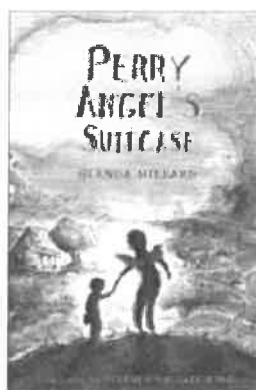
As a class invent names for new fireworks and draw designs for amazing explosive fireworks! Encourage children to write a letter from Lachand back to Lila (Chapter 2). Ask: *What is the big challenge that Lila faces?* Then in groups they can act out the scene where Lila meets Razvani. Ask: *How does the author show how Lila feels in Chapter 5? 'Illusions': what does this mean in Chapter 5? What sort of person is Lila?* Invite them to gather evidence. Provide time to create persuasive adverts for a firework show by Lila and Lachand. Also, read *The Scarecrow and his Servant* (Random House) by the same author.



## The Snow Walker's Son

Catherine Fisher (Red Fox)

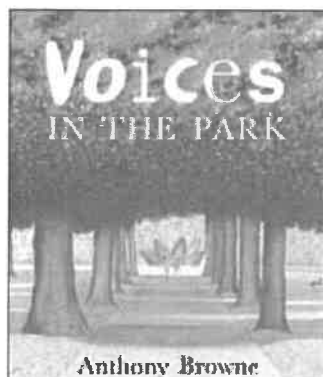
From a 'Fire' daughter to a 'Snow' son, this is the first part of a powerful trilogy involving 'magic' written by the Welsh novelist and poet, Catherine Fisher. Track the two main characters, Kari and Jessa, perhaps using a class timeline to show the main events and their developing characters. With the class make notes and discuss at the end the role of heat and cold in the story. Can they predict (or write) what might happen in the next story, *The Empty Hand* (Red Fox)?



## Perry Angel's Suitcase

Glenda Millard (Phoenix Yard Books)

Read this book yourself before sharing it with the class. Discuss in lesson how everyone feels before Perry arrives and then discuss Perry's behaviour, thinking about why he acts as he does. Discuss the suitcase. Pause in Chapter 10 to discuss why Perry gets onto the raft. Ask: *What advice can be learned from Chapter 10?* Discuss the viewpoints of those involved at the end of each chapter. The themes run deep and it will help for children to talk about their feelings. There are other books in this series, all equally magical.



## Voices in the Park

Picture book

Anthony Browne (Random House)

Read the book through several times. Ask the children to list 'things to talk about' or 'questions' then discuss. Ask: *How do you feel about each character and why? (Is the mother really a bad mother? Where is the dad? Why does she wear a bowler hat? Is it right that the girl makes the dad a cup of tea?)* Together place them in order of sympathy. Then discuss relationships. Ask: *Which is the most important picture? Why? How long did the story take to read? What is the story about? What is its theme?* Discuss the pictures, use of colour, playfulness, lines and the font used. Also, study *The Tunnel* (Walker Books) by the same author.

# Age 8–9

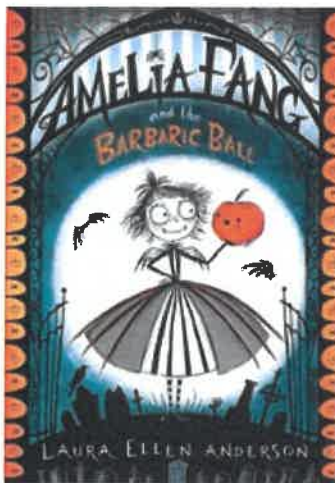


**Ade's Amazing  
Ade-ventures:  
Battle of the Cyborg Cat**  
Ade Adepitan, Illustrated  
by David M Buisán

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.

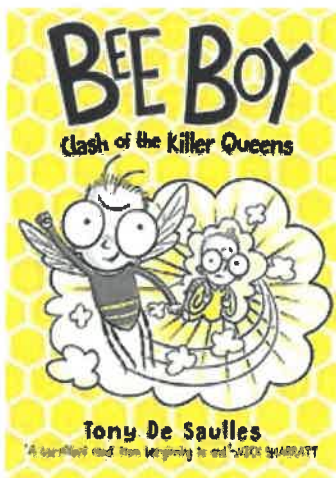


**Amelia Fang and the Barbaric Ball**  
Laura Ellen Anderson

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, Ameila is shocked to discover some glittery secrets about her nemesis.

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



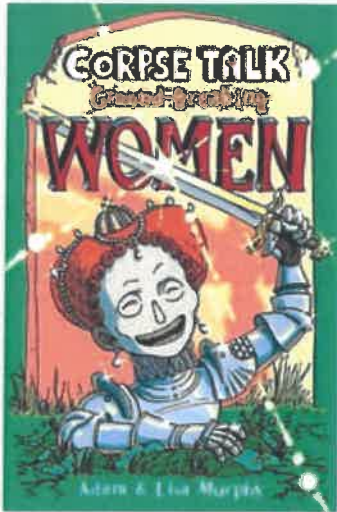
**Bee Boy: Clash of the Killer Queens**  
Tony De Saulles

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.

Age  
8-9



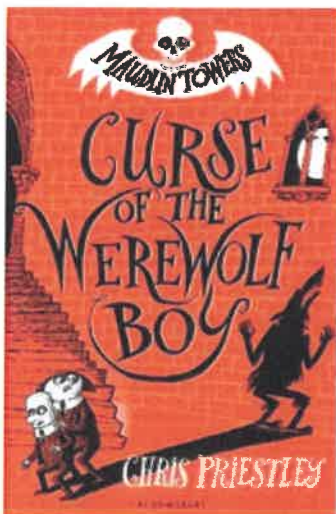
### **Corpse Talk: Ground-Breaking Women**

Adam & Lisa Murphy

David Fickling Books

In this comic book, chat show host Adam Murphy interviews 18 historical women, including Joan of Arc, Pocahontas and Anne Frank, all freshly dug up from the grave.

Unique, accessible and slightly macabre, with a snappy style and colourful comic-strip illustrations, this humorous series is packed full of fascinating facts.



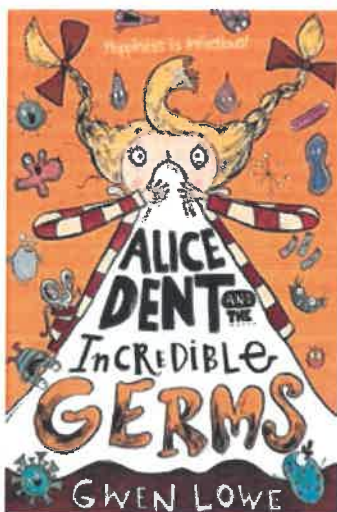
### **Curse of the Werewolf Boy**

Chris Priestley

Bloomsbury

Best friends Mildew and Sponge are not happy to be back at Maudlin Towers for a new term, until strange things begin to happen – from the theft of the prestigious School Spoon to the arrival of a potential ghost in the attic.

A tightly-plotted laugh-out-loud school story full of originality.



### **Alice Dent and the Incredible Germs**

Gwen Lowe

Chicken House

Alice is used to her hygiene-obsessed parents thinking all children are health hazards, but it's worse at Tryton Mell School, where the food is frozen to eliminate germs, and having a cold is a crime.

Can Alice outwit the Best Minister for Everything Nicely Perfect's evil plans? Find out in this brilliantly original tale of friendship and adventure.

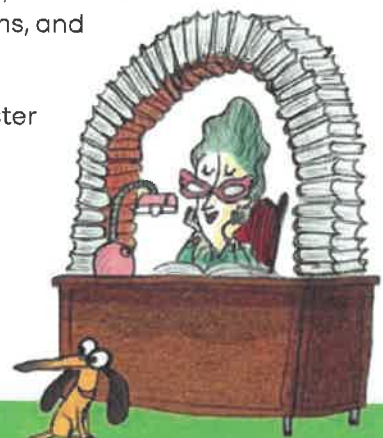


Illustration from *The Truth About My Unbelievable School...*  
© Benjamin Chaud (Chronicle Books)

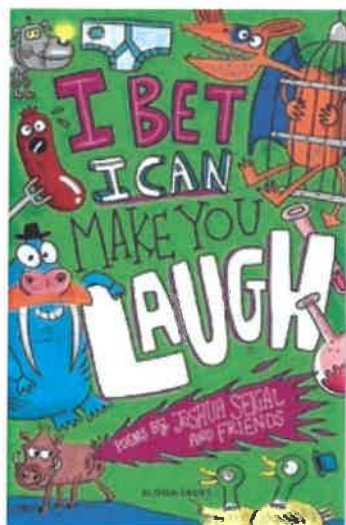


**Elise and the Second-hand Dog**  
Bjarne Reuter, Illustrated by Kirsten Raagaard,  
Translated by Siân Mackie

**Wacky Bee**

While her mother is away building a suspension bridge in the Amazon, Elise is lonely, so her father buys a dog to keep her company. Much to her surprise, the dog talks! Elise and McAddudi become best friends, and Elise's wild imagination takes them on many adventures.

Full of laughs and heart, this quirky book is one that readers won't forget.

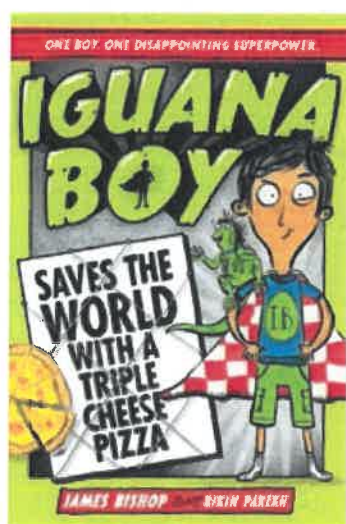


**I Bet I Can Make You Laugh**  
Joshua Seigal and Friends, Illustrated by Tim Wesson

**Bloomsbury**

This collection of very funny poems – from an acrostic poem that doesn't quite work, to a love letter to someone the poet doesn't really like – are, in many cases, hilariously uncomplimentary!

Featuring a range of children's poets and traditional verses from cultures around the world, this is a great collection for older primary kids.



**Iguana Boy Saves the World with a Triple Cheese Pizza**  
James Bishop, Illustrated by Rikin Parekh

**Hodder Children's Books**

Dylan is desperate to be a superhero, just like his big brother and sister. But when he finally gets his superpower, it turns out to be a really rubbish one. Yet when Platypus Girl takes away all the other superheroes' superpowers, only Iguana Boy can save the world...

Packed full of comic-strip illustrations, this energetic, funny story is full of heart.

Age  
8-9



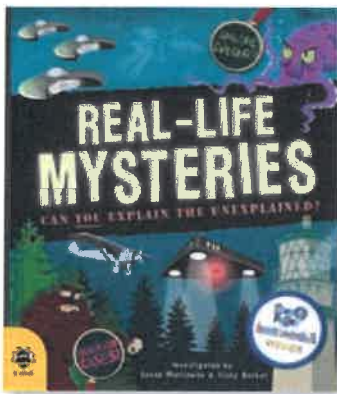
### **KidGlovz**

**Julie Hunt & Dale Newman**

Allen & Unwin

Nine-year-old KidGlovz is a musical prodigy, but his corrupt manager keeps him shut up in hotel rooms, hungry and alone – except from his music teacher, Madame Lovegrove.

Readers young and old will be rooting for KidGlovz, and this poignant story will be remembered for a long time.



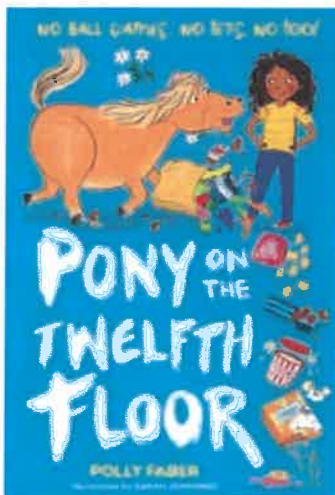
### **Real-Life Mysteries: Can You Explain the Unexplained?**

**Susan Martineau, Illustrated by Vicky Barker**

b small publishing

Did aliens visit Earth thousands of years ago and leave behind secret messages and amazing feats of engineering, like Stonehenge? Do UFOs exist or are they optical illusions?

This fascinating collection of case files covers everything from crop circles to monsters, with a view to examining and evaluating all the evidence.



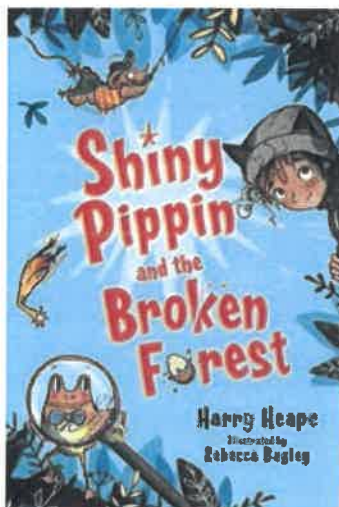
### **Pony on the Twelfth Floor**

**Polly Faber, Illustrated by Sarah Jennings**

Walker Books

Kizzy dreams of becoming a champion showjumper (even though she's never ridden a horse), so she can't believe her luck when she finds a pony in the supermarket. But how can she keep him hidden from mum when they live on the twelfth floor of a tower block?

A delightfully funny chapter book with lovely illustrations.



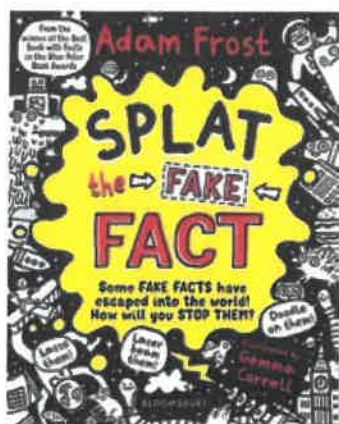
### **Shiny Pippin and the Broken Forest**

**Harry Heape, Illustrated by Rebecca Bagley**

Faber & Faber

When Pippin discovers she possesses magical powers, she uses her newfound skills to investigate the mysterious water shortage in Funsprings – which leads her to the sinister Old Laboratory, deep within the forest.

This hilarious fantasy adventure, with wacky characters and a zany plot, will have readers rolling around with laughter.



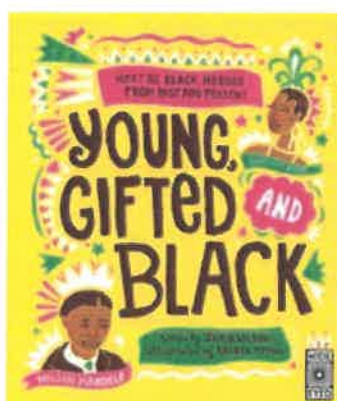
### Splat the Fake Fact

Adam Frost, Illustrated by Gemma Correll

Bloomsbury

These days it's very important to be able to identify fake facts. With a series of interactive activities, this book not only allows children to find out what is and isn't true, but also gets them to doodle, lasso and deface the fake facts. Hurrah!

Fabulously original and interactive non-fiction.



### Young, Gifted and Black: Meet 52 Black Heroes from Past and Present

Jamia Wilson, Illustrated by Andrea Pippins

Wide Eyed Editions

This beautiful book celebrates a selection of black icons from history and the present day to inspire all children to discover what they can achieve. In the wake of the #BlackLivesMatter movement, this collection's focus is very timely and necessary.

An ideal book to share with children who have questions about what's happening in the world today.



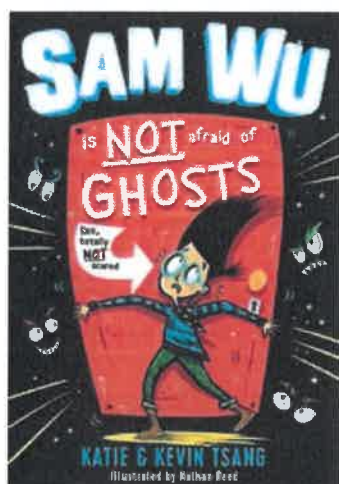
### Mr. Penguin and the Lost Treasure

Alex T. Smith

Hodder Children's Books

Mr Penguin, an adventurer somewhere between Indiana Jones and Hercule Poirot, is asked to locate missing treasure located somewhere in the Museum of Extraordinary Objects.

With the help of Colin (a spider), Mr Penguin battles ferocious beasts and makes his way into a hidden jungle underneath the museum with exciting (and often hilarious) results.



### Sam Wu is NOT Afraid of Ghosts

Katie & Kevin Tsang, Illustrated by Nathan Reed

Egmont

Sam Wu is scared of many things, though he's determined not to let anyone find out. However, after an unfortunate incident on a school trip, he becomes a target for the class bully, Ralph. Sam decides the best way to stop Ralph's teasing is to acquire a fearsome sidekick: Fang the snake.

A fast-paced chapter book full of humour and heart.

Age  
8–9



### **Looshkin: The Adventures of the Maddest Cat in the World!!**

**Jamie Smart**

**David Fickling Books**

In an attempt to make her family a bit more normal, Mrs Johnson gets a cat. Little does she know that she's just brought home Looshkin, who is anything but.

An outrageously fun graphic novel in a class of its own for silliness and hilarious absurdity – young readers will just love it.



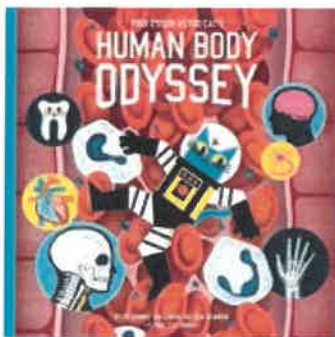
### **Alastair Humphreys' Great Adventurers**

**Alastair Humphreys, Illustrated by Kevin Ward**

**Big Picture Press**

An inspiring introduction to 20 adventurers and explorers from the last 700 years, all of whom inspired the author to go adventuring himself, including four years cycling around the world.

This book will encourage readers to live more adventurously, think a little more boldly and go a little further themselves.



### **Professor Astro Cat's Human Body Odyssey**

**Dr. Dominic Walliman, Illustrated by Ben Newman**

**Flying Eye Books**

Everyone's favourite cat-astronaut investigates the human body in this beautiful, graphically illustrated look at everything from eyes to muscles, genetics to reproduction and the immune, endocrine and lymphatic systems.

The Professor and his chums conduct a jolly and exciting journey through the human body that's fascinating for all.