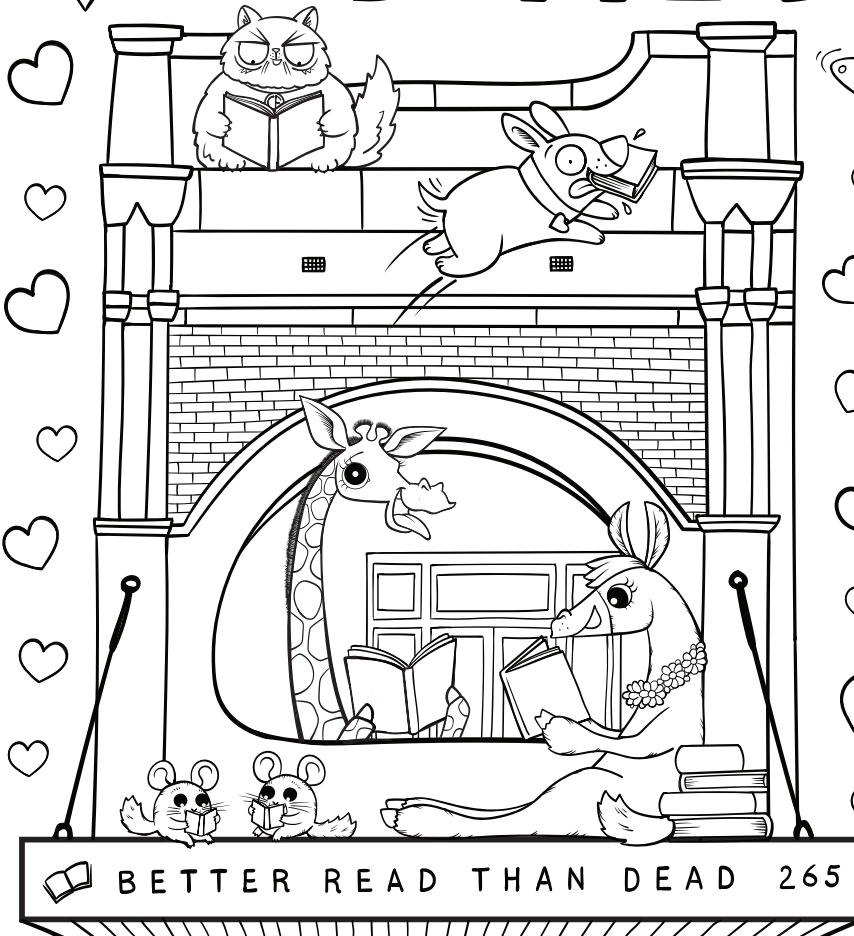




BETTER READ KIDS



SUMMER READING GUIDE 2023-2024



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Colour-in the front cover of our Better Read Kids Summer Reading Guide to win a Matt Cosgrove book pack, courtesy of Scholastic Australia!

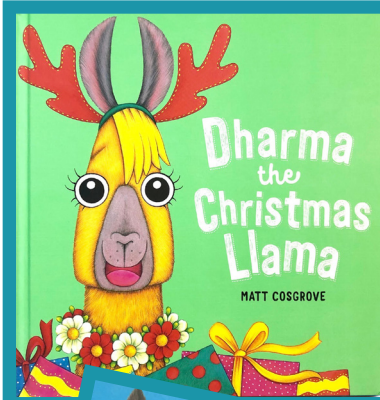
Submit your entry in-store before December 31 to be in the running. The winners will be contacted via phone in January.

The winner of our under 7s category will win all 11 Macca the Alpaca picture books, and the winner of our 7 and over category will win the Worst Week Ever series (Monday-Friday)!

NAME: _____ AGE: _____

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NUMBER: _____ GUARDIAN NAME: _____

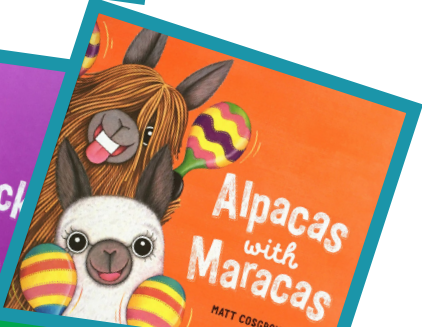
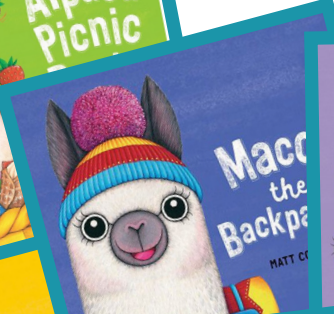
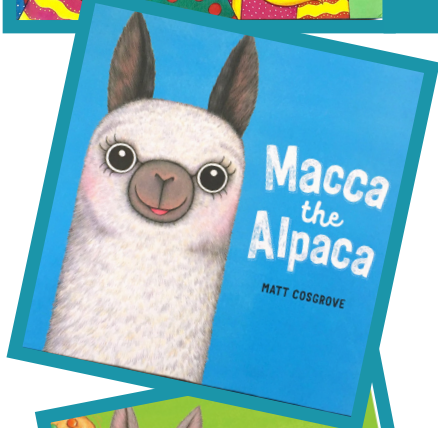


Dharma the Christmas Llama | Matt Cosgrove | \$18.99 | Scholastic | 3+

Dharma the Llama is hiding away from the hustle and bustle of the silly season so she can read her new book in peace. But when her friend, Macca the Alpaca, needs some festive help, will Dharma find a way to save Christmas?

Worst Week Ever! Friday | Eva Amores & Matt Cosgrove | \$15.99 | Scholastic | 7+

Have you ever had a bad week? Justin Chase sure has, and this is it! Against all odds, he somehow survived the trials and torments of Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. But now ... it's Friday and he's hit an all time low!



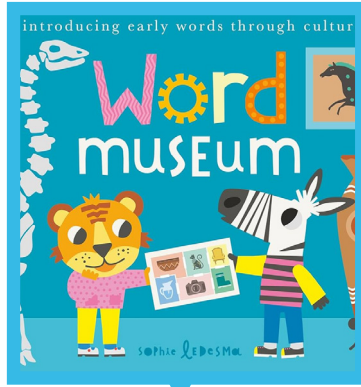
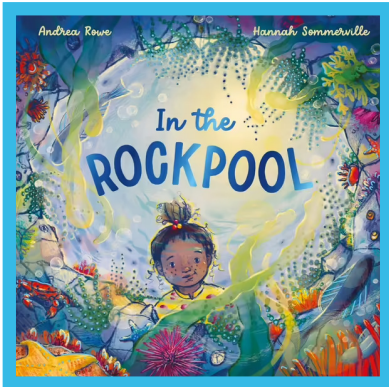
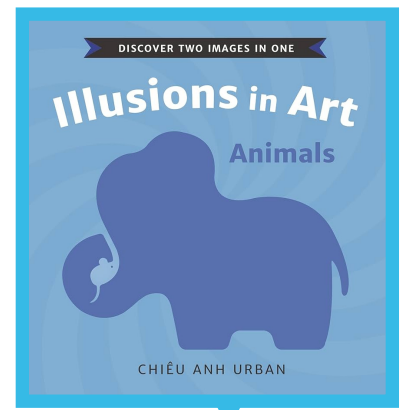
Spread Your Wings | Emma Dodd | \$16.99 | Allen & Unwin | Ages 2+

The book was about a tiny bird who loved its mum. Her mum told her all the things she'll do when she learns how to fly.

At the end they said that they will always stay together and never split apart. That made me really happy because I want to always stay with my family too.

I like this book because it is calming, easy to read and they use sweet words.

Reviewed by Anika M. age 6



Illustrations in Art: Animals | Chiêu Anh Urban | \$24.99 | Walker Books | 1+

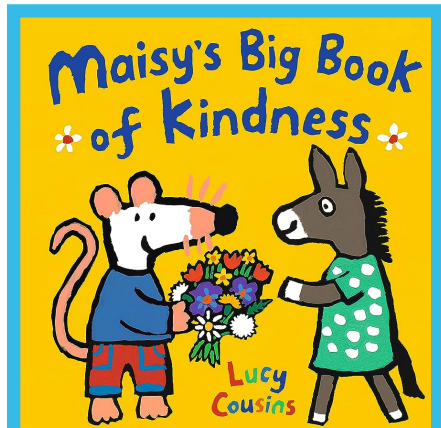
Look closely. What do you see? Could that be a bird nestled in the curl of Lion's tail? And who is swimming by Whale? Or basking in the sun near Swan? Colorful spreads invite children in with a rhyme that contains a clue, while the bold, graphic design steers the eye to a negative space revealing a hidden familiar animal.

In the Rockpool | Andrea Rowe | \$19.99 | Hardie Grant | Ages 2+

Little people love to explore little worlds! Simple, poetic verses and delightful illustrations invite children to discover the tiny universe of rockpools. Nature-lovers are encouraged to count along and spot the wildlife shown on each page, from three little urchins, to five little clams!

Word Museum | Isabel Otter | \$16.99 | Hardie Grant | Ages 2+

Join Oriel the ostrich and her students as they explore the word museum! With gatefolds and shaped pages, this book is perfect for little hands. Explore the museum's exciting exhibits, from animals and furniture to technology and clothes and learn some brilliant first words in a fun and original way.



Maisy's Big Book of Kindness | Lucy Cousins | \$27.99 | Walker | Ages 2+

Wow, this book is so lovely. It is about Maisy and her friends learning about kindness. It is set in many different places at her house and the characters are all animals. There are many examples of when things go wrong when they play. They learn sharing, giving, caring and helping. The illustrations and colours were magnificent and there were some very good examples of when kids should share. It was very sweet and simple which helps kids to get the message across very easily. It's a lovely big book of kindness.



Baby's First Zodiac | Kerry Pieri | \$16.99 | Penguin Random House | Ages 2+

Inspire babies and toddlers with the wonder of the zodiac! Sweet rhymes and gorgeous art will encourage little ones to explore their own unique traits, interests, and talents, and to learn about the star signs of family members and friends.



We Use Science | Kim Hankinson | \$17.99 | Peribo | Ages 2+

Adults who love science - and parents who want their kids to love it too - will cherish the chance to share their passion during story time. There are four everyday jobs showcased in the book each with a spread showing all the interesting and unusual STEM tools that they use. A little book of STEM-loving heroes!

Reviewed by Lily G. age 9





Reviewed by Owen O. age 9



Mr Clownfish, Miss Anemone and the Hermit Crab | Sean Avery | \$25.99 | Walker | Ages 2+

This adventurous story starts with two inseparable friends, Mr Clownfish and Miss Anemone, enjoying their harmonious life together. Then, one day Mr Clownfish surprises Miss Anemone with an unusual birthday present. This present, it would seem, has more to it than meets the eye, and will change the dynamics of their friendship forever. This

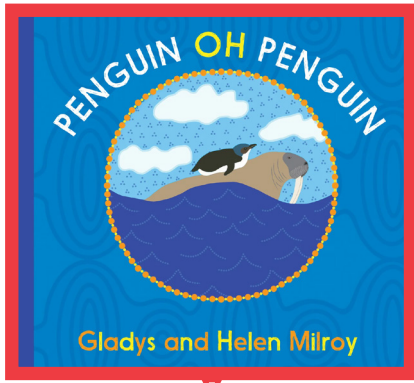
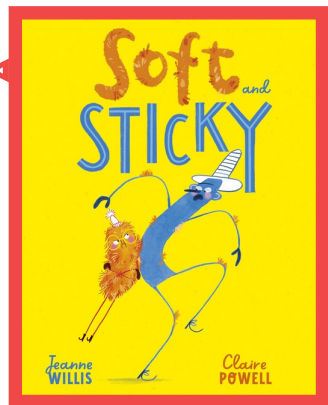
is an entertaining story about friendships and how they can change. Expressive and colourful illustrations also help to tell the story.

Paper Flower Girl | Margrete Lamond | \$26.95 | Peribo | Ages 4+

The Paper Flower Girl creates elaborate flowers out of paper, but a deal with a Giant to gain more customers goes wrong! She finds a way to hold onto the good and leave behind the bad, and find success in her beautiful business.

Soft and Sticky | Jeanne Willis | \$29.99 | Walker | Ages 3+

Soft and Sticky are best friends, but Soft's fluff always gets up Sticky's nose, and Sticky sticks like glue to Soft! After one last argument, they decide to end their friendship – life will be better apart, won't it? A hilarious and oddball story about learning to love each other's differences!



Reviewed by Ruth K. age 11



A Lost Kite | Tasy Young | \$25.99 | NewSouth Books | Ages 5+

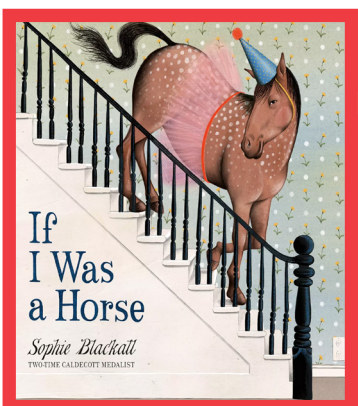
A Lost Kite is about an imaginary world where kites appear in a variety of colours, sizes, and patterns. The story takes place on a big kite (that looks like a fish) and has a small, strange house with a chimney on top with fantasy creatures. There, we find an old man playing chess next to a red kite and a big flurry of plants. Then we venture down to the ocean, where there are more kites that look like sea creatures. We also find a pink creature who takes a little boy on a ride with it. They fly through a big forest with a colossal rainbow. I loved the illustrations and how a few pictures can make a whole story.

Penguin Oh Penguin | Gladys Milroy | \$16.99 | NewSouth Books | Ages 1+

Penguin Oh Penguin is a gentle early childhood story about a penguin that runs away to be at sea. Rhyme is one of the building blocks of language learning; and the rhythm of the verse comes through and is an absolute delight to read aloud.

Little Kid with the Big Green Hand | Matthew Gray Gubler | \$29.99 | T&H | 6+

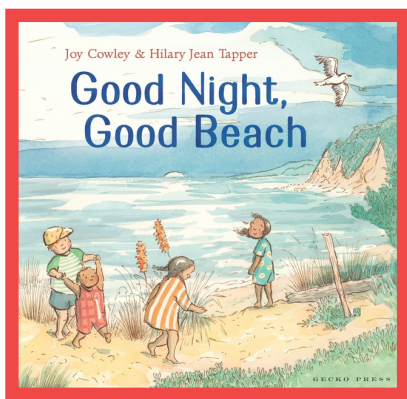
The Little Kid with the Big Green Hand is a wonderful little novel about looking at the other person's perspective. I think it shows different messages in a beautifully illustrated passage. A heartwarming story of colours, creatures, and connection. Join two unlikely friends, Chuck and Lenore, as they embark on a surreal journey of self-discovery and uncover the magic of seeing the world through someone else's eyes.



Reviewed by Zehraan R. age 9

If I Was a Horse | Sophie Blackall | \$24.99 | Hachette | Ages 2+

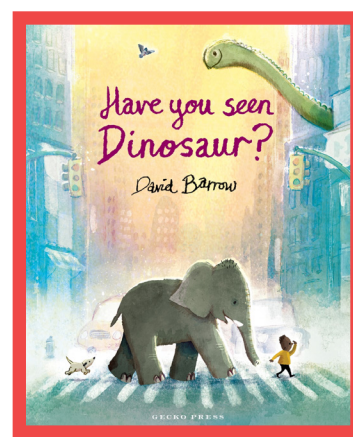
If you were a horse what would you do? A joyful picture book that captures with exuberant illustrations the astonishing spectacle of a child imagining life as a horse.



Good Night, Good Beach | Joy Cowley | \$27.99 | Walker | Ages 2+
 Summer holidays by the sea have a rhythm all their own. With a few resonant images, Cowley takes us straight to the end of a long hot day. This poem transports the reader to a childhood summer with language that asks to be read over and over.



The Bedtime Boat | Sital Gorasia Chapman | \$16.99 | Hardie Grant | 2+
 Chandan has had an exciting day, but now it's time for bed and he can't sleep. His mum has some calming techniques at her fingertips. The bedtime boat sits on Chandan's tummy, rising and falling with his breath and soon gently lulls him into a peaceful sleep. The perfect way to help restless little ones drift off to sleep.



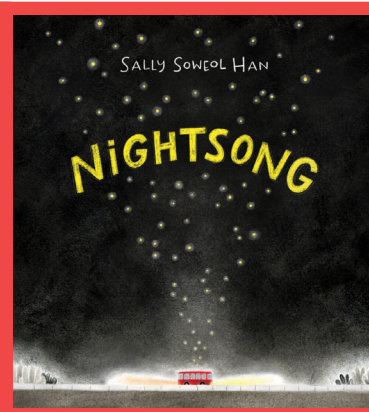
Have You Seen a Dinosaur | David Barrow | \$27.99 | Walker | Ages 2+
 Best friends Boy, Dog and Elephant are VERY good at hide-and-seek. There's a missing dinosaur in the city - who better to spot this elusive giant? Delighted readers will be pointing "There it is!" from the first page. This is an absurd, laugh-out-loud picture book, full of light and colour.



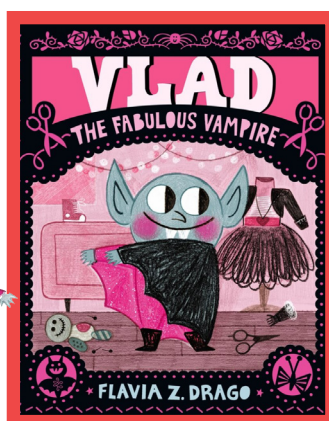
Reviewed by Genevieve L. age 7

Nightsong | Sally Soweol Han | \$24.99 | UQP | Ages 4+

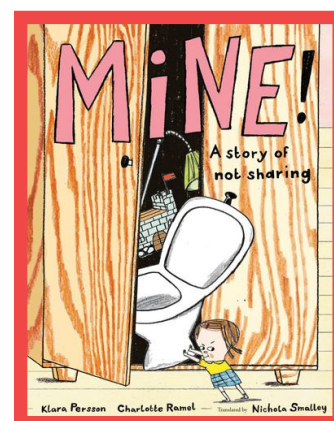
Lewis was going to his mother's friend's house. When her mum was talking to her friend, Lewis was drawing a picture. On the bus on the way home, the bus had a flat tire so they had to wait outside. While they were waiting outside, Lewis went into the wild and saw lots of strange stuff. What I feel about this book is it makes me feel brave and ready to go on an adventure. It makes me feel brave because Lewis was brave. I also like this book because it has a lot of pictures in it. The pictures are creative with all sorts of colours, both light and dark,



Reviewed by Savannah C. age 9



Vlad the Fabulous Vampire | Flavia Z. Drago | \$27.99 | Walker | Ages 3+
 Vlad's passion is fashion. And just like every other vampire, Vlad dresses head to toe in the colour black. Vlad tries to hide behind his clothes and his cape but, as it turns out, being yourself - truly yourself - is the most fabulous way to be.



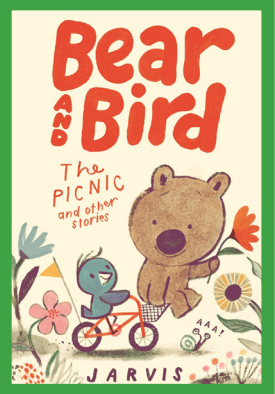
Grand Hotel of Feelings | Lidia Brankovic | \$29.99 | Thames and Hudson | Ages 4+
 A wonderful book all about a hotel, where the guests are all emotions. The author shows and describes all emotions and different strategies to understand that all feelings are welcome and ok. I love this book because it is creative and fun. I really liked the funny creatures and all their different personalities. I couldn't wait for what happened next, I just had to finish it. This book is a fun and educational way to learn that having emotions are ok.

Mine! | Klara Persson | \$26.99 | Hardie Grant | Ages 2+
 Nico is coming over to play, but Sally doesn't want him to share ANYTHING - 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.

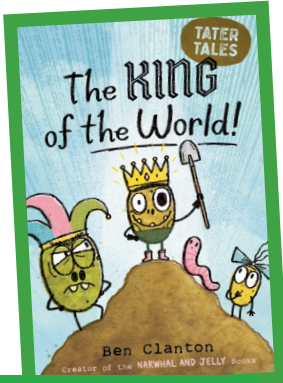




Bear and Bird: The Stars and Other Stories | Jarvis | \$24.99 | Walker | Ages 5+
 This fantasy fiction book consisted of short stories featuring the main characters, Bear and Bird. They occasionally got into disputes but eventually resolved their differences. My favourite character was Bird because she was warm-hearted and reminded me of my little sister. I had mixed feelings about Bear as he was quick-tempered but displayed kindness. The funniest part was when Bird sat on top of the tortoise. Handwritten text and creative illustrations in the book made the story feel real. I thoroughly enjoyed the book and recommend it for young readers.

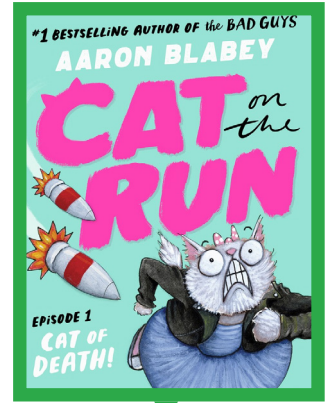
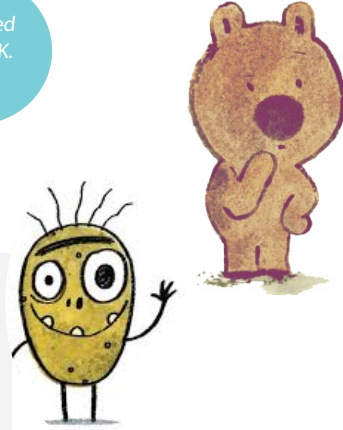


Reviewed by Ana K. age 8



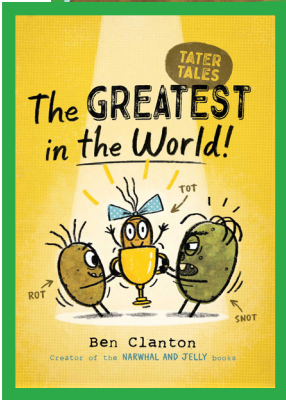
Tater Tales #1: The Greatest in the World | Ben Clanton | \$15.99 | Harper Collins | Ages 5+

Two spud siblings face off in a series of epic challenges in the first of a hilariously silly new series. Rot is a mutant potato who wakes up feeling great, maybe even... the greatest in the world! But that only makes Rot's brother Snot the grumpiest in the world. The only solution? An epic contest to prove who is the greatest. *Book 2 coming in April, 2024!*



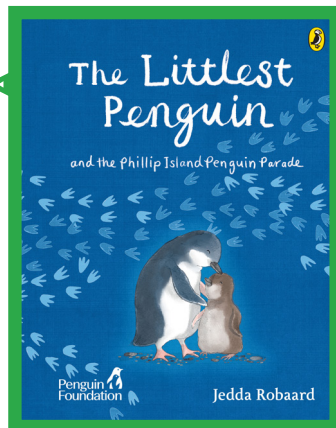
Cat in the Run Episode 1: Cat of Death | Aaron Blabey | \$16.99 | Scholastic | Ages 5+

What happens when the World's #1 Cat Video Star gets accused of a crime she didn't commit? She becomes a Cat on the Run, that's what. But how do you avoid capture and prove your innocence when you are the most famous feline on the planet?! A laugh-out-loud new series from the author of *Bad Guys*.



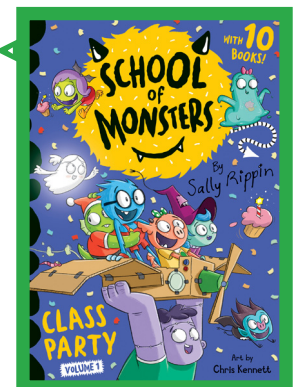
The Littlest Penguin | Jemma Robaard | \$24.99 | Penguin | Ages 5+

Come on an incredible journey with Little Penguin, Scruffy, Cheeky and Big Chick. Where have they been? What adventures did they have? A charming story for young readers that follows a group of gorgeous little penguins out to sea and back to their beloved Phillip Island.



Class Party Vol. 1: School of Monsters | Sally Rippin | \$24.99 | Hardie Grant | 5+

Welcome to the School of Monsters: the funniest, silliest and most accessible series for first readers! With tumbling rhymes and an infectious sense of humour, the weird and wonderful students at the School of Monsters are guaranteed to spark a love of reading!

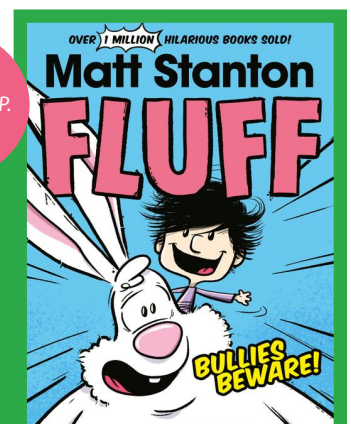


Fluff: Bullies Beware! | Matt Stanton | \$15.99 | Harper Collins | Ages 7+

If you've read *Funny Kid*, then you'll like this because it's made by the same author. *Fluff: Bullies Beware* is a book about a kid named Gilbert and his best cuddly friend, Fluff.

I like that Fluff is a funny talking stuffed bunny. One day while Gilbert was walking to school, his underpants were flapping on the school gate, and the neighbourhood bully, Carl, had put them up there. Carl was laughing his head off & teases Gilbert about it. I only got to read a sneak peek of it and can't wait to find out what happens next!

Reviewed by Nathaniel P. age 8





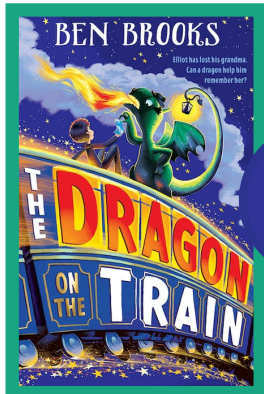
Terra Ultima | Raoul Deleo | \$45.00 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 9+
Terra Ultima is about a man, called Deleo, who finds Terra Ultima, a place untouched by humans. This has many weird and wonderful creatures like the toucan twin crab, the flamingo fawn and the six-legged ladybear. The things I liked about this book were the way it felt like an actual diary, the drawings and descriptions of the animals and the way that the doctor and Deleo have a weird relationship. An amazing book!
 - Reviewed by Noah W. age 12



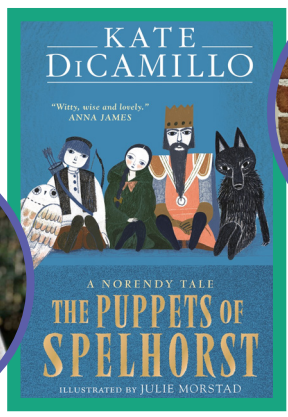
Our world is all normal as you might say, but the book *Terra Ultima* shows us we have missed a whole continent with weird and wacky creatures! You should really read this book if you like mystery and adventure. The author has written the book as a diary and takes you on an adventure through the continent of Terra Ultima. I like the book because it has amazing illustrations that help you picture the creatures there!
 - Reviewed by Aarav M. age 10



An Elston-Fright Tale | The Lonely Lighthouse of Elston-Fright | \$16.99 | Scholastic | 9+
 This is a twisting tale about ghouls, poltergeists, spirits and magic. The main characters are Flip Little (the lightkeeper), Corpse (a ghost made from wax) and Girl (a ghost that can fly). They are all friends with a gigantic spider named Simon who gets spider-napped. Flip, Corpse and Girl immediately set out to rescue him. Their rescue mission takes them on a dangerous and exciting adventure. This tale is an intriguing and mysterious book, great for those who like supernatural creatures and adventure!



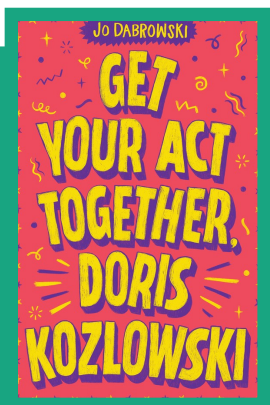
The Dragon on the Train | Ben Brooks | \$16.99 | Hachette | 8+
The Dragon on the Train is a book about a young boy who loses his love of music when his favourite grandmother dies. A magical dragon appears mysteriously one night and takes him on a train ride of adventures to help him find his love of music again. The books was easy to read with lots of short chapters and exciting moments. I would definitely read it again. I think this book would be good for kids who like stories about magical journeys.



The Puppets of Spelhorst | Kate DiCamillo | \$24.99 | Walker Books | 5+
 The book is about an old man called Spelhorst who sees a set of puppets in a toy shop window and decides to buy them! The books follows the journeys and adventures of the puppets as they find a new home. I liked the book because there was a lot of descriptive language and the characters were really creative. I especially liked the girl puppet because she was very gentle, kind and loved singing. I would recommend this book to children who like fantasy, adventure and plays!

The Puppets of Spelhorst | Kate DiCamillo | \$24.99 | Walker Books | 5+
The Puppets of Spelhorst is about puppets who are part of a show and an old sea captain wants to just buy the girl puppet, but he has to buy all of them. There is a king, a wolf, an owl, a boy and a girl. Personally, I think that it was an excellent book and other people will definitely enjoy it. The book was great and I loved that it showed the girls years later wondering if the maid was happy and well.

Get Your Act Together Doris Kozlowski | Jo Dabrowski | \$16.99 | Affirm Press | 9+
Get Your Act Together Doris Kozlowski is an inspiring book about the struggles of a twelve-year-old. Doris is from a quirky family, her brother befriends rocks, her mother is obsessed with theatre, and Babica is crazy. Recently, Doris's only friend Felicity started avoiding her and she doesn't know why. Doris needs a plan, maybe if she wins the year six talent show (the biggest one yet) she can get Felicity back. But Ideas just aren't coming and she's running out of time! This book is for anybody who is looking for a read that will make you laugh, cry, and jump up for joy, all in the same chapter, while going on an adventure.



LEXIE'S PICK

Our Family Dragon | Rebecca Lim | \$19.99 | Allen and Unwin | 3+

I love Chinese New Year so much (the food! The red envelopes! Time with family! The envelopes!), and *Our Family Dragon* is a wonderful homage of all of those things (without the money). It shows the importance of and the rituals we all have, while getting ready to leave the last year behind and getting ready for the next year; the year of the dragon, which is all about change. This book was lovely, and warm, and centred around family- the real highlight of all celebrations, no matter what your culture.



KARREN'S PICK

The Big Cheese | Jory John and Pete Oswald | \$24.99 | Harper Collins | 4+

Meet the Big Cheese a character who's not just cheesy in name but in personality too. He's the best at everything and never hesitates to boast about his achievements. The story kicks off at the annual Cheese Cathlon. His ego knows no bounds and it seems like victory is in the bag for him once again. Enter Wedge Wedgeman the quiet new guy in town, with humble demeanour and a unique approach to the Cheese Cathlon. What unfolds next is a heartwarming tale of sportsmanship friendship and the discovery that there's more to life than being the best. It's not just a fun read it's also an educational tool that teaches kids about the value of modesty and the joy of sharing success with others. Jory John and Pete Oswald serve up another heaping plate of laughs and lessons in this empowering witty and charming picture book!



The Spider and Her Demons | sydney khoo | \$19.99 | Penguin | 14+

This stunning urban fantasy tells the story of Zhi as she tries to survive high school, work shifts at her aunt's dumpling shop and still spend time with her friends. What her friends don't know, however, is that Zhi is secretly half spider-demon. When something catastrophic happens to completely flip her life, Zhi might just discover that she is no longer the scariest thing in the dark. This is a story about one girl's experience as a second-generation immigrant as she struggles to make peace with her demons, while also striving to live up to expectations and feeling trapped in her life. This book was both funny and moving and I enjoyed it a lot.

RUBY'S PICK

Business Chickens | Jess McGeachin | \$24.99 | Penguin | 3+

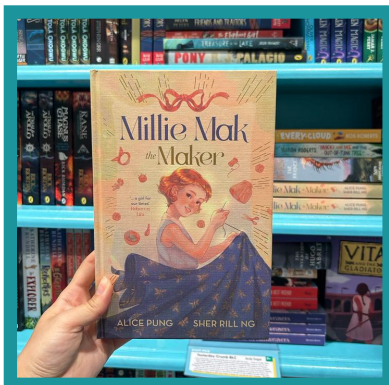
Sometimes it feels like everyone else has it all figured out and it can be overwhelming if you feel like you can't keep up. *Business Chickens* is about finding your joy – even if it looks a little bit different. Beautifully illustrated and cleverly worded, this book is a great reminder for readers of all ages!

ADRIEN'S PICK

Millie Mak the Maker | Alice Pung | \$22.99 | Harper | Ages 8+

A truly heartwarming story about recycling, family and friendship. Millie Mak learns how to sew, to find real friends and realise that everything is not always what it looks like. The book also has instructions to craft projects mentioned in the book. *Millie Mak the Maker* is a joyful read and as a hardcover a perfect gift.

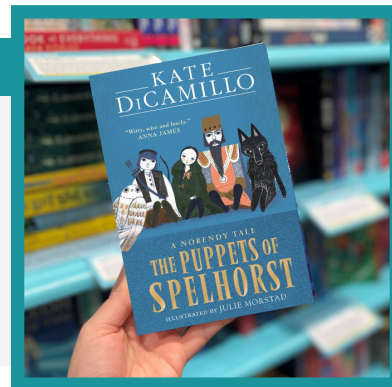
TUULA'S PICK



KATE'S PICK

The Puppets of Spelhorst | Kate DiCamillo | \$24.99 | Walker Books | 7+

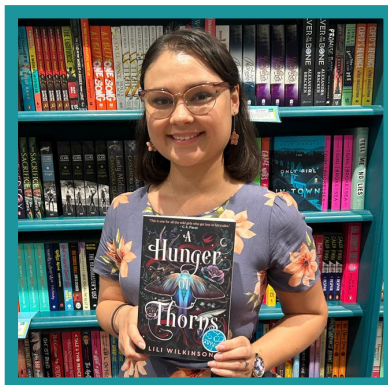
If a book can be delicious then this is the one! DiCamillo at her best with a modern fairytale that will make you smile and cry. The main characters are 5 puppets: an owl, a king, a wolf and a boy and girl. The story has them together and separated, happy and sad, loved and torn apart. As well as the puppets we have some amazing but flawed humans who all play a part in this wonderful journey. The final resting place of five puppets is in the hands of Jane Twiddum and your imagination. The illustrations just add to the pleasure.



MISCHA'S PICK

A Hunger of Thorns | Lili Wilkinson | \$24.99 | Allen & Unwin | 14+

I have always loved anything that Lili Wilkinson has written and her latest, although a dramatic detour from her usual style, is no exception and, dare I say, her most ambitious novel yet! Modern fairytale, feisty powerful witches, a missing best friend, abandoned ruins and ancient magical forests, female friendship and sapphic romance, feminist themes, twists and turns that you never see coming. Tick, tick, tick! Wilkinson's prose is enchanting, and her characters are flawed and dynamic. Evoking the Gothic lyricism of Krystal Sutherland's *House of Hollow* and Margo Lanagan, *A Hunger of Thorns* definitely delivered all the deliciously dark and witchy vibes I needed to become utterly immersed. Perfect for any teenage reader who has a touch of a wildness in them!



Burn | Melanie Saward | \$34.99 | Affirm Press | 14+

Burn is an affecting, coming-of-age debut by Bigambul and Wakka Wakka writer Melanie Saward. Set between a childhood in Launceston and Port Sorell, and adolescence in Bracken Ridge, we follow Andrew through school and family life as his obsession with fire grows. At the crux of the novel is a complete loss of control - his inability to control fires drives the story along, and his sense of hopelessness being tossed around during a family breakdown. Andrew is a realistically portrayed, complex young man whose story sheds important light on young criminal justice and intergenerational trauma.



STEPH'S PICK

Imogen, Obviously | Becky Albertalli | \$19.99 | Harper Collins | 14+

Becky Albertalli has written a delightfully perfect book for queer women and non-binary people who grew up in the early 2000's, the small in jokes of growing up queer and engaging with queer media, the only thing missing was an actual Tumblr girlfriend. Makes your toes curl in delight at the memories of your first queer crush, how liberating it felt to understand that you are queer and to know queer love is filled with so much joy. I haven't felt this much happiness from a book in such a long time.

IMOGEN'S PICK



The Grand Hotel of Feelings | Lidia Brankovic | \$29.99 | Thames & Hudson | 3+

I feel so overwhelmingly positive about the direction that children's literature is heading when I see a picture book like this. Little kids have so many emotions (trust me, I used to be a kindergarten teacher) and they can be incredibly tricky to understand. Being angry might make us want to hit, being sad might make us want to be alone, being over-excited might make us want to be loud...how on earth do we speak to children about these immense feelings without inciting guilt or confusion? *The Grand Hotel of Feelings* uses gentle, non-shaming language to talk through these feelings and how we might expect them to behave when they arrive in the body. I absolutely love this book and wish I had it when I was little - and the illustrations are divine!

ALLY'S PICK

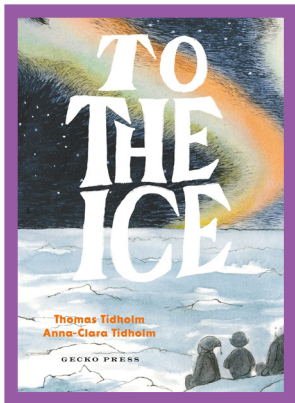




The Impossible Secret of Lillian Velvet | Jaclyn Moriarty | \$22.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 10+

I love mystery and fantasy so when I read the first page of Lillian Velvet's story, I had an excited feeling to keep turning the pages! This book is about an inquisitive girl called Lillian Velvet who basically lives a caged life! That is, until a jar of coins given to her whisk her away to a mysterious world where she must save some newfound friends. I really loved this book because of its surprising plot twists and because it was set in southern NSW. I would recommend this book to everyone who loves fantasy, mystery and adventure.

Reviewed by Alessia S. age 11

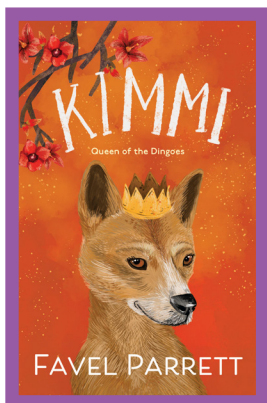


To the Ice | Thomas Tidholm | \$24.99 | Walker | Ages 6+

An epic story set in a polar wilderness that blurs realism and imagination - fully illustrated for newly independent readers. Ida, Max and Jack go to the creek one winter's day and find themselves floating away - all the way to the polar ice, with just a box, a branch and some sandwiches. An imaginative adventure tale!

Broken Rainbow | Nerra: Deep Time Traveller | Tasma Walton and Samantha Campbell | \$16.99 | Scholastic | Ages 7+

When Nerra's great-grandmother passes away, she leaves a box of artefacts to Nerra. Nerra is drawn to the clapsticks which glow red hot, and when she picks them up, she is transported back in time. Dreaming is out of balance and a hero needs to help. A compelling new First Nations adventure!



Kimmi | Favel Parrett | \$19.99 | Hachette | Ages 8+

On the night of a full moon, a small tropical dingo cub is born. This is Kimmi's story, the story of how she became Queen of the Dingoes in a sanctuary that saves them from extinction. It is her mama's story, too. An inspiring true story of survival and courage!

The Kingdom Over the Sea | Zohra Nabi | \$27.99 | Simon and Schuster | 8+

Yara must summon all her courage to discover the truth about her mother's past and her own identity... and to find her place in a new world. A lavish adventure following a girl who must travel to a mystical land of sorceresses, alchemists, jinn, and flying carpets to discover her heritage and her destiny.

House with a Dragon In It | Nick Lake | \$24.99 | Simon and Schuster | 9+

When Summer and her foster family are having lunch one day, a hole appears in the middle of the living room. That hole leads to a dragon and the promise of three wishes, granted by a very unusual witch. As things begin to unravel, will Summer get her dearest most secret wish?



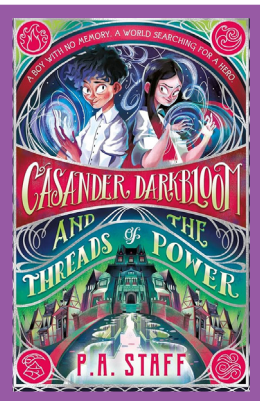
Silver Linings | Katrina Nannestad | \$19.99 | Harper Collins | Ages 10+

This book is another one of Katrina Nannestad's amazing historical fiction stories. I just feel like it was written so well and just worded really cleverly. Her historical fictions always touch my heart but this is the first one where I just cried for ages reading this.

Writing books like this can be so hard because life in the 1950s was actually exactly like how Katrina writes. *Silver Linings* has a tragic story line but I'd read it a billion times over. I'd say this is for readers over ten. The main character Nettie Sweeney shows us readers there's always hope.

Reviewed by Freya S. age 10



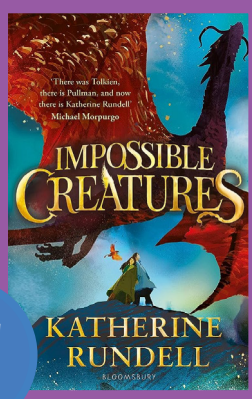


Casander Darkbloom and the Threads of Power | P. A. Staff | \$19.99 | Walker | 9+
 Casander has no memory, lives outside a curiosity shop, and experiences random surges of uncontrollable energy in his limbs. When he inexplicably brings a stuffed raven to life, he unravels a strange and thrilling magical world. A fantasy novel that truly celebrates difference!

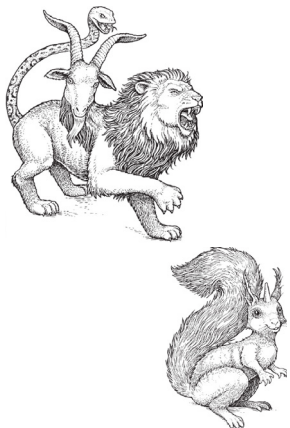
The Lost Library | Wendy Mass | \$16.99 | Text Publishing | 9+
 When a mysterious little free library (guarded by a large orange cat) appears overnight in the small town of Martinville, eleven-year-old Evan plucks two weathered books from its shelves, never suspecting that his life is about to change. A timeless story about the power of a good book!



Impossible Creatures | Katherine Rundell | \$18.99 | Bloomsbury | 9+
 Envision a place, hidden from our world, a place full of unthinkable, impossible sights. A place where all the fairytales and myths our world grew up with are true and thrive - thrive in a place called the 'Archipelago.'
 This beautiful book will take you to embark on a journey, a journey of all journeys - one you will remember forever. I liked this book as Katherine Rundell's creativity brings meaningful, mythical characters and creatures on unimaginable adventures that the turn of a page will take you on. Prepare for close calls, adventures, loss, love, the Archipelago and of course, IMPOSSIBLE CREATURES



Reviewed by Elli H. age 12



Secret Sparrow | Jackie French | \$17.99 | Harper | Ages 10+
 In 1916 16-year-old Jean McLain is working as a Post Office assistant in England. But when she wins a national Morse code competition, the army makes a request Jean cannot refuse – to take a secret position as a signaller in France. If Jean can keep the signals flowing between the soldiers at the Front and at headquarters, Britain might possibly win the war. Based on true events, this story of adventure, courage and unshakable loyalty restores women and girls to their place in history!

Two Sparrowhawks in a Lonely Sky | Rebecca Lim | \$17.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 11+
 What if you were forced to set sail for a country that didn't want you, to meet a father you couldn't remember? After their family encounters terrible hardship in rural China, siblings Fu and Pei must draw on all their resilience and courage as they embark on a dangerous journey towards a better life. A compelling and poignant novel.

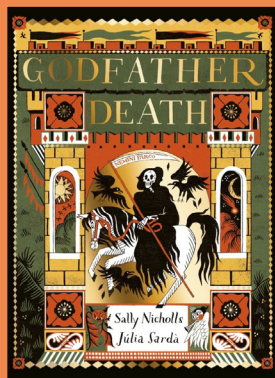
The Clackity | Lora Senf | \$17.99 | Simon and Schuster | Ages 10+
 This delightfully eerie middle grade novel tells the story of Evie Von Rathe who must rescue her aunt by entering a world of ghosts, witches, and monsters to play a game with deadly consequences. Will Evie be able to complete the mission assigned to her by The Clackity - a creature who lives in the shadows of her town?



Millie Mak the Maker | Alice Pung | \$22.99 | Harper | Ages 8+
 I love this story because it inspired me to repurpose objects, turning them into something much more useful. This not only benefits us but also contributes to a healthier environment. Millie, a nine-year-old who enjoys arts and crafts, embodies this creative spirit. She wouldn't hesitate to use a tea towel to fashion a fancy skirt! I recommend this book for kids aged 8 to 12 or anyone who enjoys crafting and making new objects. *Millie Mak the Maker* is about creating new things from scraps of random items, promoting resourcefulness and sustainability. What's remarkable is that the book provides instructions on how to make some of the items Millie creates, which is quite unique, as most books don't offer such hands-on guidance. If you have a passion for arts and crafts, then this book is perfect for you!



Reviewed by Sierra D. age 9



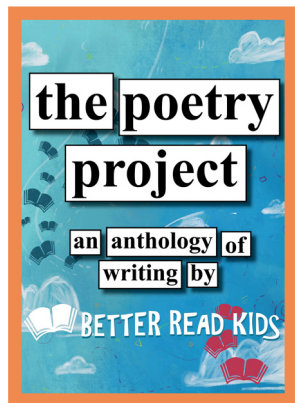
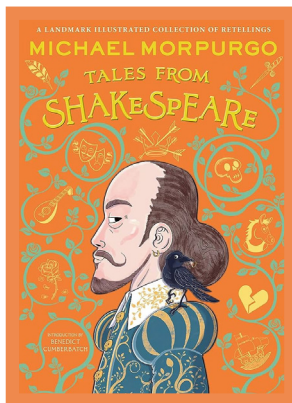
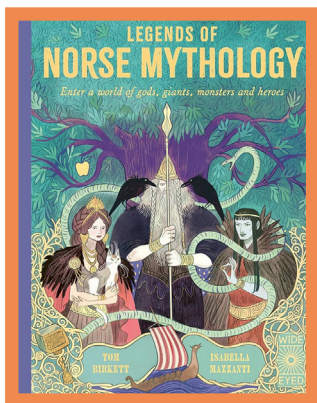
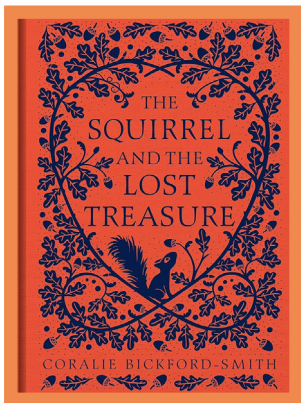
Godfather Death | Sally Nicholls | \$29.99 | Walker | Ages 7+

This book was short but was filled with lessons. I liked it very much and would recommend it to anybody of any age. The fact that the fisherman risked a random person's life for his was very, very greedy. For me it was the read of a lifetime! It doesn't matter who you are, you will probably love this book, if not it's your loss I guess. Whoever wrote this is a genius.

A soul-stirring reimagined Grimm tale by award-winning author Sally Nicholls and hauntingly illustrated by Júlia Sardà which will spellbind and thrill readers of all ages.



Reviewed by Pia H. age 9



The Squirrel and the Lost Treasure | Coralie Bickford | \$35.00 | Penguin | Ages 3+
A young squirrel spots an acorn glinting on the forest floor. But when she returns after the icy winter, her acorn is nowhere to be found. Where could it be? An enchanting fable about growth, new life and finding hope in unexpected places.

Legends of Norse Mythology | Tom Birkett | \$29.99 | Allen & Unwin | Ages 7+
An encyclopaedia of Norse gods, giants, monsters and heroes featuring beautiful and otherworldly illustrations from Isabella Mazzanti and enchanting text from scholar and Norse mythology expert Dr Birkett.

Tales from Shakespeare | Michael Morpurgo | \$29.99 | Harper Collins | Ages 7+
Featuring re-tellings of ten of Shakespeare's plays, and beautifully written with Morpurgo's warm, accessible style, this wonderful collection offers a new generation of younger readers the chance to discover the magic of Shakespeare.

The Poetry Project: An Anthology of Writing by Better Read Kids | \$20.00
The Poetry Project is a collection of 330 poems written by young Aussie writers aged 6-17!

Home | Isabelle Simler | \$29.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 4+
I can't believe this book! I love the colourful drawings and my mum said it was fun to read. My favourite homes are the bowerbird that collects the blue things, the termite tower and the spider who builds a new home after eating the silk of his old, broken home. Oh! And I love the hummingbird's home too because it is small and cute.



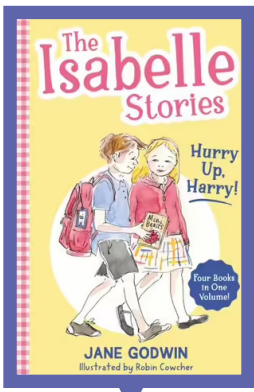
Reviewed by Cleo L. age 6



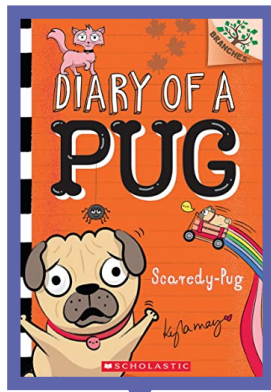
Reviewed by Isabella N. age 8

The Book for Marvellous Minds | Maggie Hutchings | \$35.00 | Affirm Press | Ages 3+
This is a book filled with glorious stories, poems and how to make fun and exciting art. My favourite parts were the short stories on every page and craft activities that would come with it. I liked the short stories because they always taught me something new and had true things in them that you can use in your everyday life. Also, they were fun and enjoyable stories for ages 4 to 11. Lastly, I adored the poems because they filled me with love and wonder, and I'm sure it would do the same for you. It is a long and fun book, and I believe this would be the perfect book for people who love poems, little stories and crafting.

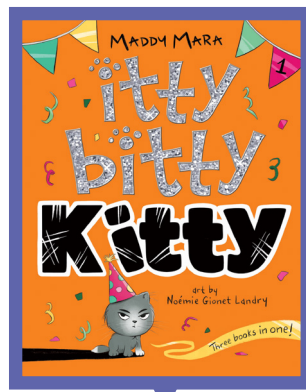




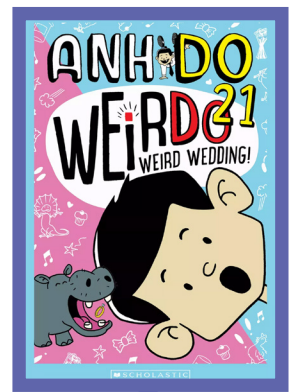
The Isabelle Stories: Volume 2 | Hurry Up, Harry! | Jane Godwin | \$14.99 | Hachette | Ages 5+



Diary of a Pug: Scaredy-Pug | Kyla May | \$9.99 | Scholastic | Ages 5+



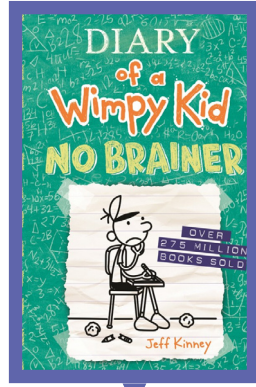
Itty Bitty Kitty #3 | Maddy Mara | \$14.99 | Affirm | Ages 5+



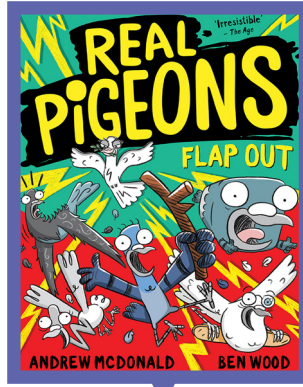
Weirdo #21: Weird Wedding! | Anh Do | \$15.99 | Scholastic | Ages 7+



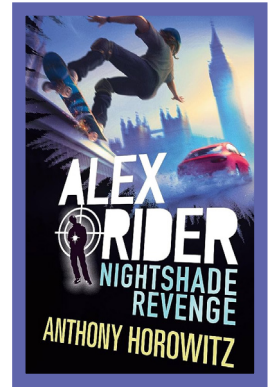
Wolf Girl #10: The Race Is On | Anh Do | \$16.99 | Scholastic | 8+



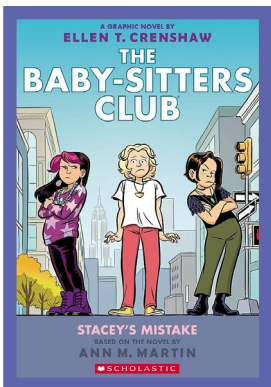
Diary of a Wimpy Kid #18: No Brainer | Jeff Kinney | \$14.99 | Penguin | Ages 8+



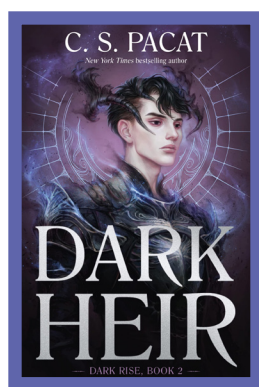
Real Pigeons #11: Flap Out | Andrew McDonald and Ben Wood | \$16.99 | Hardie Grant | Ages 8+



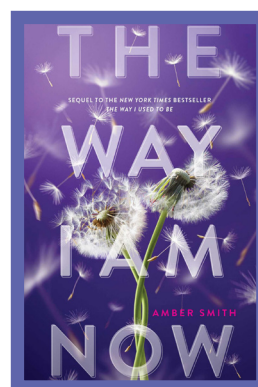
Alex Rider: Nightshade Revenge | Anthony Horowitz | \$17.99 | Walker | Ages 9+



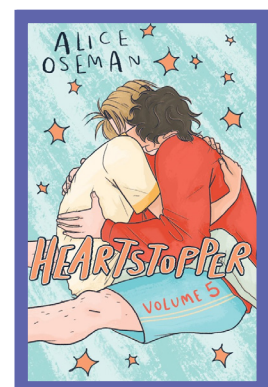
The Baby-sitters Club Graphic Novel #14 | Stacey's Mistake | Ann M. Martin and Ellen Crenshaw | \$17.99 | Scholastic | 9+



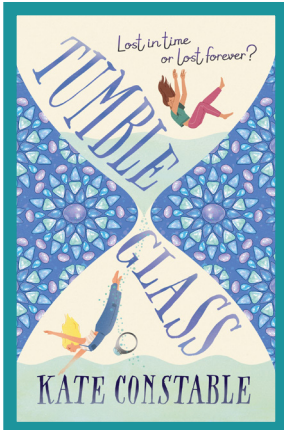
Dark Rise #2: Dark Heir | C. S. Pacat | \$24.99 | Allen & Unwin | 13+



The Way I Am Now | Sequel to The Way I Used to Be | Amber Smith | \$19.99 | Bloomsbury | 13+



Heartstopper Volume 5 | Alice Oseman | \$24.99 | Hachette | Ages 13+



FEBRUARY BOOK OF THE MONTH

Tumbleglass | Kate Constable | \$17.99 | Allen & Unwin | Carolina's Review | 9+

When Rowan finds a mysterious ring in her sister's bedroom, the pair are transported back in time to a party being held in their present-day home. Trouble strikes when Rowan (understandably, I might add, given the circumstances) accidentally disrupts the laws of time and wakes up back in the present day to her sister missing and her family having forgotten she existed. Rowan's journey to save her sister is laced with magic, lessons in bravery, and no small amount of mystery. Both captivating and heartwarming, *Tumbleglass* is perfect for middle-grade readers who want a story they can sink their teeth into. Brace yourself for unexpected twists and turns! A beautiful and clever classic time-slip novel.

MARCH BOOK OF THE MONTH

The Hotel Witch | Jessica Miller | \$16.99 | Text Publishing | Lexie's Review | 8+

I never knew I wanted to be a witch until now. Sybil works in a hotel with her grandmother, where they both use their magic to keep things running smoothly. But rather than hiding their magic it's the appeal of the hotel! Sybil is impatient to do complicated magic, but her grandmother insists on her doing lessons, learning the cleaning spells embellished on her buttons, and most importantly - learning to concentrate. When someone comes to stay in the hotel and gets her grandmother stuck on the thirteenth floor, Sybil must rise to the occasion, summon all of her powers, and take it upon herself to save her grandmother. A charming, heartwarming tale of courage and patience.



APRIL BOOK OF THE MONTH

Snail Trail | Ziggy Hanaor | \$24.99 | Thames & Hudson | Ally's Review | 3+

Marjorie is a snail like any other: cheery and adventurous with a zest for life! But even the zestiest snails need some time alone – to rest, to think, to recharge their social battery. So, when Marjorie finds her blissful solitude being consistently interrupted by friends and family she understandably gets the grumps! How can Marjorie let everyone know that she's OK, she just needs to be on her own for a while? A thoughtful, delightfully illustrated tale for the little introverts among us, *Snail Trail* gently and lovingly teaches us the language we need to communicate our needs! Marjorie the snail has stolen our hearts and we're almost certain she'll steal yours too.



MAY BOOK OF THE MONTH

We Could Be Something | Will Kostakis | \$19.99 | Allen & Unwin | Robert's Review | 13+

In this wonderful story, Will Kostakis guides us through the streets of Sydney in a dual narrative: it's a tale of family, of love, of personal dreams won and lost. Harvey is seventeen and his Dads are breaking up – it's been on the books for a while now. But now he's being shaken awake by his Ba, who is taking him away to Sydney, to his Greek family's café. Slip back over twenty years and it's still Darlinghurst, and Sotris is seventeen and on the edge of his dreams, on the edge of being a published author. And there's Jem waiting on the edge with what could real love or something. A beautiful, sad but ultimately affirming family story.



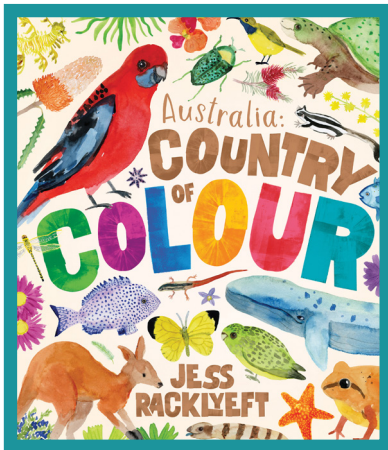
JUNE BOOK OF THE MONTH

It's the Sound of the Thing | Maxine Beneba Clarke | \$22.99 | Hardie Grant | Lilly's Review | 8+

This extraordinary collection celebrates the joy of language and features enticing and relatable poems about everyday life – the sounds of the block, the boredom of detention and the happenings in the schoolyard. Through haiku, sonnets, narrative verse, rhyming couplets, limericks, free verse, tongue-twisters and more, Maxine invites readers to fall in love with the wonder that is poetry. This is an excellent introduction to poetry for adventurous young readers: with many different types of prose - this book is engaging but approachable, which is great! In a fast-paced world often clouded by clicking and comparison, I like that this book validates the experiences of the everyday person, helping to forge a sense of joy in what may otherwise seem monotonous.



JULY BOOK OF THE MONTH



Australia: Country of Colour | Jess Racklyeft | \$29.99 | Affirm Press | Ally's Review | 3+
My immediate thought upon opening these pages was genuinely: oh...how gorgeous! Racklyeft has created an incredible ode to the Australian landscape and its inhabitants in her latest book. Categorized by the colours of the rainbow, *Australia: Country of Colour* highlights the critters and creatures who roam the natural world, accompanied by simply worded, easily digestible facts. My favourite was the 'Violet and Purple' page, which features a gorgeous illustration of the sky at dusk and animals such as the Purple-Necked Rock Wallaby and the Bathurst Copper Butterfly. Curious kids will adore the engaging pictures and information!

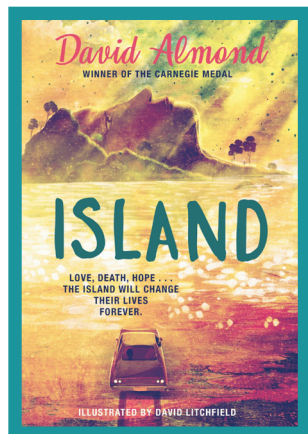
AUGUST BOOK OF THE MONTH

Ghost Book | Remy Lai | \$19.99 | Allen & Unwin | Carolina's Review | 10+

12-year-old July can see Ghosts. During Hungry Ghost Month when dangerous ghosts roam the world of the living looking for people to devour, July saves a boy ghost, William, from becoming dinner. The only problem is, William isn't an ordinary ghost, his a wandering soul teetering between life and death. With beautiful illustrations and references to Chinese mythology and culture, the adventure that ensues between these two friends will keep you on the edge of your seat! A spooky heartwarming adventure reminiscent of Studio Ghibli - perfect for fans of *Spirited Away* and *Coco*.



SEPTEMBER BOOK OF THE MONTH



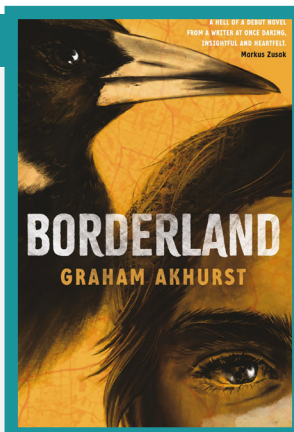
Island | David Almond | \$22.99 | Hachette | Hugh's Review | 8+

Island is another spectacular journey from David Almond! The eponymous island, Lindisfarne, is brimming with whimsy and adventure. Lindisfarne serves as the core of the story, uniting our free-spirited main characters. When Louise, who journeys there each year, meets a mysterious boy on the island, only going by 'Dark Star' both of their lives are irrevocably changed. *Island* is an ethereal and enchanting coming-of-age story, subtly dealing in themes of hope, love and loss.

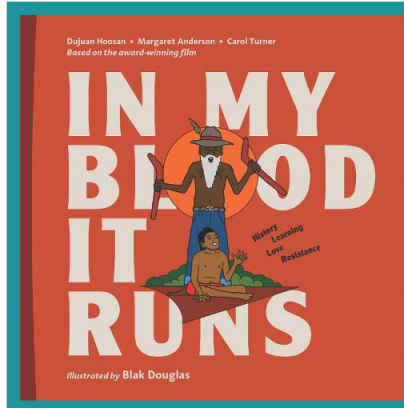
OCTOBER BOOK OF THE MONTH

Borderland | Graham Akhurst | \$22.99 | NewSouth Books | Steph's Review | 13+

I haven't read First Nations horror/dystopia this wonderful since devouring *This All Come Back Now* (edited by Mykaela Saunders). Whilst *Borderland* is a YA novel, it definitely crosses over, and the themes of Country, identity and colonisation create the perfect coming-of-age story. Jono is a city-born Aboriginal teenager who finds himself torn between a mining company that promises an awesome job with a documentary crew, and a town, history and Dreaming that suggests the job has far more sinister roots. The Wudan, a Dreaming spirit who weaves its way into the story, adds another layer of storytelling to this tale and another challenge to Jono's fraught journey - and I loved the intersection Akhurst finds between conventions of Dreaming and eco-horror. Alongside *Burn* by Melanie Saward, this is my favourite YA of the year and will be loved by teens and adults alike!



NOVEMBER BOOK OF THE MONTH



In My Blood It Runs | Dujuan Hoosan, Margaret Anderson and Carol Turner | \$26.99 | Macmillan | Ruby's Review | 5+

Based on the award-winning film, *In My Blood It Runs* is the story of Dujuan who lives with his family and dog Panda at Ewyenper-Atwatye (Hidden Valley). In his blood runs the land, ancestors and history of his family. Dujuan's Great-Nana tells him that the country is "like a human spine...that's the part that holds you together." Dujuan struggles with the divide between school/town and his culture, his family send him to live in the bush to learn the old ways and history of his people. This is a story of identity, resistance, love and finding pride in who you are. This inspiring story is told evocatively through both the storytelling and stunning illustrations by Blak Douglas.

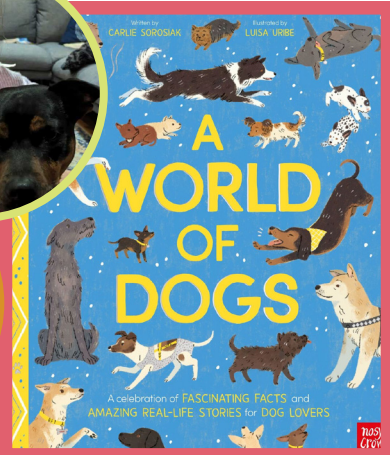


Songlines | Margo Neale | \$24.99 | Thames and Hudson | Ages 8+

This amazing book discusses how Songlines taught Aboriginal people about historical events, survival skills, when to hunt and harvest, seasonal changes, trade and navigation. I absolutely loved reading *Songlines*! The captivating illustrations and suggested activities in each chapter make this book truly special. My favourite part was the chapter on how the First Peoples used constellations and nature to guide them.



Reviewed by Adelyn N. age 9

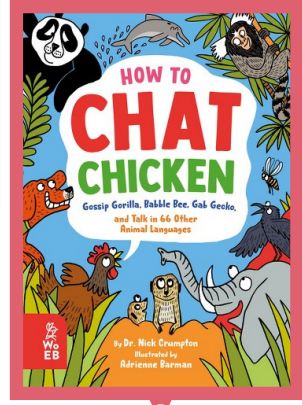
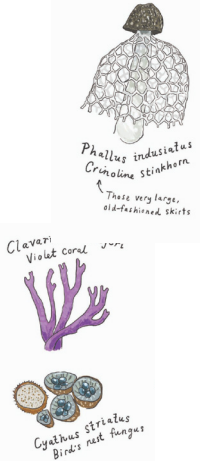
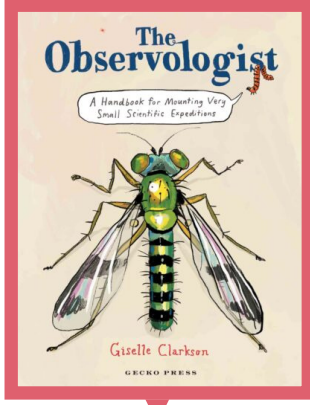


A World of Dogs | Carlie Sorosiak | \$29.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 6+
I really liked this book as it was about two of my favourite things - dogs and facts! I learned lots of things about different types of dogs and their history. I would recommend this book for anyone who wants to learn things that I never knew like some dogs were around in dinosaur times!

Reviewed by Hannah S. age 9

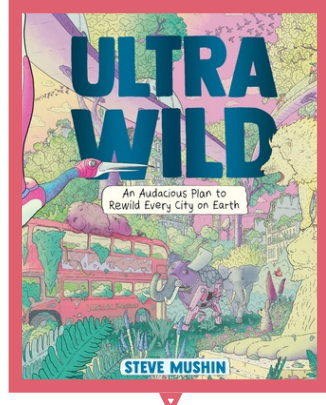


Secret Stories of Nature | Saskia Gwinn | \$29.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 7+
Nature holds fascinating secrets, from unusual features, to links between species, to insights into our amazing planets past - we just have to know where to find them. In this beautiful field guide to the secret stories of nature, readers are invited to journey around the world - through wild forests, over mountains high, to the bottom of our oceans and even as close as our own back gardens.

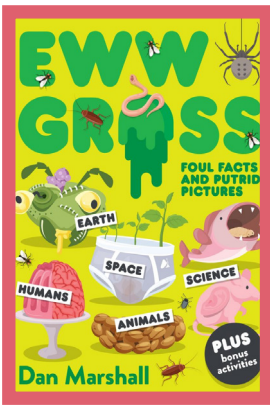


The Observologist | Giselle Clarkson | \$37.99 | Walker | Ages 7+
The Observologist puts over 100 small creatures under the microscope, from slugs, ants and seeds, fungi and flies through to bees and bird poop. Facts combine with comics, detailed illustrations, science and funny stories in this unique account of the small things all around us.

How to Chat Chicken, Gossip Gorilla, Babble Bee, Gab Gecko and Talk 66 Other Animal Languages | Nick Crumpton | \$29.99 | Walker | Ages 5+
It's a noisy world out there. Author Dr Nick Crumpton acts as our translator and guide through the animal kingdom in this fun, and funny, book. After reading it, you'll be ready for any adventure into the animal kingdom.

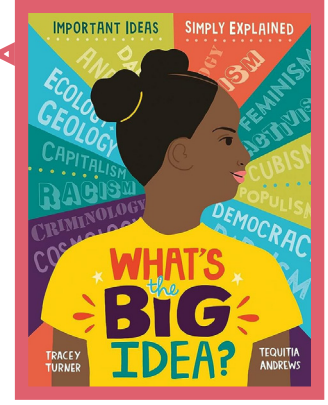


Ultrawild | Steve Mushin | \$34.99 | Allen & Unwin | Ages 10+
Mind-bendingly original and full of intricate illustrations, *Ultrawild* is totally unique, containing over one hundred outrageously funny, scientifically plausible inventions for rewilding cities and saving the planet. Tackle climate change and learn about STEM.



Eww Gross | Dan Marshall | \$29.99 | Bloomsbury | 5+
Did you know your kitchen is dirtier than your toilet seat? And that there is a parasitic fungus that turns ants into zombies? This is a disgustingly wonderful guide to all things yuck, filled with facts that will make you say eww, gross!

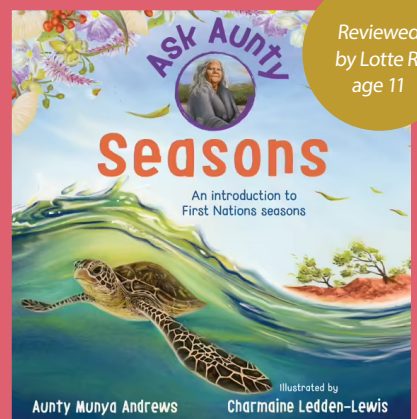
What's the Big Idea | Tracey Turner | \$29.99 | Simon and Schuster | Ages 8+
Have you ever wondered what capitalism is? How about feminism, ecology, or astronomy? Well, this book will give you straightforward, easy-to-understand answers to all your troublesome-word questions!





Ask Aunty: Seasons | Aunty Munya Andrews | \$24.99 | Hardie Grant | 8+

In First Nations communities there are more than four seasons! For example, the Bardi people, the community we learn about in the book, there are six seasons. The Kamu people of Naulyu, the Daly river, in the NT have thirteen seasons! That's pretty cool! In this book, Aunty Munya, an Aboriginal Elder from Bardi country, takes us on a journey through the Bardi seasons, and the traditions that come with them. She also shares favourite foods of the seasons, and how they travel during them. Charmaine Ledden-Lewis illustrates this book with her fabulous artistic talent, and combined with Aunty Munya's words, the two have created a truly charming book.

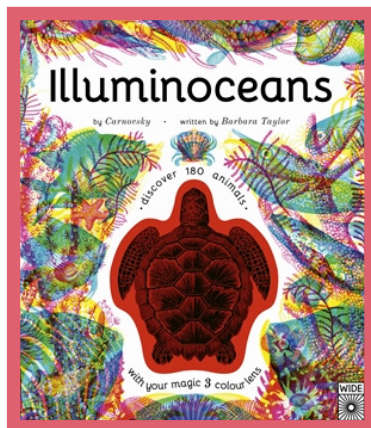


Reviewed by Lotte R. age 11



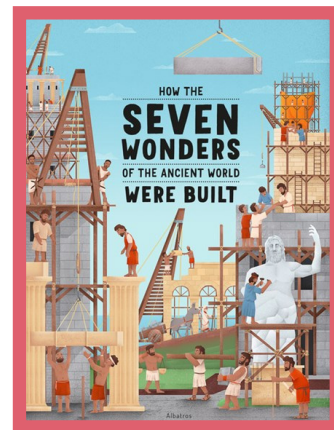
Wollemi | Samantha Tidy | \$24.99 | NewSouth Books | Ages 6+

Descended from a family of trees going back 200 million years, the Wollemi pine has survived ice, fire, and many generations. *Wollemi* explores this unique, endangered plant.



Illuminoceans | Barbara Taylor | \$39.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 5+

From the mighty Pacific to the polar seas, *Illuminoceans* takes readers on a journey of discovery through the most mysterious environments known to science. With your lens in hand, explore the worlds of wonder hidden just below the surface.



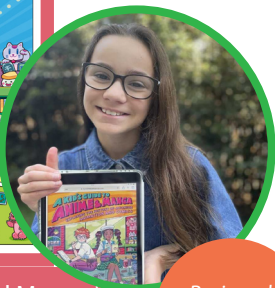
How the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World Were Built | Ludmila Henkova & Tomas Svoboda | \$29.99 | NewSouth Books | Ages 8+

We admire the ancient wonders today, but somebody had to build them. Find out how it was possible to build such wonders as pyramids and temples in ancient times.

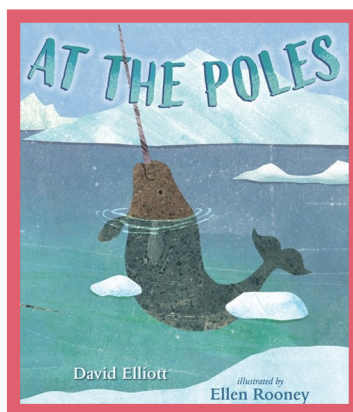


A Kid's Guide to Anime and Manga | Samuel Sattin | \$22.99 | Hachette | 8+

I love graphic novels and creativity, so when I first read this book, a whirlwind of interest hit me! This book is all about Manga and Anime, its history and genres, interviews with Manga and Anime creators, and of course, recommendations on what Manga reads or Anime television series could be waiting for you! Plus, learn about Japan and its jam-packed capital, Tokyo, discover the Japanese language, and traditions and all about Cosplay. I loved this book!

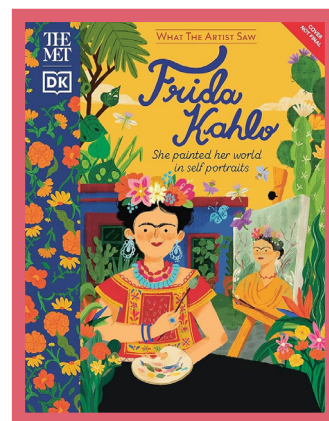


Reviewed by Alessia S. age 11



At the Poles | David Elliott | \$34.99 | Walker | Ages 3+

The stark, cold landscapes of Earth's poles may seem inhospitable, but their snowy hollows and glacial waters hide an astounding variety of creatures! Complete with notes on each animal, *At the Poles* speaks to the preciousness of life at the ends of the Earth.



What the Artist Saw: Frida Kahlo | DK | \$22.99 | Penguin | Ages 7+

Have you ever wondered exactly what your favourite artists were looking at to make them draw, sculpt, or paint the way they did? See how Frida Kahlo was influenced by her environment in the next book in this beautiful series produced with The Met.



The Bawk-Ness Monster: Cryptid Kids Volume 1 | Natalie Riess and Sarah Goetter | \$24.99 | Macmillan | Ages 8+

The Bawk-Ness Monster is half-chicken and half-sea serpent, so not at all like the Loch Ness Monster, but maybe equally as rare and cool. In this graphic novel for kids, a little girl called Penny tries to find the monster because it once saved her life. She gets her friends to help but their mission becomes even bigger than they could have imagined! I really thought this story was fun and original. I like that the illustrations are colourful and bold, and there are so many grids and speech marks to read and keep you engaged. The story moves really fast and is quite action-packed, and the water setting is great for summer. I can't wait to read Volume 2.

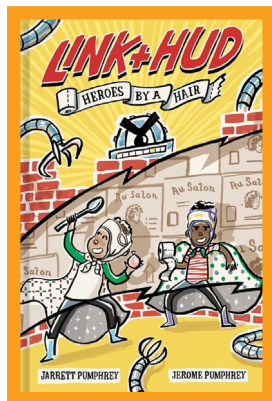


Reviewed by Zoe H. age 11



Meesh the Bad Demon | Michelle Lam | \$22.99 | Allen & Unwin | Ages 12+

How far would you go to save your home - and find yourself? Bullied by the other demons because she'd rather be fan-girling, Meesh must step up when disaster strikes and all of demon-kind is threatened, and she must also learn to love herself.



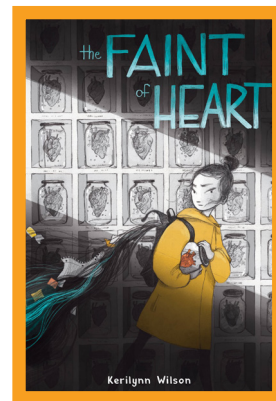
Link and Hud: Heroes by a Hair | Jerome Pumphrey | Wiley | Ages 8+

Lincoln and Hudson Dupr are brothers with what grown-ups call "active imaginations." Link and Hud hunt for yetis in the Himalayas and battle orcs on epic quests. A unique and subversive new series full of brotherly mischief and mayhem.



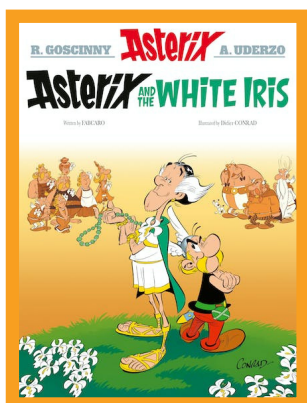
Bad Magic | Derek Landy | \$22.99 | Harper Collins | Ages 9+

When Skulduggery Pleasant and Valkyrie Cain drive into Termoncara, they discover a town with a dark past and a people haunted by their own secrets. Experience Skulduggery Pleasant as never before in this fully original graphic novel.



The Faint of Heart | Kerilynn Wilson | \$24.99 | Harper | Ages 13+

Not that long ago, the Scientist discovered that all sadness, anxiety, and anger disappeared when you removed your heart. Part speculative fiction and part cautionary tale, this is a moving and ethereal debut that questions morality and the feelings that seem too big to contain.



Asterix and the White Iris | R. Goscinny & A. Uderzo | \$29.99 | Hachette | 8+

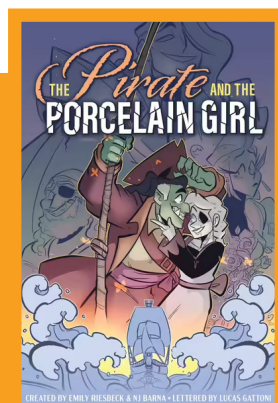
A strange new philosophy is gaining popularity amongst the Roman soldiers. When its enchanting influence reaches the Gauls, everything they once held dear is turned upside down. Armed with their trademark humour, bravery, and trusty magic potion, can our heroic duo save the Chief's wife and break the spell of the White Iris?



The Pirate and the Porcelain Girl | Emily Reisbeck | \$22.99 | Simon and Schuster | 13+

Ferra is a girl made of porcelain - so she is very easy to break! And her frenemy is a female pirate who is also an orc called Brigantine de la Girona who Ferra hires to get her across the Great Sea and back to her ex-girlfriend. I think everyone knows that getting back with your ex is not a good idea, and as the story unfolds, the relationship between the porcelain girl and the orc pirate is super unexpected and cool (if you know what I mean). This is a really unique graphic novel for teenagers that's sort of for fans of Heartstopper, if Heartstopper had action and fantasy - but it's just as mushy and lovely at times. Definitely a story I'll remember!

Reviewed by Jack T. age 14



An Unexpected Party: Queer Speculative YA Fiction | Edited by Seth Malacari | \$19.99 | Fremantle Press | Ages 13+

A super unique and interesting anthology of speculative fiction short stories, all written by the LGBTQIA+ community - this book has achieved SO much! The stories are super diverse and mix both romance and heaps of magic in the perfect blend. My favourite setting for a story was the Starscraper because I personally like space stories. I recommend this to all teen fantasy readers!



Reviewed by Sabine B. age 16

I Loved You in Another Life | David Arnold | \$19.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 13+

This is an intriguing romantic story. The narrative follows Evan and Shosh who are two characters who have been tied together over several lifetimes. This book pulled me in with the use



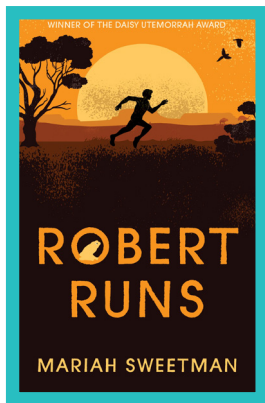
of different perspectives and it was almost like following multiple stories at once. I liked how Evan and Shosh were able to develop their character over the course of the book and the concept of soulmates bringing these two together over lifetimes was creatively used. It was definitely an amazing read!



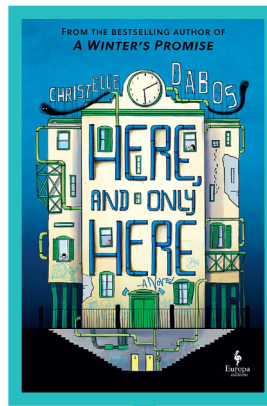
Reviewed by Anabelle H. age 14



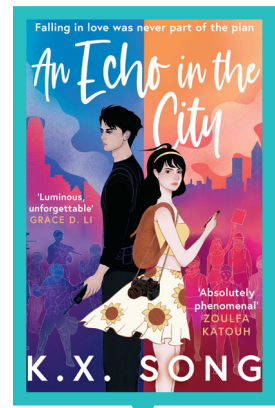
Let's Never Speak of This Again | Megan Williams | \$24.99 | Text | Ages 13+
Life is pretty good for Abby with her best friend, Ella, by her side. When a new girl arrives, Abby begins to question her friendship with Ella and in a moment of anger and confusion she wishes something bad would happen - and then it does. A tender, moving story laced with humour, about friendship, about the things that test it, and about what matters most.



Robert Runs | Mariah Sweetman | \$22.99 | NewSouth Books | Ages 12+
Based on true events, this gripping thriller sheds light on the brutalities of the past whilst championing the heroes who survived. *Robert Runs* is a poignant look into the Deebing Creek Massacre and the tough reality of mission life. This compelling story details the events leading up to that fateful day, blending fact and fiction.



Here and Only Here | Christelle Dabos | \$22.99 | Text | Ages 14+
Welcome to the School of Here, an unsettling and peculiar place that is nonetheless familiar to us all. A place full of codes and unspoken rules that are passed down from year to year. This is an intriguing and penetrating novel that explores the difficulties of fitting in.



An Echo in the City | K X Song | \$19.99 | Bloomsbury | Ages 14+
Two star-crossed teenagers, Phoenix and Kai, fall in love during the Hong Kong protests in this searing contemporary novel about coming-of-age in a time of change. As their world falls apart and their relationship intertwines with the future of Hong Kong, you'll be on the edge of your seat!

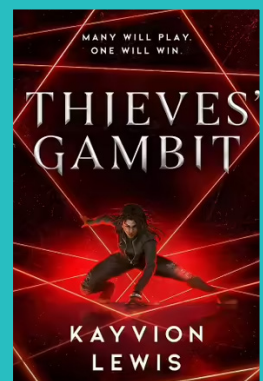
Thieves' Gambit | Kayvion Lewis | \$22.99 | Simon and Schuster | Ages 14+

Thieves' Gambit is a story about a competition between young and upcoming thieves where they complete challenges involving thievery to win a wish as the final prize. The story is written from the perspective of seventeen year old Rosalyn who must enter the cutthroat competition to save her kidnapped mother. I found the story really interesting because the unusual theme of thievery created many unique and intriguing moments, which kept me engaged from chapter to chapter.

- Reviewed by Rupert H. age 13

Rosalyn Quest comes from a highly successful family of thieves with one rule, "trust no one". When her mother is kidnapped, the only way to save her is by competing in the Thieves' Gambit, a cut throat competition where she will have to outwit and out-thieve all of her competitors, including her childhood nemesis and a boy who makes a play for her heart... The book is perfect if you love stories of crime and heists. The story reels you in with just the right amount of action, the characters were explored well, and you got a feel for people's morals and intent.

- Reviewed by Elsa M. age 13





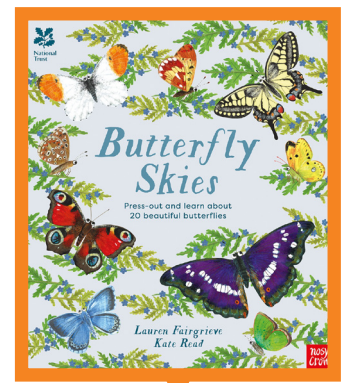
Origami for Little Hands | Fox Chapel Publishing | \$24.99 | Simon and Schuster | Ages 4+

A super fun origami book for kids, this book is perfect for young minds and little hands! Featuring step-by-step instructions, easy-to-follow visual guides, directional folding illustrations, and a helpful chart, *Origami for Little Hands* is a fun and exciting craft guide.



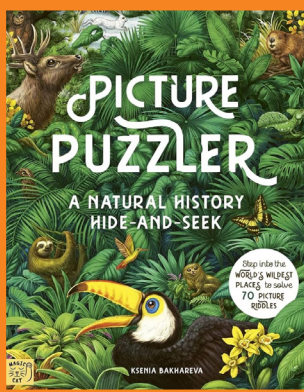
Name That Thing | Gareth Moore | \$35.00 | Thames and Hudson | 5+

Can you name a bird from its feathers? How about a meal from its ingredients? What about a scientist from their discovery? Stretch your brain power with 20 fact-packed picture quizzes. Covering key a plethora of encyclopaedic topics, keep everyone guessing with hours of family fun.



Butterfly Skies | Kate Read | \$26.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 6+

Create your own beautiful 3D butterflies before discovering fascinating facts about each species! Press out the pieces and slot them together to create 20 different flying friends, then either hang the stunning decorations or press them back into the sturdy board pages to be used again and again.



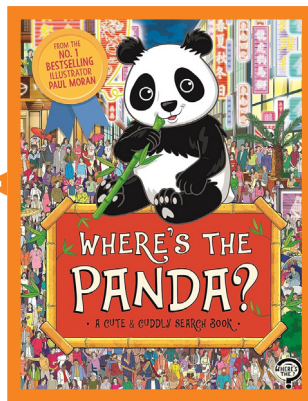
Picture Puzzler | Ksenia Bakhareva | \$29.99 | Thames and Hudson | Ages 5+
Some animals are obvious, but some are really tricky to find. Some animals I already knew, but some I learned about. I loved the clues. It was a fun way to find out new information.
- Reviewed by Hendrix L. age 9

This amazing book taught me many new things about animals and natural history, but is also an activity book. One of my favorite parts in the book is the fun animal search, and the one I liked the most is the Amazon River! This book can also take you on lots of new but fun adventures and maps show you new locations! You can find almost any animal you can imagine in this book. If you want to know more about animals and nature, then this is the book for you!
- Reviewed by Oscar D. age 7



Where's the Panda? | Paul Moran | \$14.99 | Hardie Grant | Ages 5+

From the peaks of the Himalayas to the beaches of New Zealand and the bustling streets of Cuba, take an action-packed trip around the world with a family of globetrotting pandas. Spot the pandas in each exciting scene!



Things That Go: Explore and Find | Victoriya Kurcheva | \$19.99 | Murdoch Books | 3+

This hardcover look-and-find book is ideal for children who love things that go! Explore a variety of exciting scenes, from a construction site to the city, a farm, the beach, the ocean, and more, to find the 15 cute characters throughout!

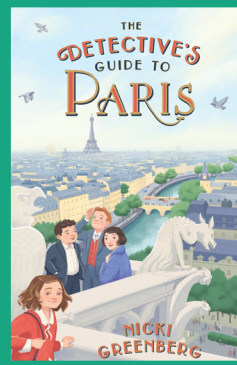
Draw This! | Marion Deuchars | \$22.99 | Hachette | Ages 6+

Let your mind run free and draw, paint and scribble your way through this fun and imaginative activity book. With over 20 activities, prompts and step-by-step drawing activities children will learn how to draw lots of animals.

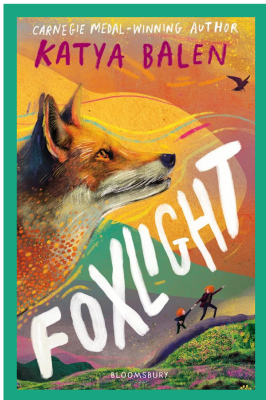


The Detective's Guide to Paris | Nicki Greenberg | \$17.99 | Affirm Press | 9+

The Detective's Guide to Paris is a thoroughly enjoyable book, filled with accurate descriptions of the delectable Parisian food, and delightfully detailed depictions of how intoxicated tourists drink absinthe. The book tells the story of juvenile detective Pepper, and her friends, holidaying in Paris. Together (with chaperone Emmaline), they unravel a mystery of a missing person and contraband that takes them all through Paris. On the way, Pepper and her companions encounter an ex-con looking to solve the mystery also. The book ends with an exciting crescendo of events, and is another wonderful instalment in *The Detective's Guide* mysteries, which also includes *The Detective's Guide to Ocean Travel* and *The Detective's Guide to New York!*



Reviewed by Monica B. age 12



Foxlight | Katya Balen | \$16.99 | Bloomsbury | 9+

Foxlight highlights the importance of family and bravery to fix relationships. I think that this book will play a huge role in the rest of my life, in influencing my actions and priorities. In my opinion, the moral of this story is mainly about keeping family first and never compromising on that. Fen (the main character of this story) learns this the hard way. Readers aged 9+ will like this book, especially if they enjoy detective novels and adventure stories. The deep meaning of this book will be, I'm sure, beloved by many.



Reviewed by Nishtha R. age 11



Reviewed by Jordan S. age 15

Reviewed by Amelia I. age 14



Where the Light Goes | Sara Barnard | \$19.99 | Walker Books | 14+

When Emmy's sister and global pop phenomenon Lizzie Beck unexpectedly passes away, the world is left reeling. But no one knows Lizzie Beck, or Beth, like Emmy does. *Where the Light Goes* is a stunning exploration of the many ways in which people grapple with grief, and the impact that social media and media attention can have on the livelihoods of celebrities. It was an incredibly engaging and emotive read, and I particularly enjoyed the author's implementation of creative formatting and visuals throughout!



Reviewed by Charlotte P. age 14

Goddess Crown | Shade Lapite | \$19.99 | Walker Books | 12+

A traditional fantasy plot of court drama, assassination and the pressures of ruling a country told in a gorgeous West-African inspired setting. The protagonist and supporting characters are strong and detailed and the uniqueness of the setting adds to the gripping plot, making the book and engrossing read with just the right amount of action. This book was hard to put down!

A Kid's Guide to Anime and Manga | Samuel Sattin | \$22.99 | Hachette | 8+

I love graphic novels and creativity, so when I first read this book, a whirlwind of interest hit me! This book is all about Manga and Anime, its history and genres, interviews with Manga and Anime creators, and of course, recommendations on what Manga reads or Anime television series could be waiting for you! Plus, learn about Japan and its jam-packed capital, Tokyo, discover the Japanese language, and traditions and all about Cosplay. I loved this book!



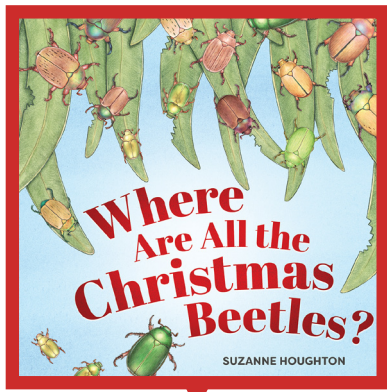
Stuck Up & Stupid | Angourie Rice and Kate Rice | \$22.99 | Walker Books | 12+

Stuck Up & Stupid is about a young woman, Lily, who is unsure what to do with her life except that she knows that she wants to make a difference and not end up like her mum. Through her experiences with the glamorous new comers and her journey to LA, Lily realises that life isn't so black and white and you shouldn't be so quick to jump to conclusions. I liked the fun writing style and how I got to know all of the characters and their hopes and dreams. I think the book is great for tweens who like a little romance with a meaningful adventure along the way.



Reviewed by Sylvie D. T. age 12

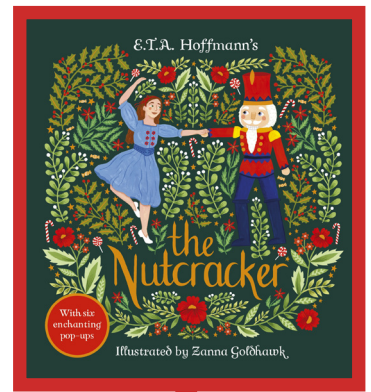




Where Are All the Christmas Beetles | Suzanne Houghton | \$24.99 | NewSouth Books | Ages 5+
Sparkling, brightly coloured Christmas beetles usually appear in the heat of December - a sign that the festive season has begun. But recently they have been hard to find. This is a lyrical discovery of these fascinating creatures where you can explore the possible reasons for their decrease in numbers.



Tis the Season | Richard Jones | \$39.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 5+
Peek inside the windows of the house to find a family wrapping presents, take a look behind a holly bush to find a little mouse and see what's happening in the town behind a glittering Christmas tree! This classic Christmas collection has a flap to lift alongside a special poem for every day of advent.



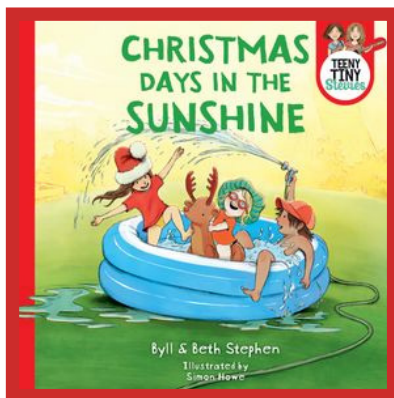
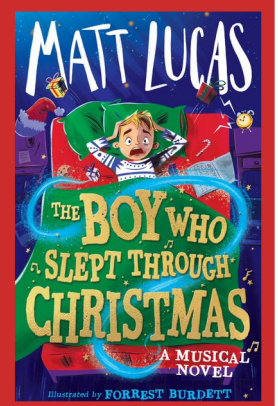
The Nutcracker | Steve Patschke | \$24.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 5+
When Marie is given a nutcracker on Christmas Eve, she immediately loves it. Little does she realise that, when night falls, the Nutcracker will defend her from the monstrous Mouse King and whisk her away to a fantastical kingdom. A much-loved fairy tale of defiance, loyalty and wonder, in pop-up form!



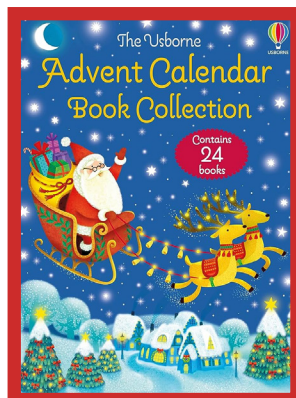
Reviewed by Oscar B. age 11

The Boy Who Slept Through Christmas | Matt Lucas | \$16.99 | Harper Collins | Ages 8+

The Boy Who Slept Through Christmas is a great book with a humorous storyline and well-developed characters. The book follows the story of a young boy named Leo. It's his first Christmas without his mum so he wants it to be the best Christmas. But when things don't go according to plan on the night before Christmas Leo wishes it would just go away. *The Boy Who Slept Through Christmas* is an amazing book with lovable characters and a great storyline. Overall I believe this book is suited for younger children starting in year 2 to year 6. It also has musical sections which you can look up throughout the book!



Christmas Days in the Sunshine | Byll and Beth Stephen | \$22.99 | Harper Collins | 3+
Celebrate an Aussie Christmas with the cool musician mums everyone loves to sing along with. This is a celebration of summer and the joys of an Australian Christmas from ABCs Teeny Tiny Stevies.



The Usborne Advent Calendar Book Collection | \$39.99 | Harper Collins | 3+
This book-filled advent calendar contains a beautifully illustrated storybook behind each window to fire up children's imaginations in the build up to the big day. Perfect for bedtime reading and cosy story times, and the perfect alternative to chocolate!



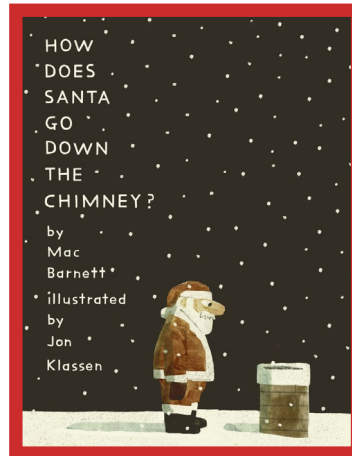
Macca the Alpaca Christmas Sticker Book | Matt Cosgrove | \$6.99 | Scholastic | 4+
Macca is a small and friendly alpaca who's getting ready to celebrate! With over 200 stickers, there's hours of Christmas fun to be had with Macca, Al and their pals! Includes 5 gift tags and 3 Macca Christmas cards!

Peekaboo Santa | Camilla Reid | \$15.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 1+

I read this with my mum and little brother, and we had fun moving the pages in and out to show what you are looking for! When you say "peekaboo elf", you can pull out a elf like it's coming from nowhere in the side of the book - and then you'd found it! I think this book is really good for babies and I also enjoyed it.

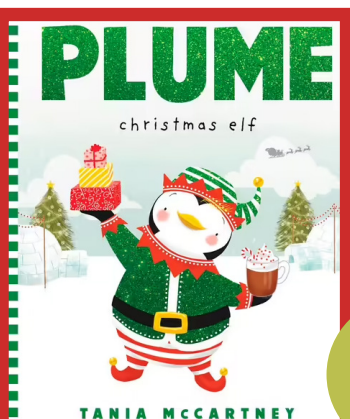


Reviewed by Toby R. age 4



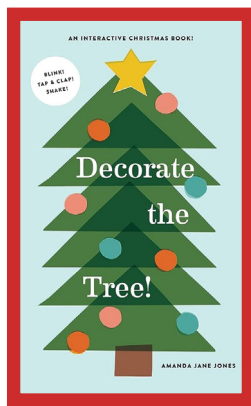
How Does Santa Go Down the Chimney? | Jon Klassen | \$27.99 | Walker | Ages 3+

When Santa arrives at a child's house on Christmas Eve, does he go down the chimney feet-first or headfirst? What if he gets stuck? Channelling a child's fanciful explanations, this latest collaboration by a bestselling team will find a secure spot among family Christmas traditions.



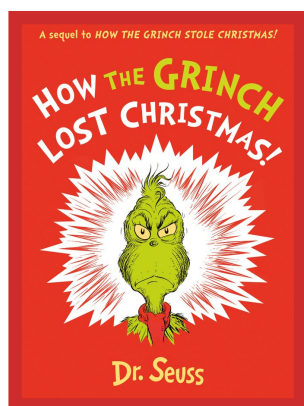
Reviewed by Isla G. age 7

Plume: Christmas Elf | Tania McCartney | \$24.99 | Hardie Grant | 4+
Plume is the name of a penguin who likes to travel. In this adventure, he goes to the North Pole which makes the story extra Christmassy! He needs to save Santa's workshop and get the whole of Christmas back together. This is a really cute story for young kids that gets you in the mood for the holiday and I want to read the other Plume books now.



Decorate the Christmas Tree | Amanda Jane Jones | \$24.99 | Thames & Hudson | Ages 3+

Blink your eyes and twinkle your fingers to help decorate the tree! Clap to turn on the lights and shake the book to add more twinkle still. This interactive picture book allows little helpers to trim the tree again and again, all season long!

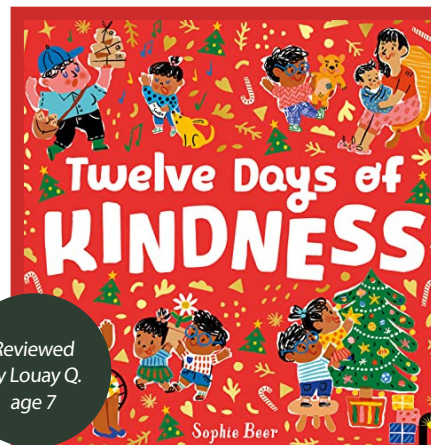


How the Grinch Lost Christmas | Dr Seuss | \$24.99 | Harper Collins | Ages 5+
The Grinch has grown to LOVE Christmas, so when the Grinch sees a poster for Who-ville's Christmas tree contest, he has an awfully crafty idea... he will show off his new festive spirit by making the tallest, most spectacular Christmas tree the Whos have ever seen! A terrific sequel to the classic.



Reindeer's Christmas Surprise | Ursula Dubosarsky | \$19.99 | Allen and Unwin | Ages 3+

It's Christmas time in Australia, and Reindeer has great fun giving presents to his friends! And this time, Reindeer might be getting just one present of his very own. A distinctly Australian Christmas story about the joy of giving and family.



Reviewed by Louay Q. age 7

Twelve Days of Kindness | Sophie Beer | \$24.99 | Hardie Grant | Ages 2+

Being kind is a very important lesson and Sophie Beer's book teaches it in a unique way - at Christmas time. It's sort of like the Twelve Days of Christmas song, except on each day you do something really nice for another person. They make a DIY Christmas card, bake cookies for the firemen, tell their teacher they are thankful and lots more. A very good story about giving and being kind.

