

The (incomplete) Lit in Colour book list

100 texts by writers of colour

Key stage 2 edition
Volume II



Lit in colour

Contents

Years 3-4

p4

Years 5-6

p28

Index by
theme

p55

Why do we have an (incomplete) list?

The (incomplete) Lit in Colour book list Key stage 2 edition, Volume II

The [Lit in Colour Research Report](#) published in June 2021 found that there is a lack of representation of books by authors of colour that are studied in English schools from Year 3 in primary, all the way up to Year 13 in secondary. It also found that the key barriers for teachers include a lack of resources, budget and time, as well as a lack of subject knowledge of texts written by authors of colour and a lack of confidence in talking about race in the classroom. Overall, this results in a systemic underrepresentation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic writers in the curriculum relative not only to their place in contemporary British literary excellence but also to the demographics of the school population in England.

So, Lit in Colour created the (incomplete) book lists as a way to support teachers, educators and those who are simply interested in wanting to bring different narratives and experiences into their classrooms or onto their bookshelves with a publisher-agnostic list of over 100 titles by authors of colour. This list was created with the intention of addressing two of the major barriers we know teachers face, the first being lack of time and the second being a lack of subject knowledge on books by authors of colour. By using this list we hope to have saved teachers time by bringing together books and authors they may not have come across before, but also deepen their knowledge of published books written by authors of colour.

This edition is the second list of titles appropriate for Key stage Two that we have compiled. Like the first, it is a publisher-agnostic list of new work and classics that we have brought together to show the rich variety of what is available to read by authors of colour. It remains 'incomplete' as we know it cannot be a definitive list, rather this is a snapshot of what Penguin and other publishers have to offer.

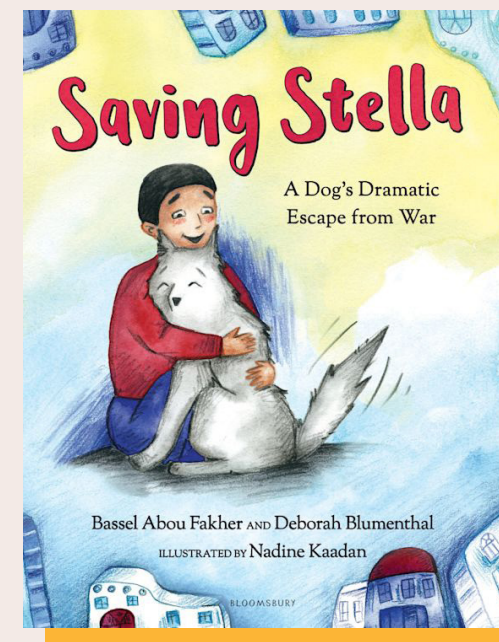
We have listed suitable titles categorised by year group, and have done our best to have a variety of books to support different reading abilities. Feel free to click on book titles and cover images as they are hyperlinked to more information about each book. There is also an index at the end of the list categorised by popular themes and topics.

Don't see a text you think we should include next time?

Please send your suggestions to

Litincolour@penguinrandomhouse.co.uk

Years 3-4



Themes/topics: War, Kindness, Animals
Publisher: Bloomsbury
Year: 2021

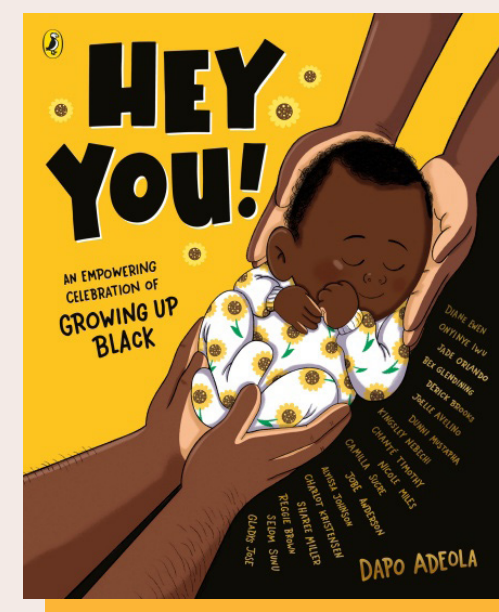
Saving Stella

Bassel Abou Fakher and Deborah Blumenthal, Nadine Kaadan (illustrator)

Saving Stella is the true story of musician Bassel Abou Fakher and his dog, Stella, in Damascus in Syria. Used to taking long walks through the neighbourhood together, Bassel and Stella find their lives change when war strikes and bombs begin to drop, leading Bassel to make the difficult decision to escape, leaving everyone – including Stella – behind.

After a long and dangerous journey to Belgium, Bassel hatches a dramatic plan to rescue his dog and be reunited with her.

This is an inspiring picture book about kindness and humanity, even in the darkest of circumstances.



Themes/topics: Racism, Hope
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2021

Hey You!

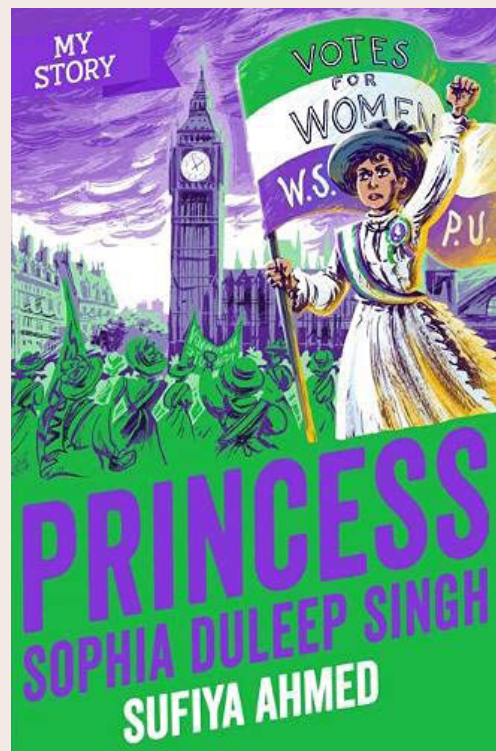
Dapo Adeola et al.

Award-winning illustrator Dapo Adeola turns his hand to writing with *Hey You!*, an exploration of growing up Black.

It's a lyrical and honest look at the experiences Black children face growing up with systemic racism, but also provides a hopeful message for a future generation of dreamers.

The picture book is illustrated by 18 of the most exciting Black illustration talents working today, along with Adeola himself.

The [Guardian](#) said the book "distils the fierce heartache of racist injustice as well as a passionate sense of joy and hope for the future".



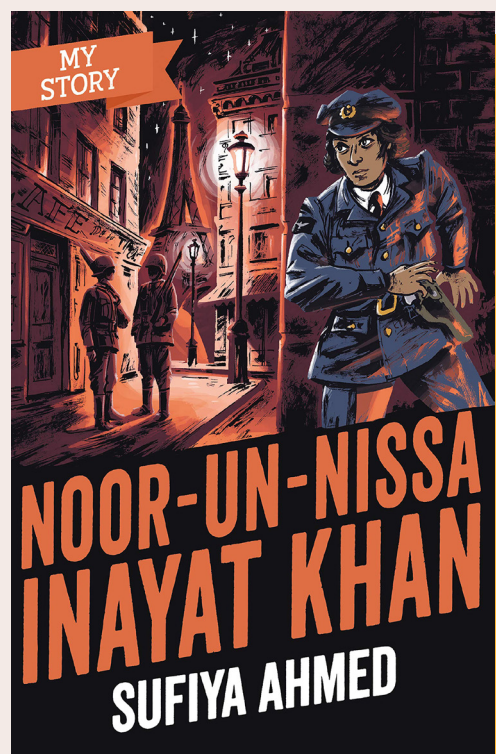
My Story: Princess Sophia Duleep Singh

Sufiya Ahmed

Sophia Duleep Singh grew up in the palace of Queen Victoria, and was a princess and prominent suffragist. She campaigned for the women's right to vote, helping to finance the suffrage movement, and even refused to pay her taxes.

In this book, Sufiya Ahmed tells Sophia's story in an accessible way for young children, introducing them to a figure not much spoken about in British history.

Themes/topics: British history, Colonialism, Feminism, Suffrage
Publisher: Scholastic
Year: 2022



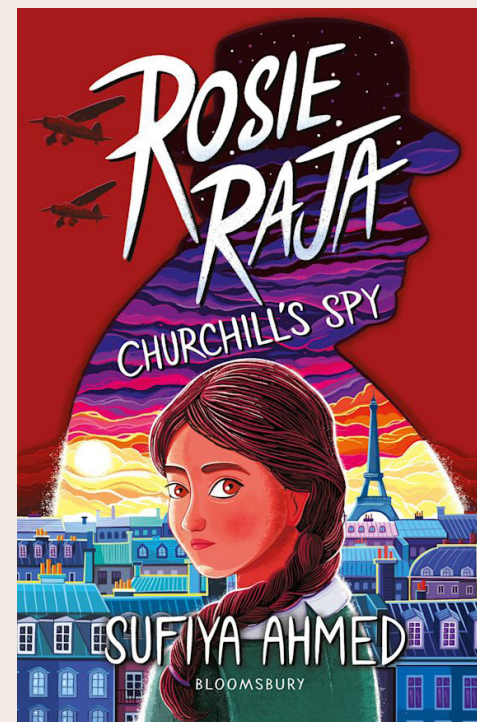
My Story: Noor-un-Nissa Inayat Khan

Sufiya Ahmed

Noor-un-Nissa Inayat Khan was a British-Indian World War Two heroine, who worked as a spy for the British in Nazi-occupied France during the Second World War.

Her fascinating story is brought to life by Sufiya Ahmed in this book, which is great background reading for key stages two and three.

Themes/topics: British history, World War Two
Publisher: Scholastic
Year: 2020



Themes/topics: World War Two, Feminism, Adventure
Publisher: Bloomsbury
Year: 2022

Rosie Raja: Churchill's Spy

Sufiya Ahmed

This historical fiction book is about Rosie Raja, a determined Muslim woman. Half-Indian and half-English, she moves to England after her mother passes away.

Miserable and friendless, she discovers her army captain father is actually a spy for the British government. Not happy with being left behind by him, she stows away in his plane and finds herself in occupied France in July 1941.

Drawn into the struggle against the Nazis, she must help her father complete his mission, and more importantly, make sure they both get home alive.



Ladybird Tales of Crowns and Thrones

Yvonne Battle-Felton and Chitra Soundar

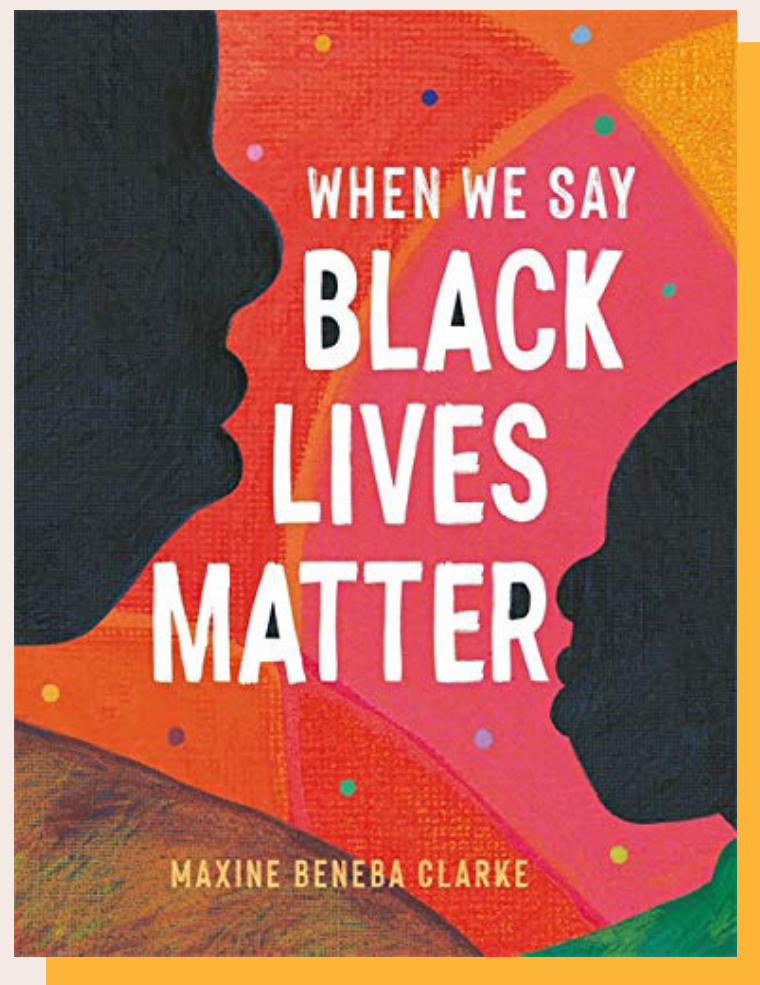
This treasury contains six new tales of wit, courage and power.

Yvonne Battle-Felton and Chitra Soundar have created six kings, queens and warriors from around the world who battle for crowns, vanquish dark forces and claim their thrones. This is an illustrated collection and contains an introduction from *Game of Thrones* actress Gemma Whelan.

Battle-Felton writes fiction and creative non-fiction, and is the author of the adult novel *Remembered*.

Soundar is the author of more than 50 books for children, as well as being an oral storyteller. She is a member of the international Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators.

Themes/topics: Short stories, Adventure
Publisher: Ladybird
Year: 2020



When We Say Black Lives Matter

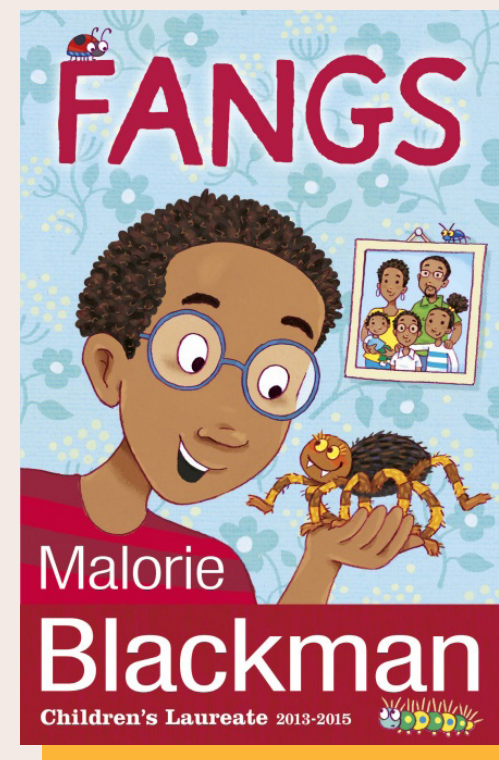
Maxine Beneba Clarke

This picture book explores the Black Lives Matter movement, including its deep history, background and meaning, as well as a focus on the tremendous amount of work still left to do.

Author-illustrator Maxine Beneba Clarke fosters activism, being anti-racist and using your voice and your power for good.

Beneba Clarke grew up in white middle-class suburban Australia, and was bullied for being different. Through her picture books, she aims to share with children the importance of self-expression and the power of standing out.

Themes/topics: Activism, Racism
Publisher: Wren & Rook
Year: 2021



Themes/topics: Nature, Animals
Publisher: Tamarind
Year: 2015



Themes/topics: Creativity, Imagination
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2021

Fangs

Malorie Blackman

Fangs is a tarantula who is terribly lonely and bored with her life in the pet shop. So when she gets taken home by Nathan, she's very excited.

But Nathan's family are a little scared, and he's going to need Fangs' help to convince them that spiders aren't just creepy and crawly, but also beautiful and brave.

This funny story is perfect for inspiring confidence in young readers.

We're Going to Find the Monster!

Malorie Blackman, Dapo Adeola (illustrator)

Two of children's books biggest talents – Malorie Blackman and Dapo Adeola – have teamed up for the first time for a picture book.

We're Going to Find the Monster! is about two intrepid adventurers whose imagination transforms their house into a wild wonderland and their big brother into a mighty monster.

This book was originally published as *Marty Monster* by Blackman, and has been stunningly illustrated for this new version.

Look Up!, Clean Up!, and Rocket Rules

Nathan Bryon, Dapo Adeola
(illustrator)

This trio of books follows chatterbox Rocket through a series of adventures.

In *Look Up!*, which won the Waterstones Children's Book Prize 2020, the UKLA Awards 2021 and was shortlisted for the Sainsbury's Children's Book Awards 2019, Rocket wants to be an astronaut. But her first challenge is to get her big brother to stop looking down at his phone and start looking up at the stars.

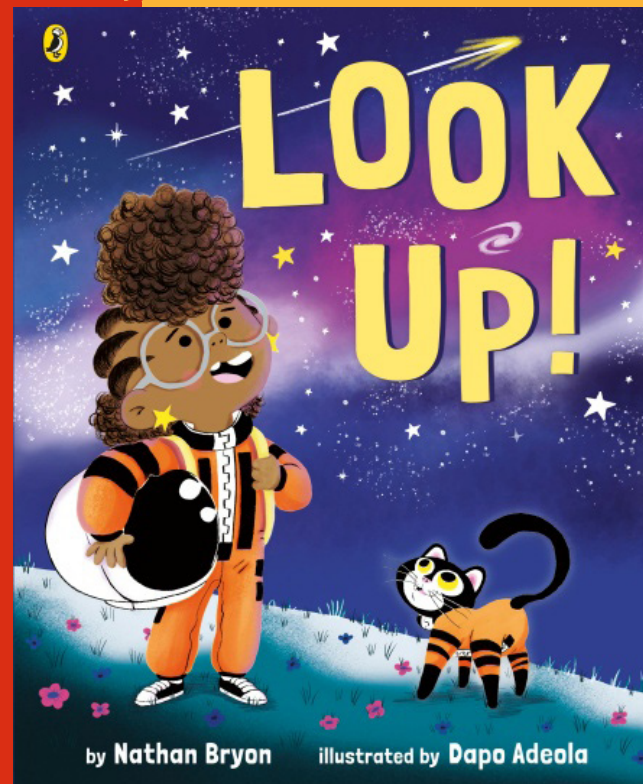
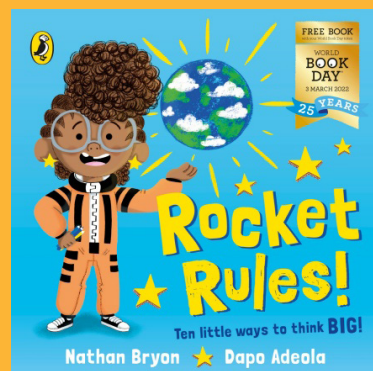
In *Clean Up!*, Rocket goes on holiday to visit her grandparents and is shocked by the pollution spoiling their Caribbean island home, putting the local sea life at risk. Can she think of a way to save the day?

In *Rocket Rules*, a mini picture book created for World Book Day 2022, Rocket explains her 10 Rocket Rules for living life in the best and most fun way possible.

Themes/topics: Activism, Environment, Space, Science, Aspiration

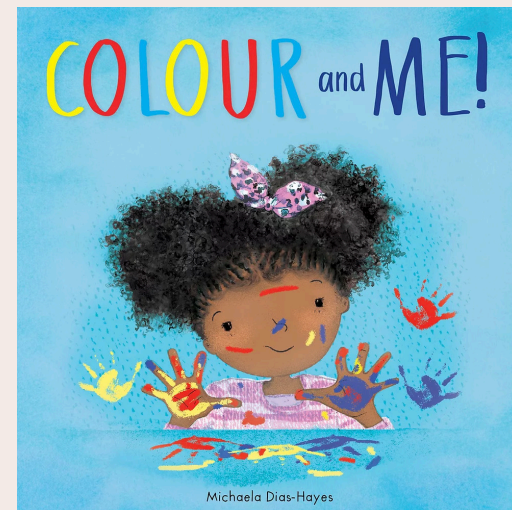
Publisher: Puffin

Year: 2019–2022



“This charming picture book is a lovely representation of family, sibling relationships and one girl’s infectious enthusiasm”

– Booktrust



Themes/topics: Colour, Self-belief

Publisher: Owlet Press

Year: 2022



Themes/topics: Anti-racism, Activism

Publisher: Ladybird

Year: 2021

Colour and Me

Michaela Dias-Hayes

This is a joyful book about colour that shows young children that brown skin is beautiful.

Dias-Hayes is the illustrator of the Kate Greenaway Medal-nominated *Sunflower Sisters*, written by Monika Singh Gangotra.

She was inspired to write *Colour and Me* by her son. In an interview with [CLPE](#), Dias-Hayes said: “I was inspired to create this first story, *Colour and Me*, after mixing paints with my young son – his comments about the brown combination of all the colours together being ‘yukky’ got me thinking about brown skin, like ours, and how we should be celebrating the beauty in it. Also, I started thinking about the mixture within all of us – not just our outward appearance, but all the culture cues and traditions that make us who we are.”

My Skin, Your Skin

Laura Henry-Allain MBE, Onyinye Iwu (illustrator)

My Skin, Your Skin is a book designed to encourage children and adults to have meaningful discussions about race and anti-racism, as well as to empower children to be the best versions of themselves.

It contains explanations on key words and concepts written in child-friendly, accessible language, with relatable examples, and supports children aged four and up with building an anti-racist stance from an early age.

Laura Henry-Allain is an early years expert and children's media creator, while Onyinye Iwu is a trained secondary school teacher and freelance illustrator.

The Marvellous Granny Jinks and Me and The Marvellous Granny Jinks and Me: Animal Magic

Serena Holly, Selom Sunu (illustrator)

This new illustrated series for children aged six and over is about Jada and her Granny Jinks, and is inspired by a true story.

In the first book, Jada Jinks finds a box of magic tricks in her granny's flat and uncovers her granny's secret dream of becoming a magician.

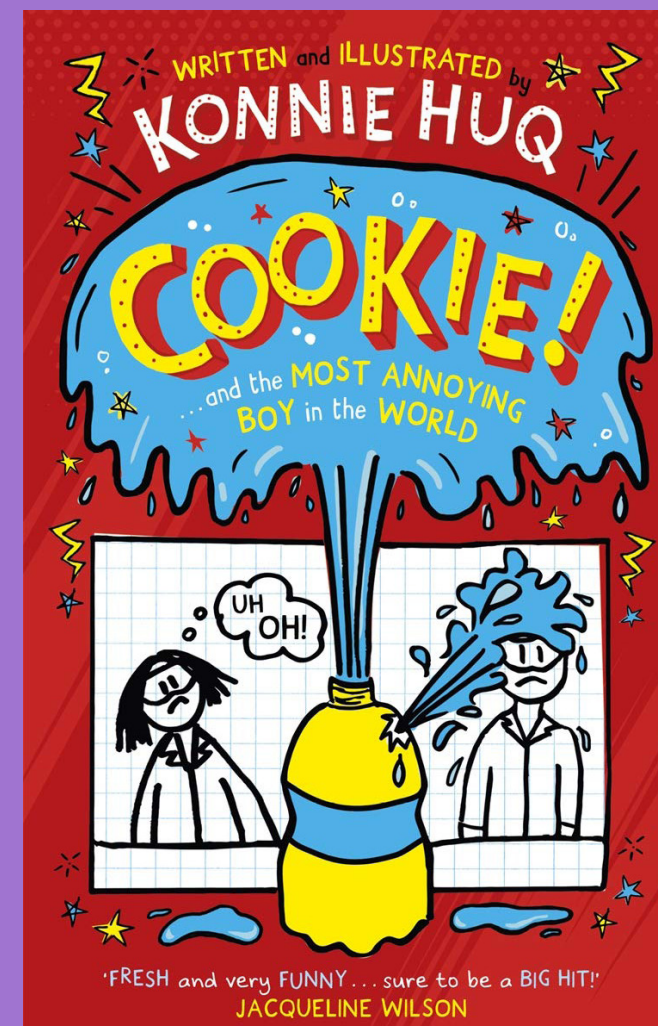
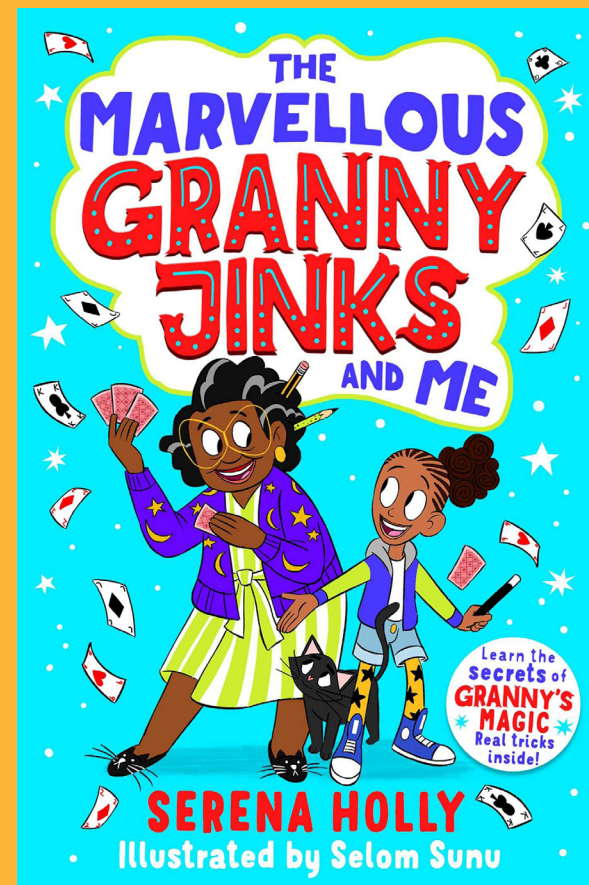
Jada soon decides that she's going to help Granny Jinks fulfil her dreams, but her dad, who hates magic, is standing in the way.

Will Jada be able to help her grandmother pass the auditions for Dalton Green Magic Society, and will she learn some tricks of her own along the way?

This series is inspired by the true story of Jenny Mayers, who was the first Black woman to be accepted into the Magic Circle. The book includes how-to magic tricks for children to try at home.

This is perfect for fans of *The Naughtiest Unicorn*, *Bad Nana* and *Wigglesbottom Primary*.

Themes/topics: Courage, Friendship, Self-belief
Publisher: Simon & Schuster Children's UK
Year: 2022



Cookie series

Konnie Huq

Former *Blue Peter* presenter Konnie Huq's series is about Cookie, and is a fun and funny set of books illustrated by Huq herself.

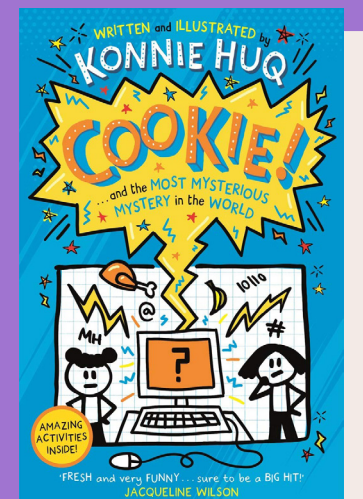
In *Cookie and the Most Annoying Boy in the World*, Cookie's best friend moves to Solihull. Desperate for a pet to fill the void, Cookie visits the pet shop and falls in love with Bluey the kitten. But before she can do anything, her new neighbour – the most annoying boy in the world – buys the kitten and changes her name to Nigel. But it's not all bad; Cookie gets the chance to go on her favourite television show, *Brainbusters*, if only she can keep her head down... This book won the Stockport Children's Book Award best read for seven to nine year olds in 2020.

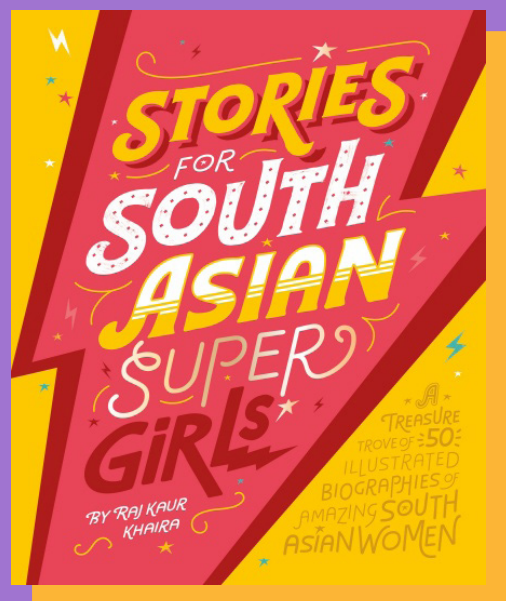
In *The Most Annoying Girl in the World*, Cookie has two tickets to see popstar Aliana Tiny. That

results in the most annoying girl in the world, Suzie Ashby, suddenly wanting to be her best friend. Somehow though, Cookie manages to fall out with her real friends, and become besties with Suzie instead. Can she repair her friendships and save the planet in the process?

In *The Most Mysterious Mystery in the World*, Cookie's Nani comes to stay from Bangladesh, and Cookie is the only one in the family who can't speak Bengali. Luckily, she realises her coding lessons might help her crack the code and bond with Nani.

Themes/topics: Friendship, Family, Science
Publisher: Piccadilly Press
Year: 2020–2021





Stories for South Asian Supergirls

Raj Kaur Khaira et al.

This anthology is in the vein of books like *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls*, but with a focus on South Asian women.

It covers the inspirational stories of 50 women, including actor and writer Mindy Kaling, business leaders Indra Nooyi, Anjali Sud and Ruchi Sanghvi, and British Muslim spy, Noor Inayat Khan.

Each page-long profile is paired with an illustration from one of 10 South Asian artists.

The [Guardian](#) said: "This call to courage celebrates warrior queens of Bangladeshi, Indian, Nepalese and Pakistani heritage. Inevitably, in doing so, it highlights a morass of injustice – sexism, homophobia, the abuse of power – but in matter-of-fact language designed to highlight obstacles overcome."

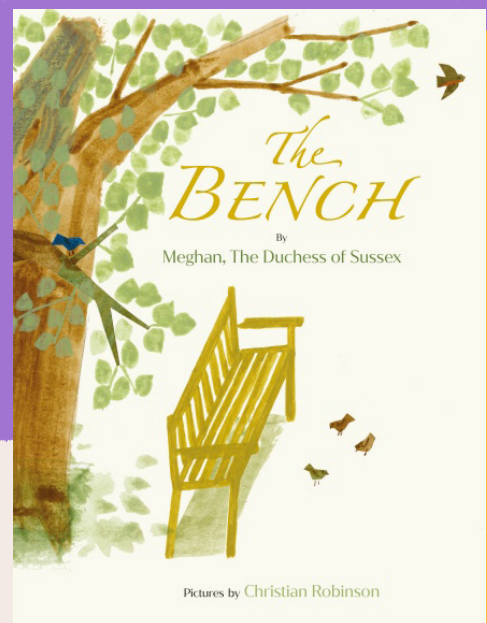
The Bench

Meghan, The Duchess of Sussex, Christian Robinson (illustrator)

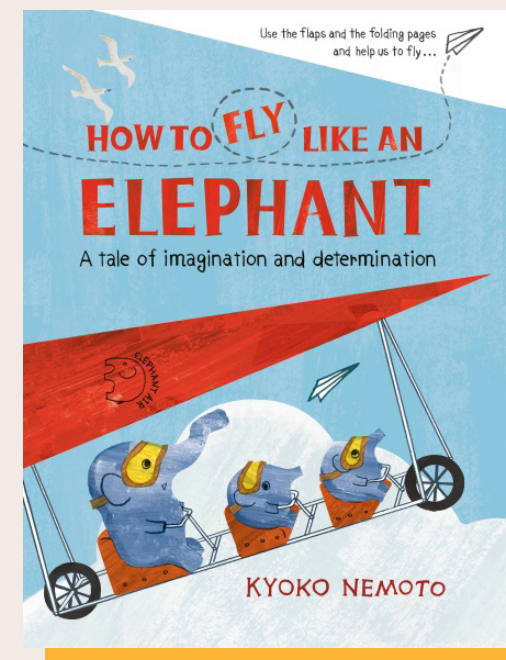
Meghan Markle's first children's book, *The Bench*, is about the relationship between father and son, as seen through the eyes of a mother.

It's a story about the many ways that love can take shape and be expressed in a contemporary family, and looks at the moments shared between a diverse group of fathers and sons.

The book is illustrated by Christian Robinson, the Caldecott-winning illustrator, working in watercolour for the first time.



Themes/topics: Family, Relationships, Love
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2021



How to Fly Like an Elephant

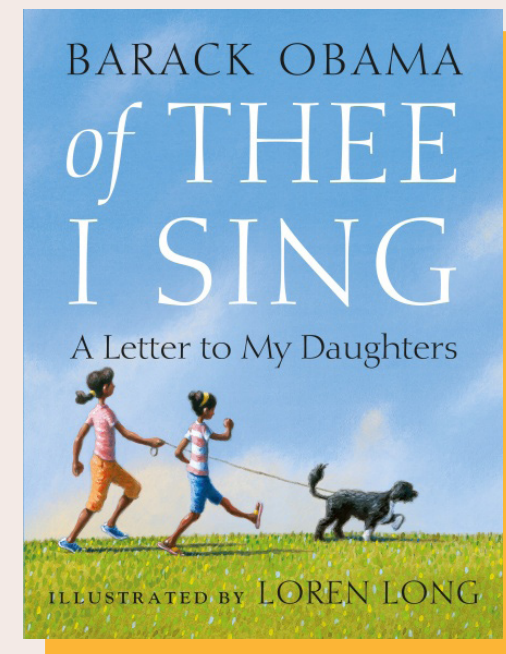
Kyoko Nemoto

How to Fly Like an Elephant is both a fun picture book and an introduction to design and engineering for young minds.

Published in association with the V&A Museum, the book includes interactive folding elements and flaps, so readers can help the elephants finally get off the ground.

Kyoko Nemoto is an illustrator living in Tokyo, who has illustrated a wide range of books and products. *How to Fly Like an Elephant* is the first children's book she has both illustrated and authored.

Themes/topics: Science, Adventure, Engineering
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2018



Of Thee I Sing

Barack Obama, Loren Long (illustrator)

Of Thee I Sing is an inspirational picture book written in the form of a letter to the former President's two daughters, Malia and Sasha.

It is a moving tribute to the ideals that have shaped America and to 13 groundbreaking Americans, including Georgia O'Keefe and her artistry, Jackie Robinson and his courage, and George Washington and his patriotism.

Themes/topics: American history, Inspiration
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2018

Anisha, Accidental Detective series

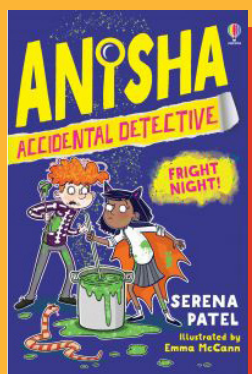
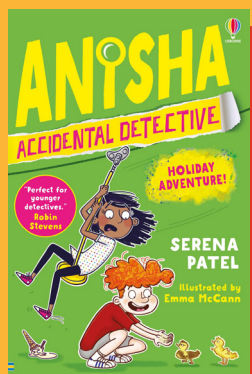
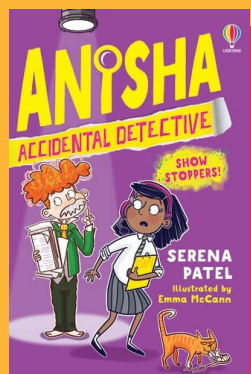
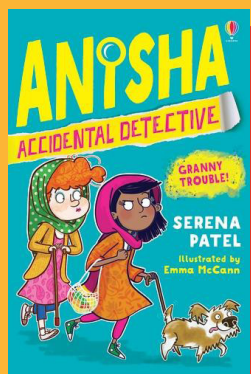
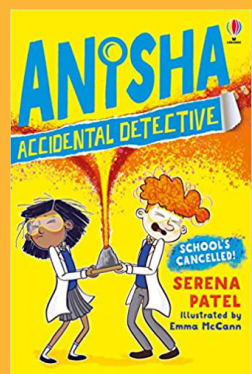
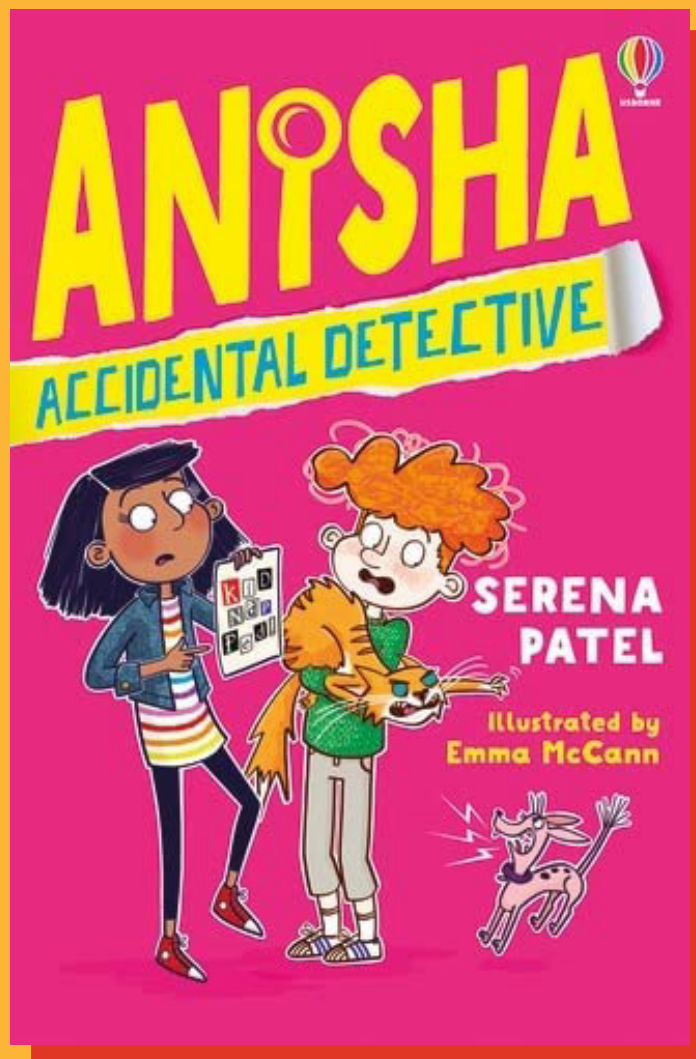
Serena Patel, Emma McCann
(illustrator)

This series spans six books, all following Anisha as she investigates various mysterious goings-on in the lives of her friends, family and peers.

In the first book, Anisha's super-dramatic Aunt Bindi is getting married tomorrow and is having a mega meltdown. Things will only get worse if she discovers that Anisha has found a ransom note, pushed through the letter box, saying Uncle Tony, Bindi's husband-to-be, has been kidnapped. The note says that Uncle Tony will only be freed if the wedding is cancelled. It's up to Anisha to become a detective and save the wedding, and the day.

The other books in the series are *School's Cancelled*, *Granny Trouble*, *Show Stoppers*, *Holiday Adventure*, and *Fright Night*.

Themes/topics: Mystery, Adventure, Friendship, Family, Detective story
Publisher: Usborne
Year: 2020–2022



“This is a highly amusing, fast-paced debut in a very promising new detective series”

– Booktrust on *Anisha, Accidental Detective*

Soccer Squad series

Bali Rai

The four Soccer Squad books – *Starting Eleven*, *Missing!*, *Stars!* and *Glory!* – follow Dal, Chris, Abs and Jason, who in the first book are determined to make the new under-11s football team their youth club is putting together.

Further books see the four play their first matches and deal with losses, become part of a television documentary, and take on their biggest challenge in the cup final.

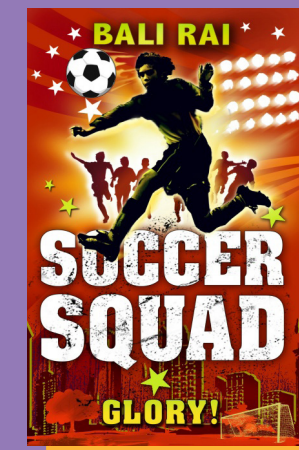
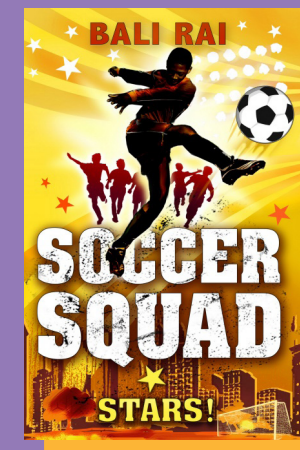
The series deals with everything from self-confidence to teamwork, and is written by Bali Rai, the writer of books including the award-winning young adult novel, *(Un)arranged marriage*.

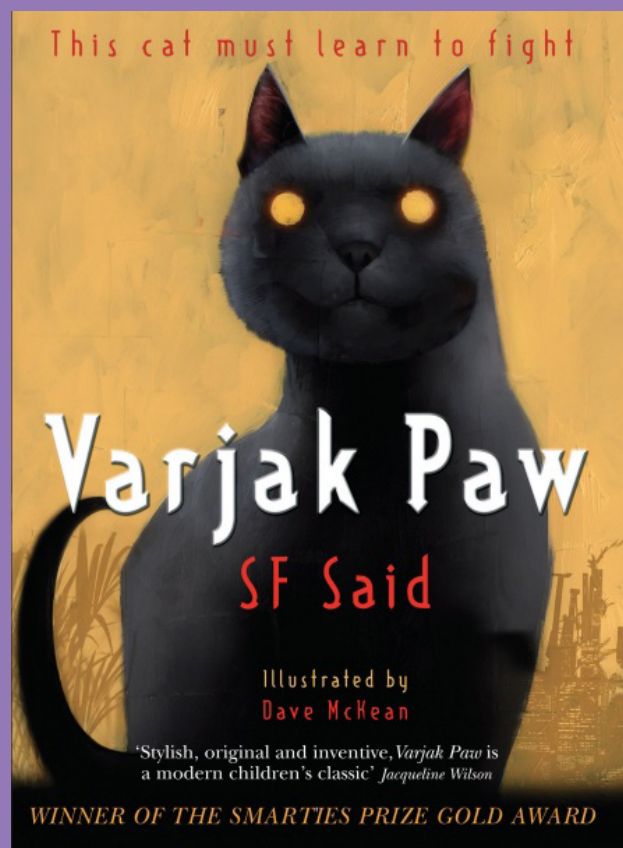
“Rai is as familiar with junior soccer as he is with speech patterns of the age group, so his dialogue always rings true and will have younger readers hooked on his stories...”

– *Leicester Mercury*



Themes/topics: Sport, Teamwork, Confidence
Publisher: Red Fox
Year: 2008–2009





Varjak Paw and The Outlaw Varjak Paw

SF Said, Dave McKean (illustrator)

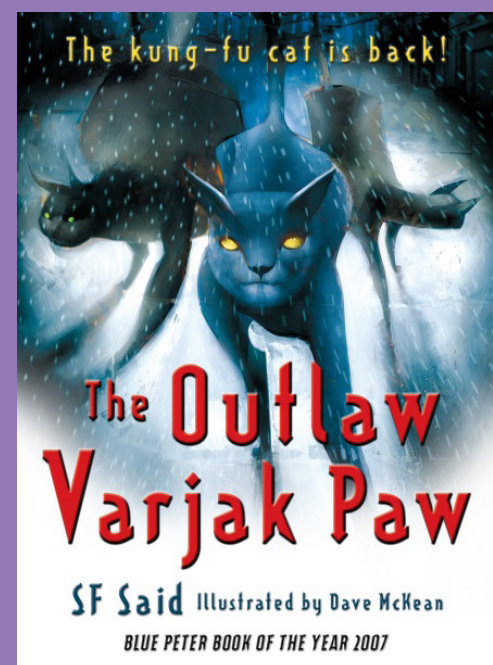
SF Said's duology is about a Mesopotamian Blue kitten called Varjak Paw. He lives high up in an old house on the hill, and has never left home. Until, that is, his grandfather tells him about the Way, a secret martial art for cats.

Learning to fight, Varjak must use the Way to survive in a city full of dangerous dogs, cat gangs and, strangest of all, the mysterious Vanishings.

Illustrated by Dave McKean, *Varjak Paw* won the Smarties Prize Gold Award, while *The Outlaw Varjak Paw*, in which Varjak Paw is elected the leader of a gang of cats that supports freedom and kindness for all, won the Blue Peter Book of the Year in 2007.

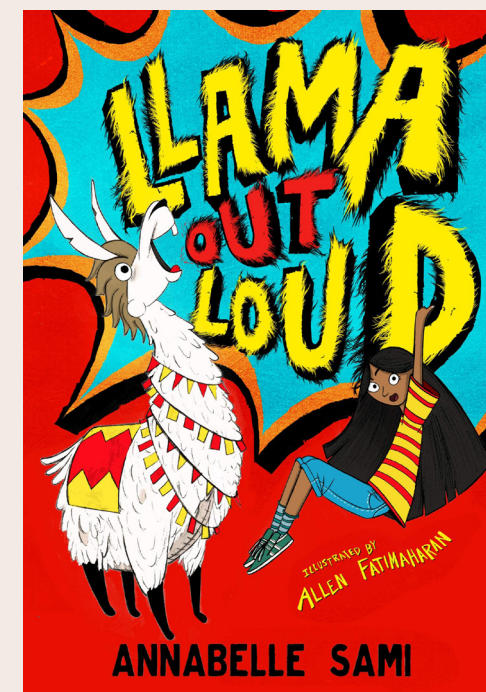
Said writes widely about literature, films and the arts for newspapers, and works regularly with CLPE, promoting reading and literacy in schools.

Themes/topics: Courage, Teamwork, Adventure
Publisher: Corgi Children's
Year: 2003-2005



"Said has created an appealing hero in the naïve but determined Varjak. His world has a dreamlike quality, both concretely familiar and creepily off-kilter, that's effectively reinforced by vivid ink sketches"

– *Kirkus Reviews on Varjak Paw*



Themes/topics: Friendship, Family, Self-confidence, Adventure
Publisher: Farshore
Year: 2020



Themes/topics: Religion, Family, Siblings
Publisher: Scholastic
Year: 2021

Llama Out Loud!

Annabelle Sami, Allen Fatimaharan (illustrator)

Llama Out Loud! is the first book in a new series about Yasmin Shah, a 10-year-old girl who is part of a big and noisy family, but who doesn't ever speak. Levi is a rude, sassy toy llama, who talks A LOT and has come to wreak havoc in Yasmin's life.

Yasmin tries everything she can to escape Levi, but is pulled along on his adventures and discovers life is never boring with him around. Could Levi help Yasmin find her voice?

Llama Out Loud! is illustrated by Allen Fatimaharan, the official illustrator for World Book Day 2022. It was shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize and won a Made for Mums Gold Award.

The Best Diwali Ever

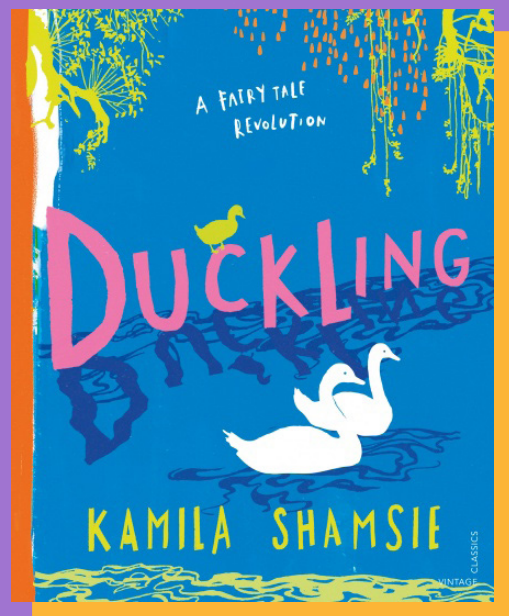
Sonali Shah, Chaaya Prabhat (illustrator)

The Best Diwali Ever introduces children to Diwali through a heartwarming family story. Ariana has a plan to make Diwali an extra special celebration, with yummy sweets, divas around the house, pretty clothes, fireworks and the rangoli competition, which she is determined to win. But standing in her way is her annoying little brother Rafi, who is always up to mischief and whose clumsiness threatens to ruin everything.

The book includes a non-fiction spread about Diwali and how it is celebrated around the world and in different religions.

Sonali Shah is an ambassador for the British Asian Trust and a BBC broadcaster.

The [Guardian](#) said: "Blazing with intricate whorls of colour, full of mouthwatering food and best-clothes excitement, this giddily sweet story, featuring an annoying younger brother whose interference ends in unexpected triumph, is a gorgeous celebration of the festival of lights."



Duckling

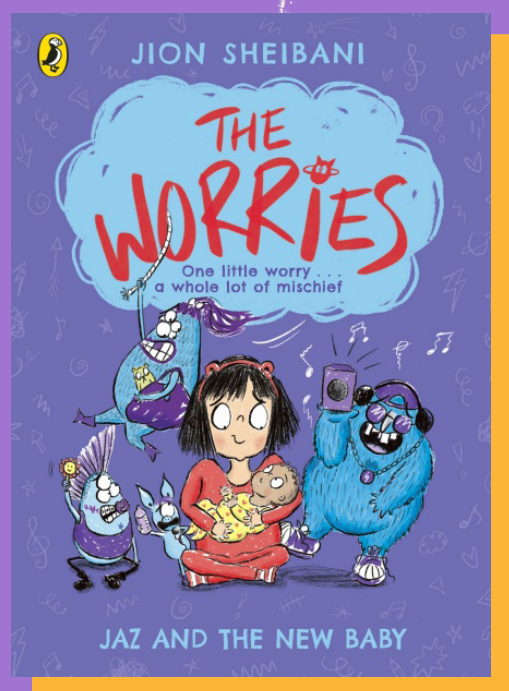
Kamila Shamsie

Duckling is Kamila Shamsie's retelling of *The Ugly Duckling*, and is part of the A Fairy Tale Revolution series.

On the farm, some eggs are hatching and a flock of sweet ducklings are popping out. But one of the ducklings looks a little different to the others...

Cast out and alone, the odd duckling will need to go on a journey to search for where she belongs, and also discover that it's ok to be different.

Themes/topics: Self-confidence
Publisher: Vintage Children's Classics
Year: 2020



Jaz and the New Baby

Jion Sheibani

This book follows Jazmin, whose mum is about to have a baby. Jaz is excited about becoming a big sister, but soon a group of furry and fretful friends – the Worries – arrive to cause mischief.

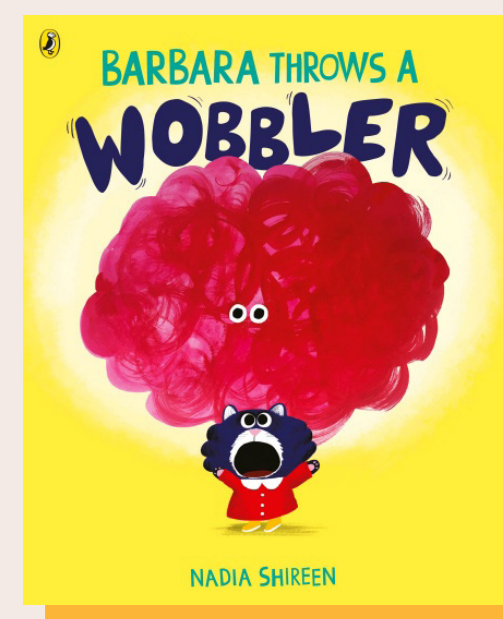
Will Jaz be able to overcome gloomy Loner, nervous Change, pushy Jealousy and DJ Disaster to become the sister she knows she can be, or will her worries overwhelm her?

Jaz and the New Baby will gently guide children through connecting with and acknowledging their worries, to themselves and to others.

Themes/topics: Anxiety, Worries, Confidence, Mental health
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2021



Themes/topics: Anxiety, Worries, Confidence, Mental health
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2022



Themes/topics: Emotions
Publisher: Jonathan Cape
Year: 2021

Shara and the Really Big Sleepover

Jion Sheibani

Shara is a big sister, and it's a role she takes very seriously. When her mum prepares to go on holiday for a few days, Shara finds herself worried. And in addition to all the usual concerns about her mum, her brother Keita, about school and about staying with her grandad for the first time, Shara finds herself welcoming a new worry: Reece Sponsable.

Bossy and demanding, Reece totally takes over Shara's life, making her think that it's up to her to make sure everyone is ok.

Barbara Throws a Wobbler

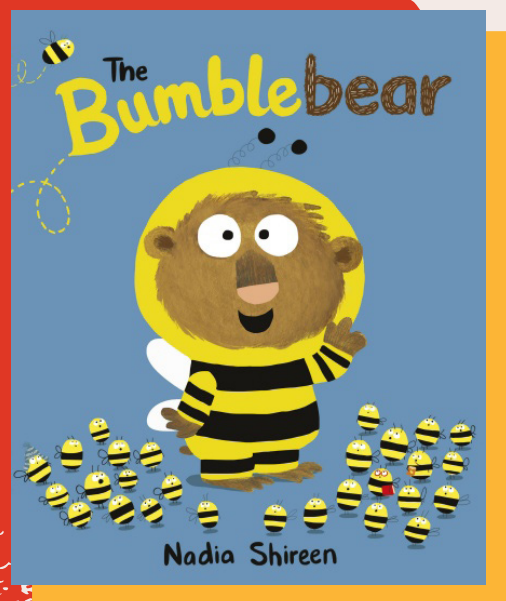
Nadia Shireen

Nadia Shireen's *Barbara Throws a Wobbler* is about Barbara, who is in a very bad mood, even if she won't admit it.

Barbara has a problem with a sock, and with a strange pea in her lunch. It all comes to a head when she's at the park with her friends, and her Wobbler is out of control.

Instead of fighting her Wobbler, what if Barbara works with it so she can be cheerful again?

Barbara Throws a Wobbler is a funny and sensitive look at understanding and dealing with tantrums.



The Bumblebear

Nadia Shireen

Norman is a bear who loves honey so much that he dresses up in a bee onesie to try and infiltrate Bee School, knowing it contains a huge honey supply.

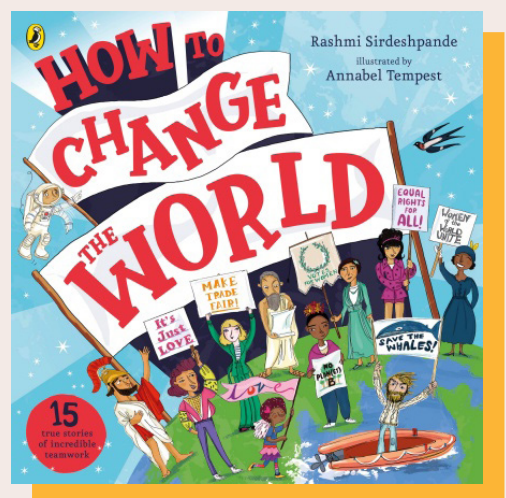
But will his disguise last? And when the hive is put in danger, will Norman be able to discover his true identity and become the The Bumblebear?

Funny and touching, this is a book about not judging people based on stereotypes, and how friendship can spring up between very different people.

Themes/topics: Friendship, Self-confidence

Publisher: Jonathan Cape

Year: 2016



How to Change the World

Rashmi Sirdeshpande, Annabel Tempest (illustrator)

How to Change the World contains 15 true stories of groups of amazing humans who have changed the world.

From the campaign for women's votes to efforts to heal the ozone layer and the incredible teamwork on the International Space Station, this book will look at the ways in which people can work together to improve things for everyone.

Themes/topics: Science, History, Teamwork

Publisher: Puffin

Year: 2021

Never Show a T-Rex a Book!, Never Teach a Stegosaurus to Do Sums, and Never Let a Diplodocus Draw

Rashmi Sirdeshpande, Diane Ewen (illustrator)

This series of picture books teach children about reading, maths, and creativity through a funny medium.

Never Show a T-Rex a Book! posits whether a T-Rex would know what to do if you showed it a book. A madcap and super silly adventure story, this is rooted in the transformative power of books. *Never Show a T-Rex a Book!* won the Queen's Knickers Award.

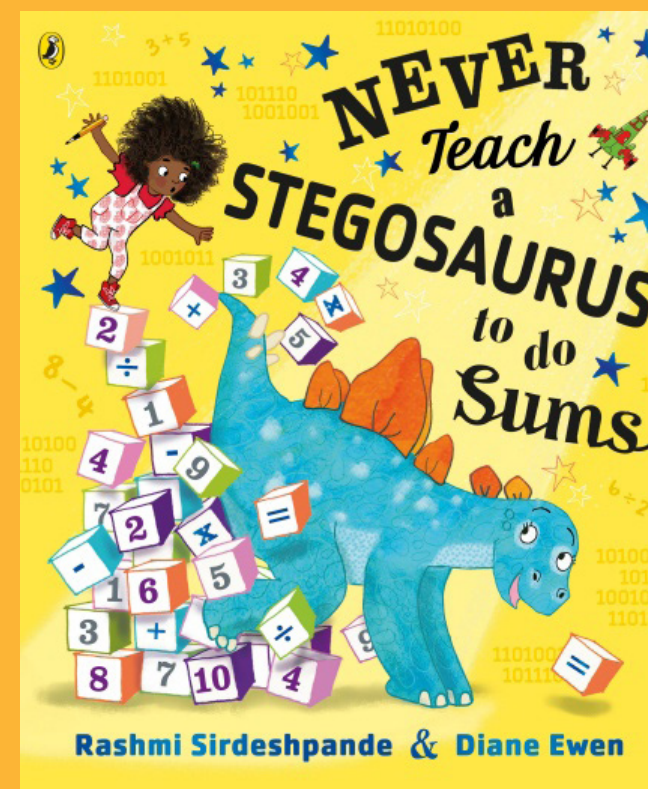
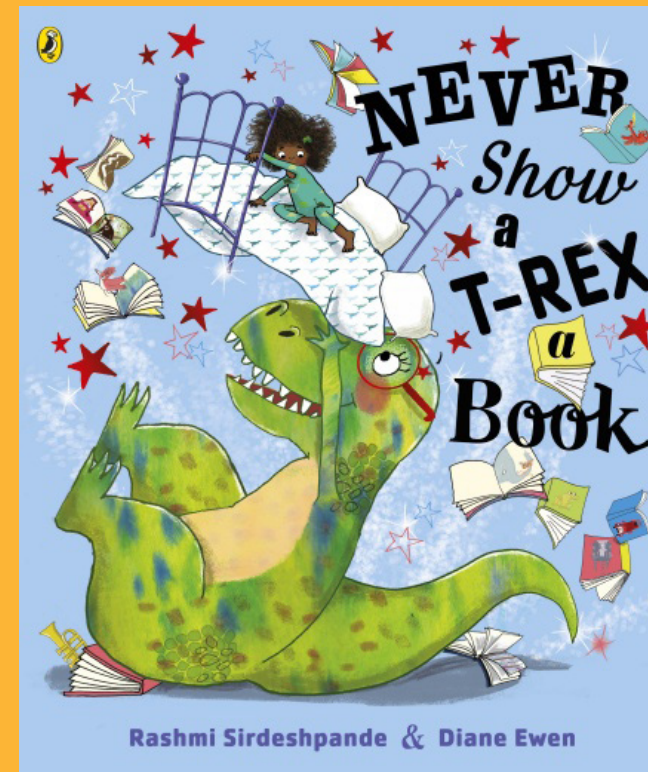
Never Teach a Stegosaurus to Do Sums is a love letter to learning and the power of numbers, and considers how a Stegosaurus could learn to code, invent or even fly to the moon if she knew how to do sums.

Never Let a Diplodocus Draw is a look at creativity, and what might happen if a diplodocus was given some crayons and paint.

Themes/topics: Maths, Reading, Writing, Creativity

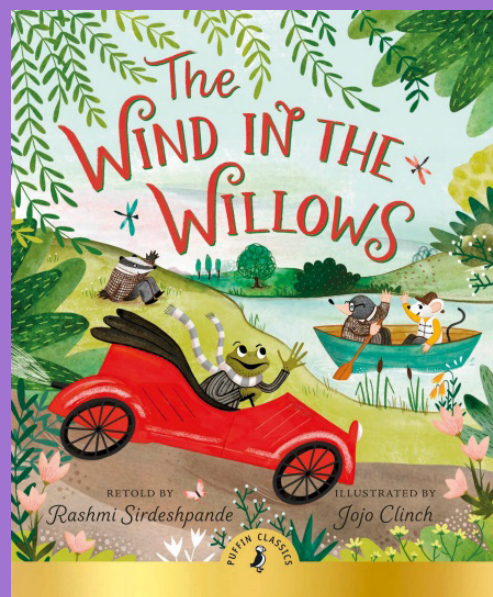
Publisher: Puffin

Year: 2020–2022



“This entertaining tale celebrates the joy of reading and demonstrates how books can fuel the imagination”

– Booktrust on *Never Show a T-Rex a Book!*



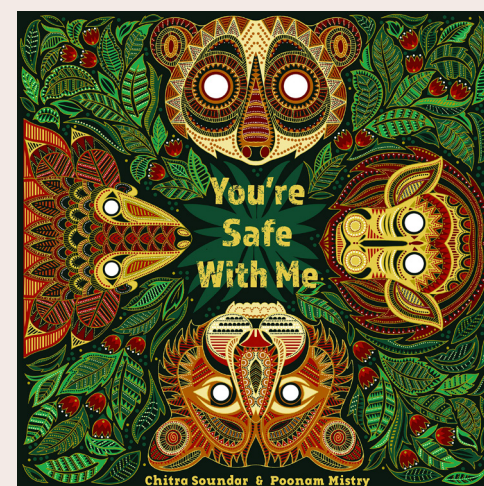
Themes/topics: Friendship, Adventure, Teamwork
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2022

The Wind in the Willows (retold)

Rashmi Sirdeshpande, Jojo Clinch (illustrator)

Rashmi Sirdeshpande's retelling of *The Wind in the Willows*, illustrated by Jojo Clinch, introduces the popular story of Toad of Toad Hall, Moly and Ratty to a new audience.

This edition is beautifully abridged and fully illustrated for a younger, modern audience.



Themes/topics: Family, Anxiety
Publisher: Lantana Publishing
Year: 2018

You're Safe With Me

Chitra Soundar, Poonam Mistry (illustrator)

A story about the baby animals of the Indian forest getting ready to go to bed, this is a book about feeling safe and reassured.

Its beautiful illustrations by Poonam Mistry are distinct, and are a great opportunity for children to learn to pursue their own creativity.



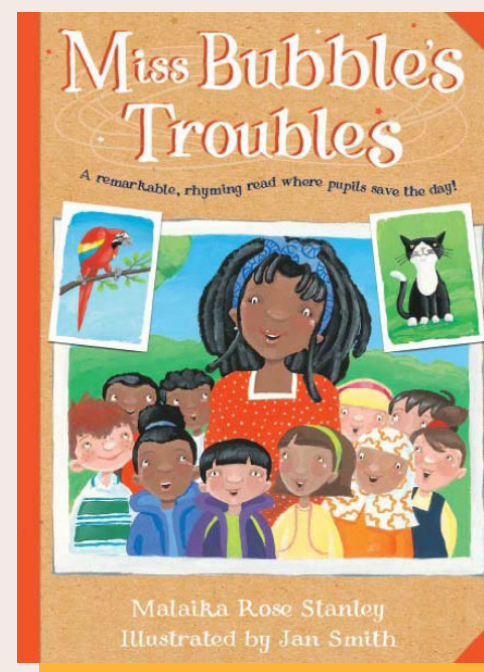
Themes/topics: Family, Growing Up
Publisher: Walker Books
Year: 2020

Sona Sharma, Very Best Big Sister

Chitra Soundar, Jen Khatun (illustrator)

This book follows Sona Sharma, whose mum tells her that she is going to become a big sister. When Sona finds out there will be a naming ceremony for the baby, she is determined to find the perfect name for her new sibling. But along the way, she learns that life is going to change in lots of ways.

Sona Sharma, Very Best Big Sister looks at a common experience for young children, and through a fictional story arms them with the tools needed to understand the changes that are ahead.



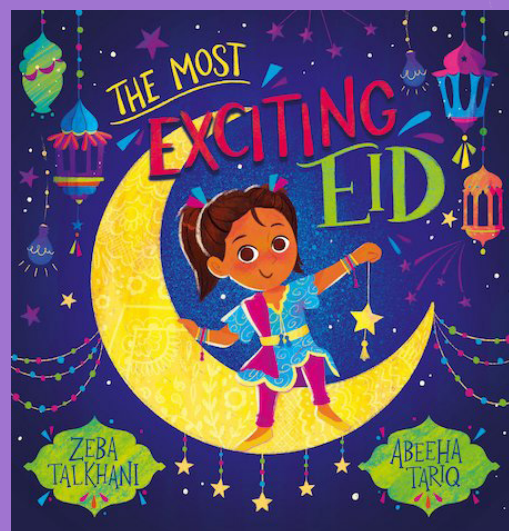
Themes/topics: School, Teamwork
Publisher: Tamarind
Year: 2010

Miss Bubble's Troubles

Malaika Rose Stanley, Jan Smith (illustrator)

This story in rhyme is about super-cool teacher Miss Bubble, who teaches Rainbow Class at Topley Primary School. Her pupils adore her and have lots of fun with her.

But when Miss Bubble ends up in a spot of trouble, her parrot Shriek and her cat Milkshake try their best to help. And so it's Rainbow Class that will need to come to the rescue.



Themes/topics: Sharing, Teamwork, Friendship, Religion
Publisher: Scholastic
Year: 2022

The Most Exciting Eid

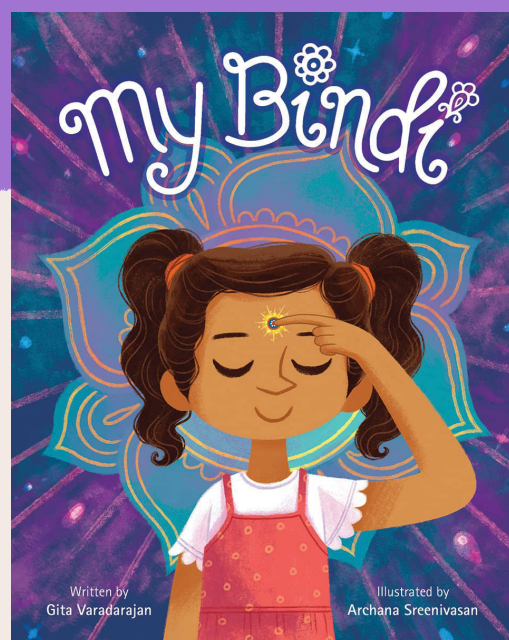
Zeba Talkhani, Abeeha Tariq (illustrator)

Safa is excited for Eid-ul-Fitr: she'll get to draw henna patterns on her hands, decorate her home, and best of all, get her hands on her brand new shiny pink bicycle. But Safa doesn't want to share her bike with her cousin Alissa.

When Safa's mum takes her to gift delicious Eid treats to her neighbours, Safa realises how wonderful it is to make others happy, and she vows to make it up to Alissa.

Zeba Talkhani is the author of *My Past Is a Foreign Country: A Muslim Feminist Finds Herself*, a memoir which was praised in the *Times*, *Vogue*, and *Stylist* Magazine.

The Most Exciting Eid includes a page about different Eid traditions, foods and greetings.



Themes/topics: Culture, Religion, Self-belief, Belonging, Family
Publisher: Scholastic
Year: 2022

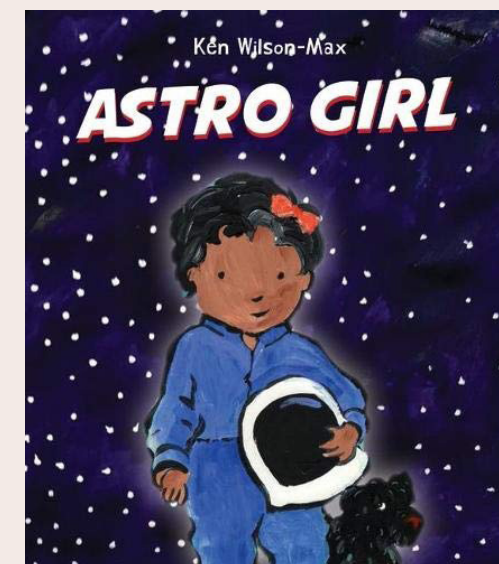
My Bindi

Gita Varadarajan, Archana Sreenivasan (illustrator)

My Bindi is a lyrical picture book debut from Gita Varadarajan, and encompasses the history of wearing a bindi as well as the power in doing so.

It's told through the story of Divya, who is scared to put on a bindi for the first time in case she gets made fun of. But her Amma is there to reassure her as they look through Amma's box to find the perfect bindi.

This is a story about belonging, embracing your heritage, and believing in yourself.



Themes/topics: Science, Engineering, Space, Creativity, Imagination
Publisher: Otter-Barry Books
Year: 2019

Astro Girl

Ken Wilson-Max

Astro Girl is the tale of Astrid, who has always loved stars and space and who wants to be an astronaut.

While her mother is away, she and her father have fun acting out what life is like on a space mission, and when it comes time to meet her mother at the airbase, Astrid is in for a surprise.

An aspirational story about creativity and science.



Themes/topics: Myths, Folk tales
Publisher: Ladybird
Year: 2019

Ladybird Tales of Superheroes

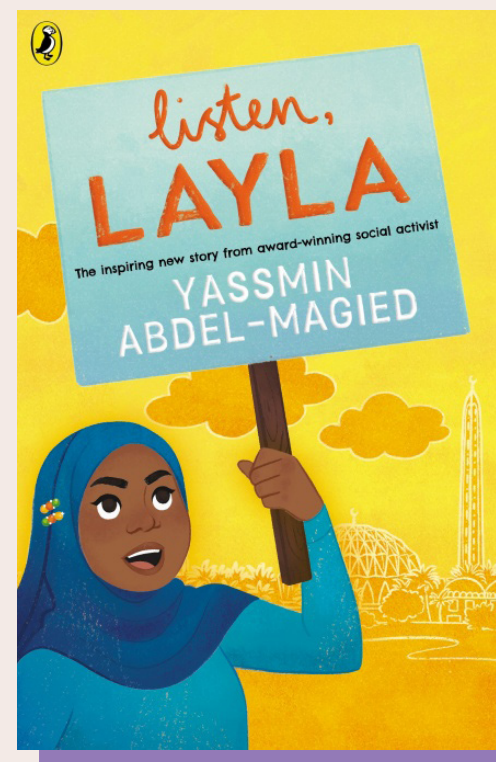
Various

Ladybird Tales of Superheroes is a colourful, illustrated collection of six tales about superheroes from around the world.

The six stories are about Anansi, Loki, Hanuman, Inanna, Shahrazad and Hua Mulan, and will introduce children to ancient tales that go beyond the fairytales and mythology of the western world.

Ladybird Tales of Superheroes is perfect for children to read on their own or out loud in company.

Years 5-6



Themes/topics: School, Family, Belonging, Politics
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2021

Listen, Layla

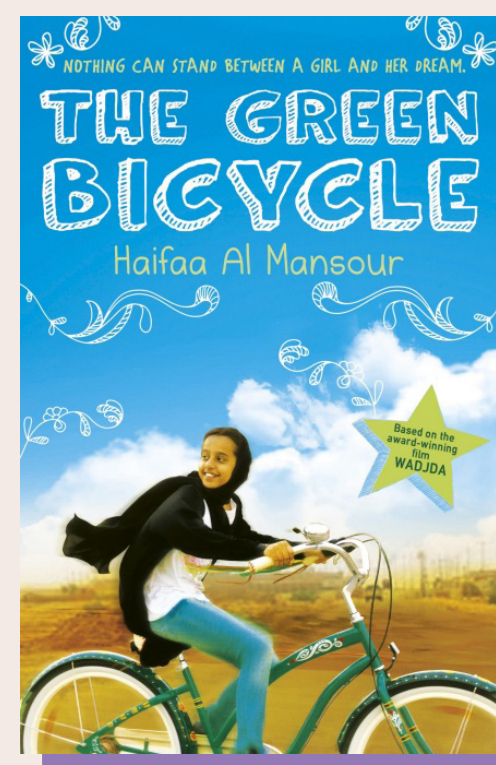
Yassmin Abdel-Magied

Listen, Layla is engineer-turned-writer Yassmin Abdel-Magied's follow-up to her debut novel *You Must Be Layla*.

School's out for the year, and inventor Layla is going to spend the summer getting her inventions ready for the grand design competition. But when her grandmother falls ill and her family must rush to Sudan to be with her, Layla feels like she's being pulled in many different directions. With big protests looming in Sudan, could Layla save the day with her revolutionary ideas?

Abdel-Magied had a career as a mechanical engineer – working often as the only female on an oil rig – before she pursued a career in writing.

The [Guardian](#) said of *You Must Be Layla* that it was a “warm, humorous account of a larger-than-life Sudanese girl navigating a posh Australian school”.



Themes/topics: Gender, Family, Politics, Activism
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2015

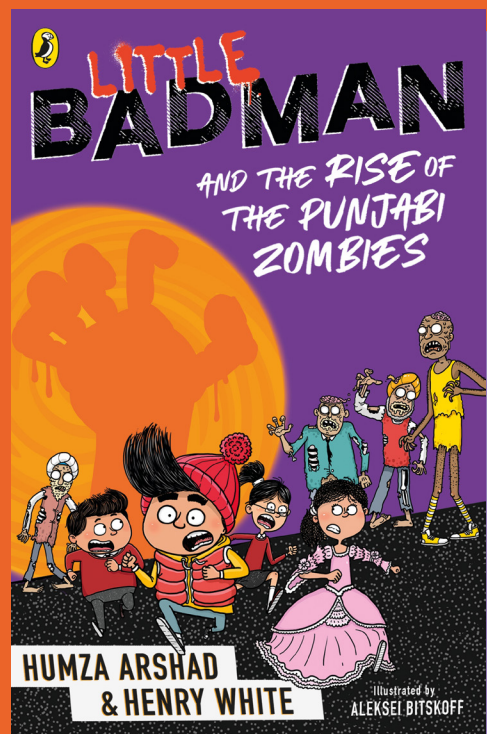
The Green Bicycle

Haifaa Al Mansour

Wadjda lives in Saudi Arabia and her one wish is to race her friend Abdullah on her very own bicycle. But in her country it's considered improper for girls to ride bikes, so her parents forbid her from having one.

Determined to follow her dream, Wadjda comes up with ways to make money and buy the bike herself. But while she's pushing forward, she soon realises that freedom comes at a high price.

Haifaa Al Mansour is a Saudi Arabian film director and screenwriter. Her first feature-length film, *Wadjda*, won the Best International Feature Audience Award at the Los Angeles Film Festival, and inspired this debut novel.



Little Badman and the Rise of the Punjabi Zombies

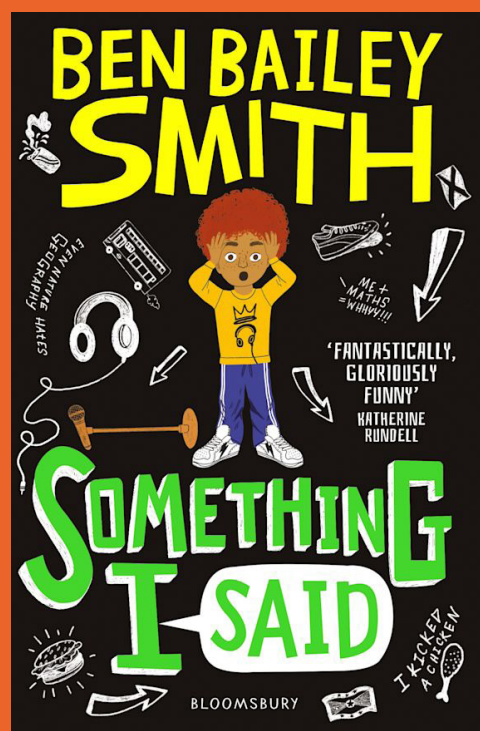
Humza Arshad and Henry White, Aleksei Bitskoff (illustrator)

The fourth Little Badman book sees Humza Khan entering secondary school and facing new challenges and enemies.

Having battled evil teacher geniuses and giant killer hamsters, he thought he'd be prepared for a new school. But he's soon been out rap-battled by the school bully, laughed at by his classmates, and there's an ancient magical orb causing havoc and very possibly leading to world destruction. Humza and his friends must face the undead in this adventure that also introduces children to the idea of starting a new school in a humorous way.

The other books in the series are *Little Badman and the Invasion of the Killer Aunties*, the World Book Day story *Little Badman and the Radioactive Samosa*, and *Little Badman and the Time-Travelling Teacher of Doom*.

Themes/topics: Friendship, School, Self-belief, Bullying
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2022



Something I Said

Ben Bailey Smith

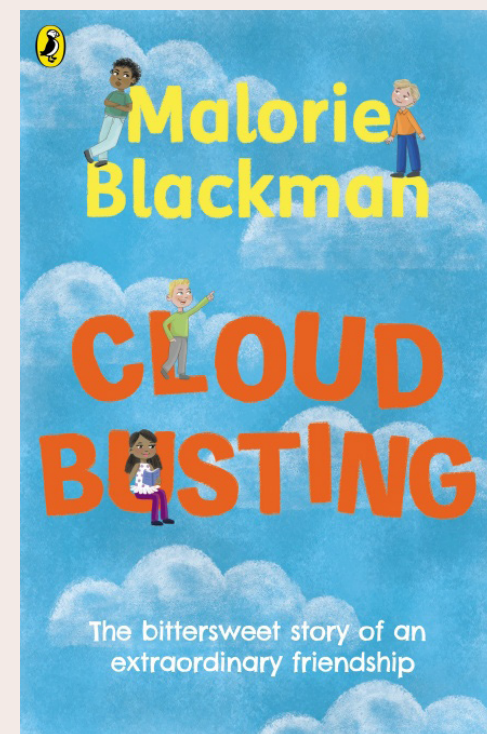
Comedian, actor, rapper and screenwriter Ben Bailey Smith's book is about 13-year-old Carmichael Taylor, who can't seem to understand why no one else finds everything as funny as he does.

When Car is filmed performing a piece of hilarious stand-up targeting his family, school and friends, the footage ends up creating international infamy. With the promise of fame and fortune comes trouble, and it's up to Car to decide what or who he's willing to risk to chase his comedy dream.

[Booktrust](#) said: "Essentially, Car's story is about finding out through experience what is most important to you. It's a great reminder that being able to make good decisions is a consequence of making bad ones and learning from them."

This is perfect for fans of books by Frank Cottrell-Boyce.

Themes/topics: Family, Friendship, Fame, Social media
Publisher: Bloomsbury
Year: 2021



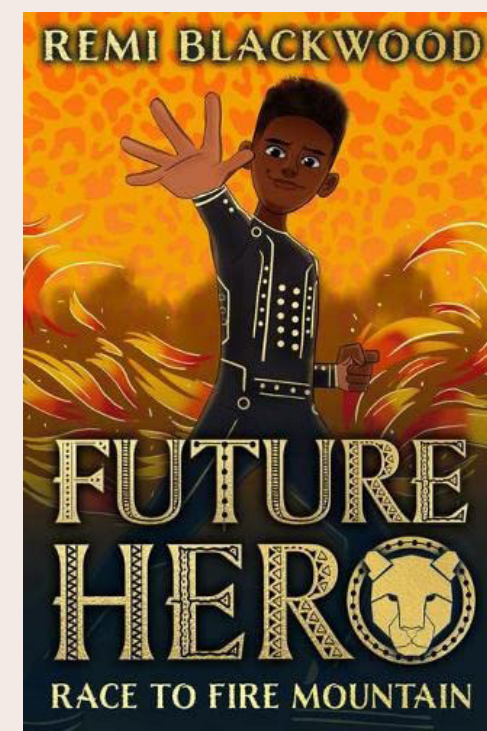
Cloud Busting

Malorie Blackman

Told entirely in verse, *Cloud Busting* is the story of new boy Davey and his classmate Sam, who can't stand him. When the pair are thrown together, Sam discovers that Davey's eccentric way of looking at the world makes life a lot more fun. Until the day something terrible happens.

This is a funny and sad story about a friendship that changes two boys forever, and is ultimately uplifting.

Themes/topics: Bullying, Friendship
Publisher: Yearling
Year: 2005



Future Hero: Race to Fire Mountain

Remi Blackwood, Alicia Robinson (illustrator)

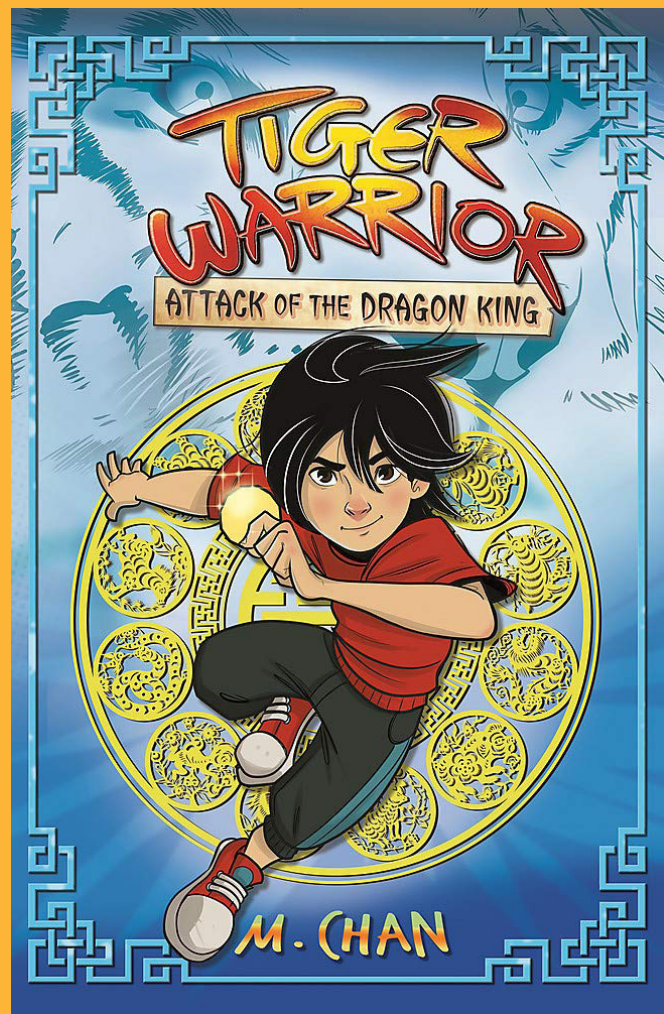
Race to Fire Mountain is the first book in a new series which will follow Jarrell, who discovers the fantasy world he is obsessed with doodling is actually real.

In the first book, he is launched into an incredible adventure to Ulfrika, the land of his ancestors, which is in trouble and needs a hero. With the help of brave and wise-cracking Kimisi, Jarrell must stop the evil Ikala to save Ulfrika.

Inspired by the mythology of Africa and its diaspora, this book is told in accessible short chapters.

Remi Blackwood is the pseudonym for a group of Black British writers.

Themes/topics: Mythology, Adventure, Family
Publisher: Scholastic
Year: 2022



Tiger Warrior series

M. Chan

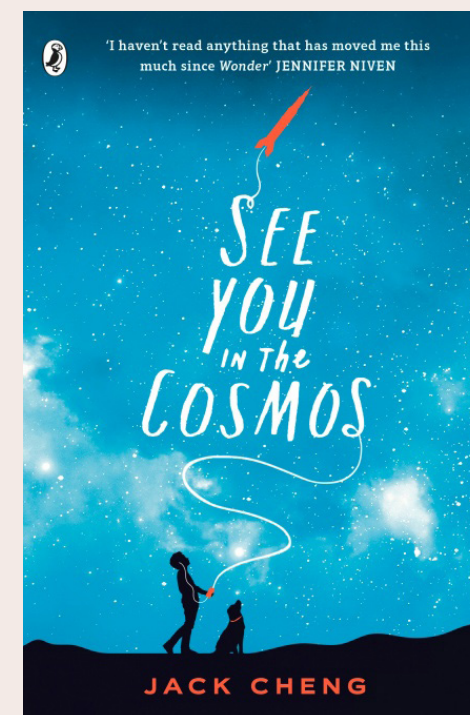
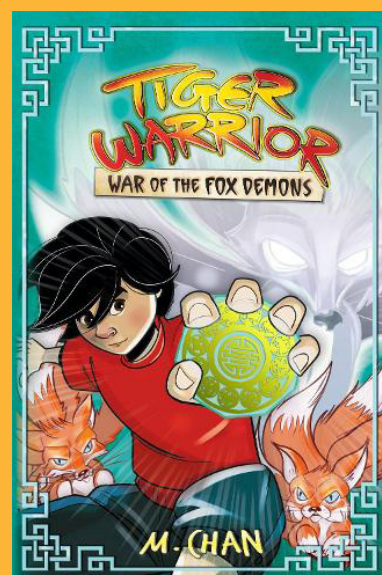
In this series, readers meet Jack who, when his grandfather leaves him a magical 12-sided jade coin, finds out he is the new Tiger Warrior, tasked with saving the world.

Luckily, in this battle of good versus evil, Jack is able to call on the magical power of the Chinese Zodiac and is aided by 12 animals. Tiger can harness the power of fire, Dragon can control water, Monkey has lightening speed and the rest are just happy to be out of the jade coin for a bit.

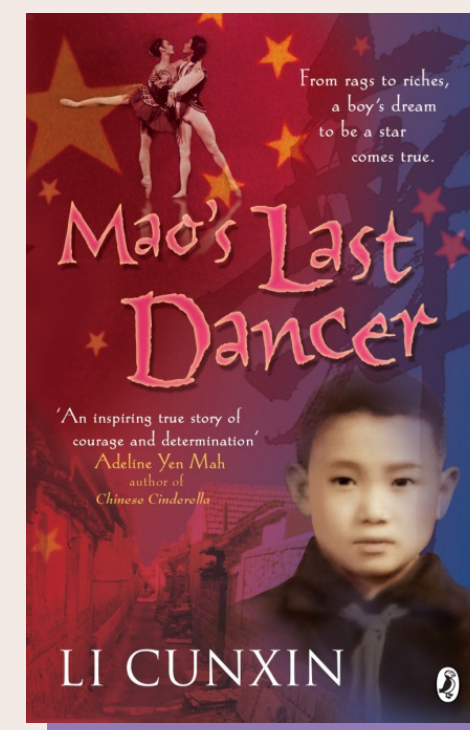
This series – consisting of *Attack of the Dragon King*, *War of the Fox Demons* and *Rise of the Lion Beast* – is perfect for fans of Adam Blade and Percy Jackson.

M.Chan is a British Chinese children's author who lives in Glasgow. Their short stories have been published in books including *Ladybird Tales of Superheroes* and *Stories From Around the World*.

Themes/topics: Mythology, Chinese history
Publisher: Orchard
Year: 2021–2022



Themes/topics: Space, Family, Grief
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2017



Themes/topics: Politics, Dance, Chinese history
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2006

See You in the Cosmos

Jack Cheng

Jack Cheng's debut novel is about Alex, an 11-year-old who wants to launch his iPod into space so he can show other lifeforms out in the cosmos what life is like on Earth.

But Alex's dad is long-dead, his mum is troubled, and his older brother is mostly not around, leaving Alex struggling to figure out who he is, what's out there and how he can be braver. Setting out on a road trip to find the answers, Alex's whole life will be turned upside down.

This book is for fans of *Wonder* by RJ Palacio and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon.

Cheng was born in Shanghai and grew up in Michigan. After spending nearly a decade in New York, working in advertising and tech, he now lives in Detroit.

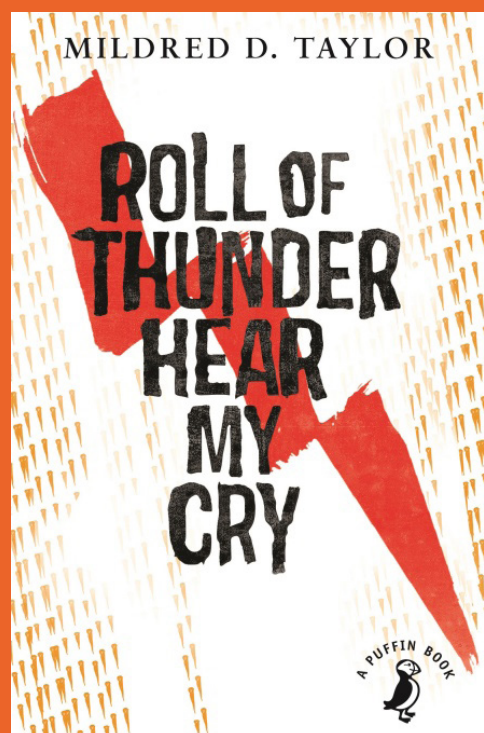
Mao's Last Dancer

Li Cunxin

Li was a poor Chinese peasant boy who was plucked unsuspectingly at the age of 10 from millions of others across the land to be trained as a ballet dancer.

In his book, he tells the story of his childhood and his lonely years of training at the Peking Dance Academy. Li attended a summer ballet school in Houston in the US, and defected to the West. He currently lives in Australia, where he is artistic director of the Queensland Ballet.

This is a condensed edition of his story specially for younger readers, and has an afterword with more information.



Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry

Mildred D. Taylor

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry is a classic of American literature. Set in Mississippi at the height of the American Depression, it's the story of Cassie and her family, and their struggle to maintain their integrity, pride and independence against the forces of a cruelly racist society.

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry won the highly prestigious John Newbery Medal, one of America's highest honours for children's books, in 1977.

Mildred D. Taylor was born in Mississippi and grew up in Ohio. She worked in Ethiopia with the Peace Corps before enrolling at the School of Journalism at the University of Colorado, where she helped develop a Black Studies programme.

Me, My Dad and the End of the Rainbow

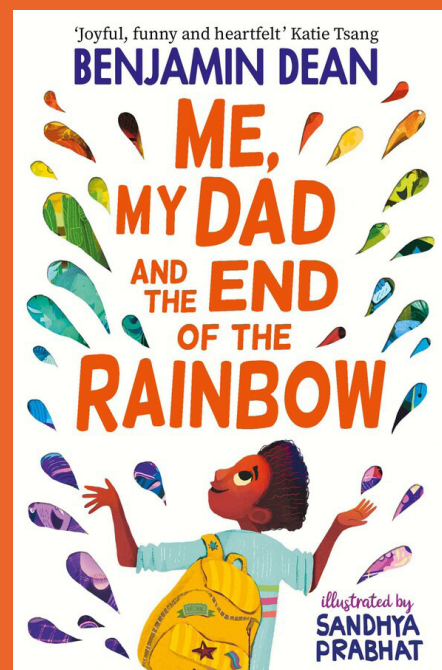
Benjamin Dean, Sandhya Prabhat (illustrator)

Me, My Dad and the End of the Rainbow is the debut novel from Benjamin Dean, a London-based celebrity reporter.

It is told from the point of view of Archie Allbright, whose mum and dad aren't doing a great job of pretending they get along and who are both keeping a secret from him. When Archie sees a colourful, crumpled flyer fall out of Dad's pocket, he thinks he may have found the answer to why his parents have been acting strangely.

With his best friends Bell and Seb, Archie sets off on a heartwarming and unforgettable journey to try and fix his family. This book is perfect for fans of the work of Elle McNicoll and Lisa Thompson.

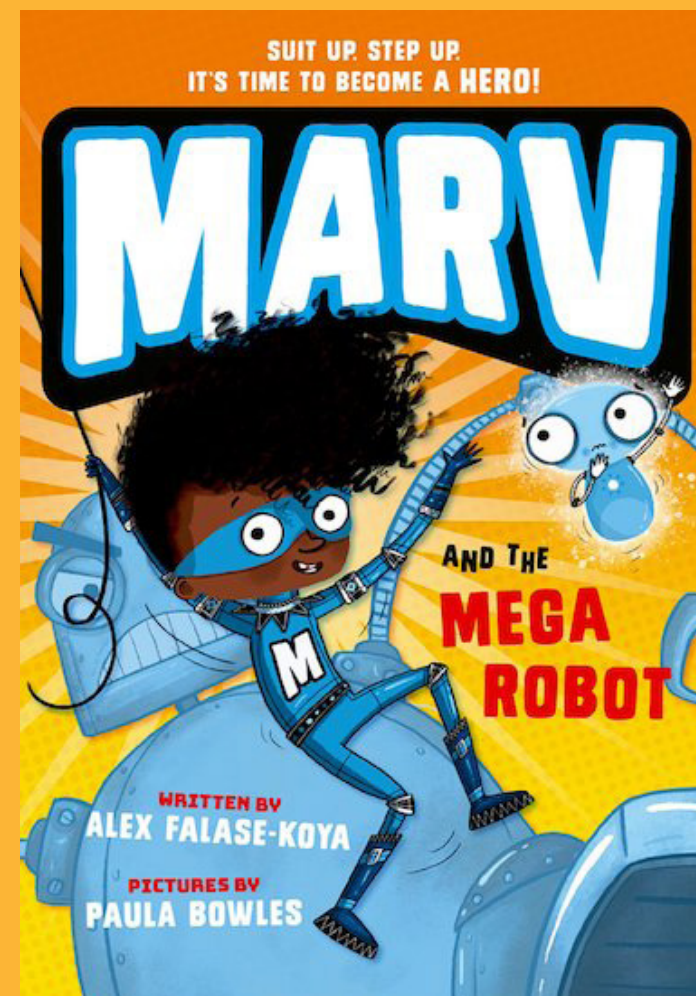
Me, My Dad and the End of the Rainbow was shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize for Younger Readers Prize 2022 and was Waterstones Children's Book of the Month for February 2021.



Themes/topics: Family, Friendship, LGBTQ+

Publisher: Simon and Schuster Children's

Year: 2021



"Funny, action-packed series"

– *The Bookseller*

Marv and the Mega Robot

Alex Falase-Koya, Paula Bowles (illustrator)

Marvin is an ordinary boy who loves spending time with his grandfather, reading comics, and making science experiments with his best friend Joe. But when he discovers a mysterious superhero suit hidden in the attic, Marvin learns that he is next in a long line of superheroes.

When the science fair is thrown into chaos by super-villain Mastermind and her giant robot, it's up to Marvin to save the day.

Alex Falase-Koya won Spread the Word's 2019 London Writers Awards for YA/children's, and has written a sequel to *Marv and the Mega Robot* called *Marv and the Dino Attack*. He also co-wrote Marcus Rashford's debut children's fiction title *The Breakfast Club*.

Themes/topics: Adventure, Superheroes, Self-belief, Family
Publisher: Oxford University Press
Year: 2022

Rumaysa: A Fairytale and Rumaysa: Ever After

Radiya Hafiza, Rhaida El Touny (illustrator)

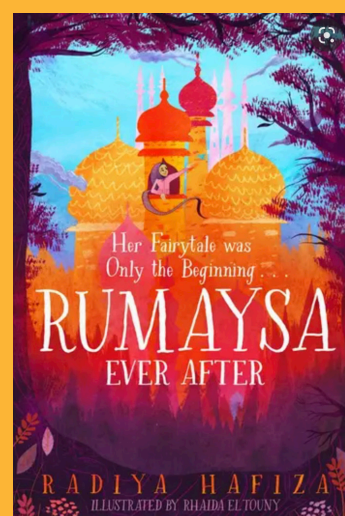
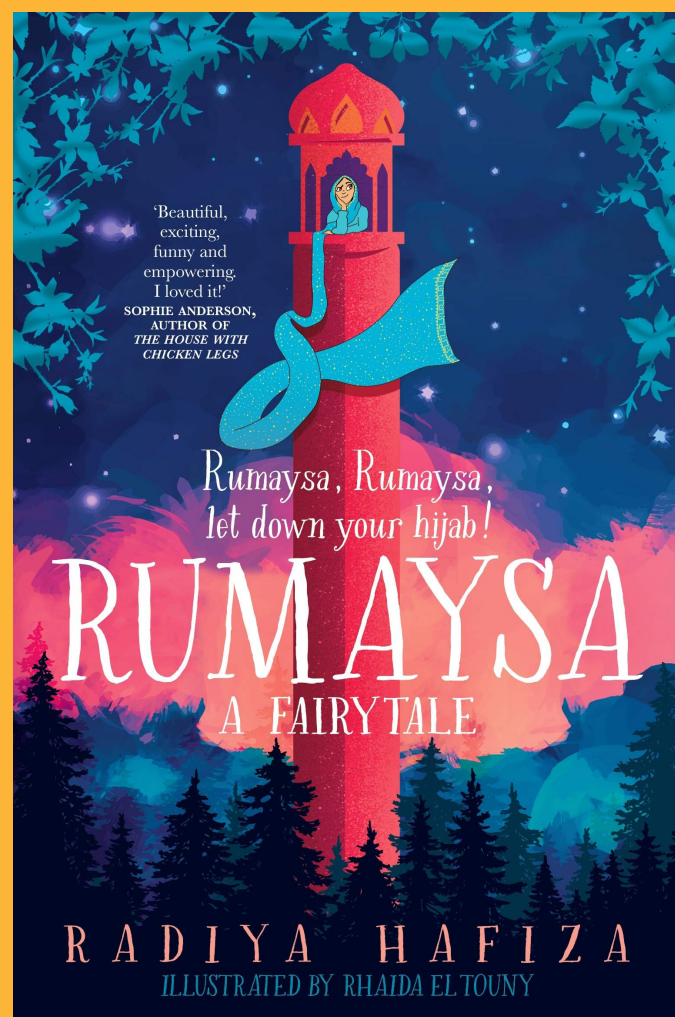
In *Rumaysa: A Fairytale*, Radiya Hafiza takes three well known fairytales – Rapunzel, Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty – and gives them a twist for the modern day to show that anyone, such as a young girl in a hijab, can be a hero.

The story follows Rumaysa as she escapes confinement from the tower she's been locked in for her whole life and journeys through enchanted forests to discover her own powers and try and find her long-lost parents. On the way she meets Cinderayla and Sleeping Sara.

In *Rumaysa: Ever After*, readers join Rumaysa as she continues to search for her family. When she receives a mysterious invitation from Saira White, Queen of Bishnara, she is soon pulled into a dark, magical adventure that threatens her own happily ever after.

Hafiza worked in publishing for a few years and is behind the blog *The Good Assistant*. She grew up reading classic Western fairy tales that never had any brown girls in them, and Rumaysa is inspired by this experience.

Themes/topics: Self-belief, Adventure, Friendship
Publisher: Macmillan Children's Books
Year: 2022

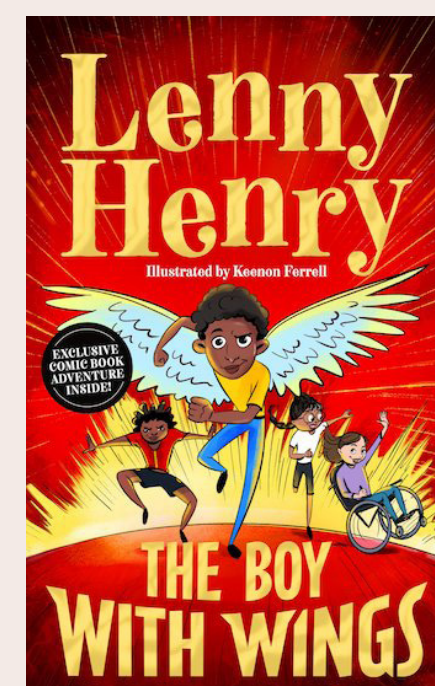


“All the fairytales in this exciting collection are vivid, magical and wonderful – each one spinning the genre on its head and bringing the stories right up to date with their diverse heroines taking centre stage”

- Jasbinder Bilan, author of *Asha and the Spirit Bird*



Themes/topics: History, Black history, Biography
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2022



Themes/topics: Bullying, Self-belief, Friendship
Publisher: Macmillan Children's Books
Year: 2022

Black in Time

Alison Hammond

Television presenter Alison Hammond's *Black in Time* is a book about Black people throughout history.

From sportspeople to scientists, activists to musicians, politicians to writers, the book will introduce a number of figures who have helped shape the world that we live in, including Mary Seacole, Ira Aldridge, George Bridgetower, Pablo Fanque and Walter Tull.

Hammond has been a much-loved fixture on British television for two decades. In 2021, she became one of *This Morning*'s main hosts, alongside Dermot O'Leary.

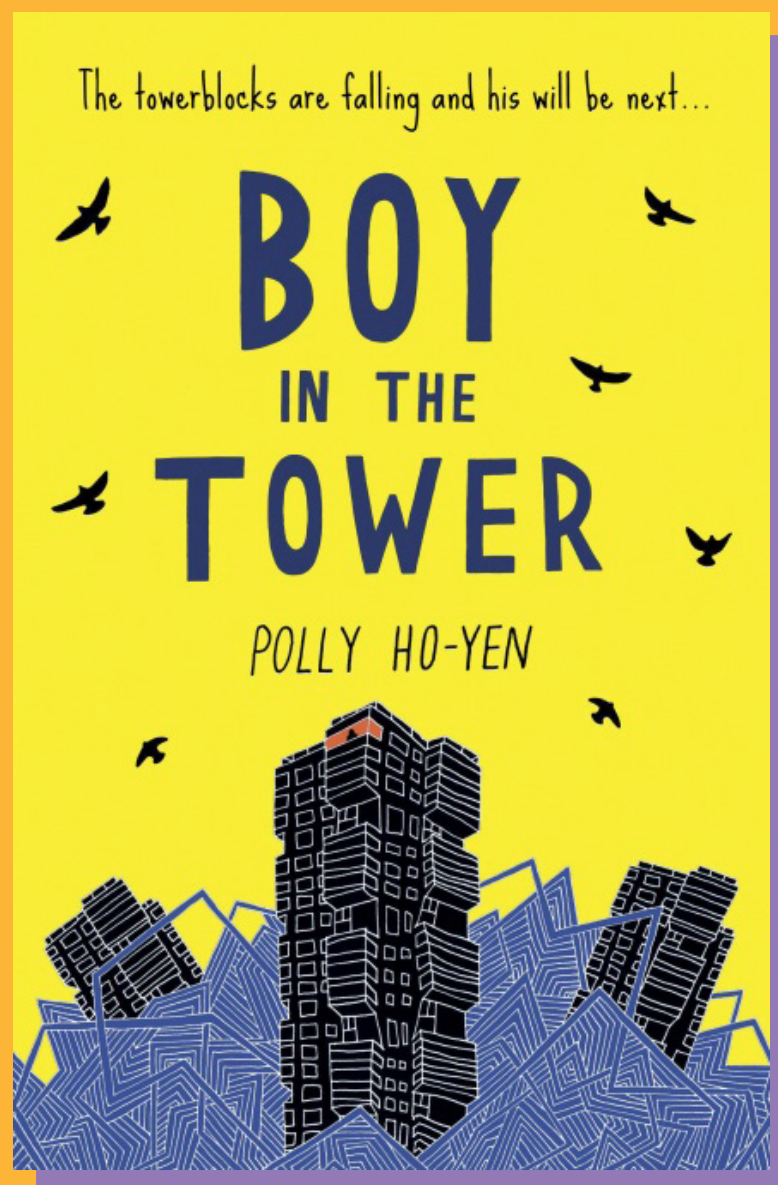
The Boy with Wings

Lenny Henry, Keenon Ferrell (illustrator)

The Boy with Wings is the first novel from comedian Lenny Henry, and is illustrated by Keenon Ferrell.

It follows Tunde, an ordinary boy who sprouts wings and discovers that he's the only person standing between the total destruction of the earth. With the help of his friends, and the distraction of the bullies at school, Tunde must figure out what is going on and fulfil his destiny as the boy with wings.

The book also contains an exclusive comic book adventure illustrated by Mark Buckingham.



“Taking place in a believable urban, multicultural environment that will be familiar to many young readers, Polly Ho-Yen’s debut is an impressively moving and thought-provoking story that will touch children and adults alike”

– BookTrust

Boy in the Tower

Polly Ho-Yen

Ade lives at the top of a tower block, and feels like he can see the world stretching out before him. His mum, however, doesn’t like looking outside, and she especially doesn’t like going outside.

It used to be safe in the tower, but strange plants have started to take over and tower blocks are falling down around them. Now Ade and his mum are trapped and there’s no way out.

Boy in the Tower is a science-fiction tale that addresses real-world subjects including friendship, loyalty and bravery. It was shortlisted for the Waterstones Children’s Book Prize and the Blue

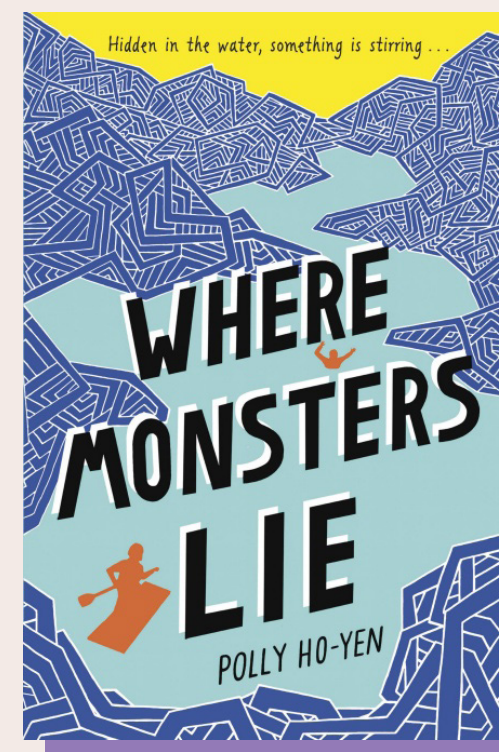
Peter Book Award. It was also long listed for the Branford Boase Award 2015, and runner-up for the Teach Primary New Children’s Fiction Award.

Ho-Yen is a former primary school teacher who began writing what would become *Boy in the Tower* in her spare time.

Themes/topics: Family, Friendship, Bravery, Mental health

Publisher: Corgi Children’s

Year: 2015



Themes/topics: Family, Supernatural, Mystery
Publisher: Corgi Children’s
Year: 2016



Themes/topics: Friendship, History, Mystery, Activism

Publisher: Puffin

Year: 2022

Where Monsters Lie

Polly Ho-Yen

Where Monsters Lie is a story set in Mivtown, where children have grown up hearing the legend of the monsters of the loch, which is a warning to stay away from the water.

But when strange things start happening in the village – Effie’s rabbit Buster escapes from a locked hutch, her mum disappears without trace and slugs start to infest her home – Effie and her best friend Finn discovered that the mysteries could be connected to the legend.

The Good Turn

Sharna Jackson

When Josephine Williams, a future-focused, internet-loving 11-year-old, learns about Josephine Holloway, a woman who started the first Girl Scout Troop for Black girls in America, she knows she must start her own.

With her friends Margot Anderson and Wesley Evans, she begins a quest to earn her Camping Badge. Drawn to an abandoned factory nearby, the trio stumble across a square, ancient television and two tatty armchairs with a wooden sideboard containing an old photograph of a young, happy couple. And so they have a mystery to solve.

The Good Turn is perfect for fans of *The London Eye Mystery* by Siobhan Dowd, and is inspired by the true story of Holloway.

Sharna Jackson’s debut novel *High-Rise Mystery* won the Waterstones Book Prize for the Best Book for Younger Readers.



My Magical Life series

Zach King

The My Magical Life series – consisting of *My Magical Life*, *The Magical Mix-Up* and *Mirror Magic* – is by social media star Zach King.

In *My Magical Life*, readers meet 11-year-old Zach, who has magical powers like the rest of his family, but who is having trouble harnessing his abilities. Forced by his parents to spend time around non-magical people, it all goes wrong when Zach does a simple spell and gets himself and a friend stuck in a vending machine.

A video of the clip goes viral, bringing Zach to the attention of fellow classmate Trisha, who is plotting to bring him down.

My Magical Life was selected as a title in Tom Fletcher's Book Club 2018.

Zach's adventures continue in *The Magical Mix-Up* and *Mirror Magic*.

Themes/topics: Friendship, Bullying, Fantasy

Publisher: Puffin

Year: 2017–2019

“Fast-paced and funny, this chapter book is the first in a trilogy, and would particularly appeal to reluctant boy readers”

– Booktrust on *My Magical Life*



Silence is Not an Option

Stuart Lawrence

Written by Stuart Lawrence, the younger brother of Stephen Lawrence, *Silence is Not an Option* is about living positively and being an activist.

Lawrence talks about the lessons he has learned and how they helped him move forward during tough times, including after the murder of his brother in 1993.

The book is split into sections covering topics such as the imagination, dealing with failure and more, and the eye-catching layout makes it easy for children to digest.

[Booktrust](#) said: “Stuart’s direct address to teenagers is accessible and relatable. The text is simple and straightforward enough to reach readers of all kinds and clearly comes from a place of great life experience and hard-earned wisdom.”

Lawrence works as an educator and motivational speaker.

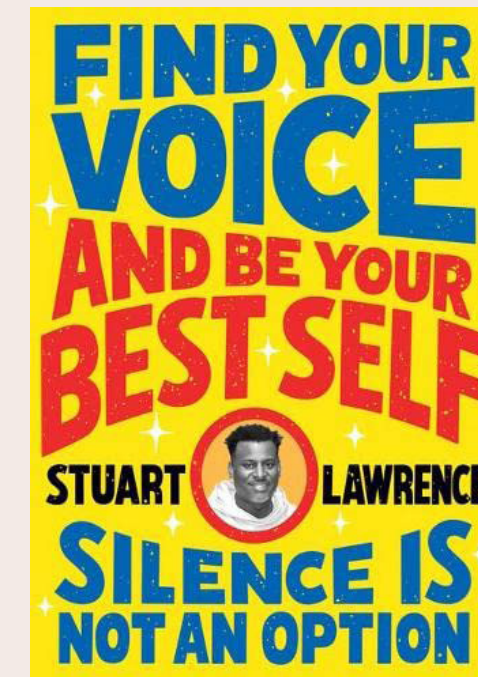
Furthermore

Tahereh Mafi

Alice’s pale skin and milk-white hair mark her as an outcast in a world brimming with colour and magic. But while Ferenwood may reject her, Alice is determined to prove herself and her magical abilities, especially after her father goes missing.

To do so, she’ll have to travel into the mythical, dangerous land of Furthermore, with the help of a fiercely annoying boy named Oliver and where nothing is as it seems.

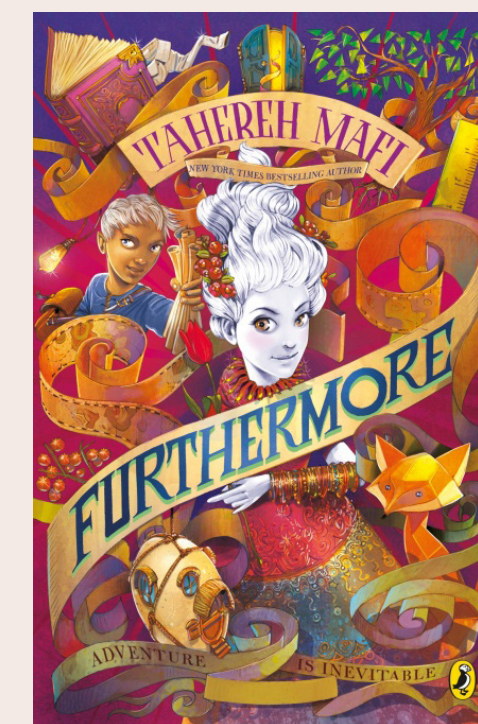
Tahereh Mafi is the *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author of the young adult dystopian *Shatter Me* series.



Themes/topics: Activism, Self-belief, Family

Publisher: Scholastic

Year: 2021



Themes/topics: Family, Friendship, Adventure, Magic

Publisher: Puffin

Year: 2016



Dream Team series

Priscilla Mante

The Dream Team series, currently consisting of *The Dream Team: Jaz Santos vs. the World* and *The Dream Team: Charligh Green vs. The Spotlight*, are inclusive stories about families, unlikely friendships and girl power.

In *Jaz Santos vs. the World*, readers are introduced to the Bramrock Stars, a football team put together by Jasmina Santos-Campbell to prove to her mum that she's a football star, so that her mum will return home.

But seven very different girls will have to learn how to work together if they want to be taken seriously as footballers.

Charligh Green vs. The Spotlight continues the story, focusing on Charligh, who is having trouble with both football and with learning the lines for her dream part in the school play.



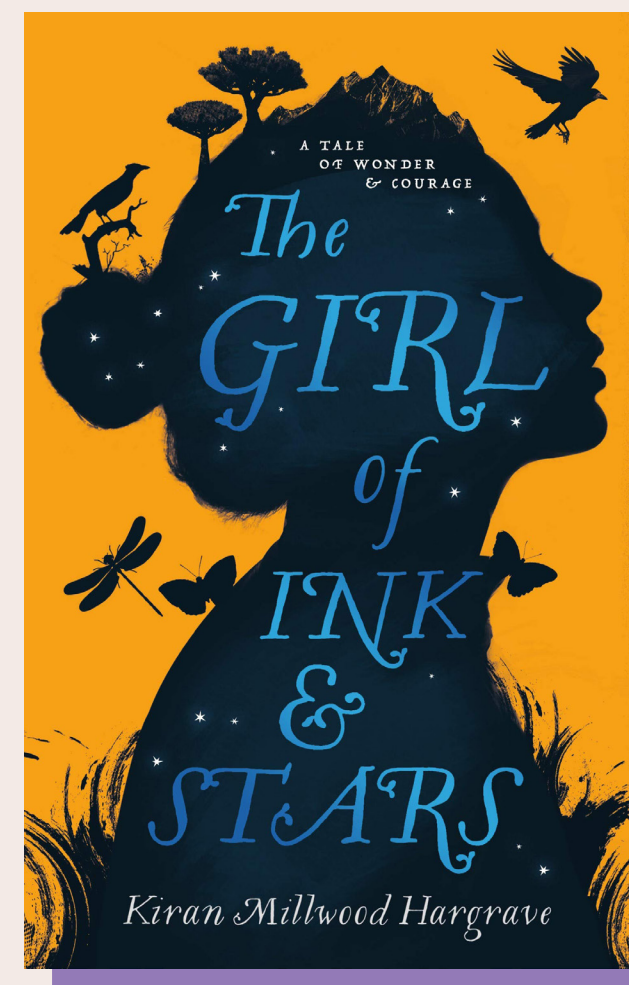
Themes/topics: Sport, Friendship, Family, Self-belief
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2021–2022

“Warm-hearted and funny, this book tackles sexism head-on... It truthfully explores the sexism in society and schools, whereby boys get all the football equipment, time and investment, showing how girls are shut out of sport from the earliest age”

– Booktrust on *The Dream Team: Jaz Santos vs. The World*

“*The Girl of Ink and Stars* is a stunning debut, full of myth, magic and mapmaking. Hargrave has created an utterly original world, complete with political intrigue and fascinating myths and beliefs”

– Booktrust



The Girl of Ink & Stars

Kiran Millwood Hargrave

Kiran Millwood Hargrave's debut novel, *The Girl of Ink & Stars*, is about Isabella, who is forbidden from leaving her island.

When her closest friend disappears into the island's Forgotten Territories, Isabella volunteers to guide the search; as the daughter of a cartographer, she's equipped with elaborate ink maps and knowledge of the stars, and is eager to navigate the island's forgotten heart.

But soon Isabella discovers the true end of her journey: to save the island itself.

The Girl of Ink & Stars won the Waterstones Children's Book Prize in 2016.

Themes/topics: Friendship, Adventure
Publisher: Chicken House Books
Year: 2016



Aziza's Secret Fairy Door series

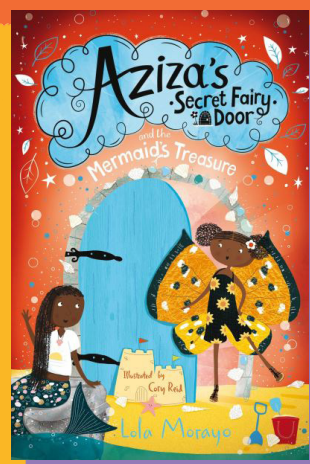
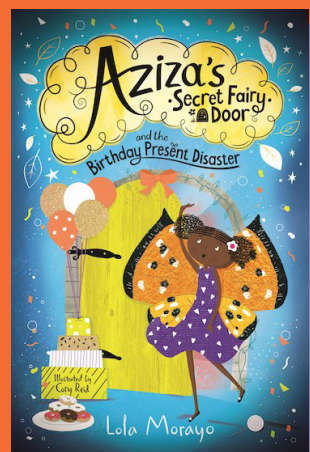
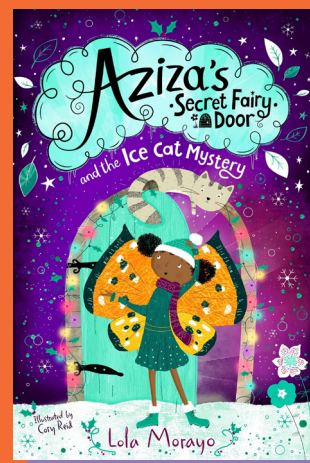
Lola Morayo

Aziza's Secret Fairy Door is the first title in an inclusive magical adventure series, inspired by world mythology.

Aziza's Secret Fair Door follows Aziza as a secret fairy door arrives for her on her birthday. The door will whisk her away to Shimmerton, a magical world with princesses, naughty fairies, shapeshifters, unicorn shopkeepers and mischief around every corner. But when the precious jewelled doorknob is taken, Aziza is trapped and must work with her new friends, Peri and Tiko, to return home.

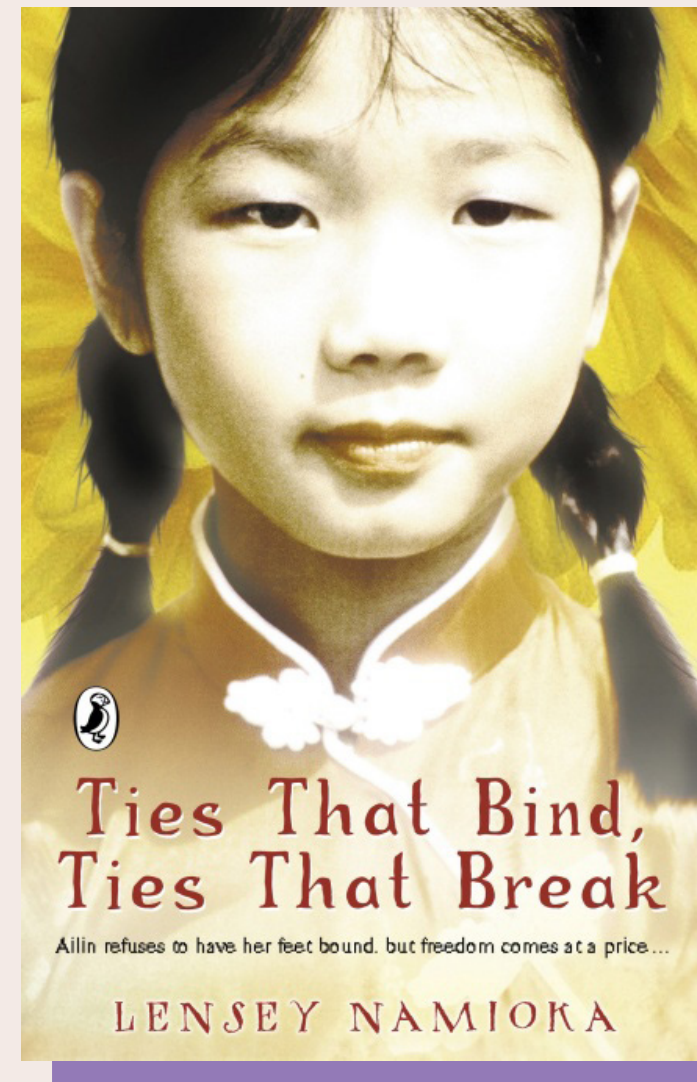
The series continues in *Aziza's Secret Fairy Door and the Ice Cat Mystery*, *Aziza's Secret Fairy Door and the Birthday Present Disaster* and *Aziza's Secret Fairy Door and the Mermaid's Treasure*.

Themes/topics:
Magic, Friendship,
Family, Adventure
Publisher: Macmillan
Children's Books
Year: 2021



"First in an inclusive and commercial series, full of mischief, magic and friendship"

– *The Bookseller on Aziza's Secret Fairy Door*



Ties That Bind, Ties That Break

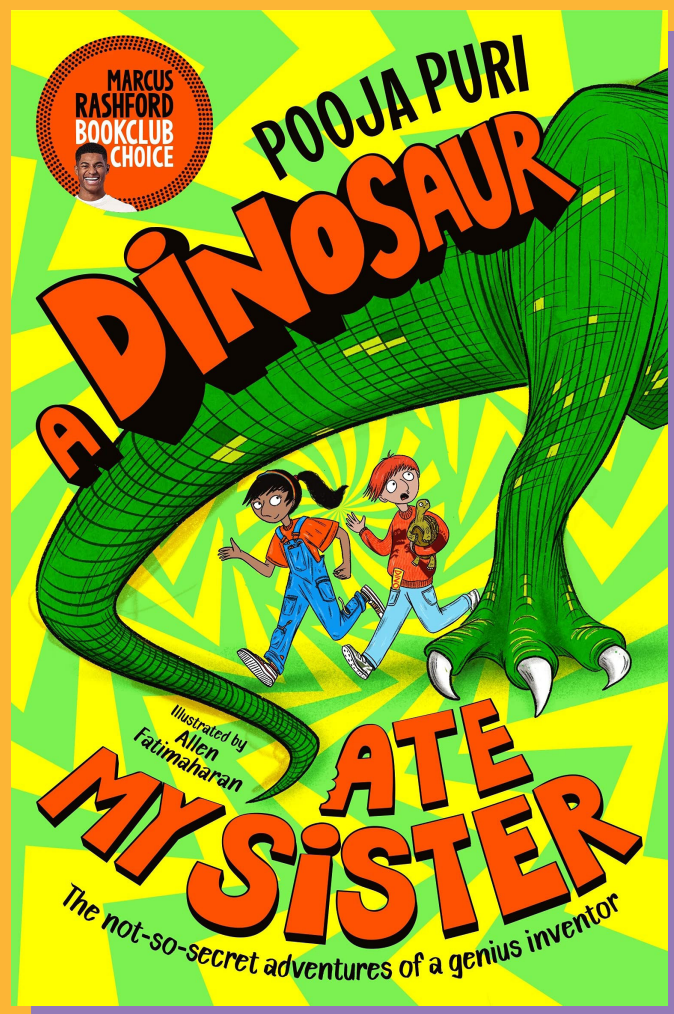
Lensey Namioka

Ties That Bind, Ties That Break is set in China in 1900s. It is the story of a young girl, Ailin, who defied tradition by refusing to have her feet bound and in doing so changed the course of her life forever.

The book received the Washington State Book Award in 2000. A sequel, *An Ocean Apart, A World Away*, follows the story of Ailin's friend, Xueyan.

Lensey Namioka was born in Beijing and moved to the USA when she was a child.

Themes/topics: Feminism, History
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2003



A Dinosaur Ate My Sister and A Robot Squashed My Teacher

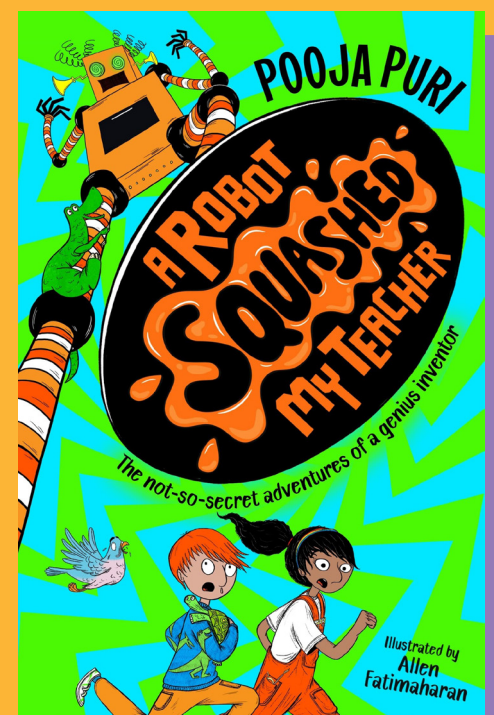
Pooja Puri, Allen Fatimaharan (illustrator)

A Dinosaur Ate My Sister is the first book selected in the Marcus Rashford Book Club, and is a wacky adventure through time.

Both *A Dinosaur Ate My Sister* and its sequel *A Robot Squashed My Teacher* are about Esha Verma, a self-described genius inventor extraordinaire. In the first book, she accidentally sends her sister back to the age of the dinosaurs, and now has to find a way to get her back.

In *A Robot Squashed My Teacher*, Esha accidentally turns her teacher into a pigeon.

Themes/topics: Science, Technology, Humour, Engineering, Family
Publisher: Macmillan Children's Books
Year: 2021–2022

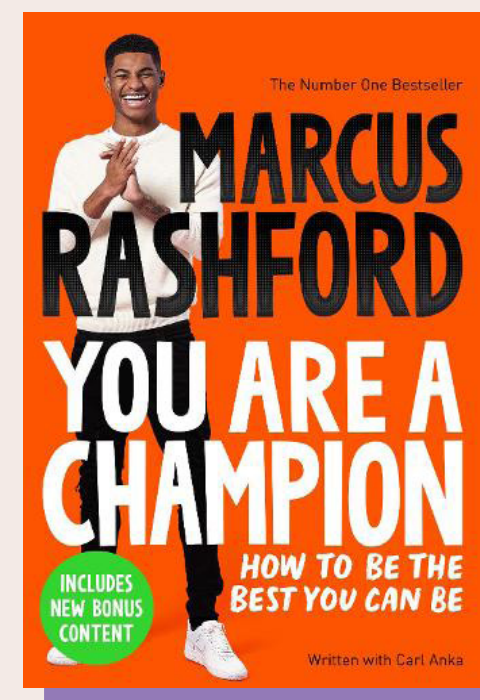


“The perfect story to escape into and find adventure. Pooja is super talented and I’m a big fan!”

– Marcus Rashford on *A Dinosaur Ate My Sister*



Themes/topics: Folktales, Mythology, India
Publisher: Puffin Classics
Year: 2017



Themes/topics: Self-belief, Advice, Mental Health, Sport
Publisher: Macmillan Children's Books
Year: 2021

Tales from India

Bali Rai

Tales from India is a collection of 20 stories from India's rich folklore heritage. It includes stories about wicked magicians, wise old priests, wily jackals and more.

It is founded on the work of folklorist, Joseph Jacob, and from tales from India's Mughal period, and retold by Bali Rai for readers of all ages.

The book includes endnotes with a glossary and additional information as well as ideas for activities that children can do to explore the stories further.

Rai's debut novel *(Un)arranged Marriage* was critically acclaimed, and was shortlisted for the Branford Boase award.

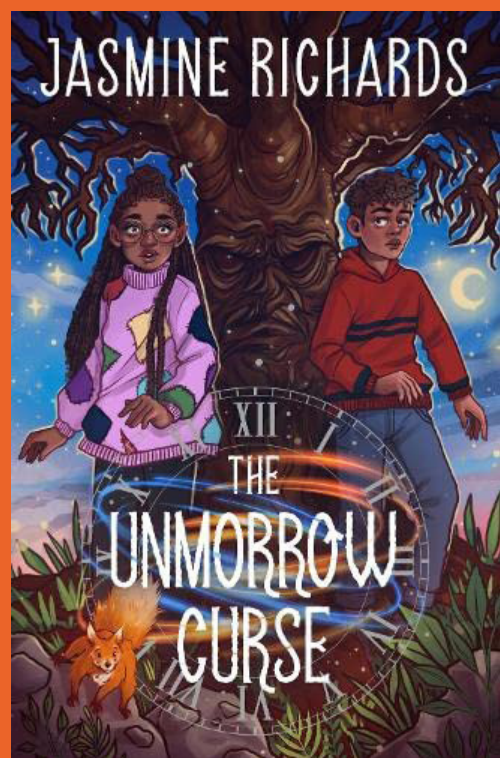
You Are A Champion: How to Be the Best You Can Be

Marcus Rashford and Carl Anka

Footballer and campaigner Marcus Rashford's first book, written with sports journalist Carl Anka, is about Rashford's own life and the lessons he has learned.

Along with tips from Rashford, there is also advice from performance psychologist Katie Warriner to help children to reach their full potential. Among the topics covered are how to be comfortable with who you are.

The [Evening Standard](#) said: “But besides the message that everyone is special, which is undeniably true, there’s a useful moral here, which is that the harder you practice, the better you get.”



Themes/topics: Adventure, Mythology
Publisher: UCLan Publishing
Year: 2022

The Unmorrow Curse

Jasmine Richards

When new friends Buzz and Mari find a famous weather woman bound by magic to a tree deep in the woods, it's only their first discovery. Next is finding out the weather woman is Sunna, the Norse Goddess of the Sun, and one of the seven day guardians who keep time in order.

As humanity is forced into a lockdown called the Unmorrow Curse, causing them to live the same Saturday over and over again, Buzz and Mari must journey to collect the Runes of Valhalla and awaken the other day guardians, before vengeful god Loki can get to them first.

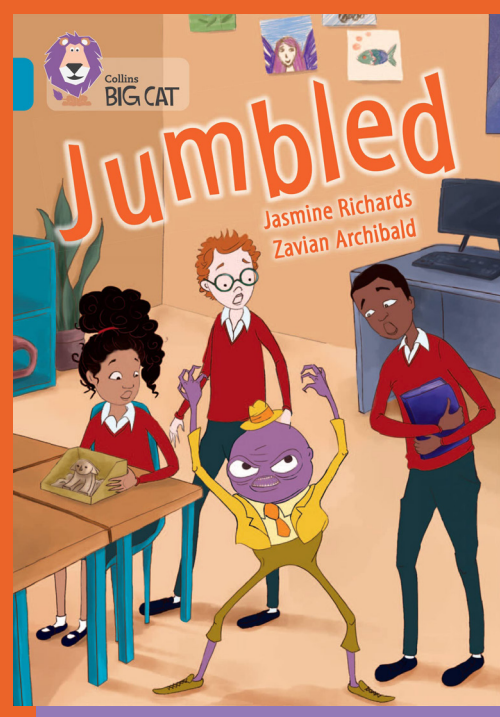
This book is perfect for fans of the work of Rick Riordan.

Jasmine Richards has more than 15 years' experience in commissioning and editing fiction. As well as being an author, she is the founder of STORYMIX, a fiction studio which finds new talents and pairs them up with an idea they have developed in-house.

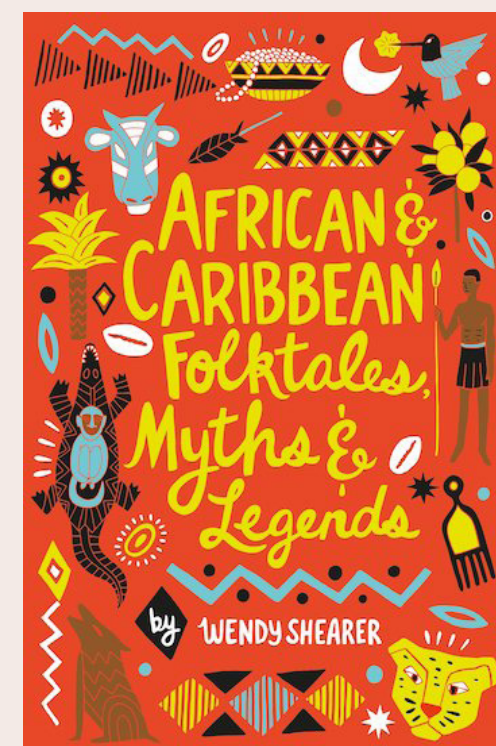
Jumbled

Jasmine Richards and Zavin Archibald

When Omari takes his great-grandmother's journal of Caribbean folktales into school, he doesn't expect to come face to face with one of the creatures from it. Now Omari and his classmates have to find a way to get rid of Baccou, and get their real teacher back.



Themes/topics: Humour, Adventure
Publisher: Collins
Year: 2022



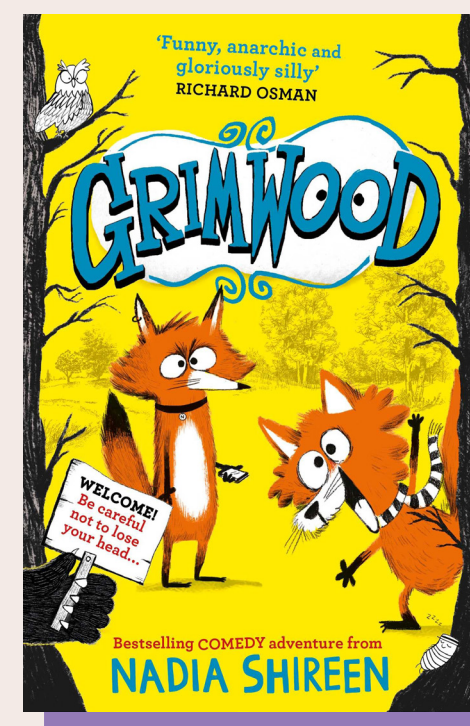
Themes/topics: Mythology, Folktales, Africa, The Caribbean
Publisher: Scholastic
Year: 2021

African and Caribbean Folktales, Myths and Legends

Wendy Shearer

This is a collection of folktales, myths and legends from all over Africa and the Caribbean, re-told for young readers by Wendy Shearer, a professional storyteller and author based in London.

Included in the collection are the trickster tale of Anansi the spider, the story of how the leopard got his spots and the tale of the king who wanted to touch the moon.



Themes/topics: Friendship, Adventure, Teamwork, Humour
Publisher: Simon & Schuster Children's UK
Year: 2022

Grimwood

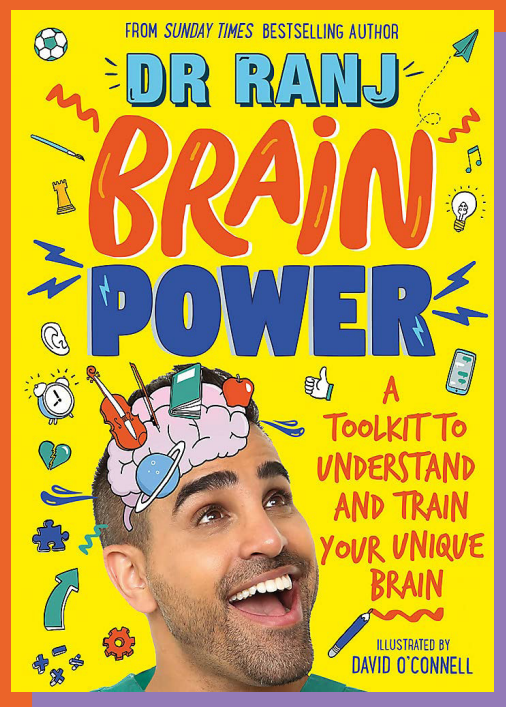
Nadia Shireen

Award-winning picture book author Nadia Shireen's *Grimwood* is a fully-illustrated new middle-grade series, and her first book for older readers.

Grimwood is about fox cub siblings Ted and Nancy, who are on the run from Princess Buttons, the scariest street cat in the Big City. They flee for Grimwood, expecting to find refuge in the peaceful countryside but are met with thieving eagles, dramatic ducks, riotous rabbits and a whole host of unusual characters.

Shireen has also written *Grimwood: Five Freakishly Funny Fables*, a special Grimwood World Book Day adventure.

The Bookseller said of *Grimwood*: "Gloriously anarchic, properly funny and highly illustrated with dynamic black-and-white art, this is a quirky delight for children – and their parents, too."



Themes/topics: Health, Mental health
Publisher: Wren & Rook
Year: 2022



Themes/topics: Magic, Nigeria, Mythology, Family
Publisher: Chicken House
Year: 2021

Brain Power

Ranj Singh

Doctor and television presenter Ranj Singh's *Brain Power* is a book about how to train your brain and become the best you can be.

Topics include how to cope with knockbacks and improve on the difficult stuff, why we feel certain emotions and how to manage the difficult ones, and why looking after your mind is the key to growing up happy.

The book also includes insights from neurodiverse young people, features bright two-colour illustrations from David O'Connell and has a dyslexia-friendly design.

Dr Ranj is an NHS paediatrician and one of the resident doctors on ITV's *This Morning*. He co-created the BAFTA-award-winning CBeebies series *Get Well Soon*, and his first non-fiction book for children, *How to Grow Up and Feel Amazing*, was a *Sunday Times* bestseller.

Children of the Quicksands

Efu Traore

When city girl Simi is sent to stay with her grandmother in a remote Nigerian village, she thinks she's going to be bored without TV, internet or her phone to keep her occupied.

Simi's grandmother dispenses advice and herbal medicine to the village, but is tight-lipped about their family history. And so, determined to find out what secret she's keeping, Simi disobeys her grandmother and goes exploring. When she gets caught in the sinking red quicksand of a forbidden lake, her fantastical journey begins.

Efu Traore won the Times/Chicken House Children's Fiction Competition, and *Children of the Quicksands* was shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize 2022. *The Bookseller's* Fiona Noble said she was "swept away by this fast-paced magical-realist debut".



The Lizzie and Belle Mysteries: Drama and Danger

J. T. Williams, Simone Douglas (illustrator)

This new middle-grade mystery series is set in 18th-century London and inspired by Black British historical figures.

In *Drama and Danger*, readers meet 12-year-olds Lizzie Sancho and Dido Belle, who are from completely different worlds. Lizzie lives in Westminster in her dad's tea shop, while Belle is an heiress being brought up by her aunt and uncle at grand Kenwood House.

Both, however, share a love of solving mysteries, and when their eyes meet in the audience of the Drury Lane theatre one night, both girls are sure they've seen something suspicious on stage.

Soon, they find themselves on the trail of a mystery, but can they solve it in time to prevent a murder?

Themes/topics: Mystery, Friendship, British history
Publisher: Farshore
Year: 2022



Front Desk

Kelly Yang

Mia Tang lives in a motel, helping her parents out by working at the front desk while trying to keep her dreams of being a writer alive. Life for her family has been less idyllic than they believed it would be when they left China.

Every day that her parents go to work, Mia worries for them, especially when they begin to shelter immigrants in the motel.

[Kirkus Reviews](#) said: "Debut author Yang weaves in autobiographical content while creating a feisty and empowered heroine. The supporting characters are rich in voice and context, with multiple villains and friends that achingly reveal life

in America in the 1990s for persons of color and those living in poverty. Heavy themes, including extortion, fraud, and racism, are balanced with the naïve dreams and determination of a 10-year-old."

Front Desk was shortlisted for the Waterstones Children's Book Prize Younger Readers Prize 2022.

Themes/topics: Family, Immigration, Creativity
Publisher: Knights Of
Year: 2021

Chinese Cinderella, series

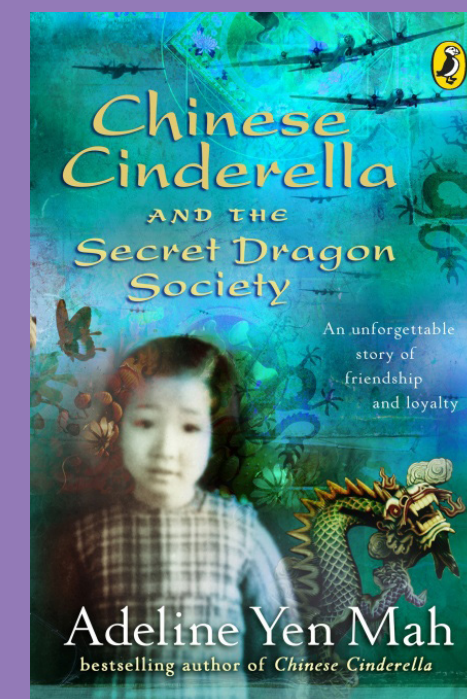
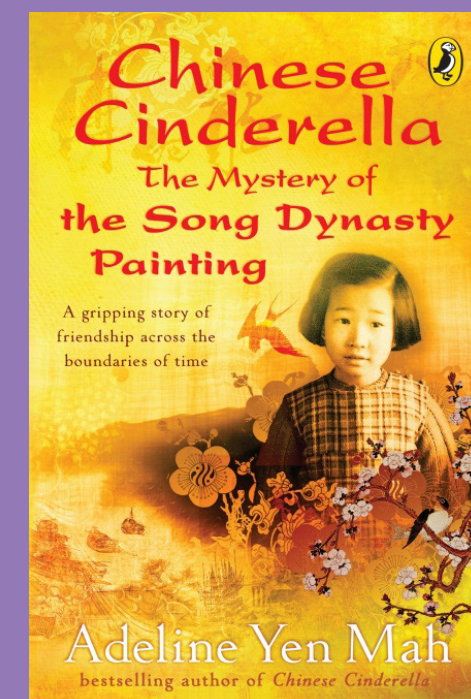
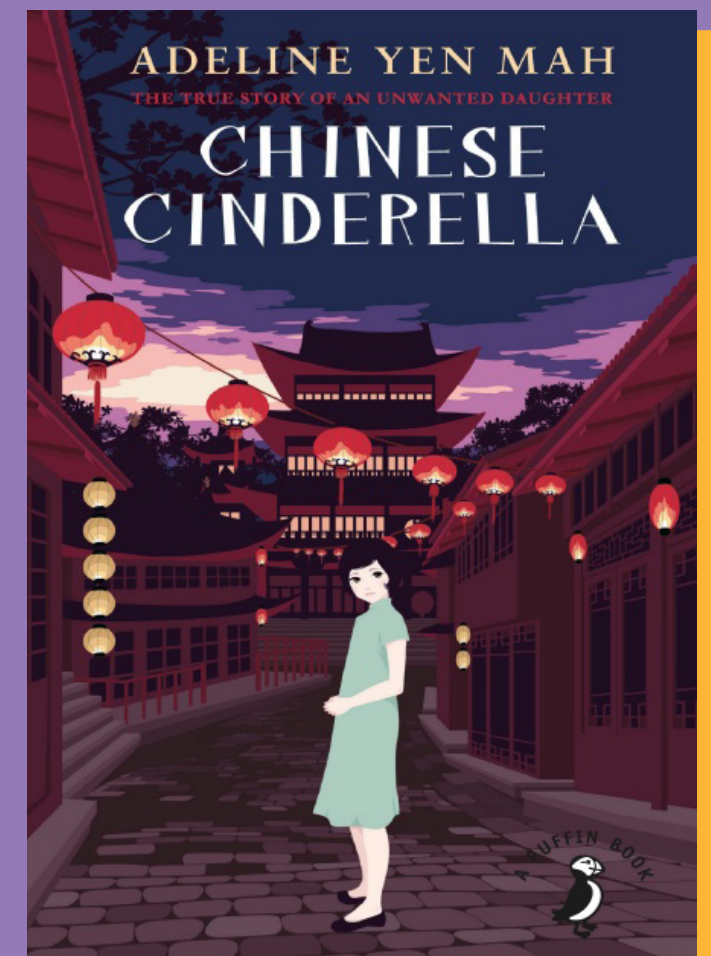
Adeline Yen Mah

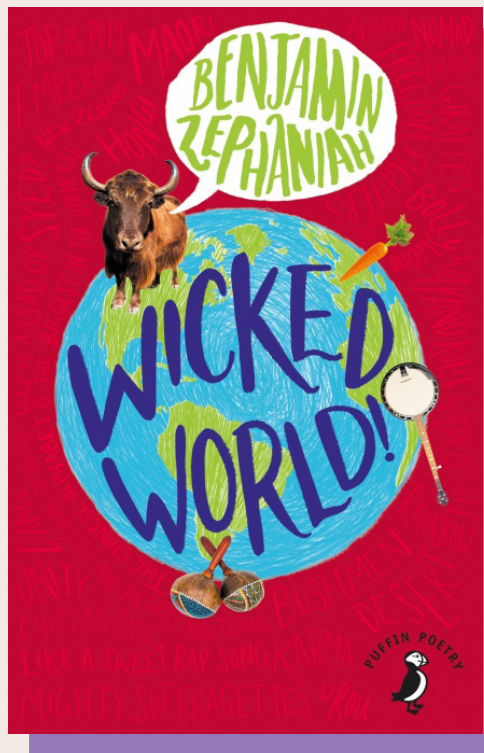
Chinese Cinderella is an autobiography for children based on the bestselling memoir *Falling Leaves* by Adeline Yen Mah.

Told over three books, the series follows Jung-ling, whose family considers her bad luck because her mother died giving birth to her. They, especially her cruel stepmother, discriminate against her and make her feel unwanted, with only her aunt and grandfather offering any love and kindness. At the end of the first book, Jung-ling's father agrees to let her study in England.

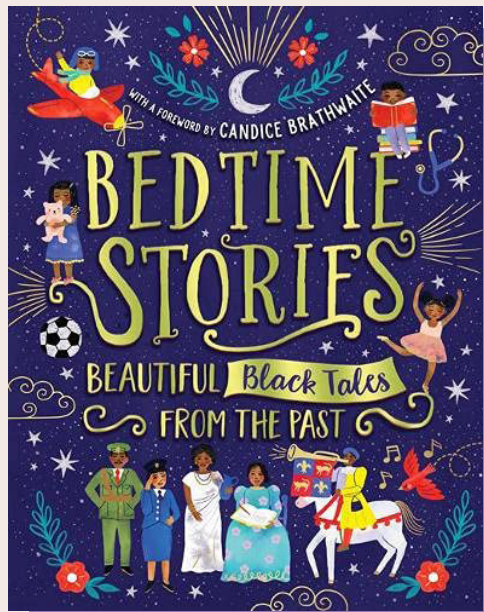
The next two books in the series, *The Mystery of the Song Dynasty Painting* and *Chinese Cinderella and the Secret Dragon Society*, are based on stories Yen Mah made up when she was a child.

Themes/topics: Family, Grief, Fiction, Non-fiction
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2015





Themes/topics: Poetry
Publisher: Puffin
Year: 2000



Themes/topics: Black history, Short stories
Publisher: Scholastic
Year: 2021

Wicked World!

Benjamin Zephaniah

Wicked World! is a real world tour of poems about people and places, cultures and nationalities from the South Pole to Mongolia and the Himalayas.

Benjamin Zephaniah's collection includes poems about Inuits, Celts, the history of Britain, Maories, the Dalai Lama, the North and South Poles, and much more.

Zephaniah is the only Rastafarian poet to be shortlisted for the Chairs of Poetry for both Oxford and Cambridge Universities and has been listed in the *Times*' list of 50 greatest postwar writers.

Bedtime Stories: Beautiful Black Tales from the Past

Various

This collection of bedtime stories has been written and illustrated by a number of Black creators, and has a foreword by author, journalist and television presenter Candice Braithwaite.

Celebratory and joyful, the tales are inspired by history, based on important figures and events from around the world.

As well as stories by authors including Ify Adenuga, Alex Falase-Koya, Ashley Hickson-Lovence and Wendy Shearer, there is also one story by a young reader who won a competition in *Cocoa Boy* and *Cocoa Girl* magazines.

Illustrators for the collection include Lucy Farfort, Anastasia Magloire Williams and Richy Sanchez Alaya.

Index

Activism and politics

Fiction and non-fiction books showing people fighting for their rights and participating in politics, and showing children how to believe in and stand up for themselves.

The Green Bicycle by Haifaa Al Mansour	<u>29</u>
Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor	<u>34</u>
Stories for South Asian Supergirls by Raj Kaur Khaira et al.	<u>14</u>
Silence is Not an Option by Stuart Lawrence	<u>41</u>
You Are a Champion by Marcus Rashford and Carl Anka	<u>47</u>
How to Change the World by Rashmi Sirdeshpande and Annabel Tempest	<u>22</u>

Environment

Fiction and non-fiction books which show the importance of our planet, and focus on the people taking care of it and how we can help.

Clean Up! by Nathan Byron, Dapo Adeola	<u>10</u>
Stories for South Asian Supergirls by Raj Kaur Khaira et al.	<u>14</u>
How to Change the World by Rashmi Sirdeshpande and Annabel Tempest	<u>22</u>

Fairytales, myths and legends

Old and new (and retold) stories from countries and cultures around the world.

Ladybird Tales of Crowns and Thorns by Yvonne Battle-Felton and Chitra Soundar	<u>7</u>
Blue Blood by Malorie Blackman	<u>8</u>
Rumaysa by Radiya Hafiza, Rhaida El Touny	<u>36</u>

Rumaysa: Ever After by Radiya Hafiza, Rhaida El Touny	<u>36</u>
Tales from India by Bali Rai	<u>47</u>
Duckling by Kamila Shamsie	<u>20</u>
African and Caribbean Folktales, Myths and Legends by Wendy Shearer	<u>49</u>
Bedtime Stories: Beautiful Black Tales from the Past	<u>54</u>
Ladybird Tales of Superheroes	<u>27</u>

Mental health, emotions and feelings

A set of books that address mental health and feelings, helping children to understand what they're going through and that it's normal.

Jaz and the New Baby by Jion Shebani	<u>20</u>
Shara and the Really Big Sleepover by Jion Shebani	<u>21</u>
Barbara Throws a Wobber by Nadia Shireen	<u>21</u>
You're Safe with Me by Chitra Soundar, Poonam Mistry	<u>25</u>
Brain Power by Dr Ranj Singh	<u>50</u>

Race

Books that address race and racism.

When We Say Black Lives Matter by Maxine Beneba Clarke	<u>8</u>
My Skin, Your Skin by Laura Henry-Allain, Onyinye Iwu	<u>11</u>

Real-life figures

Books about people throughout history.

Saving Stella by Bassel Abou Fakher and Deborah Blumenthal, Nadine Kaadan	<u>5</u>
---	----------

Noor-Un-Nissa Inayat Khan: My Story by Sufiya Ahmed	<u>6</u>
Princess Sophia Duleep Singh: My Story by Sufiya Ahmed	<u>6</u>
Mao's Last Dancer by Li Cunxin	<u>33</u>
Black in Time by Alison Hammond	<u>37</u>
Stories for South Asian Supergirls by Raj Kaur Khaira et al.	<u>14</u>
Of Thee I Sing by Barack Obama	<u>15</u>
How to Change the World by Rashmi Sirdeshpande and Annabel Tempest	<u>22</u>
Chinese Cinderella by Adeline Yen Mah	<u>53</u>

Religion

Books to introduce children to various religions.

The Best Diwali Ever by Sonali Shah and Chaaya Prabhat	<u>19</u>
The Most Exciting Eid by Zeba Talkhani and Abeeha Tariq	<u>26</u>

War

These books will introduce children to conflicts throughout history through fiction and non-fiction. Books here also include stories about famous figures, and tales about the aftermath of war.

Saving Stella by Bassel Abou Fakher and Deborah Blumenthal, Nadine Kaadan	<u>5</u>
Noor-Un-Nissa Inayat Khan: My Story by Sufiya Ahmed	<u>6</u>
Rosie Raja: Churchill's Spy by Sufiya Ahmed	<u>6</u>