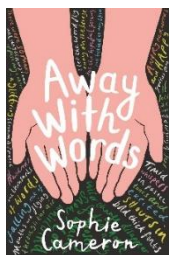




Away with Words by Sophie Cameron 13+

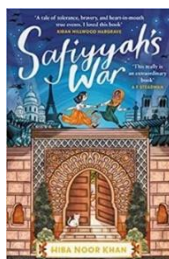
This is a relatable, engaging story about friendship, family and dealing with change.



Gala moves from Spain to a remote part of Scotland with her dad and stepdad. Struggling with a new language and with homesickness, Gala becomes friends with Natalie, a girl with selective mutism. The friends collect words and like to create poems using the words spoken by others. They seek to enrich people's lives with the poems made from captured words, but their idea is hijacked and used to cause pain and division when someone takes their idea and uses it as a tool for bullying, the two girls are blamed. Can they prove their innocence and show everyone how beautiful words can be?

Saffiyah's War by Hiba Noor Khan 9+

A moving story of courage, resilience and humanity that honours unsung heroes whose sense of justice outweighed concern for their own safety.



When war arrives in Paris and the Nazi occupation begins, the lives of Saffiyah and her family and friends change forever. Saffiyah lives at the Grand Central Mosque in Paris with her family. This book shines a light on the role the Great Mosque in Paris played in helping the Jewish community, offering an insight into a less known part of World War Two.

Drawn into danger, will Saffiyah be able to summon the courage to enter the catacombs beneath Paris and lead the Jews to safety in this daring, exciting and genuinely tense read?

Steady for This by Nathanael Lessore 11+

A hilarious story with laugh-out-loud moments.

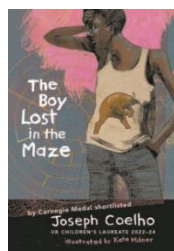


Wannabe rapper Shaun, aka MC Growls, takes part in a live-stream performance intended to platform him and his friends during an MC Battle. He is left humiliated after it goes viral for all the wrong reasons.

There is a wonderful friendship between Shaun and his best friend Shanks. There are hilariously awkward set pieces which are underpinned by deep themes around peer pressure, young carers and social inequality that make this a stand-out, highly empathic read.

The Boy Lost in the Maze by Joseph Coelho 13+

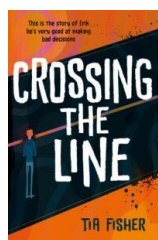
Written in verse, reality and myth converge to create a unique and fresh perspective on Greek mythology.



Three storylines run simultaneously in this extraordinary novel. Theo is studying for his A-levels and trying to find his father. Theseus is the central character in an essay Theo is working upon and the Minotaur also wants to know his father. The story is labyrinthine with false paths and doubling backs. It concludes in a way that is at once beautiful and emotionally satisfying. A rites of passage novel told through poems about becoming a man and discovering what manhood is and can be.

Crossing the Line by Tia Fisher 14+

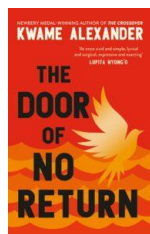
Written in verse, a skilful exploration into drug crime and county lines. This is a poignant story about seeking safety and asking for help in times of crisis.



Fourteen-year-old Erik is grieving for his father when his mum meets a new partner, becomes pregnant and is abandoned. Erik feels the burden of poverty and the weight of grief which lead him to make decisions that affect his future, and which lead him down a path from which he cannot easily escape. Measured and plausible, we follow Erik's decision to their conclusion and witness first-hand how the situation becomes so tangled. Erik's situations quickly spiral out of control in ways that are frighteningly believable.

The Door of No Return by Kwame Alexander 12+

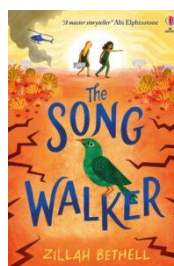
Written in verse this is the first in a trilogy about slavery with themes of war and peace, hate and love, alongside hope and despair.



Kofi Offin and his family live in West Africa in the 18th century. The first half of the book is simply told and there's an everyday quality to the story with childhood rivalries, friendship, practising for swimming contests and love. It details the lives, loves and daily experiences of Upper and Lower Kwanta in West Africa. Kofi's abduction signals a slow journey away from the familiar which makes it all the more shocking and empathic.

The Song Walker by Zillah Bethell 9+

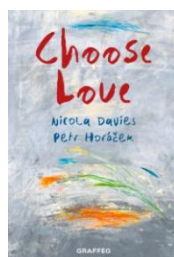
An extraordinary story of friendship, discovery and courage.



Tarni encounters a city girl alone in the outback as she undertakes a mysterious voyage to find her sister. Who is she and where has she come from? There is a clever musical thread as Tarni uses ancient songs to guide them and uses the survival skills she has learnt. The pair embark on an epic journey through the landscape of the outback and also through memory and culture. The mystery of one girl's identity unravels slowly as the story of friendship, dreamtime and spirituality unfolds.

Choose Love by Nicola Davies 9+

A cycle of poems about the realities people face as they are forced to leave everything they know behind to seek safety and asylum in other countries.



The essence of the stories come from true accounts of refugees and the aid workers who help them on their perilous journeys. Readers can expect to be emotionally kidnapped for the duration of the book. Split across three parts: departure, arrival and healing, the poems within each section correspond to the thoughts and emotions surrounding each section of a refugee's journey.