

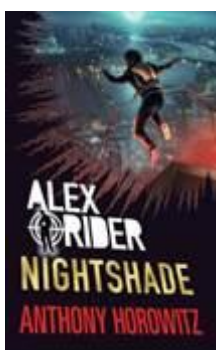
The Girl in Wooden Armour by Conrad Mason 11+



Hattie knows her grandmother Dee is quite eccentric. However, even after receiving a cryptic note from her, asking the family to visit, when Hattie arrives in the town of Brokewood, the last thing she expects to discover is a magical legacy she knew nothing about, and that Brokewood shares an otherworldly border with a nightmare world called the Un Forest. A deadly creature has slipped through from the Un Forest and stolen Dee away. It is searching for something and soon Hattie will become its target.

Fantasy and horror combine in this edge-of-your-seat tale that is at times quite scary. There are lots of twists and turns, and the action-adventure side of the story is balanced by the very human and emotional themes of grief and change.

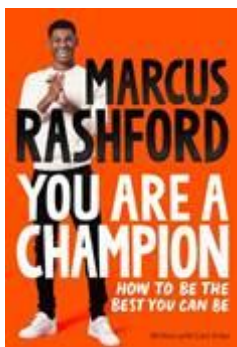
Alex Rider: Nightshade by Anthony Horowitz 11+



Alex Rider thought he had finally left his spying life behind him and was enjoying reconnecting with school and the best mate he had really missed while fighting organised crime. But when bodies start piling up and a dangerous band of 'terrorists for hire' emerges onto the world stage, Alex is dragged into yet another risky undercover op. And this time it's personal. Even as the adults in charge disregard his safety when they think they can use him, Alex is as fearless as ever and puts the greater good before his own chances of survival.

A classic spy thriller touching on serious themes of radicalisation and chemical warfare.

You Are a Champion by Marcus Rashford and Carl Anka 11+



In this gentle and encouraging book, Marcus assures young fans that anything is possible with hard work, good friends, and a positive attitude. He talks candidly about growing up in awe of his football-mad brother in Manchester, struggling at school and the life lessons he learned from his Nanna; as well as what he learned on his incredible journey from playing after-school football to becoming one of the star players on the England team and a role model for millions of children everywhere. Each page is filled with positive affirmations, encouragement, and reminders to always view 'failures' as temporary setbacks, to learn from mistakes, and to never listen to anyone who says you

can't do something because of where you're from.

A moving, and memorable book for finding your way in the world.

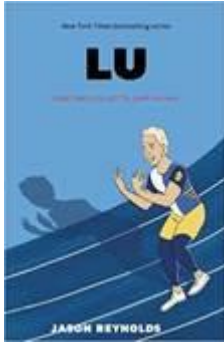
Orion Lost by Alastair Chisholm 11+



This compelling science fiction adventure is set aboard the Orion, a large spacecraft which is transporting people from Earth to a new planet, twenty six light years away. After months of uneventful space travel, the craft is unexpectedly attacked and all adults are incapacitated. Thirteen year old Beth is informed by the Orion's central interface hologram, that she is now Captain. Although it is a role she has dreamed of since the age of five, the reality of commanding a ship is overwhelming.

Full of twists and turns, this thrilling futuristic journey into the unknown will have readers on the edge of their seats.

Lu by Jason Reynolds 11+



Athletics star Lu is generally pretty sure of himself – who he is and what he's good at. However, there is suddenly a lot of change in his life. The big end-of-season championships are looming; his parents have dropped the bombshell that they're having another kid; Coach has got him running hurdles but, after an embarrassing fall, he doesn't seem able to jump them anymore; and as some new things about his dad's past are revealed, Lu's faced with a lot of questions.

An accessible story in a down-to-earth urban setting about the importance of taking that leap and believing in yourself.

Horror Heights: The Slime by Bec Hill 11+



Connie is proud to be known as the 'Queen of Slime' at school and intends to keep it that way – even though the teacher has now confiscated her entire slime collection. Desperate to get a new slime to take to school next week, Connie resorts to making her own, using a recipe her dad gets off the internet. Things take a funny turn though: after she adds some unique, additional ingredients, Connie wakes up the next day to discover the slime – aka Big Yikes – is alive!

A funny tale about a science experiment gone wild and the everyday troubles of being a young teen.

Amber Undercover by Em Norry 11+



Amber and her best friend Vi are pretty different: Amber's shy, while Vi craves the spotlight; Amber stays cool in stressful situations while Vi panics, and Vi seems to be getting more and more involved with a different crowd at school. Yet, while it would seem that Vi is more popular, it's Amber that is chosen to be a spy by a mysterious agency after passing tests disguised as an escape room and a virtual reality game: it turns out that staying calm under pressure and excellent science and maths results do matter, after all.

A fast-paced thriller-style story with tech detail that doesn't overwhelm the plot, as well as a humorous and likeable main character.

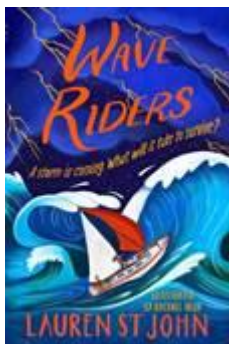
When The Sky Falls by Phil Earle 11+



It's 1941 during the Second World War and 12-year-old Joseph is sent from rural Yorkshire to stay with his gran's friend, Mrs F, in the city. She's a gruff, unfriendly woman and he's an angry boy who kicks out at everything and feels totally abandoned. Now Joseph also finds himself in the centre of the Blitz, where bombs rain down every night. The only thing Mrs F cares about is the rundown zoo that she owns, and particularly a huge silverback gorilla called Adonis. Adonis and Joseph at first seem to take an immediate dislike to each other but over the course of the story, their bonds deepen to a remarkable relationship.

This is a beautifully written historical adventure story that will take readers on a very emotional and exciting journey.

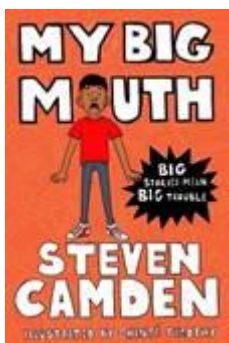
Wave Riders by Lauren St John 11+



Twins Jess and Jude were orphaned as babies but live with their guardian, Gabriel, in close to idyllic. Sailing around the world, calling at exotic locations for supplies every now and then, they feel blessed and very lucky – until the morning they awake to find the yacht adrift and Gabe missing. At first, the twins assume there has been an awful accident. But when they discover their supplies are drugged, they question whether Gabe has been abducted or killed.

Anyone who likes a story to challenge them and who enjoys trying to piece together elusive clues to solve a puzzle will love Jess and Jude's adventure.

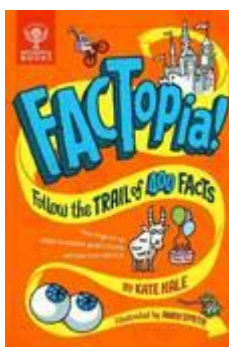
My Big Mouth by Steve Camden 9+



It's the last half term of Year 6 and Jay has a book report to write. But then Dad disappears: no goodbye, no note, no explanation of any kind. Just not there on Monday morning. Back at school, Jay is first up to present his book report and... guess what? That's right, he hasn't done it. But too ashamed to admit the truth, he opens his mouth to find a very cool story pouring out. He knows it's cool because everyone tells him so and he likes the feeling of being Mr Popular. As Jay makes up more stories, he becomes more cool and worries less about his dad – until the stress of keeping up his new façade becomes overwhelming and Jay questions whether being thought cool is really as cool as he expected.

Although it deals with some difficult issues, these are sensitively handled and Jay's story is also a funny and entertaining cautionary tale.

Factopia by Kate Hale 10+



The perfect book for any fact-lover, Factopia contains 400 different facts to discover and be wowed by, covering almost anything from nature to robots to the human body to space. Did you know that around 12% of people dream in black and white? That the Earth hums? That there is a hotel in America shaped like a potato? Each fact is presented as a snippet on the page, with an accompanying illustration or photograph – but one of the things that makes this book stand out is its 'follow-the-trail' system. Rather than being grouped together by subject matter, the facts are connected in more unusual ways: readers are encouraged to literally follow the trail between the facts.

Not only is there loads of fun stuff to learn, but it offers a different kind of reading experience and encourages a little thinking 'outside the box'.

The House of Clouds by Lisa Thomson 10+



Everything is feeling very upside-down in Tabby's life right now. Not only has her best friend gone off and found another entirely different best friend, but since her grandad moved in, all her mum's time seems to be occupied with looking after him. Plus Tabby finds her grandad and his strange stories quite irritating – she's not a little child anymore, after all. But when one of her beach walks with grandad's smelly dog Buster leads Tabby to investigate a seemingly abandoned house on the cliff-top, where she sees something quite strange, she begins to wonder whether the story grandad tells her about the 'House of Clouds' could possibly be true?

This is a lovely, gentle story about friendship, family and grief, written and printed in a dyslexia friendly format.

Star Cat by James Turner 10+



This bright, super-fun graphic novel stars Captain Spaceington and his wacky crew as they travel the universe in their spaceship, the Star Cat. Spaceington is desperate to win the much-coveted Bravest Captain Award, but every mission he's sent on by Space HQ never quite works out the way it's supposed to... Instead, the Star Cat has a habit of leaving a trail of destruction in its wake, no matter how good their intentions are, which tends to rather overshadow their successes and 'brave deeds'.

Star Cat is silly, packed full of puns and laugh-out-loud funny.

Tragedy at Sea: The Sinking of the Titanic by David Long 10+



Shortly before midnight on April 14th, 1912, the world's most luxurious (and probably most famous) ship, the Titanic, hit an iceberg while crossing the Atlantic Ocean from Britain to America. Even today, more than a hundred years later, it's the biggest shipping disaster ever and a story that, although most people have heard it, continues to fascinate.

This is a brilliant and fascinating retelling, great for reluctant or struggling readers, but also for anyone who loves non-fiction and dramatic real-life events.

Bad Panda by Swapna Haddow 9+



What makes a panda turn bad? Well, Lin has tried being good and doing all the right things and where has it got her? Thousands of miles away from her beloved brother, Face-Like-A-Bag-Of-Potatoes, is where. At home in the panda sanctuary, Lin was the cutest, wootsiest, fluffiest, wuffiest baby, while her brother looked like he'd been spun too fast in a washing machine.

Being cute had her sent to be the cuddly face of a foreign zoo. So maybe being bad will get her sent home?

With widely spaced text and a distinctive red/grey colour palette this is an ideal story for newly confident readers.

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