

St Andrew's Prep  
EASTBOURNE

# TALKING BOOKS WITH MRS GARRETT



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November 2023

## WELCOME TO THE MONTHLY LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

Christmas is fast approaching once again and this year there is an unusual Christmas display in St Pancras International station that would be worth a visit if you are in London from now until Christmas. The tree is described as *"an ode to the wealth of literature that transports us to exciting and novel worlds. From real-life travel experiences to the fantastical lands of our imagination, we hope that festive visitors feel the magic and are inspired to pick up or gift their loved ones the most timeless gift of all, **books**"* (Wendy Spinks, Commercial Director at St Pancras and HSI). You can sit in one of the cosy book nooks at the foot of the tree and listen to audio books while you rest. The hope is that this will encourage everyone to move away from their screens and to rediscover the joy of reading.



Don't forget the wonderful Icelandic tradition of *Jolabokaflod* - giving a book as a holiday gift on Christmas Eve. As Iceland is the World's third most literate nation, it is no wonder that one of their Icelandic proverbs translates as, *"It's better to be without shoes than to be without a book"*

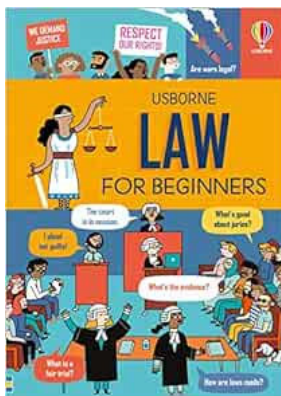


## LET'S KEEP READING!

### New books in The Library

*Book summaries are taken from The Book Trust, Goodreads, Amazon, LoveReading4Kids, The Reading Agency, Waterstones, Classical Comics, Publishers' Weekly, Fantastic Fiction, W H Smith, My Story Tree.*

### Information Books



10 +

#### Usborne Law for Beginners by Rose Hall

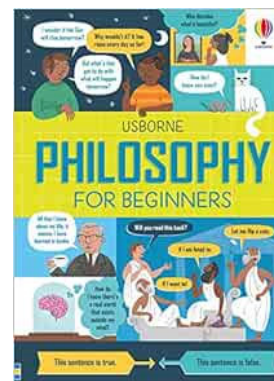
An entertaining and thought-provoking guide to what laws are, who makes them and how people enforce them. It covers crime and punishment as well as social and citizenship issues such as politics and international law, using a mixture of debates, cartoon strips and clear diagrams.

10+

#### Usborne Philosophy for Beginners

by Rachel Firth, Minna Lacey, Jordan Akpojaro and Nick Radford (Illustrator)

Philosophy is a way of thinking about just about anything. It asks big questions, such as "how can I be good?" or "what makes something beautiful?" Using lively examples, humorous illustrations and simple thought experiments, this book opens up the world of philosophy to children and adults with enquiring minds.

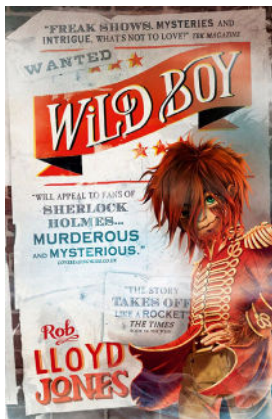


## Fiction Books

9+

**Wild Boy** by Rob Lloyd Jones

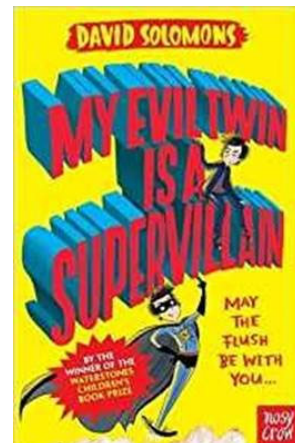
Wild Boy leads a miserable life as a spectacle in a travelling freak show. Covered in hair since birth, he's used to being treated as a monster or a savage, excluded from society and abused by his cruel master. Taking refuge in watching the world around him and all the comings and goings of the fair, he develops a Sherlock Holmes-style talent for observation. But when he witnesses the murder of Professor Wollestonecraft, even his detective skills can't help him when the folk of the fair decide that he must be the guilty party. Soon, Wild Boy is on the run, along with young circus acrobat Clarissa. Together, the pair must use all of their unusual talents to avoid the police, solve the clues and discover the identity of the real killer - the sinister hooded man. Set in 1840s London, this is a pleasingly pacy and atmospheric historical romp.



9+

**My Evil Twin is a Supervillain** by David Solomons

When Luke is confronted with Stellar, his superpowered twin from another dimension, he is highly suspicious. No one travels through time and space without a plan, and that plan is usually EVIL. So what does Stellar want? And why is he so UNBELIEVABLY IRRITATING? From his superhero hair to his rocket-powered shoes, Stellar is up to no good, and Luke must BRING HIM DOWN! **My Evil Twin is a Supervillain** is the third instalment of Luke's laugh-out-loud adventures.

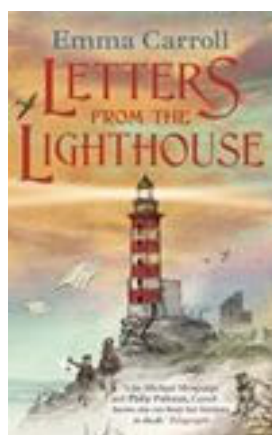
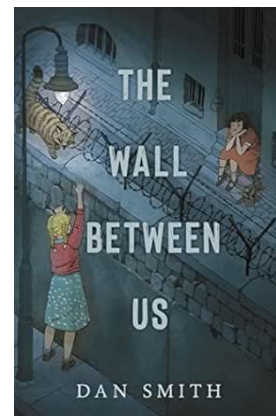


## Fiction Books continued

9+

### **The Wall between Us** by Dan Smith

Anja and Monika are two twelve-year-old girls living in 1960s Germany. They are cousins, as well as best friends. Despite living on the same street, their homes are on opposite sides of the border that separates East Berlin from West Berlin. Ever since Germany was split in two in 1949, the border has just been a line on a map. But one night in 1961, that all changes. That night, Anja is awoken by loud noises and discovers that a barbed wire barricade is being built right down the middle of her street, separating her from half her family. Soon a wall is constructed...the Berlin Wall. Anja devises an ingenious way for the two to stay in touch, thanks to the intrepid Otto. However, Anja and Monika's activities are drawing suspicion from the Stasi – the much-feared East German state secret police. Soon they are under close surveillance. Disaster strikes one night and both girls are thrown into great danger. There is a strong suggestion of betrayal in the air and the girls feel they are unable to trust anyone.



9+

### **Letters from the Lighthouse** by Emma Carroll

Olive and her brother have been evacuated to Devon, but her older sister Sukie is still missing from the night of the bombs. A mysterious note found in the coat of her sister suggests that Sukie was involved in something dangerous, but Olive can't make the pieces fit together.

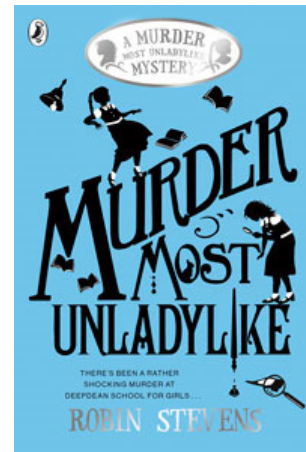


## Fiction Books continued

9+

**Murder Most Unladylike** by Robin Stevens

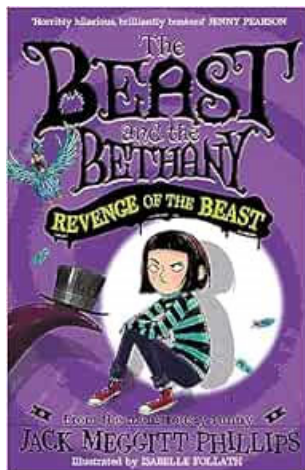
When Hazel discovers Science Mistress Miss Bell lying dead in the Gym, she thinks it must have been a terrible accident - but when she and Daisy return a few moments later, the body has completely disappeared. The girls realise a murder must have taken place, and soon discover that there's more than one person at Deepdean with a motive. Determined to get to the bottom of the crime, Hazel and Daisy put their detective skills to the test - but can they uncover the truth before the killer strikes again?



9+

**Revenge of the Beast** by Jack Meggitt-Phillips

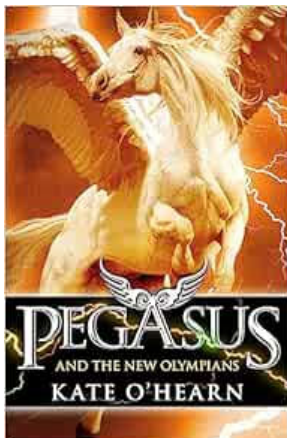
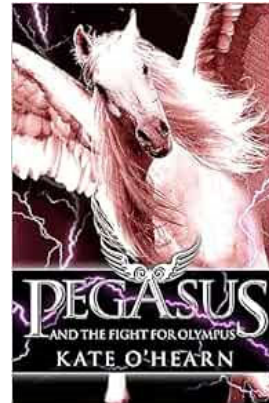
Once upon a very badly behaved time, 511-year-old Ebenezer kept a beast in his attic. He would feed the beast all manner of objects and creatures and in return the beast would vomit him up expensive presents. But then the Bethany arrived ... Now notorious prankster Bethany, along with her new feathery friend Claudette, is determined that she and Ebenezer are going to de-beast their lives and Do Good. But Bethany finds that being a notorious prankster makes it hard to get taken on for voluntary work. And Ebenezer is secretly missing the beast's vomity gifts. And neither of them are all that sure what 'good people' do anyway ... Then there's Claudette, who's not been feeling herself recently. Has she eaten something that has disagreed with her?



## Fiction Books continued

9+

**Pegasus and the Fight for Olympus** by Kate O'Hearn  
Reborn as the Flame, Emily has saved Olympus from destruction. The Olympic flame now burns strong, and peace has been restored. But not for long ...When the gruesome Nirads begin a new invasion, Emily and her friends become entangled in the conflict as old grudges are unearthed and new enemies are discovered. And all the while, Emily yearns for her father, still a prisoner of the sinister CRU, somewhere in New York.



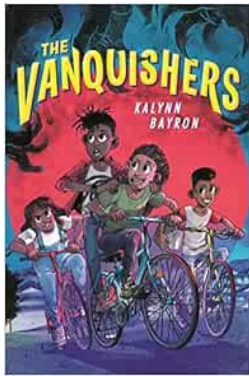
9+

**Pegasus and the New Olympians** by Kate O'Hearn  
When reports reach Olympus of a Pegasus 'double' sighted on Earth, suspicions are aroused. Emily and Pegasus must fly back to her world where they discover a sinister conspiracy that will pit Olympian against human in a war involving friends and enemies on either side.

## Fiction Books continued

9+

**The Vanquishers** by Kalynn Bayron



In the world of the Vanquishers, vampires were history ... until now. Malika "Boog" Wilson and her best friends have grown up idolising The Vanquishers, a group of heroic vampire hunters who wiped out the last horde of the undead decades ago. Nowadays, most people don't take even the most basic vampire precautions - the days of garlic wreaths and early curfews are long gone - but Boog's parents still follow the old rules, much to her embarrassment. When a friend goes missing, Boog isn't sure what to think. Could it be the school counsellor, Mr Rupert, who definitely seems to be hiding something? Or could it be something more dangerous? Boog is determined to save her friend, but is she ready to admit vampires might not be vanquished after all? No one ever expected the Vanquishers to return, but if their town needs protection from the undead, Boog knows who to call ...

9+

**Three Keys** by Kelly Yang



The story of Mia, and her family and friends at the Calivista Motel, continues in this powerful, hilarious, and resonant sequel to the award-winning novel *Front Desk*.

Mia Tang thinks she's going to have the best year ever:

1. She and her parents have a motel.
  2. She gets to run the front desk.
  3. She's finally getting somewhere with her writing.
- But, on a rollercoaster of challenges, Mia will need all her determination to hang on tight. If anyone can find the key to getting through turbulent times, it's Mia Tang.



## Fiction Books continued

10+

**Indi Raye is Totally Faking it** by Lauren Layfield

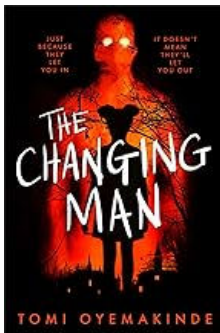
Meet Indi. She's new to Manchester with approximately zero friends. Unless you count Gary, who, unfortunately, is a gecko. If Indi's going to find some real mates - and maybe even a boyfriend - she's going to have to FAKE IT. How else is she going to survive her first job in a chippy, which is anything but glam vibes? And how on earth will she attract school crush Johnny Hotpants while smelling like a haddock in a hairnet? Will Indi ever get her first kiss? Will she accept her mum's new boyfriend (yuck)? And will she EVER learn that just being yourself is the most important thing of all? A HILARIOUS new teen diary series about trying to be cool when you just want to eat chicken nuggets and chat to your pet lizard.



12+

**The Changing Man** by Tomi Oyemakinde

When seventeen-year-old Ife joins Nithercott School through its prestigious Urban Achievers' Program, she knows immediately that she doesn't fit. Wandering its echoing halls, she must fend off cruel taunts from the students and condescending attitudes from the teachers. When she finds herself thrown into detention for the foreseeable future, she strikes up an unlikely alliance with Ben, a troublemaker with an annoyingly cute smile. They've both got reasons to want to get out of Nithercott - Ben's brother is missing, and no one seems to be bothering to find him. For Ife, it's just another strange element of this school that doesn't care about its students. But as more and more people start going missing, including one of Ife's only friends, she starts to feel haunted. Who is the figure she's started seeing in the shadowy halls, who looks mysteriously like herself? And is there any truth in the strange urban legend that travels the school like mist... the legend of the Changing Man?



## Graphic Novels

8+

**Click** by Kayla Miller

Olive "clicks" with everyone in the fifth grade - until one day she doesn't. When a school variety show leaves Olive stranded without an act to join, she begins to panic, wondering why all her friends have already formed their own groups - without her. With the performance drawing closer by the minute, will Olive be able to find her own place in the show before the curtain comes up?



8+

**Sisters** by Raina Telgemeier

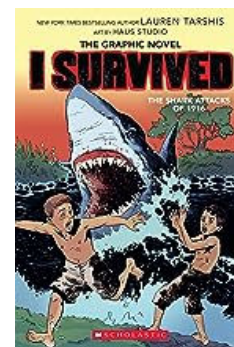
Raina can't wait to be a big sister, but once Amara is born she realizes things won't be quite what she had expected...or hoped. Despite Amara's cuteness, she is a cranky, grouchy baby and mostly prefers to play by herself. Their relationship doesn't improve much over the years but when a baby brother enters the picture and their parents' relationship starts to struggle, they realize they must figure out how to get along. They are sisters, after all.



9+

**I Survived the Shark Attacks of 1916** by Lauren Tarshis

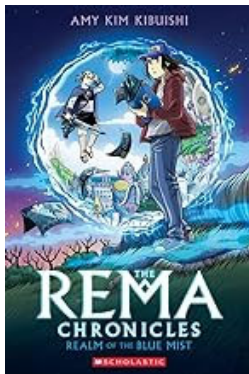
Chet Roscow is finally feeling at home in his uncle's little New Jersey town. He has three new friends and they love cooling off in the creek on hot summer days. But then comes shocking news: a massive shark has been attacking swimmers in the ocean along the Jersey Shore, not far from where Chet is staying. Fear is in the air. So when Chet spots a grey fin in the creek, he's sure it's his imagination running wild. It's impossible he's about to come face-to-face with a killer shark...right?



## Graphic Novels continued

9+

**Realm of the Blue Mist** by Amy Kim Kibuishi



Tabby Simon is determined to learn what happened to her father, who was found dead after researching a tree that leaks a mysterious mist in her neighbourhood. She is unexpectedly led to Rema, a distant world of magic and beauty that is periodically invaded by a nearby planet desperate for resources. While Tabby searches for the truth surrounding her father's death, she meets a handsome blue-haired boy named Philip. He has his own dangerous secrets, but he has promised to help Tabby get home. As Tabby learns more about this strange world, she discovers that she is destined for something far greater than she ever could have imagined.

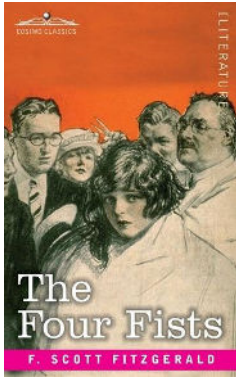
10+

**White Bird** by R J Palacio

To the millions of readers who fell in love with R J Palacio's *Wonder*, Julian is best-known as Auggie Pullman's classroom bully. *White Bird* reveals a new side to Julian's story, as Julian discovers the moving and powerful tale of his grandmother, who was hidden from the Nazis as a young Jewish girl in occupied France during the Second World War.



## Classic Novels



### **The Four Fists** by F. Scott Fitzgerald

The main character, Samuel Meredith, is a man who, as Fitzgerald says, "is certain that at various times in his life hitable qualities were in his face, as surely as kissable qualities have ever lurked in a girl's face." From boarding school to the business world, he gets into confrontations that lead to him being punched in the face, and these four major conflicts in his life lead him to be the type of man about whom the narrator eventually says, "At the present time no one that I know has the slightest desire to hit Samuel Meredith...."

## BOOK REVIEW



*Read a book, read a book, read a book...*

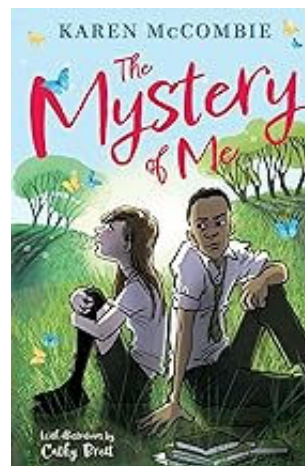
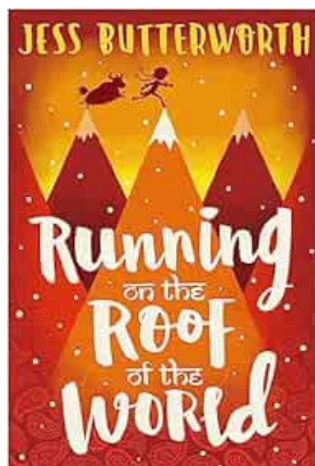
*Pegasus and the New Olympians* by Kate O'Hearn has been devoured by Bertie Fieldhouse, who has already enjoyed the first two books in this series by brilliant author Kate O'Hearn, who visited us last June. Bertie writes: "This is the third book in a series, so to understand the text you should read books 1 and 2. This fantasy book combines technology and mythology. This adventure has danger at every turn! I really love the fact that the main character is continuously torn between the world we live in and understand and a magical kingdom full of weird and wonderful creatures which, as the reader, you'll grow to love. I hope you'll enjoy this book of action." Thank you, Bertie.

Niki Chae chose a gripping title to review *The Beast and the Bethany* by Jack Meggitt-Phillips. A gentleman of over 500 years old keeps a beast in his attic. If he gives the beast anything he wants to eat, the beast will give him presents and a potion to keep him forever young. Here's how Niki describes this action adventure that is partly fantasy and sometimes a little spooky: "There's a man called Ebenezer and he gives a beast whatever the beast likes to eat and so Ebenezer gets what he wants. But, one day, the beast asks Ebenezer for a child. Ebenezer says 'no' but had to say 'yes' because he had wrinkles around his eyes and goes to get one and finds Bethany." Niki gave this title 5 out of 5 stars. Thank you, Niki.

## Recommended reads for this month

*Running on the Roof of the World* by Jess Butterworth has been recommended by Luca Aguna Turner who describes it as a great adventure which jumps backwards and forwards. There is a plot twist at the end and it's very exciting... *Tash and her best friend Sam have grown up used to following the rules in occupied Tibet. But when a man sets himself on fire as an act of protest, Tash barely escapes after her house is raided and her parents are arrested. She, Sam and their two yaks set out on a dangerous journey across the Himalayas to reach India and the Dalai Lama, who she hopes will be able to save her parents.* Thank you, Luca.

I would like to recommend a Barrington Stoke title for the 11+ reader. (Barrington Stoke titles are short books in a format that is designed for the dyslexic reader, but they are also great stories for the more reluctant reader who does not find it easy to engage with longer texts.) *The Mystery of Me* by Karen McCombie is aimed at 11+ readers. It is a story of self discovery and dealing with trauma. It is a heart-warming story with a nice 'reveal' at the end. The story is about Ketty 'who had a terrible accident and was technically dead for two minutes and thirty-nine seconds according to the doctors who saved her. She's on the mend yet can't remember anything about her life before the accident. But people are treating her really weirdly and Ketty just can't shake the feeling that something is terribly wrong.'





## WORTH A LOOK!

**0 - 3 years**

**Peekaboo Santa** by Camilla Reid

Easy-to-use peekaboo sliders, a funny rhyming text and surprise mirror ending combine in this stylish and interactive board book for babies and toddlers!

With a total of 10 smooth mechanisms to push, pull or turn on every spread this beautiful book is packed full of fun!

**The Nose, Toes and Tummy book** by Sally Nicholls

*This is your nose. What happens when I press it? BEEP! What a noisy nose!*

This charming book talks directly to the baby listening, as the adult presses their nose, smells their feet and kisses their tummy. It focuses on specific body parts, and then culminates in the adult using their arms to hold the baby tight and love them from top to toe. The final word is 'Goodnight', ideally meaning the baby goes to sleep feeling loved, after many giggles.

Written with gentle humour and much warmth, this is infused with love for tiny people. Various different adults and babies are depicted throughout in an inclusive way, so that many families can feel represented.

**Maths Words for Little People 6 book set (Shapes, Sorting, Counting, Sums, Time, Money)** by Helen Mortimer

This series of little books builds children's confidence with mathematical vocabulary and ideas and provides a foundation for learning in a way that feels good.

**Roald Dahl's Opposites** by Roald Dahl

Busy little hands can lift the flaps to discover the opposites with iconic illustrations of Dahl's much loved characters from the one and only Quentin Blake. This sturdy board book is the perfect first baby book to introduce titchy toddlers to the world of Roald Dahl.

**Sparkle - Go - Seek Farm** by Katie Button

Who goes moo? Who goes baa? Who goes neigh? Who goes bok? There are farm animals hiding under the lift-the-flaps in this fun, interactive board book. Just lift each flap and go seek! With shiny foil under each lift-the-flap, the simple words encourage the reader to 'sparkle go seek' under each flap to discover the sparkly farm animal picture underneath. Thick card pages and sturdy flaps are easy to turn and lift and make this book perfect for little ones and first readers who love interactive and imaginative play.

## WORTH A LOOK! *continued*

### 0 - 3 years *continued*

**I'm the Bin Lorry Driver** by Oxford Children's Books

It's time to hop aboard the bin lorry and follow a day in the life of a bin lorry driver! This entertaining and interactive picture book invites you to jump into the driver's seat, so strap on your seatbelt and away you go. From putting on the right gear and pulling the right levers to tipping all the recycling at the lorry's end destination, children are immersed in the action of the job. The lovely bold illustrations and text are laid out in a way that emphasizes the action and fun – there's a dashboard at the bottom of the page so children can pretend to operate the wheel, press the buttons and pull the gears. Along the way, there are also various text prompts to encourage early learning skills like counting, colour recognition and basic shapes.

### 3 - 6 years

**Mine! A Story of not Sharing** by Klara Persson

Nico is coming over to play, but Sally doesn't want him to touch her toy squirrel. Or her train. Not her parking garage either. Sally's mum said to put the things she doesn't want to share in the wardrobe. As it turns out, there are quite a lot of things Sally doesn't want to share - including her mum. This fresh and funny approach to sharing shows just how complicated hiding all the things you love can be. In the end, it might be easier to give sharing a try. Maybe. Kids will find the whole concept a hoot and will come away understanding that greed isn't actually that good.

**The Winter Wish** by Helen Mortimer (a festive picture book)

William lives in Words of Wonder, a perfect bookshop full of stories and delights. He has always lived there with his family, ever since he was a baby, and now he is thirty-seven books tall. But times are hard, and the bookshop is struggling, so William takes it upon himself to create the most beautiful Christmas window to draw people in – with a leaping reindeer, pulling a sleigh full of stories. And then one night, as Christmas draws near, the reindeer comes to life and all William's wishes for his family and all the shops around come true . . . making a Christmas to remember through the power of words and hope.

## WORTH A LOOK! *continued*

### 3 - 6 years *continued*

#### **Corner** by Zo-O

A crow finds itself in an empty corner and begins to make the space its own. First, it furnishes the corner with a bed, a bookshelf, a rug, even a potted plant. In the newly decorated space, the crow reads and eats, listens to music and waters the plant, but something's missing. What is it? The crow decides to decorate more, drawing geometric patterns on the walls in yellow. The corner is filled with colour and shapes, but something is *still missing*. The crow adds a window, and finally discovers what it needed all along - a way to connect with the world outside and to make a new friend. This highly original, almost-wordless picture book is the first title by award-winning Korean author and illustrator Zo-O to be published in English. Soft, detailed illustrations of the cozy corner will inspire kids to express themselves in their own spaces, and the crow's problem-solving skills encourage readers to think about how they can comfortably step outside of their comfort zone.

#### **The Tree and the River** by Aaron Becker

In an alternate past - or possible future - a mighty tree stands on the banks of a winding river, bearing silent witness to the flow of time and change. A family farms the fertile valley. Soon, a village sprouts, and not long after, a town. Residents learn to harness the water, the wind, and the animals in order to survive and thrive. The growing population becomes ever more industrious and clever, bending nature itself to their will and their ambition: redirecting rivers, harvesting lumber, reshaping the land, even extending daylight itself. . .

#### **My Strange Shrinking Parents** by Zeno Swords

One boy's parents travel from far-off lands to improve their son's life. But what happens next is unexpected. What does it mean when your parents are different? What shape does love take? And what happens when your parents sacrifice a part of themselves for you? In this heartbreaking and heart-warming story, CBCA award-winner Zeno Swords reflects on his own migrant parents' sacrifices to create a universal story about what it means to give to those you love. Drawing from the sacrifices his Chinese mother made to raise her young family in a small country town, Swords's drawings are full of beautiful detail and fairytale settings that explore his own journey from child to parent. With humour and pathos, Swords reflects on the strange nature of giving and receiving love and celebrates those parents who embrace a hard life for themselves in the hope of a better life from their children.

## WORTH A LOOK! *continued*

6+

**The Skull: A Tyrolean Folk Tale** by Jon Klassen

In a big abandoned house, on a barren hill, lives a skull. A brave girl named Otilla has escaped from terrible danger and run away, and when she finds herself lost in the dark forest, the lonely house beckons. Her host, the skull, is afraid of something too, something that comes every night. Can brave Otilla save them both? Steeped in shadows and threaded with subtle wit - with rich, monochromatic artwork and an illuminating author's note - *The Skull* is as empowering as it is mysterious and foreboding, but is also a tale of sweet friendship.

**Bunny and Tree** by Balint Zsako

A gorgeous wordless adventure story about a rabbit and a tree, their surprising friendship, and the distance they go to find a place to call home.

Bunny and Tree first meet when the tree observes a ferocious wolf threatening the bunny and comes to its protection. From that moment on, there is a bond of trust between the two, which flowers not only into friendship, but amazingly, into a road trip adventure, when Bunny, who's looking for his rabbit friends, convinces Tree that it's time to uproot and see the world. Compelled by sympathy and a shared purpose, Bunny and Tree hit the road, becoming another tremendous and memorable picture book odd couple. Depicted in bright colours in a world of lavish skies and so much to see, Bunny and Tree share in wonder, adventure, misadventure, solidarity, and a sense of homecoming.

8+

**Noah's Gold** by Frank Cottrell Boyce

Being the smallest doesn't stop you having the biggest ideas. Eleven-year old Noah sneaks along on his big sister's geography field trip. Everything goes wrong! Six kids are marooned on an uninhabited island. Their teacher has vanished. They're hungry. Their phones don't work and Noah has broken the internet. There's no way of contacting home ... Disaster! Until Noah discovers a treasure map and the gang goes in search of gold.

## WORTH A LOOK! *continued*

### 8+ *continued*

#### **The Phantom Tollbooth** by Norton Juster

Milo's extraordinary voyage takes him into such places as the Land of Expectation, the Doldrums, the Mountains of Ignorance and the Castle in the Air. He meets the weirdest and most unexpected characters (such as Tock, the watchdog, the Gelatinous Giant, and the Threadbare Excuse, who mumbles the same thing over and over again), and, once home, can hardly wait to try out the Tollbooth again. But will it be still there when he gets back from school?

#### **Axel and Beast: The Grabbem Getaway** by Adrian C. Bott

One elite gamer. One shape-shifting robot. Unlimited adventure! One day, Axel is playing video games when something HUGE breaks into his garage. It's a robot. His name is BEAST. And he's on the run from the nasty Grabbem Industries, who want BEAST back – right now! Axel has no idea that he and BEAST will soon be best friends and go on the wildest adventures you could imagine. BEAST is no ordinary robot, and Axel isn't your usual gamer. But are they awesome enough together to escape from BEAST's evil creators?

#### **Crocodile Attack** by Justin D'ath

When the robber who has kidnapped Sam Fox and his two-year-old cousin Nissa crashes his car into the Crocodile River, Sam struggles to protect himself and Nissa from the danger all around them.

### 9+

#### **The Song Walker** by Zillah Bethel

When a young girl wakes up in the middle of the desert, she has no idea who she is. She's wearing one shoe, a silky black dress, and she's carrying a strange, heavy case. She meets Tarni, who is on a mysterious quest of her own. Together, the two girls trek across the vast and ever-changing Australian Outback in search of answers. Except both are also hiding secrets...



## WORTH A LOOK! *continued*

9+ *continued*

**Mwikali and the Forbidden Mask** by Shiko Nguru

12-year-old Mwikali is moving to a new school in Nairobi and just wants life to be normal. But when she meets Soni, Odwar and Xirsi who reveal that she is descended from an ancient bloodline of legendary Kenyan warriors, all hope of a normal life fades. Now, with an array of malign forces massing, Mwikali must delve deep into the past to discover her ancestry, learn to harness her extraordinary powers, and enter a race against time to defeat a village elder who has turned to dark magic in an effort to gain ultimate power...

**Einstein the Penguin** by Iona Rangeley

When the Stewart family visit London Zoo one winter afternoon, Imogen and Arthur are enthralled by a small, inquisitive penguin named Einstein. As they leave, Mrs Stewart jokingly tells him that penguins are always welcome at their house. However, they are astounded when he turns up on their doorstep later that evening, clutching a small rucksack stuffed full of silver herrings, a Polaroid camera and a selection of photographs. They attempt to alert the zoo, but are met with disbelief, so do what anyone would in the circumstances and invite him to stay. Although Einstein cannot speak, they communicate through a series of grunts and gestures, and discover that he is on a rescue mission. Can they help him complete his quest before the mysterious man in a wide-brimmed hat catches up with them? While Imogen enjoys honing her investigative skills, Einstein gives Arthur the confidence to overcome his shyness and make a new friend.

Readers will laugh out loud at the family's hilarious attempts to integrate Einstein into their household.

**Our Castle by the Sea** by Lucy Strange

Growing up in a lighthouse, 11-year-old Pet's world has been one of storms, secret tunnels, and stories about sea monsters. But now the country is at war and the clifftops are a terrifying battleground. Pet will need to muster all her bravery to uncover why her family is being torn apart. This is the story of a girl who is afraid and unnoticed. A girl who freezes with fear at the enemy planes ripping through the skies overhead. A girl who is somehow destined to become part of the strange, ancient legend of the Daughters of Stone.

## WORTH A LOOK! *continued*

### 9+ Information Books

#### **Weird But True 2024** National Geographic

This 2024 children's annual is loaded with all-new jaw-dropping, eye-popping, brain-bending facts and bright, bold photography!

Combining the planet's weirdest facts with the coolest and strangest true stories from peculiar pooches and cockroach cyborgs to unusual sculptures, sparkling salt flats and super sneezes this book explores animals, geography, science, the environment, human achievement and lots more. The perfect book for fans of *Guinness World Records* and *Ripley's Believe It or Not!*

#### **Kay's Incredible Inventions** by Adam Kay

Do you ever wonder where the stuff around you all came from? No, not from the shops. I mean, who had the amazing idea of making video games or the annoying idea of building a school? In the latest laugh-out-loud book from the record-breaking and extremely handsome Adam Kay and Henry Paker, you'll learn about everything ever invented, from the daft to the disgusting to the downright dangerous.

You'll discover all about:

- The queen who pooped on the first ever toilet
- How velcro was invented by a dog
- Why the Ancient Greeks wiped their bums on dinner plates

As well as 48,762,851,208 other facts. (Approximately.)

### 10+

#### **Murder in Midwinter** by Fleur Hitchcock

Sitting on the top deck of a bus days before Christmas, Maya sees a couple arguing violently in the middle of a crowded Regent Street. They see her watching, she looks away, and the woman disappears. Maya goes to the police, who shrug and send her away. Then a body turns up... Now convinced she is a vital witness to a crime, the police send Maya into hiding in rural Wales. She resolves to get to the bottom of the mystery. Then the snow comes and no one can get out. But what if someone can still get in?

## WORTH A LOOK! *continued*

12+

**Hatchet** by Gary Paulsen

Brian is on his way to Canada to visit his estranged father when the pilot of his small prop plane suffers a heart attack. Brian is forced to crash-land the plane in a lake and finds himself stranded in the remote Canadian wilderness with only his clothing and the hatchet his mother gave him as a present before his departure. Brian had been distraught over his parents' impending divorce and the secret he carries about his mother, but now he is truly desolate and alone. Exhausted, terrified, and hungry, Brian struggles to find food and make a shelter for himself. He has no special knowledge of the woods, and he must find a new kind of awareness and patience as he meets each day's challenges. Is the water safe to drink? Are the berries he finds poisonous? Slowly, Brian learns to turn adversity to his advantage - an invading porcupine unexpectedly shows him how to make fire, a devastating tornado shows him how to retrieve supplies from the submerged airplane. Most of all, Brian leaves behind the self-pity he has felt about his predicament as he summons the courage to stay alive.

12+

**Steve Jobs: Insanely Great** A graphic novel biography by Jessie Hartland

Told through a combination of black-and-white illustrations and handwritten text, this fast-paced and entertaining biography in graphic format presents the story of the ultimate American entrepreneur, the man who brought us Apple Computer, Pixar, Macs, iPods, iPhones, and more. Jobs' remarkable life reads like a history of the personal technology industry. He started Apple Computer in his parents' garage and eventually became the tastemaker of a generation, creating products we can't live without. Through it all, he was an overbearing and demanding perfectionist, both impossible and inspiring. Capturing his unparalleled brilliance, as well as his many demons, Jessie Hartland's engaging biography illuminates the meteoric successes, devastating setbacks, and myriad contradictions that make up the extraordinary life and legacy of the insanely great Steve Jobs.

## WORTH A LOOK! *continued*

13+

**Jt: The Making of a Total Legend** by Jonathan Thurston

JT. One of the greats, simply the best. He is Johnathan Thurston. As a young Brisbane kid, Johnathan Thurston was written off as too skinny, too slow and too wild to play rugby league professionally. But he defied the odds to become one of the game's greatest players. In this young readers' edition of his bestselling autobiography, follow his journey from his debut with the Canterbury Bulldogs in 2002, to State of Origin star, and to total legend of the game.

**My Grief Handbook : Why Grief Hurts and How to Cope** by Beck Ferrari, David Trickey and Olivia Clark-Tate

Grief can be complicated and painful. Our memories, relationships, good times and worries are unique, and these all affect how we experience a loss. No two people will experience grief in the same way because all of our relationships are specific to us. But there are frameworks for understanding our reactions when someone dies. Lots of people have found it helpful to understand these frameworks, as knowing what's going on with grief can help us find ways to cope with the loss, let go of some of the pain, and find ways to still have a good future. Based on years of research, this book includes some first-hand experiences from people who have been through grief, to show how the ideas could work in real life. However, this is not another person's story. It is a guide to understanding your own. By getting to know how we are processing grief, we can start getting on with it - working alongside it and moving forward.

**People to Follow: A gripping social media thriller** by Olivia Worley

They're used to being followed. But not like this . . . Ten social media stars think they're about to join the cast of a hot new reality show. But the production crew never shows up, and the influencers find themselves stranded on a deserted Caribbean island with no contact with the outside world - except for messages from the mysterious 'Sponsor', who is threatening to expose their darkest secrets. When one of them winds up dead, things start to get more real than they bargained for . . . With the body count rising, the influencers must figure out who is trying to get them cancelled - like, literally - before their number one follower strikes again.