



It's simple- you have a choice of 17 books. Choose which one you want and you will get it!

**HDHS is a reading school -
Reading for purpose and reading for pleasure**







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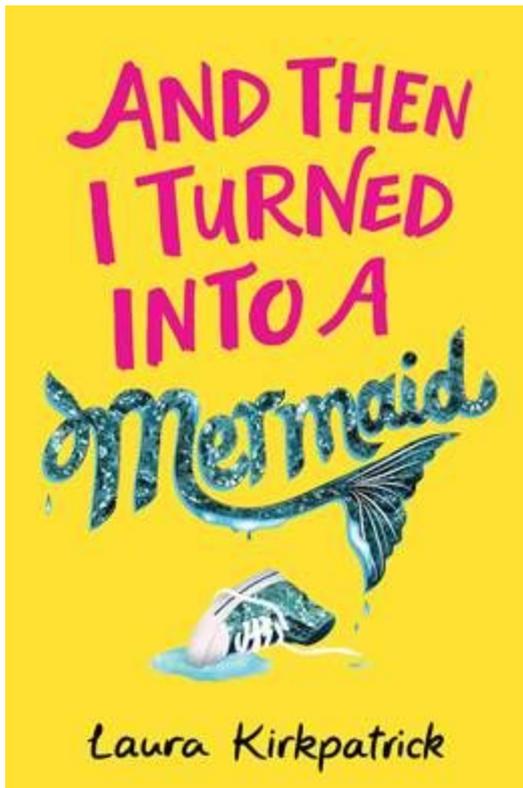


Interest age: 11-13

Reading age: 11+

A Darkness of Dragons **Author:** S.A. Patrick **Publisher:** Usborne

When Patch agrees to help find a way to break the curse that's turned his friend Wren into a rat, he has no idea it'll land him in quite as much trouble as it does. In Patch's world, playing music has a magical effect: it can conjure courage or make you dance until exhausted, and everyone lives under the shadow of the actions of the evil Piper of Hamelyn. Ten years ago he stole away a hundred human children and a hundred dragon children with a forbidden song. Why? And what happened to them? Like an avalanche, one quest quickly leads to another. Patch, Wren and their Dracogriff friend Barver (half dragon, half griffin) are quickly sucked into an adventure that leads them to a series of dangerous secrets with potentially world-ending consequences. Because what if the stolen children were just one small part of the Piper's terrifying plan... With a classic adventure feel, this is a great book for anyone who loves epic quests and magical worlds to get lost in. There are dragon secrets, powerful sorcerers, magical stones, tricky prophecies and an outlawed song that holds terrible power. A true roller-coaster ride of a book.



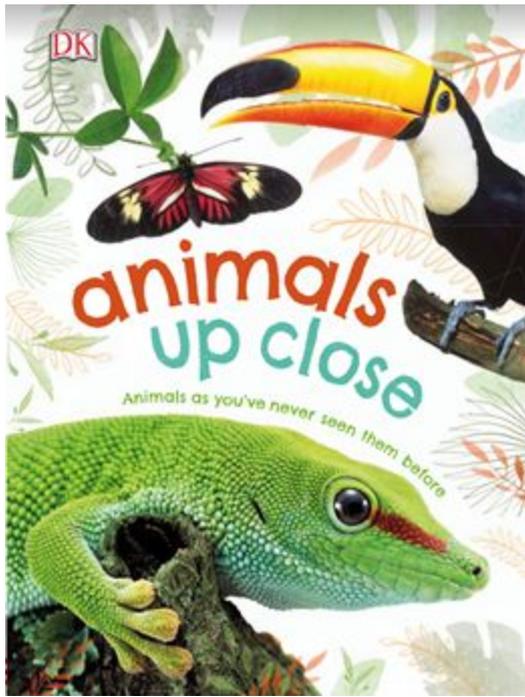
Interest age: 11+

Reading age: 10+

And Then I Turned into a Mermaid

Author: Laura Kirkpatrick **Publisher:** Egmont

Molly Seabrook really just wants to be normal. And popular if possible. But when, at midnight on her thirteenth birthday, her mum and older sisters take her on a mysterious trip to the beach and reveal that she's half-mermaid, Molly knows with absolute certainty that normal is never going to happen. Being a mermaid might sound pretty cool, but when you just want to fit in, transforming every time you go near the swimming pool is a pretty big challenge. Dealing with school and the popular crowd is hard enough without having to deal with a tail as well, especially when you're forbidden from telling anyone – even your best friend. Because if her family's secret was discovered, it would be disastrous for everyone. A brilliantly insightful and super fun story about growing up, navigating friendships and first crushes, and figuring out how you fit in. Tail or no tail, Molly is undoubtedly a character that every teen girl (and anyone who once was a teen girl) can immediately relate to. From an embarrassing parent, confusing sisters and family drama to friendships on the brink and boy-related confusions, this book covers all the emotions but with a great sense of humour.



Animals Up Close **Author:** DK **Publisher:** Dorling Kindersley

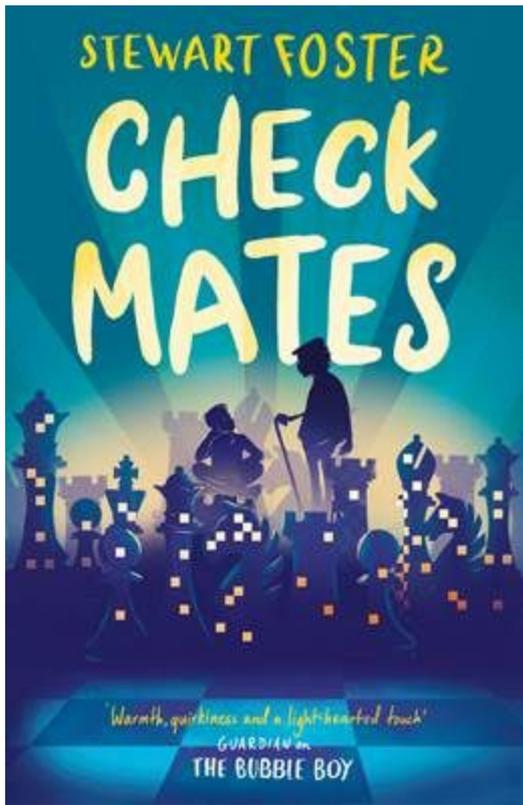
Did you know that you can count the ring patterns on a tortoise's shell to find out how old they are? Or that seahorses are actually fish?

Animals Up Close showcases over thirty creatures with close-up photographic images and simple facts about how they live and the special adaptations they have that help them survive. From the tree-climbing Racer Snake and fruit-eating Fire-Tufted Barbet to the tiny, super-cute Harvest Mouse, a selection of animals from land, sea and air are all included.

Flick through this book, dip in and out, read it cover to cover, or just enjoy looking at the photographs. Which creature have you never heard of before? Which one has the most surprising adaptation? And which one will be your favourite?

Interest age: 6-11

Reading age: 6+

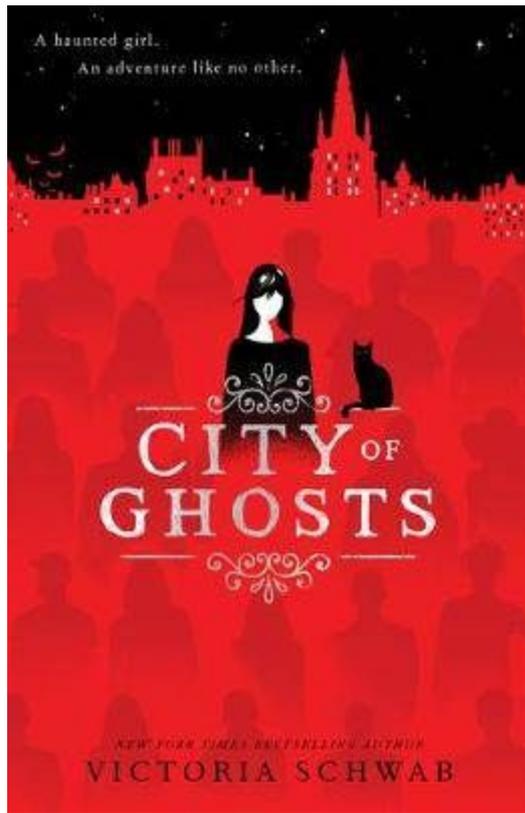


Interest age: 11+

Reading age: 11+

Check Mates **Author:** Stewart Foster **Publisher:** Simon & Schuster

Felix feels like he's permanently in trouble at school. Everyone keeps telling him to try harder, but it's just not that simple. His mind is constantly changing direction, making it impossible to concentrate, and no-one gets how frustrating it is. When his Granddad decides teaching Felix to play chess will help, Felix will do anything to get out of it. Aside from being boring, chess is for nerds! He really just wants to play video games and the imaginary war games he and his friend love so much. Plus Granddad has some pretty odd habits, like always keeping the curtains closed and never answering the phone. But playing chess leads Felix to some surprising discoveries, from what it feels like to be good at something, to the dark secret that his Granddad has been hiding for nearly 60 years. A well-constructed and thought-provoking real-life drama. Stewart Foster draws a clever link between the strategies required for gaming and for chess as Felix is drawn from one to the other, while Granddad's cold war storyline brings in an additional element of interest and intrigue as Felix tries to untangle and understand his Granddad's past.

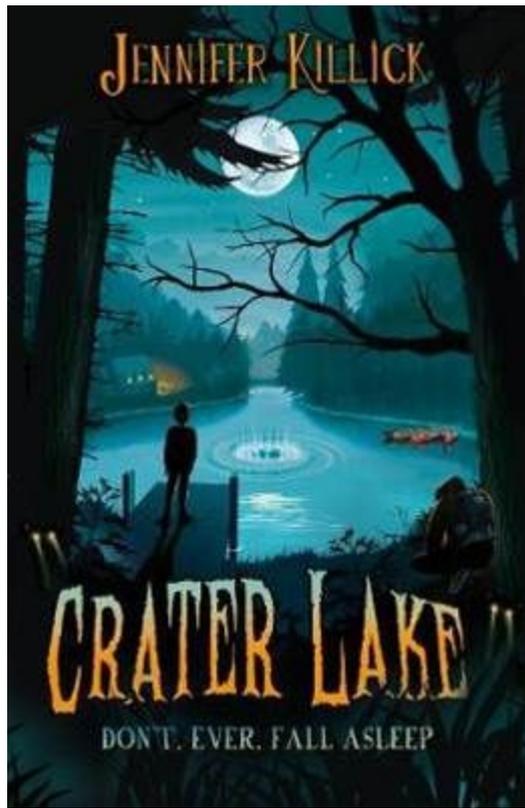


Interest age: 10-13

Reading age: 11+

City of Ghosts **Author:** Victoria Schwab **Publisher:** Scholastic

Instead of summer at the beach, Cassidy's parents have dragged her on a trip to Edinburgh to film their new TV show. This wouldn't be so bad, except that since her near-death experience last year, Cass has been able to see and feel ghosts whenever they're near –and Edinburgh is one of the most haunted cities in the world. Cassidy can cross the 'veil' into a realm between the worlds of the living and the dead. She's desperate to understand this ability, but the ghosts of Edinburgh are more powerful than any she's encountered before, and she quickly finds herself losing control. Pulled into the veil without her choice, Cass attracts the attention of the deadly Raven in Red, who's intent on stealing Cass's life-force and trapping her in the veil forever. Can Cass unravel the secrets of the veil and find a way back to the living? Hooking you from the very first page, it has just the right amount of spookiness, mystery and action, keeping you on the edge of your seat without getting gory. Victoria Schwab is a superb storyteller, blending well-crafted characters with a perfectly paced plot. A ridiculously fun, spine-tingling read.

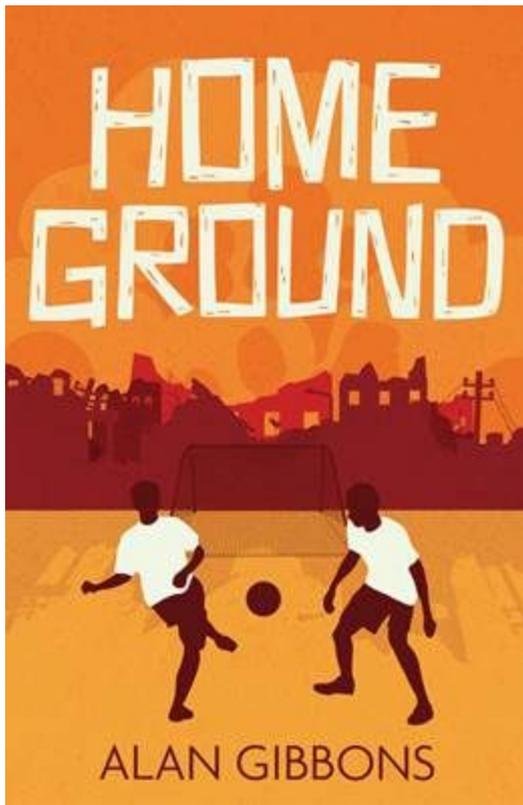


Interest age: 10-13

Reading age: 11+

Crater Lake **Author:** Jennifer Killick **Publisher:** Firefly Press

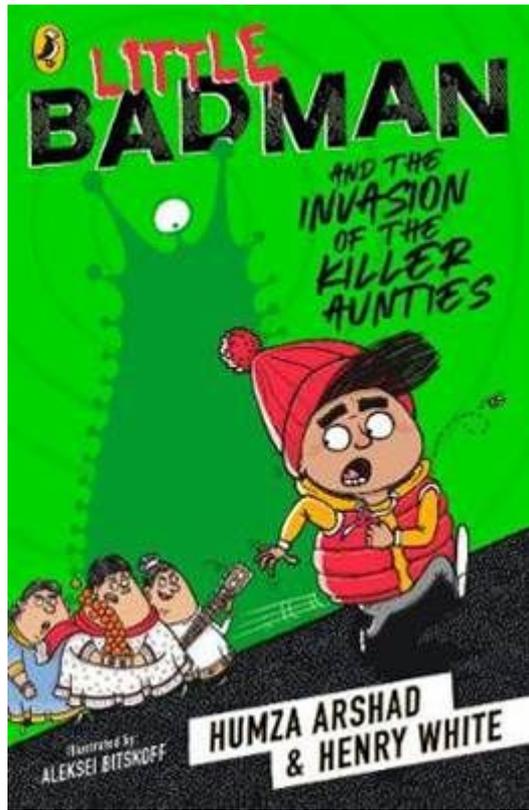
There are three rules for surviving Crater Lake: *don't* go anywhere with an adult; *don't* follow any instructions you're given; and don't *ever* fall asleep...When Lance's class arrives at the brand new Crater Lake activity centre for their school trip, it's immediately clear something is not quite right. Aside from a weird lack of staff and a very odd manager, there's also the panicked man covered in blood shouting at them all to run. And it's not long before the teachers and other kids in his class start behaving strangely too. Like Zombies, they get out of bed and, spaced-out, start marching into the woods at midnight. As they're unaffected, it's up to Lance and his friends to uncover the cause – and find a way to stop it. But time is ticking, they're exhausted, and if they fall asleep, then all will be lost...Crater Lake is a fast-paced, high action read full of suspense, scares, twists and turns. Alongside the action, there's witty dialogue and a strong message about staying loyal to your friends and how to stand up for yourself against bullies, whether they're mean kids, monstrous teachers – or even body-snatching aliens. Immensely enjoyable; light and dark perfectly balanced.



Interest age: 9+
Reading age: 8+

Home Ground **Author:** Alan Gibbons **Publisher:** Barrington Stoke

Sam's football team is second to last in their league and desperate not to be relegated. They try really hard but have barely won a game all season and Jordan, their captain, isn't much of a team player, fighting his own team and blaming them for their poor record. When Sam recruits skilled players Hasan and Faisal to join the team, it looks like their luck might finally change. For Hasan and Faisal, though, who are refugees, football means much more than winning a few games. Being part of the team means community, friendship, and a new sense of belonging. But not everyone's happy about them being there, especially Jordan, who wants all the glory for himself. How far will he go to get his own way? Printed in a dyslexia-friendly font, this novella brilliantly shows how sport can bring people together and forge new connections, while short factual sections at the end of each chapter provide valuable context for the refugee storyline. Perfectly pitched by author Alan Gibbons, it's a great read both for anyone who likes books football and sports, or anyone looking for a shorter read with real-life concerns.



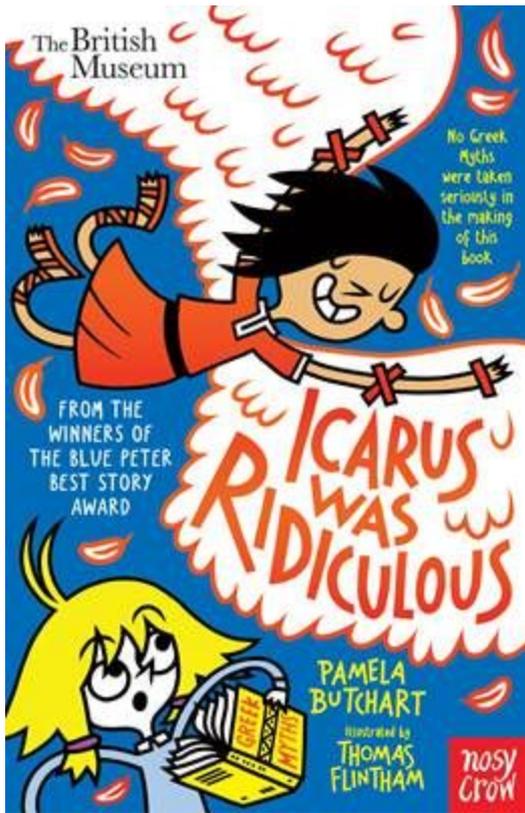
Interest age: 10-13

Reading age: 10+

Little Badman and the Invasion of the Killer Aunties

Author: Humza Arshad and Henry White **Illustrator:** Aleksei Bitskoff **Publisher:** Puffin Books

Humza (aka Little Badman) great ambition is to be a super cool rapper and he devotes most of his time and energy on pursuing this goal. Something weird is happening at school though: teachers are disappearing and being replaced by food-obsessed Aunties intent on fattening everyone up! When his music teacher vanishes, putting a halt to Humza's rapper dreams, he's determined to figure out what's going on – and then things start to get *really* crazy...But Humza's famous for telling not-entirely-true stories: how's he going to get anyone to believe him? Recruiting his best friend Umer, his elderly uncle 'Grandpa' and Wendy, the smartest girl in school, it seems Humza's particular musical talent is the only thing that will save his school, town – and possibly the whole world – from potential alien invasion. As long as he doesn't let stage fright defeat him first...Fast-paced and funny, readers are immediately swept into Humza's world and really feel for him and his various troubles, like his super-strict dad and adults not listening properly. Full of action and humour, but perhaps best of all is how Humza grows and changes through the story, and gets his dad to too.



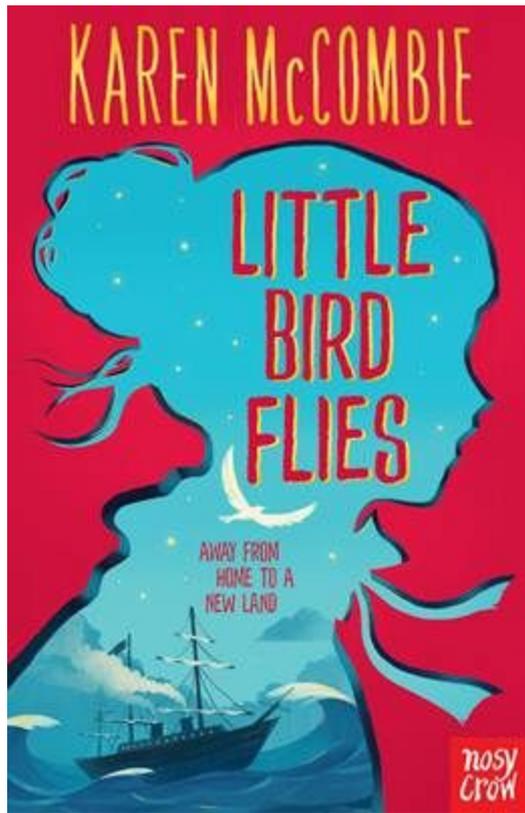
Interest age: 9+

Reading age: 8+

Icarus Was Ridiculous

Author: Pamela Butchart **Publisher:** Nosy Crow

Izzy and her friends are on a class trip to the British Museum. When one classmate fails to pay attention to the teacher, holding everyone up, Izzy's inspired to tell the story of Icarus who, after failing to listen to his dad's instructions, flies too close to the sun with his wax wings, with catastrophic results. This is Ancient Greece as you've never seen it before. Concerned about the sticky situations her friends keep getting into, Izzy retells four different Greek myths, each in her own unique and hilarious way. In Izzy's versions, people drink cappuccinos and eat fish fingers; Paris goes to Sparta to check out their fluffy carpets; Icarus is a grumpy teen; and King Midas has a meltdown if his beans touch his chicken goujons. The Ancient Greeks all get their comeuppance of course, from growing donkey's ears to invasion via a wooden horse, but will Izzy's friends learn from the Greeks' mistakes? A truly original take on some famous classical tales – though perhaps better appreciated if you know the originals. The way in which Izzy characterises the stars of each story through their behaviour is especially enjoyable, and Thomas Flintham's illustrations add that extra level of fun.



Interest age: 11+

Reading age: 11+

Bridie loves the tiny Scottish island where she lives, but can't help dreaming of what lies beyond the boundaries of this small world; she's determined that one day she'll fly free and cross the ocean to America. But for now she's tied to Tornish by traditions and promises and family. Until Bridie's island life is turned upside down by the arrival of a new Laird. He's brought with him his snooty family, a mysterious lady in black, and some worrying new ideas about how the island should be run.

Bridie's family try to carry on as normal. But who is the woman in black? And when the Laird's devastating plans for Tornish are revealed, Bridie and her family are faced with a heartbreaking choice. Will Bridie find her wings when she needs them most?

Little Bird Flies is a beautiful story of changing times and the upheaval of a small rural community, seen through the eyes of one young person. Set in the 1860s, the story chronicles rural life, family and friendship. It's wonderfully told, with a hopeful and outward-looking perspective. Bridie is caring and compassionate, tied to her past, but filled with dreams of a different future.



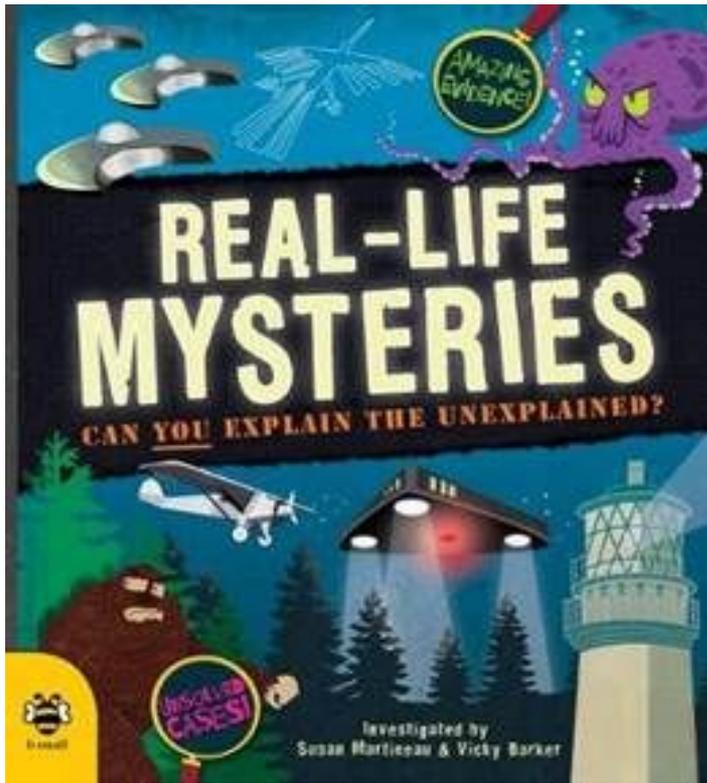
Interest age: 9-12

Reading age: 9+

Max has a terrible habit of getting in trouble – he really doesn't mean it, but somehow things just go wrong. His home life is tough too: since mum died, Max's dad works several jobs and Max has to help look after his three little sisters. Then, after one too many not-quite-legal jobs, Dad gets into trouble too and leaves Max all alone to look after his three little sisters.

Dad hasn't said how long he'll be gone and Max knows he's expected to step up, to be a 'Big Man', but he's scared and it's definitely not fair. So after finding a key to a remote Welsh cottage, Max makes a plan: hide out in Wales until Dad gets back. It seems like a great idea at first, but when things go from bad to worse, can he find a way to make them right? And should he have to?

A remarkable book about families, being a boy and coping with loss. The characters are supremely well written, the author sensitively exploring how there are different ways to be a man and how boys are shaped into men. An emotional read about real-life challenges and figuring out where you belong.



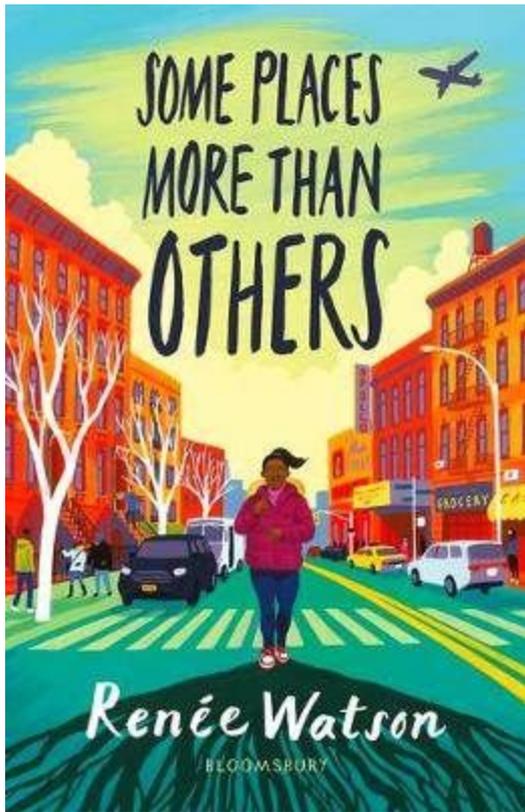
Real-Life Mysteries

Author: Susan Martineau **Illustrator:** Vicky Barker **Publisher:** b small

Is there really a Loch Ness monster? Can people really bend a spoon using just their mind? Are crop circles really created by aliens? This book examines some of the biggest mysteries and apparent supernatural occurrences from around the world to try and figure out if they're real – or something else. Unexplained phenomena have been written and spoken about for centuries; science has rationalised some things, but many mysteries still remain unsolved. Here you can read eyewitness accounts then take a look at the evidence and see the scientists' theories. Using written accounts and storyboard presentations, it's a fascinating collection of case files covering everything from human combustion to alien engineering. But what do you think? Examine and evaluate the evidence provided, then it's up to you to decide what the truth is. A great book for anyone who likes fun facts and to dip into books and pore over details and think about things a little differently. Engaging and entertaining, it also subtly helps readers learn how to discriminate and assess real facts from false or misleading ones, a useful skill for anyone to learn, especially in the age of 'fake news.'

Interest age: 8-13

Reading age: 9+

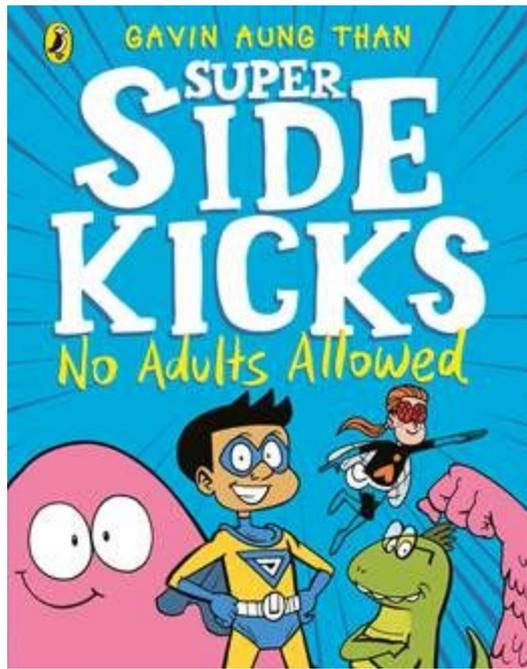


Interest age: 11+
Reading age: 10+

Some Places More Than Others

Author: Renée Watson **Publisher:** Bloomsbury

Amara desperately wants a trip to New York for her birthday, to meet her dad's family and see where he grew up and she can't understand why her parents are reticent about the trip. Until she discovers her dad hasn't spoken to his dad, Grandpa Earl, for twelve years – not since the day she was born. What could make them so mad at each other? For Amara, this makes the trip even more important. Perhaps she can untangle the web of secrets that's got her family twisted into this knot, and help her father mend the past. Harlem, NY is very different from her home in Oregon and, arriving in the city, she's plunged in a whole new world. But it's one with a powerful history that speaks deeply to Amara and leads to surprising revelations about people she loves and her own sense of self. Renée Watson is an outstanding storyteller and Amara's voice is clear and compelling. Concepts of family history are neatly tied together with the extensive roots of black American history that are revealed to Amara, giving her a true sense of empowerment and identity. A textured, warm and positive story, beautifully written and with a poetic feel.



Super Sidekicks: No Adults Allowed

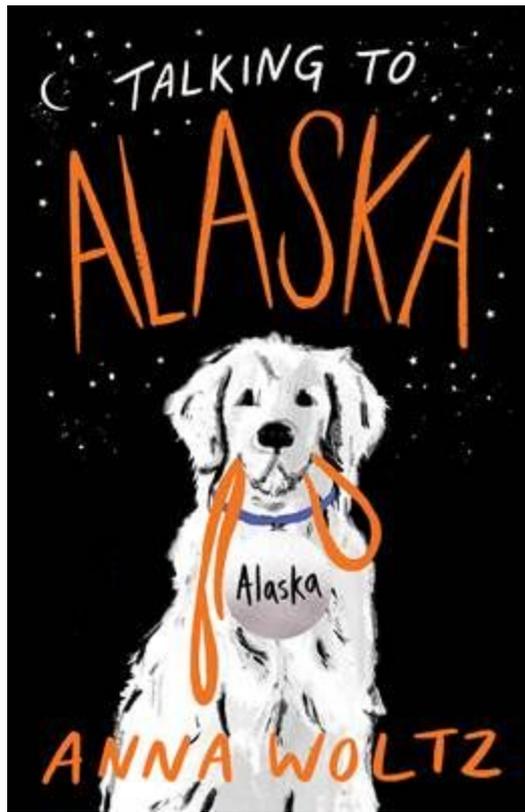
Author: Gavin Aung Than **Publisher:** Penguin

JJ and his friends Fly Girl and Dinomite are sick of being taken for granted by the adult superheroes they work for. It's time to stage a revolution and prove that they're not just sidekicks! Can they get the adults to listen? When Goo arrives at their no-adults-allowed meeting things get even trickier. The misunderstood sidekick of the villain, Dr Enok, Goo just wants to have some friends. But Dr Enok has other plans. Now the Sidekicks have their first mission: free Goo. But will their superpowers be up to the task? Although saving Goo from Dr Enok's evil grasp is their top priority, if they succeed, perhaps the adults will finally see them as superheroes in their own right and take them seriously for once.

An excellent, super-fun mini graphic novel (in black and white) that perfectly captures the superhero genre whilst also speaking to any reader who's ever felt unfairly undervalued just because they're a child. The adults are of course also completely blinkered when it comes to Goo, and it takes the kids to help them open their eyes. A clever story of empowerment told in a fresh new voice and wrapped up in a superhero comic package.

Interest age: 6+

Reading age: 6-11



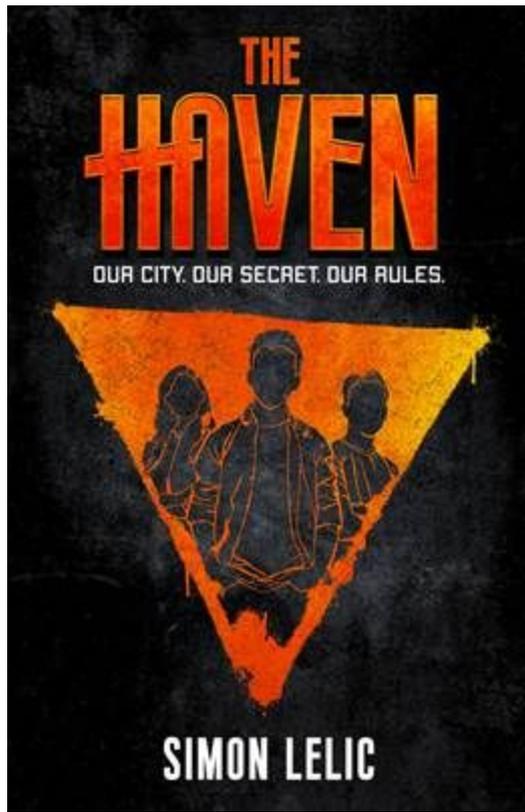
Interest age: 11-13

Reading age: 11+

Talking to Alaska

Author: Anna Woltz **Translator:** Laura Watkinson **Publisher:** OneWorld

It only takes one day at their new school for Parker and Sven to become mortal enemies. Parker's had a terrible summer and just wants to be invisible, while Sven is desperate to make an impression and be known as anything other than 'that kid with epilepsy.' When Parker discovers her beloved dog Alaska – who she had to give away last year – now belongs to Sven, she's determined to steal her back. Of course, that's much easier said than done... Meanwhile, Sven is mortified when Alaska is brought to meet him wearing her fluorescent Assistance Dog vest. Having epilepsy feels like he has no control over his life anymore, so when Parker – face covered and in disguise – arrives in his bedroom at midnight to take Alaska back, there's something new to think about. But after spilling all his secrets to her, what'll happen if he uncovers her real identity? Told in alternating chapters between the two characters, this is a heartfelt story about understanding others. It's a relatively short read, but Anna Woltz packs a lot in, including themes of bullying, trauma, and coping with life-altering situations, while the characters make unexpected discoveries about friendship – and a special discovery about Alaska too.



Interest age: 11+

Reading age: 11+

The Haven

Author: Simon Lelic **Publisher:** Hachette

When Ollie's pulled from his bed by masked men in the middle of the night and his guardian, Nancy, is murdered, it's only thanks to the help of street kid Dodge that he survives. Dodge takes Ollie to The Haven: a secret refuge for kids with nowhere else to go. Run by the children themselves, The Haven helps get lost or homeless kids off the streets and give them a new start. Ollie's desperate to find out why Nancy was murdered, but the Haven has other priorities: kids from the city's gangs are going missing. Who's taking them? And why? Quickly sucked into the investigation, Ollie joins his new friends as they uncover a terrifying plot by mob boss Maddy Sikes. Not just the kids' lives, but the whole of London is at stake... A well-layered action thriller, this is perfect for readers who enjoy a tense story packed with life-threatening danger. A number of different threads run through it that the author very cleverly pulls together in the dramatic finale. How are Nancy and Maddy Sikes linked? Can they prevent the different street gangs from going to war? And, perhaps most importantly, can they save The Haven itself?



Interest age: 11-13

Reading age: 11+

The Switch-Up

Author: Katy Cannon **Publisher:** Little Tiger Press

Willa and Alice meet for the first time in the unaccompanied minors lounge at LAX airport. They look so alike that they're mistaken for sisters, but in reality they're chalk and cheese: Willa is outgoing and precocious; Alice is quiet and serious. They're both being sent away for the summer: Willa to Italy to stay with an aunt she's never met; Alice to London to stay with the girlfriend she didn't even know her dad had. Totally not how they thought they'd be spending their summers, and neither wants to go where they're going. When Alice suggests they swap places, she's joking – but Willa is 100% serious when she says yes. It'll be the adventure of a lifetime! Besides, no-one will ever find out... will they? The perfect teen coming-of-age movie all wrapped up in a book. Each girl has a personal reason behind this dramatic decision and as we follow each of their stories, their different summers help them come to terms with the changes in their lives. It's lighthearted and fun whilst touching on themes of parental separation, grief, foster care and growing up. A highly relatable feel-good read about discovering the true meaning of family and friendship.