



2021



Across the Risen Sea by Bren MacDibble 10+



When three strangers arrive on her island home, everything Neoma thought she knew about the world is turned upside down. Set in a near-future where rising sea levels have decimated the land, Neoma and her best friend Jaguar live in a close-knit community on the Ockery Islands. They live simple lives, fishing and scavenging. But when the strangers arrive and install some strange tech on the hillside, ignoring the islanders' protests, everything changes. Who are they? Where did they come from? And what are they doing?

Short chapters, plenty of action and the mystery at its heart make this a really exciting read. The story touches on deeper issues such as environmental protection, modern slavery, and themes of freedom and respect.

Slick by M.M. Vaughan 11+



Slick is an android – a robot that looks and behaves just like a human. But no one knows he's an android, not even him. What Slick does know is that it's important to have the coolest clothes and the best tech, and be friends with the popular kids. That's what everyone's always telling him, anyway – his parents, his teacher, his Uncle Martin. But when Slick meets Danny, he starts to wonder whether true friendship is about more than just popularity.

This is a page-turning story with themes of artificial intelligence, friendship and what it means to be human.

The Haunting of Aveline Jones by Phil Hickeys 11+



The worst thing about seeing a ghost is that nobody believes you...Aveline loves ghost stories. She's staying with her aunt in a stormy seaside town for October half-term and has found a book of local ghost stories in the town's second-hand bookstore. But as she reaches the end of the book she discovers the last story has been completely crossed out, making it unreadable. Why? And what was in the story?

Wonderfully gothic, this is a properly spine-chilling and atmospheric story hopeful and outward-looking perspective. Bridie is caring and compassionate, tied to her past, but filled with dreams of a different future.

The Infinite by Patience Agbabi 11+



Elle is a Leapling: born on a leap day (29th February) and with the ability to leap backwards and forwards through time. On her twelfth birthday she'll take her first official leap, on a school field trip to 2048. They'll visit the Time Squad Centre, a time-travelling crime-fighting organisation. But when Elle, in 2020, receives a cryptic SOS text message sent from someone in 2048 she knows something is wrong in the future. Who sent it? Why? Someone's in trouble in 2048 – and it's up to Elle to figure out who it is, and how to save them.

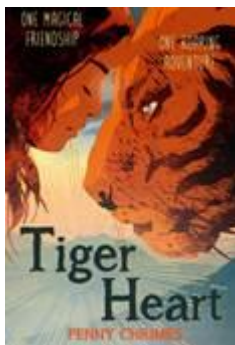
A time-travelling science fiction adventure combined with crime mystery.

The Middler by Kirsty Applebaum 11+



In the town of Fennis Wick, there are two rules: eldests go to military camp when they turn 14, and you don't talk to wanderers: they're dirty, dangerous and deceitful, or so Maggie's been told. Maggie is a middler – a middle child – and she's sick of it. Eldest children get all the good stuff: the parties, the prizes and the praise, while middle children grow up in the eldests' shadows. Maggie desperately wants a taste of being an eldest. So when she meets a wanderer, she reckons that if she can catch them that will make her a hero and people will finally listen to her. But Fennis Wick is hiding a terrible secret and everything Maggie thought she understood about the world is about to come crashing down. This is a wonderfully conceived and slickly executed dystopian novel.

Tiger Heart by Penny Chimes 11+



Left on the orphanage doorstep as a baby, Fly doesn't know anything about her past. Working as a chimney sweep, she mostly lives on the streets and has to scrounge for food. But when she decides to run away and jumps down an unknown chimney to escape her employer, she's surprised to find herself face-to-face with a tiger. She's even more surprised when the tiger speaks to her, instead of eating her. The tiger tells Fly she has royal blood. As she unwraps her past, Fly embarks on a daring journey to right a terrible wrong and break the curse placed on hers and the tiger's homeland.

Perfect for any reader who loves daring adventures with a twist of magic.

When Life Gives You Mangoes by Karen Getten 11+



Something happened last summer – something big – but Clara cannot remember what. She's fallen out with her best friend Gaynah because of it, and Clara feels like she's a problem that everyone is trying to fix. Clara begins to unlock her buried memories. Can she work out what happened last summer and why Gaynah is so angry at her? But if she does, what will that mean for Clara?

This is a beautifully-written story of small towns and the eternally shifting sands of friendship and family.

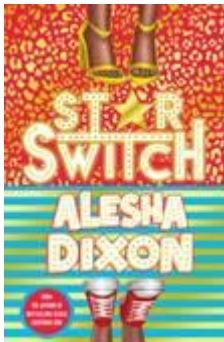
Wonderscape by Jennifer Bell 11+



When Arthur, Ren and Cecily enter an abandoned house to rescue a trapped dog, they unknowingly step through a portal into both the future and a galactic 'in reality' adventure game called Wonderscape. But what now? To get home, they need to find one of the game's creators, Milo Hertz, who has a special time-key that will open the gateway back to 2021. That means navigating the Wonderscape, solving the game's puzzles and completing the challenges. But there are bigger problems: firstly, Milo's been missing for three years. And secondly, they only have 57 hours to find him before a game reset turns them into slime...

Wonderscape is an expertly crafted, breakneck speed adventure with a videogame-like structure.

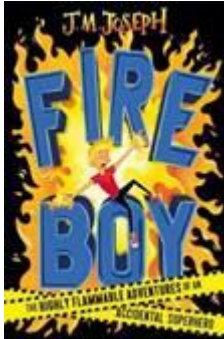
Star Switch by Alesha Dixon 10+



Naomi may be a famous popstar at just fifteen years old, but every minute of her life is micromanaged by her manager-slash-mum. She's tired, bored and acting out. Ruby loves to sing and dance but is too shy to tell anyone other than her best friend about it. She's also Naomi's biggest fan and dreams of being her and being on stage. But Naomi's and Ruby's lives are about to cross in the strangest of ways... Thanks to an unplanned encounter, an unusual book, and a magical jinx, Naomi accidentally ends up in Ruby's body and Ruby in Naomi's..

A classic body swap story Star Switch is a super fun story about friendship, growing up and how to follow your dreams.

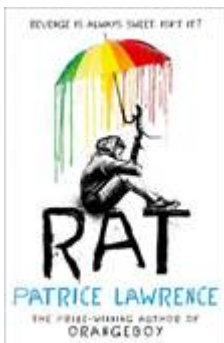
Fire Boy by J M Joseph 10+



When Aiden receives a surprise parcel with 'Top Secret' written on it and a note saying not to open it until his mum gets home, obviously he opens it straightaway. It appears to be just a jar of sweets though, so why all the secrecy? Answer: they're sweets that give you superpowers. Now, Aiden and his best friends Sadie and Hussein have no trouble finding all sorts of fun things to do with their new-found abilities. But the man who sent the sweets is on their trail – and will do anything to get them back...

A super-powered action comedy.

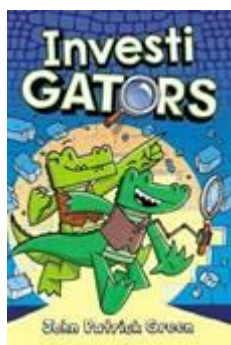
Rat by Patrice Lawrence 12+



Al is finally out of foster care and back living with his mum, now she's out of prison. She's made four important promises to help them stay together, but trouble is just around the corner and Al is devastated when she's arrested again. It's clear to Al whose fault this is, though: the grumpy man from the flat downstairs, Mr Brayker, who's hated his mum since they moved in, and who was right there in the shop when Al's mum was arrested. Now Al is going to make him pay for what he's done.

Printed in a dyslexia-friendly font, an incredibly insightful and moving short story about young lives and the importance of community spirit, tolerance and kindness.

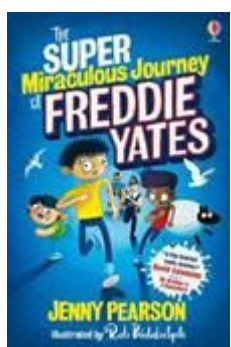
Investigators by John Patrick Green 8+



Mango and Brash, two alligator detectives, have an assignment to go undercover at Batter Down, a bakery owned by the world famous cupcake chef Gustavo Mustachio, who has mysteriously gone missing. The mystery deepens; what is Gustavo Mustachio's big oven doing at the Science Factory, and what caused the massive explosion? And who might be keeping the famous chef prisoner, making him bake dough after dough, searching for the perfect sewer-resistant recipe...?

Fans of Dog Man will adore this pun-heavy whodunnit graphic novel.

The Super Miraculous Journey of Freddie Yates by Jenny Pearson 10+



Do miracles really happen? Freddie Yates isn't convinced – until the summer he goes on an unexpected journey with his two best friends. Freddie loves his adoptive dad, but when his Grams dies and leaves Freddie a letter revealing the name of his birth father, curiosity takes over. Freddie's plan is simple: pretend he's staying at his mate's, then get the train to Cardiff and find his biological dad. But things do not go according to plan...

Though packed with humour, Freddie's journey also explores the ups and downs of friendship. Funny and heart-warming, this is the story of a summer road trip no like no other.

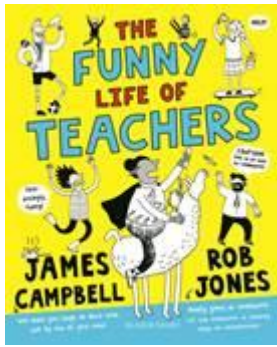
D-Day Dog by Tom Palmer 10+



Jack's favourite things are his dog, Finn, and playing war-themed videogames with his dad, who's an army reservist. He's excited about the school trip to Normandy and the class project on World War II. War and being a soldier seem like really exciting things. As the class begins the research for their project, though, Jack's perceptions are questioned at every turn. First there's the new girl Cassandra, a Syrian refugee, who wants to research a civilian – but war is about soldiers, not civilians, right? Then his dad gets called up and his mum is really unhappy about it – but shouldn't she be excited and proud for Jack's dad? And when Jack's asked to research D-Day soldier Emile Corteil and learns about what happened to him and his dog, Jack's whole idea of war is turned inside-out.

Inspired by a real-life soldier and events, Tom Palmer carefully introduces the grey lines and different perspectives of war. A highly thought-provoking book, printed in a dyslexia friendly format.

The Funny Life of Teachers by James Campbell and Rob Jones 10+

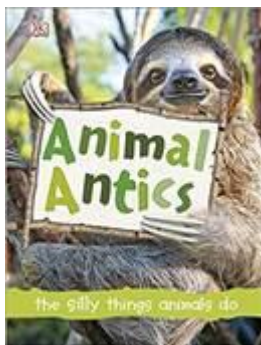


You shouldn't believe everything you read in this imaginative and inventive 'guide' to anything and (almost) everything related to school and teachers!

Packed with cartoon-style illustrations, this highly interactive book mixes together real and made-up facts about school and teachers, with hilarious results. Topics include the different types of teachers and what they might get up to in the staffroom, those supremely embarrassing moments of seeing your teacher outside of school, and other hilarious takes on subjects such as school toilets, the school hamster, lollipop ladies, dinner ladies, class names, accidentally calling your teacher mum, PE, how teachers try to motivate you and – obviously – emergencies you might need a banana for.

A book full of very silly things, but there are some real facts in there too if you can find them!

Animal Antics by Dorling Kindersley 8+



Smile... you're on camera! In these candid and hilarious photographs, lots of different animals have been caught in the act of making funny faces or doing the silliest looking of things. There's a laughing leopard, polar bears having a boogie, and even a Komodo dragon practising kung-fu.

Each photo is accompanied by a short paragraph of text that reveals the story behind the image and provides a useful and fascinating insight into the creature's life within the animal world.

A book for dipping in and out of, laughing at, and then sharing the animal facts with your friends.

Survival in Space: The Apollo 13 Mission by David Long 9+



Astronauts Jim Lovell, Jack Swigert and Fred Haise were over 200,000 miles from Earth, in a rocket on the way to the moon, when a faulty wire caused a disastrous explosion. With compromised support systems and one oxygen tank completely destroyed, their survival was on the line.

This is the true story of the famous Apollo 13 mission, told in an accessible narrative style and dyslexia friendly format, brilliant for reluctant readers but also anyone who loves non-fiction and real-life stories about breaking boundaries and overcoming challenges.

An inspiring read.