

## Beyond the Book

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## EDITORIAL

I should like to introduce myself. Pat Pinsent mentioned in her last editorial that I am a librarian, a children's librarian, and have been for the whole of my professional career. As a result my background has been practical rather than academic – but I do not see these as mutually exclusive. I am interested in connections and in the ways these two 'worlds' can enrich each other.

I began my career in Hertfordshire under the aegis of Joan Butler through whom I learnt the importance of real book knowledge and appreciation of the past as well as passion for new developments. When I moved to Wandsworth to work under Doris Aubrey, I became involved in her personal project – The Wandsworth Collection of Early Children's Books. I am still involved with this, having overseen the publication of one catalogue and various moves. It is now housed in a dedicated room in Putney Library. I have been – indeed, still am, a member of the Children's Books History Society. On the professional side, I have been chair of the Youth Libraries Group, London, then chair of the National Youth Libraries Group. This allowed me to serve both as a judge for the CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway awards and as chair of the judging committee. Then there is IBBY. This year I had the privilege and excitement of being part of the organising committee for the 33rd International Congress here in London. I am now looking forward to taking up the challenge as editor of *IBBYLink* and delighted that I do so with an edition that reflects so many of my interests.

'Beyond the Book' the 19th IBBY/NCRCL MA annual conference, which took place on 10 November 2012 at Roehampton University, London, is the subject of this issue of *IBBYLink* and Lisa Sainsbury has given us permission to reproduce her opening address.

### Opening Address by Lisa Sainsbury, NCRC

It is my pleasure and privilege to open the 19th Annual MA/IBBY Conference, hosted by the NCRC and Roehampton University.

Reflecting on our title this year, 'Beyond the Book', I found myself drawn to that notion of *moving* beyond – a movement that both transcends and retains. I dwelt on a particular form of moving beyond, which comes to us all; a moving beyond

that Siobhan Dowd was keen to explore before she herself moved beyond the space of her books, leaving her ideas in the imagination and vision of Patrick Ness and Jim Kay (whom we will be hearing from later).

Pursuing this notion of authors who have passed beyond the wonderful books that they have left behind, I wanted to mention a few of those whom we lost this year, but who remain in the pages of stories still to be told. Maurice Sendak, Nina Bawden and Margaret Mahy are sure to influence future generations with books that continue to push at the boundaries of what is possible to think and visualise in children's literature.

There is no better way to open our conference than to listen to words beyond, from the wonderfully inventive and provocative Margaret Mahy. I give you:

#### The Dictionary Bird

Through my house in sunny weather  
Flies the Dictionary Bird  
Clear to see on every feather  
Is some outlandish word.

'Hugger Mugger' 'gimrack' 'guava'  
'Waggish' 'mizzle' 'swashing rain'  
Bird – fly back into my kitchen,  
Let me read those words again.

Margaret Mahy has had quite an influence on members of the NCRC and I know that Alison Waller is involved in an event next year at Cambridge with Elizabeth Hale that explores Mahy's work.

#### Conference Presentations

The abstracts/short summaries from the workshop presentations are given in this issue of *IBBYLink*. Full papers from the all the sessions and workshops will be published by Pied Piper Publishing.

#### Blogs by Students

Those of you who weren't able to attend the conference might be interested to see the summary blog posts from the day. All the summaries were written by alumni and current MA students on the NCRC on-site and distance learning MA and PhD in Children's Literature. The plenary posts are at <http://ncrc.wordpress.com/2012/11/26/ibbyncrcl-conference-report-plenary-sessions/>. The posts for the parallel workshop presentations are at <http://ncrc.wordpress.com/2012/12/03/ibbyncrcl-conference-report-parallel-presentations/>.

#### Ferelith Hordon

## A Member's Blog Post

*Anne Harding*

## BEYOND THE BOOK

I always look forward to the IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conferences, and Saturday's lived up to expectations. The array of speakers was truly impressive, and there was a profusion of exhilarating ideas.

A lecture on eighteenth-century children's literature hadn't sounded of enormous interest, but Matthew Grenby held me riveted with his exploration of the interrelationship between the oral tradition, maternal manuscript writings and the early printed book, and how these reflected cultural norms of the times. He shared fascinating examples. One manuscript book was remarkably similar to today's picture books.

We then skipped a couple of centuries, as speakers from Nosy Crow ([www.nosycrow.com](http://www.nosycrow.com)), Winged Chariot ([www.wingedchariot.com](http://www.wingedchariot.com)) and Hot Key Books ([www.hotkeybooks.com](http://www.hotkeybooks.com)) brought us right up to date with the latest developments in digital publishing. It was great to hear about the innovations happening with apps and ebooks. Touch-screen technology in particular is revolutionising children's book publishing, and children's experiences of books and reading in very exciting ways. Interestingly, all the speakers were adamant that children need immersion in printed books as well as digital ones.

Sita Brahmachari, author of *Artichoke Hearts*, next gave a brilliant account of the adaptation of Shaun Tan's wonderful wordless picture book about migration *The Arrival* that she and Tamasha Theatre Company have created for circus performance. The processes she described of bringing the book alive in a new way were amazing, not least the multilingual oral testimony and a verse transcript. We saw a tantalising video clip. The show is going on tour shortly (see [www.tamasha.org.uk/the-arrival/](http://www.tamasha.org.uk/the-arrival/)). I can't wait!

A brief résumé of IBBY UK news and lunch were followed by workshops. The two I attended were very stimulating, one on children's responses to wolves in children's books, and one on the impact of ebooks on children's reading. Research in the mid-1990s suggests ebooks may aid reading comprehension. A very small recent study indicates that they can change reluctant readers' attitudes to reading. More research is needed. It would be particularly valuable to find out the impact of modern forms of ebooks on comprehension.

I found the next session, *Eight Books Is Never Enough*, especially interesting. School librarian Kay Waddilove gave us a fabulous insight, complete with two videos, into Carnegie shadowing at JFS School, Kenton, Harrow. Twelve-year-old Carnegie reviewer Emilia Lamkin's enthusiasm was infectious. Shadowing has increased her confidence, improved her writing and changed her approach to reading.

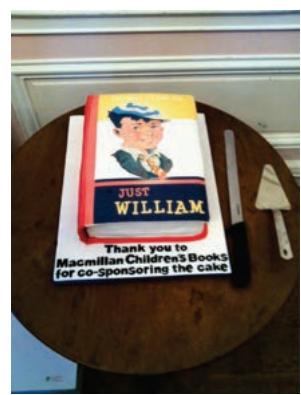
Children's dramatist David Wood was fascinating on the excitements and challenges of adapting books by authors as diverse as Roald Dahl, Michelle Magorian, Philippa Pearce, Dick King-Smith, Eric Hill and Judith Kerr for the stage. I was intrigued by the differing extents to which authors get involved.

We then heard from some authors and an illustrator, as Candy Gourlay, James Mayhew and Karin Littlewood described their work as curators for the incredible Pop-Up Festival of Stories (<http://pop-up.org.uk/>), a brilliant and innovative call to reading.

The last speaker of the day was super-talented illustrator Jim Kay, who shot to fame with his illustrations for *A Monster Calls*. His talk was illuminating and entertaining. He tries to stay faithful to all the books he illustrates. It took him many attempts to get the monster as he wanted, with sufficient gravitas, plus enough anonymity and ambiguity to allow readers to create their own imagined pictures.

A great day! Just William's 90th anniversary cake was a delicious bonus.

[Anne Harding is a freelance trainer specialising in children's and young people's reading and children's and school libraries. See [www.anneharding.net/](http://www.anneharding.net/).]



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# The Dress of the Book: Children's Literature, Fashion and Fancy Dress

*Kiera Vaclavik*

Dress constitutes a relatively uncharted field for exploring the fuzzy boundaries of books, and the ripple effect of literary works in the everyday lives of young readers. It involves consultation of both print and non-print sources, requiring us to look beyond the printed page as well as within it. Although there is a complex interrelationship between children's literature and dress, this paper focuses principally on the ways in which the former shapes the latter, focusing in particular on the late nineteenth century.

Three forms of dress are explored: everyday wear (including 'best'), play wear (dressing-up games and home theatricals) and occasion wear (fancy dress outfits for parties and balls). In terms of literary influences on everyday wear I offer two examples from the 1880s and 1890s, both of which show the enormous importance of nostalgia and which underline the contribution of visual culture: the (Kate) Greenaway vogue and (Little Lord) Fauntleroy craze. The section on play wear stresses that dressing up (as an end in itself, or as part of charades or home theatricals) was as popular in the nineteenth century as it is today. What children read had a huge influence on the games they played, and these two strands often came together so that children frequently dressed up as specific characters from books and stories. Paintings and photographs often present children engaged in these forms of play, and books themselves can also provide indications of the practical processes involved. Dressing up outside the home – for fancy-dress parties and balls – was also a hugely popular Victorian pastime. A key source of inspiration was, again, literary. In her immensely popular *Fancy Dresses Described, or What to Wear at Fancy Balls*, the doyenne of nineteenth-century fancy dress, Ardern Holt, notes that: 'Some of the best dresses worn by young people are suggested by the illustrated books, fairy tales, and others, specially written for them' (1828: 155).

I then examine the ways in which attendance to dress can contribute to our understanding of specific characters and of children's literature more generally. Taking the example of Lewis Carroll's Alice, I argue that the significant amount of time that passes before she is taken up as a fancy-dress character reveals a great deal about the perception of her character in terms of an evolution from ordinary to 'other'. More broadly, dress can contribute to a much discussed but under theorised area of children's literature research, i.e. the processes of identification. Focusing on children's dress of various kinds also allows us to see children's literature as a springboard and prompt, and as something carried out by children at times when they are not reading and indeed when books may be far away. The use of literary characters in fancy-dress play in particular suggests a certain inventiveness and creativity on the part of children; their active involvement in the reading process rather than just the passive reception of the author's labour.

Yet we also need to be wary of overstating the active involvement of children in these processes when parental – and especially maternal – influence was so strong. With the exception of outfits put together as play activities at home, most everyday and fancy-dress outfits were foisted upon children rather than selected by them. Nevertheless, dress in its many manifestations offers an exciting angle into the reception of literary works for young readers by both children and adults. It extends our understanding of the intergenerational nature of children's literature, and further stresses the performativity of works so often read aloud but also borne about in minds and upon bodies.

[Kiera Vaclavik is Senior Lecturer in French and Comparative Literature at Queen Mary, University of London and is a specialist in children's literature and culture from the late nineteenth century to the present day. She is currently working on maps and globes in childhood culture, and on a project exploring Alice and fashion.]

## **Just a Figment? Online Participatory Writing Communities and the Future of the Young Adult Novel**

*Gwen Athene Tarbox*

While the entire field of children's literature has been impacted by the rise of digital media, the young adult segment has been thoroughly and even radically transformed via new technologies. In keeping with the conference theme of investigating developments 'beyond the book', this paper examines how the corporate sponsors and teenage users of online participatory writing (OPW) communities such as Figment (<http://figment.com/>) and its rival Wattpad ([www.wattpad.com/](http://www.wattpad.com/)) have upended the traditional notion of young adult literature authorship as the purview of trained professionals performing a service to youth. In OPW communities, authorship is a public, collaborative and youth-dominated activity in which market considerations are felt to be equally as important as artistic and intellectual concerns. By tracing the literary and creative practices of a select group of highly productive and influential teenage Figment users, I offer evidence that young, amateur authors, working simultaneously within and outside established publishing models, are shaping the young adult novel in unprecedented ways.

[Gwen Athene Tarbox is an Associate Professor in the Department of English and an affiliate of the Gender and Women's Studies programme at Western Michigan University, USA, where she runs the program in children's and adolescent literature.]

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## **The Big Smallness: Niche Market Picture Books and the New Children's Literature**

*Michelle Ann Abate*

While the proliferation of digital books has received the bulk of attention from librarians, journalists, and literary critics over the past decade, another seismic shift has been occurring in the realm of children's publishing: the growth of niche-market texts. Fuelled by the steadily increasing sales of children's books, the ease as well as accessibility of desktop publishing and the promotional opportunities made possible by the internet, these books embody a radical break from previous formulas for literary success. Whereas previous commercially successful picture books have largely been composed by professionally trained authors, released by established publishing houses and written for a broad audience, niche-market texts defy such longstanding literary, material and aesthetic trends. Reflecting the increasing specialisation, atomisation and customisation within millennial life, these narratives are about a very specific topic for an equally specific audience.

Accordingly, my talk told the story of what I am calling the new 'big smallness' in picture books and the way in which it is remaking children's literature. Filling a gap in discussions about transformations of the book in the twenty-first century, I addressed how niche-market picture books are not anomalies in the present, they are forerunners of the future.

[Michelle Ann Abate is the editor of the journal *Children's Literature* and an associate professor of English at Hollins University, USA.]

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## **Planeta Tangerina: An Editorial Concept that Pushes Boundaries**

***Marta Borges and Sandie Mourão***

Planeta Tangerina, a Portuguese publisher that specialises in creating picture books, believes that the picture book is one of the most challenging arenas for experimentation – it regards everything and anything as possible. It respectfully creates picture books, striving at every stage to ensure there is a constant dialogue between the author, the illustrator, the designer and the editor to create the picture book as an object, something it is convinced is the major factor in its success as a picture-book publisher. It has two house rules: do not follow formulas and always challenge the reader.

This presentation showed how Planeta Tangerina's quest to enable a positive relationship between visual literacy and the role of illustration has developed a new way of participating actively in interpreting and constructing knowledge through and beyond the picture book. It included a short description of activities that demonstrate how the publisher supports mediators in their quest for promoting dialogue through the picture book as an object, organises exhibitions to give readers the chance to be directly in contact with illustrators' work, and runs workshops to motivate children, teachers and parents to think, ask questions, experiment, take risks, and create – using Planeta Tangerina picture books as vehicles.

[Marta Borges is currently taking a Masters in Graphic Design and Editorial Studies. She has worked as a design, multimedia and audio-visual teacher.

Sandie Mourão is a freelance teacher educator, author of English-language teaching materials and an educational consultant. She recently completed her PhD investigating the role of picture-book illustrations in language development.

Planeta Tangerina's website is at [www.planetatangerina.com/en](http://www.planetatangerina.com/en) (also in Portuguese).]

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## **What's the Problem? Building Teenage Publishing in Britain**

***Lucy Pearson***

We all know the story about the mother who went to the library to get a suitable novel for her fifteen year-old and was asked by the librarian, 'What's his problem?'.

(Nina Bawden, 'A Dead Pig and My Father' in *Writers, Critics and Children*, 3–14, p.5. Originally published in *Children's Literature in Education*, 14, May 1974.)

Teenage literature in Britain emerged in the 1960s as a 'problem' genre, both in terms of subject matter and in respect of its place within the publishing industry. Anxieties over the new world faced by adolescents helped to fuel the desire for more books that dealt with real-life issues, but the desire to show 'life in the raw' pushed at the boundaries of children's literature. While some commentators called for a new specialist literature for adolescents, others pointed to the world of adult literature as the next step for adolescent readers.

This paper looks at the emergence of specialist publishing for teenagers in Britain, with a focus on two early paperback lists, Penguin's Peacocks and Macmillan Education's Topliners. These two lists, edited by renowned Puffin editor Kaye Webb and notable author and critic Aidan Chambers, exemplify the diverse and often conflicting views of teenage literature in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s. Their work demonstrates the ways in which publishers negotiated and shaped perceptions of teenage publishing, laying the foundations for today's young adult market.

[Lucy Pearson is a Lecturer in Children's Literature at Newcastle University. Her research interests are focused around children's publishing, book history, fan culture and digital culture.]

## The Blank Page: The Writing Process and the Creative Dissertation

*Maaike Palmier-Claus*

The blank page is terrifying. Unfortunately, everyone who wants to write will have to encounter this particular horror. In fact, the whole process of beginning to write can be petrifying: from the research to the constant worry that you are ‘just not good enough’. In my paper I discuss my experience of the blank page and the writing process in personal terms that I hope will mirror and help demystify some of the problems that other prospective writers have faced. My particular focus is on beginning writing, because it can be such a painful first step into a scary world, and on experimentation, simply because I enjoy a good experiment with my writing. I have just finished my MA at Roehampton University and chose to write a creative dissertation. Before I began the creative-writing module I had never considered being a writer, much as I had not considered being a rock star, but now I find it hard to consider *not* writing and hope to share my enthusiasm with other prospective writers who have also begun their battle with the blank page.

[Maaike Palmier-Claus has just completed her MA in Children’s Literature at Roehampton University, London, and is hoping to stumble across a career path.]

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## Greek children’s Literature in the Digital Age: An Overview

*Dominique Sandis*

Despite the storms of financial crisis raging over the country, the digital age has not left Greece untouched and, as of 2010, ebooks have carefully and steadily made their appearance on digital bookshelves.

What, however, is the digital publishing panorama in Greece and, in particular, that of children’s digital publishing? How many books have been published and where are they made available? In a report produced by the National Book Centre of Greece, which established an eBook Monitoring Unit in December 2010 (<http://ebooks.ekebi.gr>, in Greek), some 2500 titles were made available by the end of 2011 by approximately 50 publishers, including backlist titles and new releases. The retail channels supplying consumers with ebooks include publishers’ estores, specialist ebook stores and the estores of bookstores. In addition, ebooks and apps can be procured from international sites such as iTunes and, shortly, Barnes & Noble. The greater part of ebook sales belongs to adult fiction and non-fiction; however, scattered sales of young adult fiction titles have been noted. Sales of children’s ebooks are still scarce. The majority of ebook buyers tend to hail from Greece and Cyprus, yet sales are also notable in countries that retain strong Greek-speaking immigrant populations (i.e. the USA, the UK, Australia and Canada). What advantages does digital publishing hold for Greek children’s literature?

Psichogios Publications is currently the biggest ebook publisher in Greece and the pioneer in publishing interactive picture-book apps in Greece. In this paper, an overview is provided of the Greek children’s digital publishing market (titles available, publishers active in the field, indicative sales and marketing techniques), as well as a brief showcase of the apps that have been successfully created. Focusing in particular on the projects developed by Psichogios Publications, the first Greek interactive apps for the iPad, iPhone and iPod touch were launched in October 2010 for children aged 4+. Originally written as a print children’s book, the app entails interactive and animated full-colour illustrations, Greek, English and Chinese text, sound effects and narration in all three languages. This was soon followed by four further apps.

The latest app, from the book *Why Don’t you Count some Sheep* by Makis Tsitas, includes even more interactivity in each spread along with three extra games for the

young user (memory, tic-tac-toe and a numbers writing game). While there are many aspects, both positive and negative, being discussed about the digital age, a positive effect that can be seen here is that for a national literature that is constrained by its language, borders and small readership, the internet and its digital developments have offered a way out of its confinement.

While ebooks are provided in Greek, apps are deliberately aimed at an international market and produced in additional languages other than those of the home market (i.e. English, French, German, Spanish and Chinese). Up until today our process of creating apps has been to take a popular or in-house favourite best-selling picture-book title and turn it into an interactive storybook app.

With each new app under development, the goal is to make them as innovative and advanced as possible, including original interactivity in conjunction with popular best-selling stories and because, as Kate Wilson of Nosy Crow (*Publishing Perspectives*, 22/08/2012) writes, ‘apps are voracious’, each app needs to become more and more advanced and original.

Of course, as a product stemming from such a small country, the app is also against the tide of international competition that it needs to wade through, in addition to the ‘Angry Birds’ generation. We can only hope that originality, exciting plots, clever ideas and fun illustrations will help to make an impact.

[Dominique Sandis is the children’s fiction commissioning editor at Psichogios Publications in Athens, Greece.]

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## **Enhancing the Experience: Rekindling and Renewing Forgotten Texts**

*Kirsty Jenkins*

This paper focuses on the role that fan societies and their affiliated presses play in maintaining and rekindling interest in neglected and forgotten twentieth-century children’s authors and texts, and what their existence means to their members. In particular, it focuses on the work of Girls Gone By Publishers, The Abbey Chronicle (Elsie J. Oxenham Appreciation Society’s magazine) and Fidra Press. It explores how fan societies enable members to enhance their literary experience through magazines, travel, book sales and group meetings, and how they are instrumental in moving forwards an understanding of the texts through fan fiction, fill-in novels, discussion of cultural elements, and biographical and critical appreciations. The paper also demonstrates the valuable work that publishing companies such as Girls Gone By Publishers, Bettany Press and Fidra Press are accomplishing in making these authors and their texts accessible to the present generation through new, affordable publications of rare, out-of-print works that combine the original text and illustrations with new introductory material and short stories.

[Kirsty Jenkins is a PhD student at the University of Manchester.]

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## **Second to the Right and Straight on till Gallifrey: The Uses of J.M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan* in Steven Moffat’s *Doctor Who***

*Anne Malewski*

Transcending target audience and media boundaries, J.M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan* tale is a prime example of how book boundaries are expanded and broken. The creative potential of intermediality is illustrated by the tale’s recent transformation in Steven Moffat’s first two series of *Doctor Who*. The television series has drawn on literature since its creation. This tendency is particularly pronounced under Moffat, who, approaching

*Doctor Who* as a dark fairy tale, frequently refers to fairy tales or texts that have become fairy tales themselves, like *Peter Pan*. Barrie's imagery, themes and structure redefine the relationship between the doctor and his companion. Echoes of the well-established image of the flight of Peter and his nightgown friends reposition *Doctor Who* in the fantastic, magical realm of childhood stories. Furthermore, Barrie's themes of perpetual childhood, imaginary friends and childhood faith are explored, expanded and partly re-evaluated via a plethora of curious references. Moreover, the source text's structure of stories within stories reverberates in Moffat's elaborate inter-frame storytelling. The workshop explored the transformation of *Peter Pan* in *Doctor Who* as a case study of Moffat's literary approach, and argues that, here, intermediality is used creatively and to the benefit of both media.

[Anne Malewski received her MA in British Studies from the University of Leipzig in 2012 and is currently pursuing new adventures.]

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## **Virtual Worlds and New Literary Interactions in Salman Rushdie's *Luka and the Fire of Life***

*Ciara Gallagher*

Salman Rushdie's latest work *Luka and the Fire of Life* (2010) has often garnered attention because of its use of a narrative partially influenced by computer games. This aspect of the novel has been alternately lauded for its vision and critiqued for the supposed failure of this influence of new media to resound fully through all levels of the narrative. However, while Rushdie's exploration of virtual worlds refuses to marginalise or neglect such spaces, neither does it locate the narrative's solutions there. This composite approach is evident in other representations that interact with the book's content and aesthetic. For example, a short film animation based on *Luka* employs a style that draws on the tempo and structure of the computer game, while also incorporating what Rushdie describes as the 'post-Sendak wit of the drawing style'. Similarly, a YouTube publicity trailer for the book invokes multiple influences, highlighting the multiplicity of spaces available to the child within and through the book, ranging from virtual worlds to the worlds that continue to appear in children's literature inspired by circuses and fairy tales. The exploration of alternative worlds and margins throughout the novel is a site of powerful potential in terms of the repositioning of traditional themes in children's literature, and this paper examines some of the interactions the book has inspired, including the trailer for the book itself, in terms of what may be considered reinventions of literary interaction.

[Ciara Gallagher teaches seminars on Irish studies and literary theory at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth.]

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## **Re-imagining the Form of the Book: Su Blackwell's Book Sculptures**

*Carey Gibbons*

Su Blackwell is one of many contemporary artists exploring the book as a material object and reinventing its pre-existing form. Blackwell is known for her delicate paper sculptures that transform books into fantastical three-dimensional worlds. Some of her works include recreations of *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Secret Garden*, *Little Red Riding Hood* and *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*. Using a scalpel, Blackwell carefully cuts and folds book pages to craft intricate scenes evoking both childhood vulnerability and possibility. New and unexpected histories and realities emerge through her alterations of the book's physical form and structure. Although Blackwell's sculptures expose the precariousness of the book, they also reveal unanticipated and overlooked meanings. By producing works that combine a sense of loss and longing with playful manipulation and

innovation, she questions, but ultimately asserts, the importance of the weight, texture and design of the book in the digital age. Although she destroys the book's original form, her sculptures ultimately assert the enduring nature of childhood and re-image the book as a living, malleable object.

[Carey Gibbons is a PhD student at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London, researching the field of Victorian illustration.]

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## **Walking with Wolves: Children's Responses to the Wolf Tradition in Stories**

*Kerenza Ghosh*

For centuries the wolf has existed alongside humans; both in reality and through literary and cultural representations. Traditional stories passed down through generations embody stereotypical images of the wolf as we know it today (*Of Wolves and Men*, Barry Lopez, 1978). Consequently, the mere mention of the word 'wolf' evokes a response within most people. This seminar paper stems from a project, and analyses the responses of six children in upper Key Stage 2 to the wolf tradition in stories. It explores the children's awareness of and responses to folk and fairy tales, fables and legends. Since representations of the real wolf are entwined within traditional stories, the children's knowledge and understanding of actual wolves is addressed, along with their reading of the picture book *Walk with a Wolf* (Janni Howker, illus. Sarah Fox-Davies, 1997), which offers realistic portrayals of wolves in their natural habitat. During the project, the influence of popular culture and film, including *Harry Potter* and *Doctor Who*, was evident as the children drew on their shared 'funds of knowledge' (Cathy Amanti, in *Funds of Knowledge*, González, N., L. Moll and C. Amanti, C., 2005) to respond to the wolf character in the stories. To contextualise the children's responses, this paper also offers a concise history of the representation of wolves in literature, and how this has been affected by the changing attitudes of humans towards this creature.

[Kerenza Ghosh, prior to teaching at the University of Roehampton, London, taught at a primary school in Redbridge, London, and held the post of English Coordinator. Much of her research has involved looking at picture books with older children.]

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## **Beyond the 'Grown-up Child': The Quality of Childhood in *Matilda: The Musical***

*Erica Berry Irving*

*Matilda: The Musical* demonstrates how moving from page to stage can provide new approaches to the vexed issue of maturation in children's stories. Consistent with the place that Matilda has come to occupy in the popular imagination, this adaptation's major innovation is its ethos of liberation from pedantic narrative control. It accomplishes this effect both by giving consistent attention to the child characters' interest in telling stories, both fictional and biographical, and by capitalising on the narrative and stylistic conventions of the musical theatre form. The tension between revolution and conservatism in Roald Dahl's writing for children is readily evident in the original 1988 novel; the characters, though typically extreme, never break the familiar structure of the storybook English village, where polite children are the ideal and the narrator knows best. In the musical, however, the adaptor's specific construction of the singing child as the essential storytelling vehicle results in the staging of an active, present negotiation between child and adult actors and audience members over the values of 'childhood' and 'adulthood', as well as a heightened sense of childhood as both a distinct experience and a transient phase. The presentation of this paradox as a fluid model of maturation can be summarised as a dialogue between two of the songs, 'Naughty' and 'When I Grow Up', which serve as the centre of my analysis.

[Erica Berry Irving is a first-year PhD student at the University of Cambridge, researching the adaptation of illustrated texts and picture books to the stage. She has an MPhil in Critical Approaches to Children's Literature from Cambridge.]

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## **Children's Movables and the Threat of the Mechanical Book**

*Hannah Field*

Can there, after all, be a more literal embodiment of the animism that we see ourselves as having abandoned than the strangely eloquent object that we take a book to be?

In his review of Marina Warner's *Stranger Magic* (2011), quoted above, Steven Connor discusses the book in conjunction with the array of other magical objects in the Arabian Nights. Ultimately, the book is the *ne plus ultra* of magical talismans: we do not need special magic to animate the book, as we already experience its regular attributes as a form of magic. But what happens when the book fails to become the transcendent magical object – when the book rather seems inanimate or mechanical? Arguing that the children's book in particular is culturally required to exist as a 'strangely eloquent object', I use nineteenth-century movable books for children to discuss these questions. Movables reflect the conditions of the book in the 'age of mechanical reproduction' (to borrow Walter Benjamin's famous phrase) in unique ways: outside the book, through the technologies of producing movables, and the structure of the companies that produced them; inside the book, through the mechanisms visible on the page and the way the accompanying text engages these mechanisms. My paper opposes fantasised magical books in children's literature to concepts of the mechanical book, with reference to a set of unusual Victorian pop-ups, Dean's Surprise Model series. I consider the intersection of the book as a mechanically produced object with representations of machines and technology in the series. Discomfort at the mechanical book from a range of sources both popular and critical will also be canvassed: in particular, Iona and Peter Opie's decrying of the movable in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1975.

[Hannah Field is a DPhil candidate in the English Faculty at Oxford University, where her research centres on movable books from the Bodleian Library's Opie Collection of Children's Literature.]

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## **The Impact of Ebooks on Young Children's Reading Habits**

*Sally Maynard*

Although the importance of reading undertaken in childhood is widely understood, studies in various countries have found a decrease in an interest in reading amongst young people. As a result of this decrease in interest and the growing appeal of computers and other technology, it has been suggested that the electronic environment is becoming more important to the growing number of children who do not respond well to traditional print media and who are reluctant to read. However, with the growing interest in computers amongst children, the electronic book may very well prove to be of significance in their reading habits, providing a love of reading for pleasure as well as a foundation for the acquisition of knowledge.

In my paper I consider how the interaction between children and electronic books has changed over the past 10 years. Research studies are described investigating the effect of electronic books on the comprehension of child readers. Moreover, the results of a recent small-scale study are reported, involving children reading on currently available portable ereader devices: Amazon Kindle, Nintendo DS-Lite and Apple iPod Touch. Finally, there is a consideration of what the future may hold for electronic books aimed at young readers.

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[Sally Maynard is a lecturer in the Department of Information Science at Loughborough University. Her research interests are concentrated around children's literature, children's libraries and electronic publishing. She is the editor of the journal *New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship*.]

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## Literacy and the Non-Verbal Child

*Rebecca R. Butler*

When books are presented to young readers with the necessary cognitive skills and vocal capability, the readers can absorb the texts, question and discuss in the traditional way. With children who have learning difficulties and who may lack the ability to speak, however, methods must be sought that reach beyond the boundary of the printed text to enable the readers to participate.

My session explains and demonstrates some of these readership aids. They often employ so-called 'objects of reference', toys or simulacra that can be used to reference characters, events or symbols in the related text. The most commonly used aid is a 'story sack' consisting of a large print copy of the book suitable for display to a group, plus appropriate objects of reference. One such story sack contains models of the three owls who feature in the book. Sometimes a piece of fake fur represents an animal. Characters that need to be actively displayed are often represented by finger puppets.

My experience with such aids beyond the boundary of the book suggests that even children who might seem disconnected by their disability from books and reading can be stimulated to enjoy texts.

[Rebecca R. Butler is a lecturer and reviewer in children's literature. She holds BA and MA degrees from Roehampton University and is currently reading for a doctorate in education on a course offered jointly by Roehampton and Kingston universities.]

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## OTHER TOPICS

### The Times Stephen Spender Prize 2012

*Robina Pelham Burn*

Our annual poetry translation competition has been running for nine years but there was a particular buzz at the judges' meeting this year, arising partly from the very welcome variety in the younger categories, with 12 and 19 languages represented in the 14-and-under and 18-and-under groups, respectively, including – from the African continent – Afrikaans, Tigrinya, Twi and Yoruba.

Impressed by the richness and quality of the entries, the judges – Susan Bassnett, Edith Hall, Patrick McGuinness and George Szirtes – felt moved this year to award three prizes rather than just one in the most junior age group, and were delighted to reward translations from Dutch and Bengali in a category that tends to be dominated by translations from French, Spanish and Latin.

Damayanti Chatterjee, who won joint second prize in the 14-and-under category with her translation from Bengali of a poem by Narendranath Chakraborty, had written in her accompanying commentary: 'It's about an ordinary person, who wanted to do something extraordinary. And when all the other ordinary people got their ordinary wish, he, Omolkaanthi, was left without his extraordinary dream.' All four judges had been drawn to 'Omolkaanthi' and were delighted when a Bengali expert described it as 'a remarkable effort for a 12 year old', adding: 'the poem seems simple at first reading, but is actually quite layered, and challenging'.

At the prize-giving ceremony on the evening of Tuesday 13 November at the University of Notre Dame, London, the prize winners read their poems in front of some 150

translators, academics and poets (including Tony Harrison and Grey Gowrie), as well as representatives from the Dutch and Irish Embassies.

Damayanti read out her poem, her voice full of sympathy as she reached the final stanza:

The one amidst us who became a teacher,  
Could have easily been a doctor,  
The one that became a doctor,  
Wouldn't have lost out by becoming a lawyer,  
However, their dreams all came true,  
But not Omolkaanthi's,  
He couldn't become the sunshine,  
That same Omolkaanthi,  
Who, every day, was enchanted by the sun, wanting nothing but to be it,  
Couldn't.

We left Omolkaanthi behind in his dark printing shop to hear Thomas Franchi, who shared second place with Damayanti, declaim with palpable enjoyment his version of what George Szirtes described as Antonio Quevedo's 'gorgeous tease of a poem', 'A una nariz' [To a Nose]:

There was once a man who had a nose.  
It was a most impressive nose,  
the nose of a killer,  
a writer's nose,  
a hairy pointed sword of a nose.

Thomas's reading was practised, confident. Laughter rippled through the room. Those following the reading in the booklet admired the way in which he had shaped the poem to look like a bulbous nose.

Thomas was succeeded at the microphone by David Meijer. Halfway through what was only his second year at school in Britain, David had spent some time searching for the London equivalents of Amsterdam landmarks, so that his lion might terrify people in Downing Street and Wimbledon rather than Singel and Postzegelmarkt. His charming translation of a childhood favourite, Annie M.G. Schmidt's 'De leeuw is los!' [The Lion is Loose], was rated 'remarkably nimble' by George Szirtes and took first prize:

The lion is loose! The lion is loose!  
He's strolling down the street.  
He wants to go to London's woods,  
and look for something to eat.

More predictably, Pessoa, Goethe and Verlaine swept the prizes in the 18-and-under category, their translators all excellent linguists. Amanda Thomas had come to Portuguese through her Spanish studies and is now reading Portuguese and French at Oxford; Francis Scarr, who tackled 'The Destruction of Magdeburg', is applying to read German and Russian, while James Martin (whose translation of an Akhmatova poem was also commended) plans to study French and Russian. His atmospheric rendering of Verlaine's 'Effet de Nuit' [Night Impressions] ended:

Then, surrounding three prisoners – deathly pale and  
Barefoot – the body of soldiers  
March, and their straight, upright blades, like harrow rods,  
Gleam against the lances of the downpour.

Edith Hall admired Amanda Thomas's sure-footed handling of metre and her 'brilliance at concealing technical effort' in her translation of Pessoa's sonnet, 'Abdication', which began:

Take me, eternal night, into your arms,  
And call me your son ... for I am a king  
Who abandoned, quite voluntarily,  
My throne of restless dreams and weariness.

A radio programme about the ravaging of Magdeburg led Francis Scarf to Goethe's rather heavy-going poem. Dissatisfied with how stilted and clunky his translation seemed on his first attempt, he introduced some very colloquial dialogue before having the unseen narrator conclude:

Women scream in fear.  
The girls scream even more.  
They're screwing everything that moves –  
And they've raped the town as well.

Not surprisingly, this competition attracts in the 18-and-under category that dying breed, those studying languages at A level – though, of course, a good knowledge of another language is not in itself enough, or even the most important element: the winners are all young people who write beautifully and understand what does (and doesn't) make a good poem in English.

It is no coincidence that some of the same names feature on both the Times Stephen Spender Prize 'roll of honour' and the prestigious list of Foyle's Young Poets; one of this year's Foyle winners, Sarah Fletcher, was commended by the Spender judges in the 18-and-under category for her imaginative translation of Argentinian poet Alfonsina Storni.

There are many, many children in our schools, however, who don't study a language even to GCSE, but who with their parents or grandparents speak a language other than English. The Spender Trust badly wants the aspiring poets among them to enter the competition and would be very glad of IBBY members' help in spreading the word among this large and ever-growing section of schoolchildren.

All the winning translations from this and previous years can be read at [www.stephen-spender.org](http://www.stephen-spender.org). Free booklets may be obtained by emailing [info@stephenspender.org](mailto:info@stephenspender.org). The 2013 competition opens in early January 2013 and the closing date for entries is 24 May 2013. We are keen to encourage entries in the 18-and-under and 14-and-under categories from children who may not be studying a foreign language but speak a language other than English with their parents or grandparents. Conditions and how to enter are at [www.stephen-spender.org/2013\\_prize/entry\\_conditions.html](http://www.stephen-spender.org/2013_prize/entry_conditions.html).

[Robina Pelham Burn is Director, the Stephen Spender Trust.]

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## REVIEWS

### Books about Children's Literature

#### *It Doesn't Have to Rhyme: Children and Poetry*

Bridget Carrington and Jennifer Harding (eds), Shenstone: Pied Piper Publishing, pb. 978 0 9552 1066 2, ebook 978 0 9552 1067 9, £20, 244pp.

This book is the proceedings of the annual IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conference of the same title, held at Roehampton University, London, on 12 November 2012. IBBY/NCRCL Papers 18.

Poetry has always been the poor relation in the discussion of texts for children – possibly because it involves some very knotty questions. Two recent books, *Poetry for Children* (ed. Nancy Chambers, Thimble Press, 2009) and *Poetry and Childhood* (ed. Morag Styles, Louise Joy and David Whitley, Trentham, 2010) have shown how views tend to polarise. On the one hand children's poetry is only a stepping stone to adult poetry, and is therefore useful educationally (corollary: it is necessarily inferior, or not poetry at all). On the other hand, playing with words is a natural, liberating part of child culture (corollary: performative poetry is probably the best) and, at the extreme, that children's poetry can be recognised only by children and so should be left to children.

And now we have *It Doesn't Have to Rhyme*, the proceedings of last year's IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conference. I have to say that I'm always sceptical about 'proceedings' because they are very much like putting performance poetry on the page: can the buzz of the conference be maintained in print, or would it have been better to ruthlessly edit the contributions down to a more coherent argument?

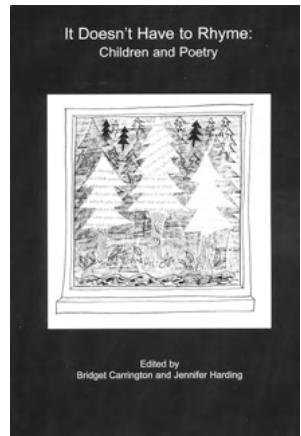
I am pleased to report that *It Doesn't Have to Rhyme* just about pulls the trick off – partly because the mixture is so rich. There is everything: from the lively polemics of Mike Rosen and the measured advocacy of Philip Gross, to Susan Bassnett's scholarly account of translation of poetry, careful academic essays on death, rhymes in the Harry Potter series and vibrant and deeply informative pieces on slam poetry. There are publishers' accounts, and teachers' accounts, a report on the progress of the Children's Poetry Archive and what must be the definitive essay on Welsh poetry for children by Siwan M. Rosser. And if the summaries of the workshops can be rather flat (perhaps an intractable problem) and some contributions seem a little thin or uneven without the force of the personality on the stage, there is the compensation of cheerful illustrations, extensive bibliographies, a stunning array of links and even a well-selected glossary.

The only problem is finding one's way around. Bridget Carrington has made a noble attempt at a conventional introduction, but I wonder whether something more radical – a themed contents page or multiple contents pages might have helped navigation. True, there is an excellent index, which suits readers with their own agendas, but at the outset for the less-focused reader, some idea of the themes being treated might have been useful. Myself, I would have started with one of the best pieces that I have read on the whole question of how children's poetry exists, Debbie Pullinger's 'Mind Reading: Thinking about Children's Poetry', which lurks in the basement.

Equally, an introductory overview of the current state of poetry might have been helpful: it's all rather confusing. We are told that:

Under the heading 'Passion for Poetry Rides out the Recession', *The Times Educational Supplement* (11 May 2011) stated that 'a grassroots movement to promote poetry for children is continuing to build, despite the recession'. Yet a month earlier, at a seminar at the London Book Fair, Chris Holifield, director of the Poetry Society, warned that children's poetry 'faced extinction'. And Kate Paice, commissioning editor at A & C Black stated that 'a lot of bookshops seem quite scared of poetry. They don't know how to shelve it or how to sell it and if we can't reach our market through bookshops, then we can't sell to our market'. (p.21)

Then we have Fiona Waters from Troubadour book fairs:



I am the bearer of great tidings as I know that poetry is alive and well in our schools, and, even more excitingly, it is the children who are buying it. We shift vast quantities of it every term. (p.17)

What is perhaps not obvious is that *It Doesn't Have to Rhyme* is a deeply subversive book positioning performance poetry, slam poetry, Caribbean poetry and the creative efforts of individual teachers against the dead hand of the educational system. Morag Styles, in an otherwise typically optimistic account of her lifetime with poetry, leads the charge:

I feel angry that when I tackle poetry with my current Masters students; they respond with excitement and vigour until they remember that it will be difficult to find the energy to pursue these poets with their pupils in the classroom because there isn't space or time in the curriculum, or they have to follow plans devised by someone else, or they are scared to do something that might not be approved of at the next Ofsted inspection which, these days, might happen at any time. ... What a joke that we have come to think of creativity as something separate that needs adding to the curriculum instead of being an essential part of learning and teaching! (pp.4,13)

Mike Rosen backs her up when talking about school visits:

On one occasion the teacher said, 'It's absolutely marvellous you've come because the quick ones have been writing poems and the slows have been doing rhyming words.' And I thought, 'That's marvellous! Even as we're doing poetry we are able to discriminate actively against the children in the class.' They've been streamed, which as you know is a bit of government dogma, even whilst doing poetry. Now there's idiots like me who have been going around thinking poetry is a popular form that is available to everybody, including children, an idea that is thought to be rather lunatic by some people. (p.36)

And Robert Hull is equally scathing, nailing the National Literacy Strategy: 'poetry in junior school has become obscenely cerebral' (p.162) and *Grammar for Writing*, a DfES text 'weighing in at about a kilo' which 'brandishes 13 bullet points, no less, for teaching haiku' (p.187).

*It Doesn't Have to Rhyme* retains much of the quirkiness and inevitable unevenness of the conference from which it derives – although it is necessarily more formal and polite (I would love to know what Mike Rosen thought of David Whitley's meticulous use of his poems in the cause of revolutionising the teaching of rhythm and metre.) And despite the fact that it is unquestioningly predicated on the innate value of poetry ('It is indisputable that poetry can reach parts of us that other literature cannot' (p.2)), it is a worthwhile addition to that small shelf of books that discuss the problems of children and poetry seriously.

**Peter Hunt, Professor Emeritus in Children's Literature at Cardiff University**

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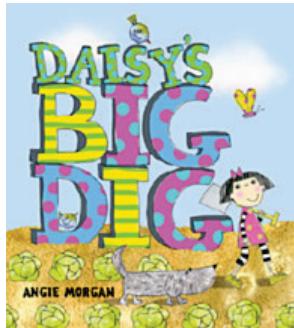
### Picture Books

#### *Daisy's Big Dig*

Angie Morgan, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0208 8, £11.99, 2012, 32pp.

Years 2 and 3 thought Daisy was a real 'heroine' in the story when, through her act of kindness, she not only helps Mr Hofmeister, but also brings all the neighbours together so that they eventually become friends.

*Daisy's Big Dig* is a gentle and heart-warming story that reflects life in our communities today. It is an excellent book for discussing friendship, being part of a group, loneliness and much more. Year 4 thought it was a very good book that would encourage children to eat vegetables and encourage healthy eating! They were also very happy with the outcome, and thought there was still a bit of a cliffhanger about what happens next.



We all loved the illustrations, which brought the text to life. The variety of styles, combining drawing and collage are delightful.

Year 4 thought this book would be suitable for the 3–7 age group, but all the adults said they enjoyed it too.

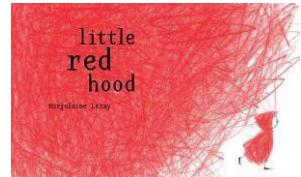
### Vicki Willingham

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#### ***Little Red Hood***

Marjolaine Leray, trans. Sarah Ardizzone, London: Phoenix Yard Books, hb. 978 1 9079 1200 9, £7.99, 2011, 40pp.

This book has quite a different slant on the traditional story from most others that have been produced over the years, but follows the original closely enough to be recognisable. Text and illustrations are in two colours: black depicting the wolf and red Little Red Hood.



The story takes the form of a conversation between the two characters, beginning with Little Red Hood's capture by the wolf. It evolves through a series of clever one-liners that depict Little Red Hood's growing confidence as she develops a plan to overcome the problem facing her. There is a lively humour running throughout that helps to make the book a real page-turner.

Simple, almost scribbled illustrations portray the body language of the characters so well that even quite young children would be able to sense how each feels. One could almost feel sorry for the wolf portrayed in the final pictures, after Little Red Hood has turned the tables on him.

Ines, a 10-year-old girl who read this story, made the following comments:

‘This book is original and I loved it. The cover is interesting and imaginative. It shows light and dark in the forest and Little Red Hood’s shape is interesting. There aren’t many words; the pictures tell you more of the story. It is very funny. I like the way you can tell the expressions of the characters by looking at the way their hands and feet are drawn.

The wolf is not the usual big bad wolf. He is kinder than usual. He also gets embarrassed by Little Red Hood’s comment about his stinky breath.

Little Red Hood is funny and very clever. She uses questions well and bosses the wolf about. Her plan is great and tricks him brilliantly.’

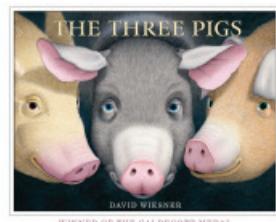
### Jackie Davenport

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#### ***The Three Pigs***

David Wiesner, London: Andersen Press, 978 1 8493 9405 5, £5.99, 2012, 40pp.

‘Once upon a time there were three pigs who went out into the world to seek their fortune.’ So begins this rather familiar story, yet these are not ‘the three *little* pigs’ of the traditional tale, but three rather different, subversive pigs with their own ideas of how this well-known story will unfold. True to form, the wolf huffs and puffs, but to his surprise and the pigs’ delight he blows them beyond the page boundaries and right out of the story. The pigs find themselves in a new imaginative backdrop, where they fly and wander through scenes from nursery rhymes and fairy tales. On their way they liberate other characters, including a dragon and a cat with a fiddle, and ultimately take charge of their own fate.



Through a range of illustrative techniques and thrilling perspectives, Wiesner experiments with the structure and conventions of traditional storytelling. His artistic style transforms the pigs from flat drawings into three-dimensional versions of themselves as they burst out from the confines of the book. Enjoying this newfound freedom, the trio soar around on a paper plane made from the pages of their original story. One pig peers directly at the reader, declaring ‘I think ... someone’s out there.’

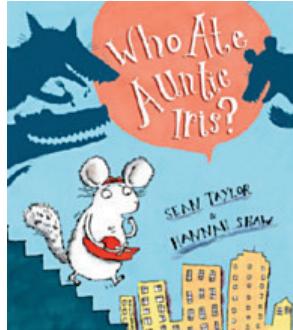
Several such metafictive devices feature, drawing the reader's attention to the book as an artefact in itself, and blurring the boundaries between fantasy and reality. On the closing pages, the final words of the text are broken apart and the letters are sent scattering across the illustrations, demonstrating that now the pigs have ventured out into the wider world, their story will never again be the same.

Visual jokes and humorous dialogue throughout the story will engage readers and challenge their expectations of how picture books work. Having been awarded the 2002 Caldecott Medal, this is a welcome UK edition of David Wiesner's *The Three Pigs*.

### Kerenza Ghosh

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#### *Who Ate Auntie Iris?*



Sean Taylor, illus. Hannah Shaw, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0219 4, £11.99, 2012, 32pp.

Children from Key Stage 1 and Year 4 loved this book when I read it to them and wanted to read it for themselves again and again. Each time they read it they discovered something new and interesting to talk about.

As well as making us laugh out loud (the wolves doing yoga was voted the funniest), it also created a delicious sense of anxiety and fear. Has one of the neighbours hurt Auntie Iris, if so which one and how? There are lots of opportunities for the children to predict what they think might happen. The suspense is built up throughout the story, keeping one on tenterhooks from start to finish. The use of rhyme and repetition enabled even the youngest child to join in with retelling the story.

The detailed illustrations are fabulous, showing each flat and the tenants, with plenty to talk about and enjoy.

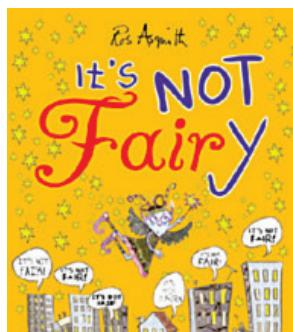
A superb read from start to finish.

### Vicki Willingham

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#### *It's Not Fairy*

Ros Asquith, London: Frances Lincoln Children's books, hb. 978 1 8478 0236 1, £11.99, 2012, 32pp.



Ros Asquith's picture book takes off on that frequent children's refrain of 'It's not fair!', heard when things don't quite go their own way. She introduces the idea of the It's Not Fairy who visits whining children and eats them. She makes clear, too, that adults are prone to making the same kind of complaints, equally annoying to the It's Not Fairy, who asserts, 'If you want to live fairly, you'll have to agree, that life isn't just about me, me, me!'

The family in this story take the fairy's words to heart and draw up a plan to be less selfish and more helpful. But now the It's Not Fairy has no one to eat, so she goes, embarrassingly, into an 'It's not fair!' stomp, encouraging the family to let off steam with a mass groan, grouse and gripe, until they all collapse with laughter.

Told in verse and cartoon-style illustrations, the story has some trade mark Asquith wit and humour. I particularly like the earth as if seen from space ringed by 'It's not fair!' in 12 different languages. And, if you want to set younger children thinking about what fairness really means, especially at home, then this might be one way to start.

There's certainly humour and food for thought for adults and children here. As an Asquith fan, however, I found the concept of the It's Not Fairy a bit difficult to grasp (although the pun is good enough) and I can't help thinking that the story doesn't amount to a great deal, confirmed by the inclusion of a two-page recipe for It's Not Fairy cakes in a book that's already relatively short.

### Clive Barnes

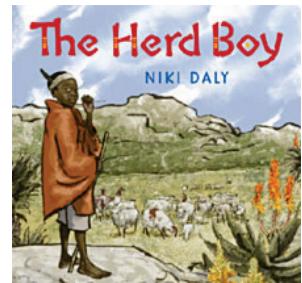
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### **The Herd Boy**

Niki Daly, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0217 0, £12.99, 2012, 32pp.

This evocative picture book is an aspirational story about a South African herd boy with big dreams to be president. Words and pictures describe a meeting between the boy and Nelson Mandela, who was himself a herd boy in the Transkei, the same region as the young boy we meet on this day.

We see Malusi and his family in their hut early one morning. It is still dark and the boy's mother tells him that he must have some steaming hot *meilie pap* for breakfast before he goes out to look after his grandfather's sheep and goats.



By the time the boy and the sheep reach the grazing slopes the sun is up and the earth is hot beneath his feet. There is a black eagle circling high in the sky and we can see the danger in the grass that Malusi has to be careful to avoid: the puff adders are coiled up in the bush, dozing in the sunshine! The herd boy's main problem though is to keep the sheep and goats from straying towards the deep *donga*, which is easy to fall into but hard to get out of. He must also protect this herd all day long from the baboons who stalk the flock.

We soon encounter a troop of lively looking baboons which Malusi has to drive away by throwing stones and shouting. Then we meet his friend Lungisa who is a little older and has a dog. The two play football and stick fight in the heat.

While the two friends are having a break for lunch we learn that Lungisa wants to be a footballer and Malusi himself aspires to be president. A fact that causes Lungisa to laugh so loudly that the baboons join in.

The day goes by with the herd boy watching busy termites, collecting dung for which his mother will receive some fresh vegetables and protecting the baby lambs and kids. His friend and the dog come to the rescue when an old hungry baboon attacks and injures a lamb. Malusi wraps the bleeding lamb in his blanket to take home for his grandfather to put medicine on the wounds.

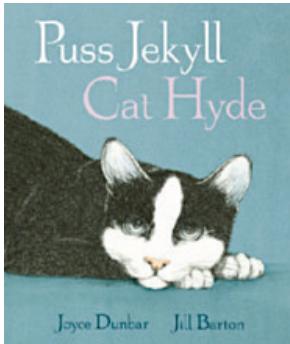
As the boys are returning to the kraal after the heat of the day has passed, a shiny black car appears out of the dust. When the window is wound down we can see that the occupant is none other than Nelson Mandela. He tells them that when he was a boy he too looked after sheep. Inevitably he asks the friends what they want to be. When the old man sees the injured lamb he tells Malusi: 'a boy who looks after his herd will make a fine president'.

Later that evening Malusi's grandfather gives him a pup to help protect the herd from danger. The happy boy falls asleep under his blanket with the animal, dreaming of being President Malusi.

At the end there is a glossary of all the South African words used in this book to enhance our enjoyment of this story.

This is a wonderful story simply told and beautifully illustrated. Niki Daly reminds us that many great men have come from humble beginnings.

**Shirley Hobson**



### **Puss Jekyll Cat Hyde**

Joyce Dunbar, illus. Jill Barton, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0369 6, £11.99, 2012, 32pp.

This is a delightful book for all lovers of cats. The rhyming and very rhythmical text tells the tale of a cat that behaves one way during the day and a very different way at night! She is so sweet and loveable, and then all of a sudden, her sneaky, sly cat ways are revealed ... and we wonder if this can be the very same cat!

Accompanied by Jill Barton's beautiful coloured pencil and watercolour drawings, this poetical book is a gem. It is well designed and turning the thick pages feels like a real treat. The text dances on the page, almost a character of its own.

This is a beautiful gift or a perfect bedtime story for children and adults of any age. Excellent for those who love cats and those who don't ... yet.

### **Shireen Babul**

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#### **Sparkle's Song**

Samantha Hale, illus. Mariana Ruiz Johnson, Pulborough: Maverick Arts Publishing, pb. 978 1 8488 6080 3, £7.99, 2012, 32pp.



This is a beautiful picture book (illustrated by Argentinian artist Mariana Ruiz Johnson) about a little girl named Sparkle who loses her parents in a tragic car accident. Sparkle goes to live with her very grumpy Aunt Millicent.

After much loneliness and sadness, Sparkle discovers some magic musical instruments in the woods and her love of life is returned. In fact, even Aunt Millicent is enticed by the music and we find out she is not as grumpy as we once thought! Through music, a little girl and her aunt can find happiness and connection with each other.

This book is about how music can heal hurt and how it can restore joy to a place of much sadness, and the author has placed a lot of emphasis on this idea. Although the beginning of the book is, for me, a little too sad, the end restores our faith in the human spirit so that we can deal with this initial sadness. The illustrations are warm and filled with so much emotion that my daughter and I spent much time exploring the beautiful pictures and talking about them.

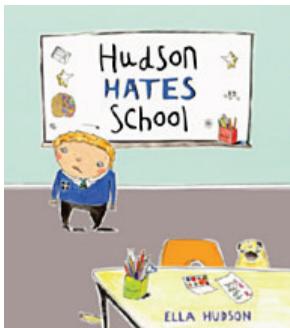
This story is for children of 3–4 years and up.

### **Shireen Babul**

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#### **Hudson Hates School**

Ella Hudson, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0375 7, £6.99, 2012, 32pp.



Hudson is a primary-school child (age unstated) who is immensely creative. He likes making things, cooking and sewing. However there is one thing that Hudson cordially detests: it is going to school. One Friday Hudson mounts a determined refusal to go to school, which is overcome by his mother's even more determined resolve to take him there. There is a good reason why Hudson is specially reluctant to attend school on this day: it is the day of a spelling test, and Hudson's atrocious spelling makes him feel unutterably stupid.

The day works out as badly as Hudson foresees. He has made no effort to learn the spellings set for the class. He has to hand his spelling book over to other pupils to mark, a practice now outdated in primary schools. They find his efforts hopeless and his spellings hysterically funny.

Hudson is now obliged to forfeit another break time, staying indoors and getting 'help' with his spelling, which he hates even more. By the end of the day Hudson is utterly depressed and tearful. When he gets home he is horrified to learn that his teacher is telephoning his mother. For the first time they hear the word 'dyslexia'. A specialist is

called to the school to help Hudson. But this involves yet another test, the thought of which drives Hudson insane with rage.

The new test, however, is unlike any other Hudson has taken, involving looking at pictures, and making shapes and patterns. These are all things Hudson is good at. After the test the expert explains that Hudson has dyslexia. This means that his brain processes information differently. He is not more stupid, just different. Hudson is now guided to a different class and a new teacher for some lessons with other dyslexic pupils. He begins for the first time to like school.

Dyslexia is not exactly a neglected area. But this book takes a different and refreshing look at dyslexia through the eyes of a dyslexic pupil and in the words of an author who is herself dyslexic. The illustrations are made in collage and are vibrant, reminiscent of the style of Lauren Child. They add immensely to the appeal of the book. Another feature of the book design that works well is Hudson's thought bubbles. Many dyslexic readers enjoy graphic forms, and this book will appeal to all of them as well as to the general reader.

### **Rebecca R. Butler**

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#### ***I Am Cat***

Jackie Morris, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0135 7, £11.99, 2012, 32pp.

This picture book will appeal to cat lovers of all ages.

It is a beautiful book to hold and look at with its luminous watercolour illustrations packed with hidden images. There is something different to see each time a page is revisited.

The story is simple. A domestic ginger cat is curled up, warm and contented in its bed and is dreaming. We enter the cat's dream and together we go on a magical journey, visiting the various places inhabited by nine wild cats. We are enchanted by what we see and learn through the eyes of the familiar sleeping cat. It is with wonderment that we find out how these other cats live and try to survive in their environments. It is made clear how endangered they have all become, apart from our domestic cat.

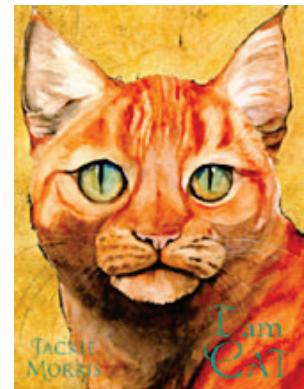
Jackie Morris' brilliant illustrations and carefully chosen words alluding to the often mysterious worlds these amazing creatures inhabit are easily understood. The way of life of big cats such as the Siberian Tiger, the Cheetah, the Lynx, the Puma, the Jaguar, the Snow Leopard, the Lion and the very rare Amur Leopard are all in the dreams of our ginger cat. However, it is not only about dreams of 'big cats' in exotic places. More unusually there is a lovely double-page spread where our cat dreams of being a 'secret cat' in the mountains of Scotland. We learn that this cat is 'striped like a tiger, solitary and fierce, ancient, almost a memory'. This cat is also in danger of becoming extinct.

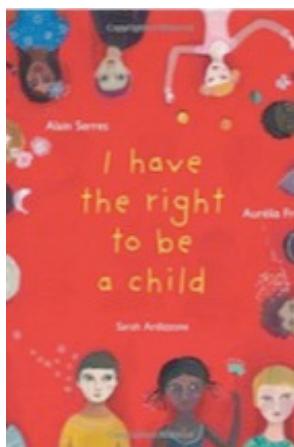
The text is sparse. The author doesn't waste words and includes some quite difficult ones for small children, like ammonite, when describing the way our dreaming cat is curled up. The child will learn new words to memorise for use later on. There is also, after the story, a really good spread showing all the cats with a brief résumé relating to the animals in real life and the dangers they constantly face.

This unique celebration of cats is not only a beautiful work of art for young children to enjoy, it is also extremely well researched and very informative.

### **Shirley Hobson**

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### ***I Have the Right to Be a Child***

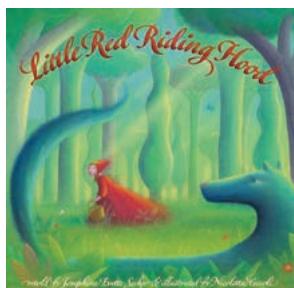
Alain Serres, illus. Aurelia Fronty, trans. Sarah Ardizzone, London: Phoenix Yard, pb. 978 1 9079 1211 5, £7.99, 2012, 40pp.

Imagine the challenge of creating a picture book from the 54 articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: putting the articles into a language that can be understood by younger children, and, through words and pictures, encouraging your readers to think about the implications of the Convention. It's easy to see how the result might be worthy (how could it be otherwise) but dull; or perhaps shocking in showing children whose rights were not respected. This book confounds such expectations. It is the work of a French author and illustrator, and put into English by prize-winning translator Sarah Ardizzone.

While the book's images are positive, showing children enjoying rights that they may take for granted rather than children who live in poverty or are abused, it asks questions that invite children to imagine what it might mean, for instance, not to have a name, a family or a country to call one's own. The text is a clever mix of such questions with small assertions of individuality. A question about the right to grow up healthy is followed by the statement 'Oranges are my favourite food: you can drink them and you can eat them.' So general rights are linked back to individual children with unique personalities, although the children who speak are never identified and could be any of those who appear in the illustrations.

The illustrations are perhaps the book's greatest triumph. They have the quality of a child's own artwork and show children of all complexions and cultural backgrounds, indicated by the clothing, toys and animals that are pictured. Colourful and vibrant, they express complex ideas in a simple form. The question, 'Do I have the right to a roof over my head?' is accompanied by the illustration of a girl sleeping peacefully in a blanket which has a design of the map of her community with its buildings, roads and woodland. Gradually, through the book, the illustrations build up a picture of the interdependence of individuals, communities and the natural world, through which all our lives are realised. This is a brilliant piece of work from author, illustrator and translator and congratulations and thanks are due to Phoenix Yard, its British publisher.

### **Clive Barnes**



### ***Little Red Riding Hood***

Lari Don, illus. Célia Chauffrey, read by Imelda Staunton, Oxford: Barefoot Books, 2012, pb. and audio CD 978 1 8468 6 768 2, 32pp.

The strap line for Barefoot Books invites us to 'step inside a story' and this delightful retelling of a timeless narrative does not disappoint.

While the written text remains focused on the events of the story, the illustrations provide a series of deliciously wicked twists and turns in characterisation and motive. French illustrator Célia Chauffrey brings a subtle and beautifully observed perspective to the familiar characters of Wolf, Little Red Riding Hood and Granny throughout her tableaux for this book. Little Red Riding Hood appears to be a strong match for Wolf's cunning, and Granny seems positively gleeful as she takes part in the hunter's elaborate plot to entice the wolf to his death. In addition, Chauffrey provides a visually appealing backdrop through which the plot unfolds, from the patterning on Granny's quilt cover to her finely detailed texture work on tree bark in the forest and on the wallpaper in Granny's cottage.

Such attention to detail from both writer and illustrator enrich this retelling for all readers, from those returning to an old favourite to those exploring this narrative for the very first time. Imelda Staunton is the perfect storyteller and both book and CD demand many revisits.

### **Sarah Stokes**

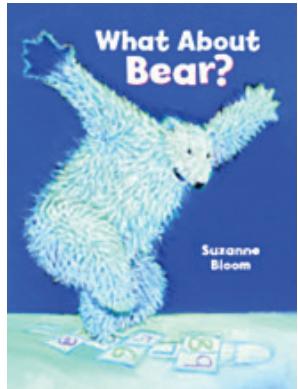
### **What About Bear?**

Suzanne Bloom, London: Alanna Books, 2012, hb. 978 1 9078 2508 8, £11.99, 2012, 34pp.

It is impossible to imagine a more effective book about the trials and tribulations of friendship for younger readers than this one. Bear and Duck are playing happily with their puppets when along comes a tiny fox, demanding to join in. The original friends welcome him immediately, but he soon starts making a nuisance of himself, wanting to change the game and exclude Bear on account of his size and grumpiness. While Bear is quite put out by this intrusion, Duck takes on the role of mediator, eventually finding a way to play where everyone is satisfied.

The warm, written dialogue is simple and repetitive, situated in a series of vibrant and engaging illustrations. There is no clutter in this book, in either the words or the pictures, leaving plenty of room for some lengthy discussions between reader and adult on how we treat our friends and what really matters.

**Sarah Stokes**

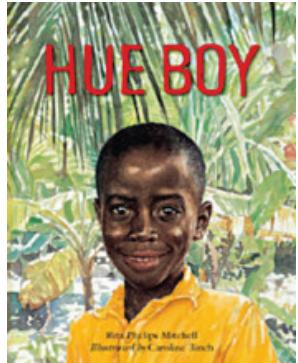


### **Hue Boy**

Rita Phillips Mitchell, illus. Caroline Binch, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0303 0, £6.99, 2012, 32pp. First published by Gollancz, 1992.

The combination of resonating language and absorbing illustrations makes this a potent picture book. Hue Boy lives in a small Caribbean village, where he is best known for being the smallest child, despite following the suggestions of his family and friends as to how he might grow taller. Sadly, no amount of eating healthy foods, exercising, walking tall or singing healing songs makes any difference, and Hue Boy remains as short as he ever was, to the exasperation of his mother. All he really wants to do is to talk to his father about the problem, but he is far away overseas, working on a ship.

The story resolves in the most satisfying way, when it transpires that happiness is the most effective cultivator of height that Hue Boy could possibly wish for.



**Sarah Stokes**

### **Fussy Freya**

Katherine Quarmby, illus. Piet Grobler, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0045 9, £6.99, 2012, 32pp. Hardback published 2008.

I read this wonderful book with an eight year old who is a good eater and we had such a laugh. The rhyme has a flowing rhythm making it almost musical. I loved the way the text was printed in bold to emphasise the feeling in important places. This makes for fun and interesting listening – and easy for the adult to give the text greater feeling. It is a thoroughly laugh-out-loud book with fabulous illustrations. It can be read by all parents, whether their children are fussy or non-fussy eaters. Personally I loved the grandparents' approach. We are reading it to laugh and practise different voices at least twice a week.

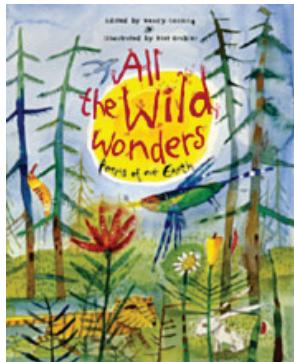
**Liane Barnard**



## Poetry

### *All the Wild Wonders: Poetry of our Earth*

Wendy Cooling (ed.), illus. by Piet Grobler, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0336 8, £7.99, 2012, 48pp.

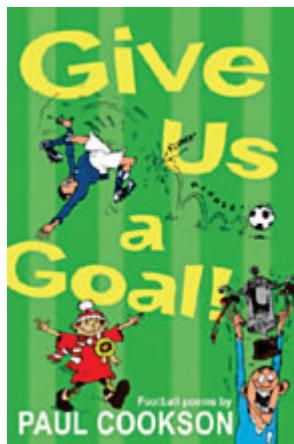


This is a book with illustrations which make the reader want to open it and discover more. The poems are simple but thought provoking. We really enjoyed reading it and it often comes down from the bookshelf when the subject of the environment is our topic for discussion. I read it with our eight year old, who learned several of the poems by heart without being asked. 'Dreamer' was one of her favourites. She will be taking it in to school for poetry week shortly. For me, the illustrations drew me in and made me want to read it. It would make a lovely present for any child.

Liane Barnard

### *Give us a Goal*

Paul Cookson, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0341 2, £5.99, 2012, 96pp.



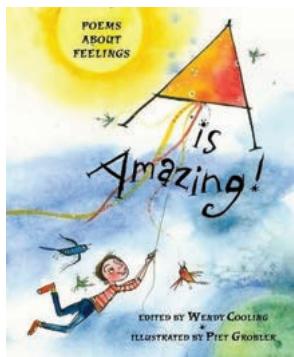
Paul Cookson is poet in residence at the National Football Museum in Manchester and this collection, published by Frances Lincoln, adds some new poems to a collection first published by Macmillan in 2004. Cookson has credentials both as an Everton fan and a leading scorer in Macmillan's crowd-pleasing team of poets for children. Here the predominant viewpoint is that of the fan in the stands at a league match, although there are poems about school and park football and the improvised games that require at least four participants to be wearing coats that they don't mind being used as goalposts. The mood is comic and light-hearted, supported by David Parkins' cartoons. Cookson makes inventive use of the language of fans, journalists and pundits, the clichés of ecstasy and despondency, and stock characters and situations: the reviled referee, for instance, and the irritations and joys of listening to match reports on the radio.

For those who aren't fans, there is a danger of tedium setting in rather quickly. However, if the imaginative flights and clever observation of Allan Ahlberg's *Friendly Matches* put that book somewhere near the top of the league of all-time great football poetry for children, then this collection sits very respectably a few places down. I suspect that Cookson's role at the National Football Museum is at least partly to work with schools, to show how words and poetry can serve to capture and heighten the experience of following your team, and to use football mania to engage youngsters, particularly top-junior and lower-secondary boys, with literature. Cookson's consistently ingenious and amusing poems, which play on the sometimes innovative and often hilarious argot of players, fans and pundits, should hopefully do that.

Clive Barnes

### *A is Amazing!*

Wendy Cooling (ed), illus. Piet Grobler, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0255 2, £12.99, 2012, 48pp.



A large hardback book approximately 278 mm (height) by 220 mm (width) but fairly thin and costing £12.99 would seem to be aimed at libraries and indulgent grandparents and godmothers. The cover illustration indicates to me that the book is intended for a young child, perhaps between 7 and 10 years old. The subtitle of the book is 'poems about feelings'. On reaching the table of contents, I find that there is at least one poem for each letter of the alphabet. The reason for two poems for some of the letters is not explained. As often seems the case, the headings are sometimes strained to fit the alphabet: P has 'Puddle-wonderful' and V has 'Very strange'. The usual X and Z problems are covered by 'eXtraordinary' and 'fiZzy'. I like the last one particularly, an imaginative choice. I cringed slightly at 'Joyful', not a word I would expect a child to

say he/she felt, nor ‘Wonder’ or ‘Original’ – does a child of that age use these words? But ‘Bored’, ‘Huffy’ and many of the others seem exactly right.

The title page gives the permission and copyright details so an author’s other poems can be traced when a favourite is read. However, the font size is so small that only very sharp eyes will be able to read this paragraph. At the end of the book is a section ‘About the poets’ with just two or three lines about each. Twenty-nine poets are listed – with only five from the past: e.e. cummings, Emily Dickinson, John Keats, Carl Sandburg and Robert Louis Stevenson. The mix of known and lesser known, UK and overseas is interesting, and the country or countries of the poet is stated after each poem. There are no poems from Europe and if any of the poems were originated in a language other than English this is not stated.

The choice of poems is very appealing. It is hard to pick out just a few. Carol Ann Duffy contributes to A with ‘Argumentative (from Seven Deadly Adjectives)’:

She’d argue black was white  
to be right, that blue was red  
to say the last word to be said,  
that yellow was green, a king  
was really a queen, that bright day  
was night.

I think we all know such a child!

And Wendy Cope takes H with ‘Huff’:

I am in a tremendous huff –  
Really, really bad.  
It isn’t an ordinary huff –  
It’s one of the best I’ve had.

Many but not all the poems are light hearted, but none seems to grasp the nettle of death or serious illness. ‘Sad’ is the closest with Kit Wright’s ‘Grandad’, which opens with:

Grandad’s dead  
And I’m sorry about that.

This only skims the surface and to me is a lost opportunity to give ‘Sad’ a deeper-feeling poem, such as those discussed by Emily Roach at the IBBY/NCRCL poetry conference in 2012 (see *IBBYLink* 33, Spring 2012). In fact there is no poem that pushes the boundaries, which may be appropriate for the age group or may be a lost opportunity.

The mix of poems is wide, with ‘Very strange’ having some riddles and, for me, the choice of poems from well-known authors are not those so often chosen for anthologies, but lesser-known ones. If you had read me:

There was a naughty boy  
and a naughty boy was he  
He ran away to Scotland  
The people for to see –

I would never have guessed who wrote it.

I also enjoyed discovering poets new to me; for example, Jan Dean with ‘An Owl Flew in my Bedroom Once’ under ‘Dreamy’, Douglas Houston with ‘An Enquiring Mind’ under ‘Inquisitive’ and Jean Kenward with ‘Stepmother’ under ‘Kind’.

The illustrations are very indicative of the feeling expressed in each poem and will appeal to the age group. The colours are also very much in keeping with the words.

Here is a final quotation from Carl Sandburg’s ‘Little Girl, Be Careful what you Say’ under ‘Careful’:

Little girl, be careful what you say  
when you talk with words, words –

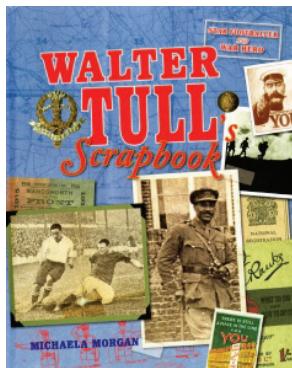
...  
So, little girl, when you speak greetings,  
when you tell jokes, make wishes or payers,  
be careful, be careless, be careful.  
Be what you wish to be.

A thoroughly recommended anthology.

**Jennifer Harding**

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### Non-Fiction



#### *Walter Tull's Scrapbook*

Michaela Morgan, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0212 5, £11.99, 2012, 32pp.

Some Key Stage 2 readers may have encountered *One Boy's War* by Lynne Huggins-Cooper that tells the true story of Sydney, a 16 year old, through his letters home from the First World War trenches and his journal entries. In *Walter Tull's Scrapbook*, Michaela Morgan cleverly uses the medium of a fictionalised scrapbook with actual photographs, documents and records, which is both informative and appealing. This account is remarkable and of special interest as Walter Tull was the first black British football star as well as the first black British soldier to become an officer. His life and courage provide the young with a great role model. The colourful illustrations and use of different fonts make the book easy to read. There is much information and an opportunity for readers to discover period touches such as a 'Sunlight Soap' advertisement and war propaganda posters including Lord Kitchener, alongside press cuttings. Walter's life inspires readers to achieve greatness too, as if anything is possible against the odds. He defied prejudice and achieved greatness both on and off the pitch and this book should be especially appealing to football fans. The author graciously credits the volume she has taken much of her information from: Phil Vasili's *Walter Tull* (Raw Press, 2010).

Born in Kent on 28 April 1888, Walter died at the age of 29 in the Second Battle of the Somme on 25 March 1918. We learn of a poor young man, the son of a carpenter, whose own parents were West Indian slaves, making good. Walter lost his mother before his seventh birthday and, soon after remarrying, his father died of a heart attack. His stepmother could not cope, so he and his brother Edward were sent away to a Methodist home in the East End of London. During these early years, Walter's talent for sport, in particular cricket and football, was noticed. He was asked to play in the Bonne Road football team and a photograph shows him sitting proudly in the front row.

After leaving the home, Walter went to live with a family and his sporting talent was recognised, so it was not long before he played for the best amateur team and trained hard. The press commented on his clever footwork and he was chosen to play for Tottenham Hotspur and tour South America in 1909. He was signed up and became the first black British professional field player.

Not everything went smoothly, however, as we learn that during a match in Bristol he suffered from racial prejudice: whenever he got the ball, the crowd broke into jeering and shouting insults about his skin colour. In *The Star* the journalist was sympathetic: 'Let me tell the Bristol hooligans ... that Tull is so clean in mind and method as to be a model for all white men who play football. Tull was the best forward on the field.' Understandably, Walter was dispirited, but things improved when he was signed up for Northampton and he became popular with the crowds. Just as he looked forward to transferring to Glasgow and meeting up with his brother war broke out. As soon as he saw the recruiting posters, he signed up and was destined for the front trenches in the Footballers' Battalion by Christmas 1914.

There are definite parallels between fighting the enemy and playing football (as in *War Game* by Michael Foreman). Drawings in his journal of his football kit are rapidly replaced by those of his first uniform and later that of an officer. In January 1918 his actions and bravery in Italy, raiding enemy lines, meant he was recommended for a Military Cross. ‘You were one of the first to cross the river and during the raid you took the covering party of the main body across and brought them back without a casualty in spite of heavy fire.’ Finally Walter returned to the Somme and described how dreadful the shelling was on 24 March 1918. His writing ends with ‘Must do my duty. I must play the game.’ He was killed crossing No Man’s Land and, despite repeated efforts, his men could not recover his body. His name is therefore inscribed on the Arras memorial to the missing in France along with those 35,000 fallen soldiers. There is also a memorial to him in Northampton where his career as a footballer is remembered.

Certainly this book deserves to be among other World War historical reading. As it is a factual book, we should note a minor slip. Morgan has Walter write: ‘They say we lost nearly 60,000 men by lunchtime when we attacked on the Somme. All those men dead in the mud.’ This is to confuse overall casualties with the numbers killed. The British Third and Fourth army suffered 57,470 casualties on the first day of the Somme, of whom 19,240 were killed or died of wounds.

*Walter Tull’s Scrapbook* is distinctive, and no one reading this can fail to see Walter’s determination and pluck. His experiences as the first black professional player and the first British black officer are memorable.

Susan Bailes

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### Early Readers

#### *The Tortoise’s Gift: A Story from Zambia*

Lari Don, illus. Melanie Williamson, Oxford: Barefoot Books, pb. 978 1 8468 6773 6, £5.99, 2012, 48pp.

#### *Never Trust a Tiger: A Story from Korea*

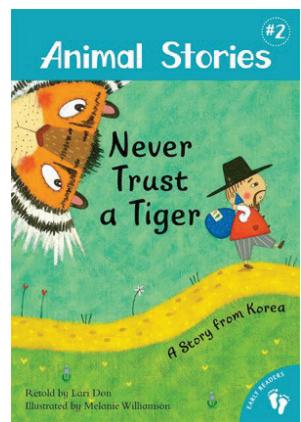
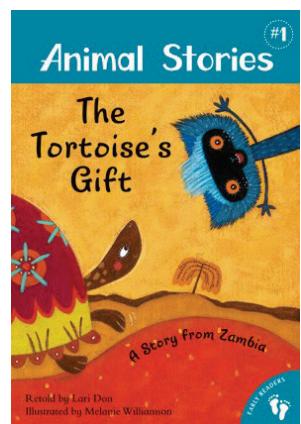
Lari Don, illus. Melanie Williamson, Oxford: Barefoot Books, pb. 978 1 8468 6775 0, £5.99, 2012, 48pp.

These two stories are in the Barefoot Books’ Animal Stories series of folk tales from across the world for newly independent readers. Both these stories, in lavishly illustrated small chapter books, are adapted by Lari Don and illustrated by Melanie Williamson.

The African tale, *The Tortoise’s Gift*, seems more familiar and I am sure I have seen it in other forms in other collections. Each animal goes to the local mountain to bring back the word that will restore abundance to the drought-stricken land through a sacred tree that bears all the fruit in the world. Only the slow and steady tortoise avoids distractions on the way back and keeps his mind clear enough to complete the task.

In the rather less familiar Korean tale, *Never Trust a Tiger*, the hare eventually provides a common-sense solution to a morally perplexing problem posed when a merchant releases a tiger from a trap and then finds the tiger about to eat him: ‘Should a good turn be repaid with a bad?’

Because I enjoyed the stories and the delicate and dramatic illustrations, I would have liked to have unreservedly recommended these books, but, as books intended for children who are just gaining confidence in reading, I have misgivings about their design. Advertised as easy readers, the vocabulary and the syntax demand a level above beginner. Also the print is small and frequently set against a dark background, making it difficult to read at times. The abundance of illustration unfortunately gives a cramped feel to the books as if too much has been crammed into too small a space, making the story more difficult to get into and the whole experience rather more intimidating than it might be. I don’t have a convenient grandchild at this stage of reading development to



get a rating from the intended audience, but the books were, in part, a bit of a trial for my ageing eyes.

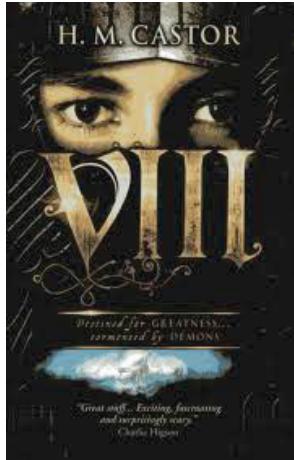
### Clive Barnes

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#### Fiction

##### VIII

H.M. Castor, Dorking: Templar Publishing, pb. 978 1 8487 7500 8, £6.99, 2012, 399pp.



This imaginative, gripping Tudor historical narrative immediately grabs the reader's attention and provides vivid insights into the life of Henry VIII from childhood. Acknowledging interest from her respected historian sister, Helen Castor, author of the best-selling *She Wolves*, H.M. Castor has successfully researched and brought to life episodes in Hal's life, providing distinct psychological motivation for the famous hot-tempered, larger-than-life king. Ideal for teenagers who would find this inspiring, this children's historical novel affords a helpful understanding of Tudor life.

The cover with a youth's eyes peering out of a black visor is arresting and highly appropriate, as much of Hal's youth was spent learning fighting techniques and he dreamt of challenging others as an anonymous knight in a suit of black armour, inspired by tales of King Arthur, Henry V and the triumphs of Agincourt. What struck me was how young all the key rulers of that time were. Henry was not yet 14 when promised in marriage to Catherine of Aragon; Charles, her nephew, and Francis I of France were similarly very young. The book contains a helpful family tree and throughout we are made fully aware of the paramount concern of security for the Tudor succession.

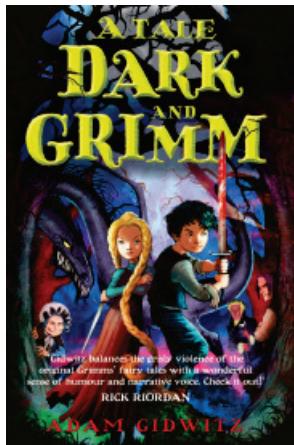
The very young Hal's first encounter with a mysterious dead boy in a trunk when searching for his comforter, Raggy, is just the beginning of his being haunted. He immediately believes God is communicating directly with him via this ghostly figure. The prophecy of a glorious future is seen by Henry to apply to himself, but in his last years he discovers it actually applies to his living daughter, Princess Elizabeth. Like Macbeth in his desperate desire to see the prophecy fulfilled, he has become a ruthless tyrant. Although this ghostly vision is terrifying and very real to the protagonist, I found it to be the least satisfying aspect of this historical novel, but it certainly thrills. The novel suggests that Hal did not have a loving, close relationship with his father and that Arthur, his older brother, was the favourite. Undoubtedly H.M. Castor conveys Hal as a charismatic, multi-talented individual, making his physical decline by the end of the novel all the more poignant. Hope is to come with Princess Elizabeth, and further novels are to follow.

### Susan Bailes

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#### *A Tale Dark and Grimm*

Adam Gidwitz, London: Andersen Press, 978 1 8493 9370 6, £5.99, 2011, 272pp.



Adam Gidwitz's debut novel takes its inspiration from a selection of Grimms' fairy tales to weave a dark and intricate story of Hansel and Gretel. These familiar sibling characters are introduced through an adaptation of a lesser known Grimms' tale 'Faithful John'. In order for their parents to save the life of their most loyal servant Faithful Johannes, Hansel and Gretel must suffer having their heads cut off by their father. On their lives being miraculously restored by Johannes, the children are in some doubt as to where their parents' loyalties lie, and thus embark upon a quest to find good parents who will love, protect and guide them. *A Tale Dark and Grimm* moves way beyond what many will recognise as the original tale of Hansel and Gretel, as they leave behind the familiarity of breadcrumb trails, gingerbread houses and outwitted witches, and venture into a forest teeming with various enemies. Hansel and Gretel journey through six original Brothers Grimm tales and three final stories of Gidwitz's own creation, which entwine to make one complete original story. In his adaptations, Gidwitz is faithful to the original tales, whilst making necessary alterations to allow one tale to

flow naturally to the next. The Seven Ravens, for instance, are changed to the Seven Swallows, as Gidwitz's book already features three ravens of great significance.

A notable presence within the book is the narrator, sensitive to children's responses when encountering these sometimes gruesome tales, but equally aware that many readers will be enticed by each gory or violent passage – all authentically Grimm. The narrator is intrusive, adding his own observations and directly telling readers the point of each tale. Yet, since this is a book for children, the contemporary commentary is welcome, particularly when dealing with the upfront severity of the Grimms' fairy tales. Gidwitz is careful to inform the reader: 'Warning: this next bit is quite disgusting.' Wisely, he states, 'You see, the land of Grimm can be a harrowing place. But it is worth exploring. For, in life, it is in the darkest parts one finds the brightest beauty and the most luminous wisdom. And, of course, the most blood.'

Every chapter begins 'Once upon a time', reminding the reader that these engaging tales stem from a long-standing storytelling tradition. The overall story is entirely gripping and readers will enjoy reaching the climax of Hansel and Gretel's quest, which sees them happily reunited with their parents and everyone wiser for their experiences. *A Tale Dark and Grimm* provides an excellent introduction to Grimms' fairy tales, encouraging children to read the originals and make comparisons. Gidwitz skilfully reminds readers that traditional tales, centuries old, have enduring qualities and can be re-imagined and retold for a modern audience.

### Kerenza Ghosh

#### **Bowl Like the Devil**

Bob Cattell, illus. Keith Sparrow, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0282 8, £5.99, 2012, 102pp.

Tyrone is a secondary-school pupil who doesn't much like school. The only time he's happy is when he's playing cricket. He dreams of being a deadly fast bowler, faster than any other bowler in the game. The problem is, he's actually not that talented. His friend Christiano is a far more talented player with plenty of potential. Christiano tries hard to help Tyrone find a place in the school XI, despite the doubts of the captain Jim.

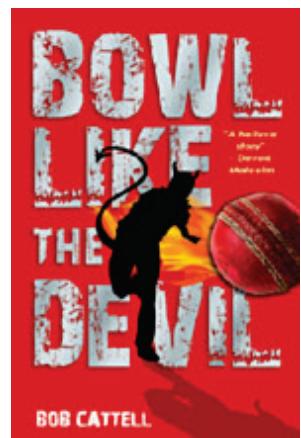
One day Tyrone is practising in the nets. He has had a bad day, being kept in detention and having to copy out a poem by some guy called Ted Hughes. Along comes a stranger, a man named Nick whose eyes are green. Nick tells Tyrone he can help him bowl faster than he's ever bowled before, faster than he's ever dreamed of. He must measure out his run-up to eighteen paces and say 'here's one for Old Nick' before every delivery.

Tyrone takes Nick's advice and starts bowling at lightning speed. He becomes the star player in the school league and gets scouted for his county. He is taken under the wing of the county club chairman, Godfrey Boddy, known as 'God'. The question is how far Tyrone will go to achieve his dream and what he will sacrifice in the interests of fast bowling?

Writing as one who has no special interest in cricket, and who has been forced to endure the presence of a father who lives the game, the appeal of this book to many boys is self-evident. All the talk about cricket in the book seems to be very authentic. The author has an instinctive grasp, for example, of all the fielding positions. The author certainly has the passion for cricket that such a story demands. One interesting point, on a county team opposing Tyrone there is a player who is – are you ready for this? – a girl.

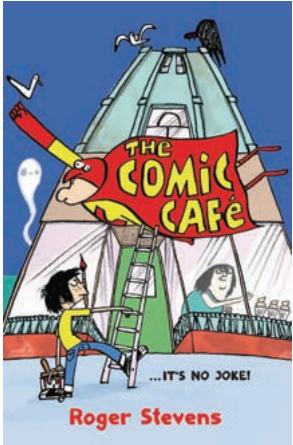
Sparrow's illustrations, heavily stylised, add to the conviction and pace of the book.

### Rebecca R. Butler



### *The Comic Café*

Roger Stevens, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 976 1 8478 0270 5, £6.99, 2012, 272pp.



Roger Stevens' book is a romp, full of fun and enterprise as the narrator, a young boy Wilf, shares his experiences when he finds himself and his four younger sisters, Elizabeth, Jaz, Briony and Sammi, abandoned by both parents for a time.

Absence of parents means freedom from rules and schoolwork, but, in this case, the children respond with positive results. Wilf has the idea of cleaning and opening the run-down, dilapidated seaside café recently purchased by his dad. This purchase has necessitated upheaval for the entire family and considerable strain between wife and husband, and each parent has decided to go away for a while without realising the other's intention coincided.

An intriguing variety of past customers visit and share the café's history as a smugglers' den. In true Blyton fashion, the children discover, via a flooded cellar, a secret passage and, inevitably, a kind of art treasure. The villainess is an alarming Mrs Herring, who likes to dress in black and pretends to be harmless, assisting the children with the cleaning.

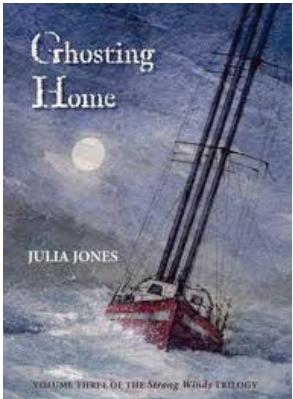
All in all, the book is great fun. Wilf himself is a talented artist, decorating the newly painted walls with comic characters, hence 'The Comic Café', and inspires readers to show initiative. Although the plot is far-fetched, full of coincidences and improbabilities as well as the inevitable happy ending, nevertheless we want to find out what happens and approve of the children's endeavours.

**Susan Bailes**

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### *Ghosting Home*

Julia Jones, illus. Claudia Myatt, Chelmsford: Golden Duck, 2012, pb. 978 1 8992 6206 9 £7.99, 297pp.



Reviews of *The Salt-Stained Book*, the first volume in the nautically based trilogy *Strong Winds*, appeared in *IBBYLink* 32 (Autumn 2011) and of the second volume, *A Ravelled Flag*, in *IBBYLink* 34 (Summer 2012).

As I've indicated in those reviews, Julia Jones owns the yacht *Peter Duck*, one of a number belonging at one time or another to Arthur Ransome. The Ransome connection extends beyond this, as her parents knew Ransome and bought the yacht after his death, then allowing their small daughter to read many of the *Swallows and Amazons* stories in the quarter-berth on board, which Ransome had used to store his typewriter. Jones' trilogy has strong intertextual connections with the *Swallows and Amazons* series, and other earlier literature, so if you are familiar with Ransome's books it adds an additional piquancy to these novels, as it does if you know Longfellow's narrative poem *Hiawatha*, and have read R.L. Stevenson's *Treasure Island*.

In this final novel (the three together chronicle events that span a year), Donny and his mother Skye, who is profoundly deaf and severely dyslexic, continue to live with his 80-year-old veteran sailor, great-aunt Ellen (who prefers to be called 'Gold Dragon') on her schooner *Strong Winds*. We continue the stories of three families: Donny's, the Riberos and Anna's, all of whom are seeking answers to questions that have damaged their past lives or threaten to in the future. In addition, Jones interweaves the story of Min, setting out on his own journey of discovery from China to seek help from someone he has never met and whom he knows only as 'Gold Dragon'. There are subtle resonances between Donny and Min, and as they move closer together geographically we gradually discover what links from the past have resulted in their meeting. With Donny we also unravel the mysteries behind the starting point of his search for his identity, the 'salt-stained book' of the first novel, and continue to piece together an intricate web of past interconnections between the characters.

Boats and sailing are key to the series of adventures, and Jones gives detailed information about every aspect of the vessels and the voyages involved in progressing the action. She also appends a reminder of the characters, maps of the coasts and an illustrated key to the boats that readers have encountered in the three books.

Loyalty, selflessness and integrity are once again the values underpinning the story, values that are displayed more by the younger, disadvantaged or displaced characters than by those in authority. We meet again true, traditional villains like Flint, and a new breed of villain in the form of modern pirates who deal in inflicting harm and death on vulnerable human lives. Jones addresses the decline and death of loved ones with realism and sensitivity, and always celebrates a future enriched by diversity of background and the experience of adversity.

The Strong Winds trilogy is an excellent twenty-first-century adventure story, infused with classic literature for children, a powerful celebration of boats, and a sensitive examination of the complications of family life and its impact on succeeding generations.

### Bridget Carrington

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#### ***Hidden***

Miriam Halahmy, London: Meadowside Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8453 9523 0.  
£6.99, 2011, 253pp.

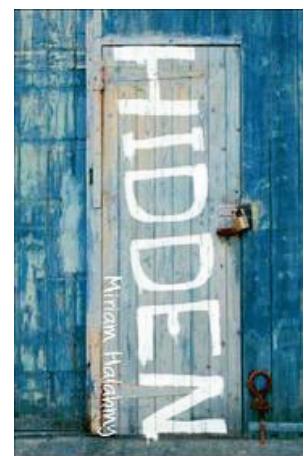
#### ***Illegal***

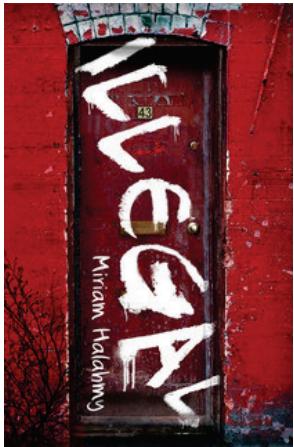
Miriam Halahmy, London: Meadowside Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8453 9524 7.  
£6.99, 2012, 268pp.

The combination of a quiet and relatively little-known island off the south coast of England with asylum seekers is the unusual setting for Miriam Halahmy's first two novels in a trilogy set on Hayling Island. Halahmy has lived in London all her life and for more than 20 years has taught in primary schools, often encountering refugees and asylum seekers. She has a particular interest in the Middle East through her Iraqi husband and his family. She also knows Hayling well, having holidayed there since childhood.

*Hidden* is the story of Alix, an ordinary 14 year old, bored with life on Hayling, who stands up for Samir, a new boy at school, who is being bullied by some of his peers. Walking on the beach one weekend Alix and Samir rescue a drowning man, Mohammed, whom Samir identifies as an Iraqi, an illegal immigrant and an asylum seeker. Fearing that he will be captured and returned to Iraq where he would be vulnerable because his family helped the British forces during the war, Alix and Samir keep Mohammed hidden and nurse him with the help of Alix's best friend. They also find a surprising source of support in Lindy, who comes from a dysfunctional family reviled for its criminality and previously no friend to Samir and Alix.

Halahmy's novel is an exciting adventure of teenagers defeating self-righteous adult intervention in their affairs, but very much more than that. The issues of family relationships are highlighted through the tight-knit Iraqi extended family, Alix's own parents, at present emotionally and physically disabled, and Lindy's chaotic siblings. Multicultural relationships are revealed as complex, often fuelled by a lack of understanding and historical prejudice, and a deep, irrational intolerance. There's plenty here to engage teenage readers and to make them (and adults) think hard about the way we treat each other, whoever and whatever we are. Let's hope that Halahmy's conclusion, in which Mohammed's problems are resolving, Samir returns to school and Alix's family situation begins to right itself, is an accurate reflection of what would happen in reality, rather than just a comfortable tidying up of loose ends.



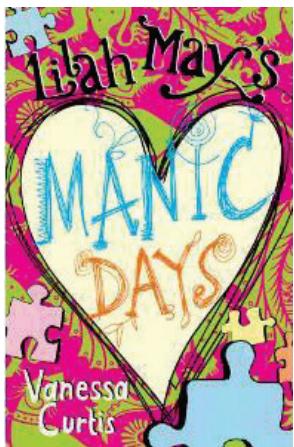


*Illegal* tells Lindy's story. One of the notorious and totally dysfunctional Bellows family, with father out of work but gambling, mother devastated by the death of baby Jemma, older brothers constantly in prison and Lindy herself so unhappy that she has begun to self-harm. Her younger brother Sean is asthmatic, and helping him provides Lindy with the impetus to try to avoid the family fate. Desperate to earn some money for the family, she is drawn unwittingly into her cousin Colin's drugs trade, but once she discovers what he is doing she desperately tries to escape his circle. She is befriended by Karl, an elective mute whose family life is equally dysfunctional, though for very different reasons. Together they attempt to outwit Colin and bring him to justice, while discovering that they can find in each other what they lack in their families.

Several of Halahmy's characters have disabilities or special needs, and we discover both the restrictions this can bring to individuals and the special skills they acquire in order to overcome their needs. We see that Lindy is strong and, although she skips school frequently, potentially gifted. She is determined both to extricate herself from the drugs work, and to ensure that she can train as a paramedic to help others. Karl has cut himself off from a world in which his parents spend their lottery millions and ignore his needs, principally his wish to achieve his potential in education.

Halahmy writes an exciting adventure story, but there's always more than that. Once again she engages young readers through Lindy's problems, her courage and the growing relationship between her and Karl. The final novel in the series, *Stuffed*, was published in October 2012, and I'm sure it had an eager audience awaiting it.

**Bridget Carrington**



### *Lilah May's Manic Days*

Vanessa Curtis, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0246 0, £6.99, 2012, 176pp.

The sequel to Vanessa Curtis' contemporary young adult novel *The Taming of Lilah May* (2011) continues, as the author herself explains, to 'explore what might happen to a close, loving family if one of its members went missing unexpectedly, and how a teenage girl would cope with intense feelings of anger and guilt as a result of that disappearance' (p.164). The missing family member is Lilah's older brother Jay, who left home shortly after Lilah told 'the Olds' (their parents) about Jay's drug use. He has been absent two Christmases now and, in the meantime, each family member has been coping in different ways.

For Lilah, her experience has been learning how to control her intense bursts of anger, both during Jay's absence and when he returns soon after the novel's opening. Lilah keeps an anger diary to help her track her own feelings and, as her father is a lion tamer at the local zoo, he has also taught her breathing techniques to 'tame' her anger in the heat of the moment. While at times the parents' input to Lilah is one of 'keep your emotions in check for the sake of the family', overall it is Lilah's bravery to speak truthfully about her feelings and experiences that enables her brother's assimilation back into the family unit.

Various subplots add both humour and authenticity to this contemporary novel. On one hand, Lilah's parents are almost carnivalesque in their chosen career paths: her dad, a lion tamer, and her mother, a clown – although now a depressed clown following the disappearance of her son. Lilah also has a habit of using her own made-up words called Lilahisms, such as Groo, raddlewatch, bumbutt and dumptruck, to name a few. With a more serious tone, after Jay's return, a girlfriend called Spud follows and it quickly becomes apparent they are both still using drugs. The parents are firm, but compassionate as the novel explores therapies and recovery programs for Jay and Spud individually as well as for the family.

Lest the reader forgets that she is a teenage girl, Lilah is also dealing with the loss of her best friend Bindi over Adam Carter, the boy of Lilah's dreams. The mothers of each girl encourage them to put their friendship before a romantic relationship, but jealousy and

competition remain. The handling of this relationship is the weakest in the novel, but it does add to the intensity of Lilah's experiences and Curtis offers a few methods for regaining a lost friendship. Overall, *Lilah May's Manic Days* is a novel that explores female anger without demonising it and rewards the bravery of telling your own truths.

### Erica Gillingham

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#### ***The Stone of Destiny: Tales from Turkey***

Elspeth Tavaci, illus. Paul Hess, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0279 8, £6.99, 2012, 133pp.

A poor stonemason named Salahaddin was cutting stones for the construction of a mosque. It was late and he was tired, but he decided to cut one more boulder before going home to his modest abode. Imagine his surprise when inside the stone he found a blood red jewel. He took the jewel to a friend in the business of precious stones. The friend told him to take the jewel to Istanbul under the cover of the utmost secrecy. No one must know of his find or his journey. The vow of silence is especially hard for Salahaddin because in addition to being a stonemason he is also a storyteller.

Salahaddin manages to keep his secret from his family. He meets a boy, Hüseyin, who must also travel to Istanbul. The reader already suspects that allowing the boy to ride with him is a big mistake. In bed at the first staging post Salahaddin tells the boy his secret. What harm can that do? He is unaware that in another bed in the darkened room lie two merchants, as greedy and corrupt as merchants always are in stories of this kind.

The merchants now plot to steal Salahaddin's jewel. However they reckon without his storytelling. Every night in a new staging post he tells a story. The book narrates the stories that Salahaddin tells. The presence of the audience deters the thieves until, at the last post, they slip him a sleeping potion. My personal favourite among the stories concerns a princess reluctant to marry and the efforts of those courting her.

The various stories are neatly woven together within the overarching story of the stonemason. The narrative pace is well sustained. Useful to young readers, the book includes a map of the area Salahaddin must traverse and a note on the importance of staging posts. Tavaci duly acknowledges her debt to earlier translators of these Turkish folk tales.

I found Hess's illustrations somewhat disappointing. This is a vivid story, but the illustrations (no doubt at the insistence of the publisher) are in monochrome. The story is dynamic. But the rather static imagery of the illustrations tends to slow, rather than sustain, the narrative impetus.

### Rebecca R. Butler

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#### ***Robin Hood***

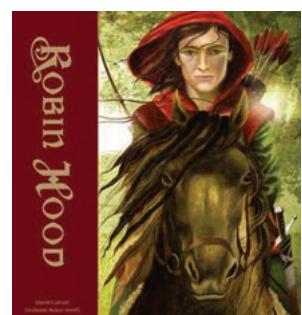
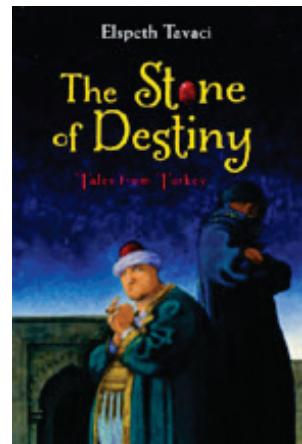
David Calcutt, illus. Grahame Baker-Smith, Oxford: Barefoot Books, 978 1 8468 6357 8, 2012, £17.99, 113pp.

#### ***Robin Hood***

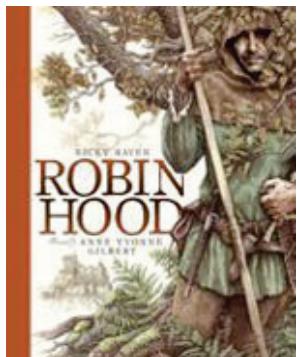
Anne Yvonne Gilbert, London: Templar, 978 1 8487 7404 9, 2012, £14.99, 94pp.

It is welcome to see some new versions of the Robin Hood legend emerging. There are, of course, very different ways to approach these tales, which have become intertwined with fairy tale, hero legend and history. There is the retelling that starts with the ballads and recorded stories: this was the approach adopted by such greats as Carola Oman, Rosemary Sutcliff and Roger Lancelyn Green; all still worth recommending if they can be found.

David Calcutt has also adopted this path in his version published by Barefoot Books. Each story takes a particular ballad as a starting point. Calcutt then uses all his storytelling skills to bring the incidents to life. The resulting text is a lively mix of contemporary narrative and dialogue that moves the storyline along briskly. The whole



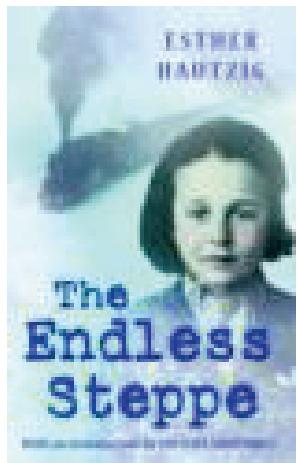
is gorgeously embellished with the illustrations and page designs of Grahame Baker-Smith. These create both the effect of a decorated medieval manuscript in close up and the sense of being surrounded by the green-gold undergrowth of a woodland copse. Balancing this are the bold, dramatic illustrations that provide a welcome sense of modernity, marrying as they do the traditional with the use of computer-generated techniques.



The other way to treat these stories is, perhaps, more in keeping with current thinking and will attract a generation who are familiar with recent television and film versions. Here the stories inspire a new narrative. This is how Nicky Raven makes use of his source material. In *Robin Hood* published by Templar, the reader is treated to a much more creative retelling. The young reader will certainly meet all the usual characters – Will Scarlett, Little John, Friar Tuck and, of course, Maid Marian. However, there are fewer of the familiar stories, apart from the Silver Arrow incident. Themes and motifs are woven throughout to create a medieval fantasy. Significantly the death of Robin is not included, though it is in the Calcutt edition. In keeping with this imaginative narrative, the illustrations by Anne Yvonne Gilbert instantly transport the reader into the romantic world of the folk hero, using meticulous detail and exceptional graphic technique to draw the reader in and enchant the eye.

Both these offerings are beautiful to look at as is to be expected from their respective publishers and are definitely gift material. They are completely different in approach – Calcutt referencing his sources throughout, Raven using them as a springboard. As a result they provide different experiences. If you are looking for tradition, the Barefoot publication should be your choice; for fantasy choose Templar.

### Ferelith Hordon



### *The Endless Steppe*

Esther Hautzig, London: Jane Nissen Books, pb 978 1 9032 5243 7, £7.99, 2012, 215pp.

This novel first appeared in 1969 and it is a joy to see it published by Jane Nissen Books in 2012. It is a superb eye-witness account by a Jewish Pole, Esther Hautzig, who miraculously survived the fate of so many Jewish families during the time of the Second World War. Rather than being persecuted by the Nazis like Anne Frank or Judith Kerr, her family suffers at the hands of the Russians. As Michael Morpurgo remarks in his preface, '*The Endless Steppe* tells of the dangers, and difficulties, the fear and the insecurity that all refugees have to endure,' so it clearly has relevance in today's world as families seek refuge from zones of conflict.

It is June 1941, and ten-year-old Esther begins her tale in her prosperous family home in Vilna in north-east Poland, the oldest seat of Jewish culture, the Jerusalem of Europe. Totally unaware of the imminent danger and that her family's lives will never be the same again, Esther is sent by her mother one morning to take a box containing the family jewels to her grandmother. Shortly after her return, her father appears with two armed Russian soldiers who force the family to pack a few belongings and leave for the railway station. Esther is told; 'You are capitalists and enemies of the people. You are to be sent to another part of our great and mighty country.' Along with hundreds of other Polish Jews, they are thrown into a cattle car and travel for six days in appalling conditions, realistically described, until they reach the endless steppes of Siberia.

This flat desolate world is to be their home for the next five years. The seasons bring great challenges: first, they must walk miles in the unrelenting sun, then come the terrible winds of autumn, followed by freezing winter temperatures in which many die. Esther's father is an engineer but he is made to harness horses to wagons loaded with gypsum, whilst her mother must dynamite the mines, her grandmother must shovel gypsum and she must work in the fields. With food severely rationed, it is not surprising that many drink cologne as a form of alcohol. The most enjoyable aspect of life is a trip with her grandmother to the Sunday village market *baracholka* to trade silk underwear and an umbrella for roubles to purchase meat and flour. This is just one example of Esther's entrepreneurial spirit and ability to make the most of a terrible situation.

Once Russia and Poland become allies, the only difference is that the family can leave the mine and move to the village of Rubtsovsk where they are assigned jobs by the police: her father as a bookkeeper and mother as a worker in the bakery. Esther longs to attend school and the only way this can happen is for them to find a home on the outskirts of the village where they are fortunate to be allowed to share a dark hut with a couple, Nina and Nikita.

Esther has to cope with being an outsider. Apart from her lack of Russian, she is also isolated because of her prosperous background and it is only when she sacrifices her long becoming hair braids that she makes a friend. Esther revels in the library and reads great literature including Balzac, Tolstoi and even Dickens. She masters Russian and is elected editor of the Russian paper as well as preparing for a declamation contest with Tatyana's dream from Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*.

The narrator's clarity of writing and attention to detail enable us to feel the hardships and to sympathise when, for example, her father is ordered to the front lines in a labour brigade. We can only admire Esther's initiative when she uses her talent for knitting to make sweaters in exchange for vital provisions. Even in this harsh world there is laughter as when Esther has to remake a sweater, which has taken her months to create, because the client has grown fat.

At fifteen Esther is sent back to Poland and the family is reunited with her father in Lodz. Once again the book beautifully captures the irony of a young girl who, fashion conscious and having her first boyfriend, is desperate to be able to wear the knee-high shiny leather boots and green quilted jacket of the region, only to hear her father's comment, 'And your clothes, Lalinka .... But don't worry, the first thing we will do is get you some new ones.'

The book ends triumphantly: 'The years out on the steppe had come to an end, our exile was over.' Such fighting spirit and endurance, along with the loving relationships shown amongst family and friends are testimony to the power of humanity. The *Endless Steppe* is an excellent book for young people and a fine companion to *Anne Frank's Diary* and Judith Kerr's *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*.

### Susan Bailes

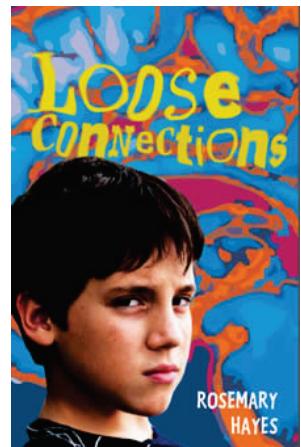
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#### ***Loose Connections***

Rosemary Hayes, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0293 4, £6.99, 2012, 199pp.

The face of a young adolescent boy, warily thoughtful, scrutinising the reader, is the main focus of the cover illustration. A blue background with fiery red streaks suggests turbulence and disruption, and the lettering of the title wobbles unevenly above the boy's head. The tenure of Jake's normally secure life of home, school, friends and football is suddenly broken up by critical changes in the lives of all the people he is attached to. His mother has to be admitted to hospital because her pregnancy is at risk, a situation that has occurred before and the baby died. Jake's father, recently unemployed, is offered a job if he completes a period of training in America. Jake and his grandmother assure the parents they will manage. However these arrangements quickly show signs of strain. Gran, normally down to earth, begins to behave in increasingly eccentric and inconsistent ways. Initially Gran forgets her pin number and Jake has to take over. More unnerving is the erratic drive to the hospital to visit Mum, and Gran's apparent obliviousness to danger. She becomes vague and distract, and her memory begins to waver between past and present time. Jake's close friend and football partner is supportive, but Jake does not feel able to fully confide his doubts. Nor does he welcome the well-intentioned efforts of a neighbour (who has her own troubles), and this unease is further complicated by his grandmother's antipathy towards this woman.

The picture of the stresses of Jake's life and his increasing sense of frustration and alarm is vividly conveyed in the writing. Jake's thoughts are printed in italics so the reader lives alongside him as he struggles. We see him caught between his own needs for an



ordered life in a home that supports him, and his growing sense of responsibility towards those adults he cares about.

Help comes in the unexpected form of a strange girl who is not entirely welcome to Jake, but her presence is reassuring and Gran takes to her at once. Her name is Verity and she tells Jake that Gran is not herself because she has had a stroke. Verity comes from the empty house with the large unkempt garden which is for sale. She appears to have no ties and has a passionate concern for animals and nature. She seems to complement a reassuring inner voice that Jake has experienced after waking from restless dreams, like those he has had when the baby and Grandfather died. The empty house offers Jake space where he can be free of his present cares, putting him in touch with unexpected reserves within himself.

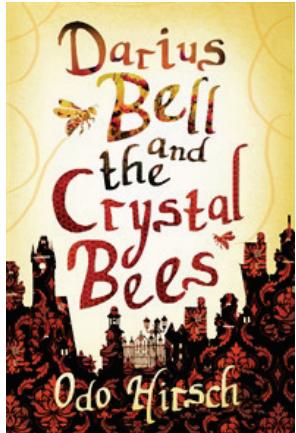
The question ‘what happens when past and present collide?’, asked on the book cover, is explored in this unusual story about a young boy and his grandmother thrown together in unexpected circumstances. How they survive the crises that threaten to engulf them and what resources they have individually to draw on are unfolded in this sensitive narrative. The importance of memory in preserving a sense of identity and the powerful effect of empathic attachment are elements that remain with the reader.

### Judith Philo

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#### *Darius Bell and the Crystal Bees*

Odo Hirsch, Crows Nest: New South Wales: Allen & Unwin, pb. 978 1 7423 7683 7, 2011, £6.99, 254pp.



This is the second book about Darius Bell, a boy who lives in a big house on an estate that has seen better days, with his family headed by an eccentric dad who, hardly recognising that the era of the leisured classes is over, spends his days indulging his self-proclaimed ‘literary sensibilities’ writing unpublished short stories. The estate, the school that Darius goes to, the town that he lives in and the people that he knows are of the kind created by Roald Dahl: instantly recognisable to readers in the developed world and anyone familiar with its children’s books, but not exactly like anywhere that they know in real life.

Still, like Dahl, Hirsch deals with things that matter. In this story, it’s the destruction of the local bee population by disease (presumably suggested by the mysterious decline of bees in our own time) and the disastrous consequences that it might have for the Bell estate’s garden and orchards, particularly for the members of the Fisher family who depend on the produce for their livelihood. What follows, for Darius and the reader, is an engaging and painless lesson in ecology, economics and politics, as Darius seeks to find a solution to the problem, encounters the implacable opposition of Mayor Podcock, and, through some honourable blackmail, eventually mobilises the local school in a unique pollinating experiment.

Like Dahl, Hirsch creates larger-than-life characters who embody the worst and best of us, but also those who are more like most of us: often weak and sometimes strong, capable of behaving badly in some circumstances and well in others. Here, too, as in Dahl, it is the irredeemably mean-spirited, spiteful and selfish who get their come-uppance at the end. Darius himself is an attractive hero, thoughtful, decisive and resourceful, sometimes naive perhaps, in the best possible way, and always learning and never giving up, whatever the setbacks.

This is an immensely enjoyable book, which, I imagine, will appeal to children of about eight or nine and older. Hirsch, an Australian who now lives in London, won the Australian Book Council’s Children’s Book of the Year Award with his first Darius Bell book, *Darius Bell and the Glitter Pool*, in 2010. He deserves to be much better known over here.

### Clive Barnes

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### *A Medal for Leroy*

Michael Morpurgo, illus. Michael Foreman, London: HarperCollins Children's Books, hb 978 0 0074 8751 6, £12.99, 2012, 223pp.

The scene is London in the aftermath of the Second World War. Michael is nine years old. He lives with his French mother. He never knew his father, a Spitfire pilot killed in action. Once in a while, from a sense of obligation, Michael and his mother, somewhat reluctantly, visit his father's two elderly aunts who were responsible for raising him, Aunt Mary known as Pish and Aunt Martha known as Snowdrop.

One compensation for having to make these visits is the opportunity to meet the aunts' dog Jasper, whom Michael adores. In London Michael's mother has never been willing to own a dog.

Aunt Snowdrop goes into hospital for what should be a routine treatment. She seems to cope well, but then suddenly dies. There is a parcel that she had planned to give to Michael but had never got round to doing so.

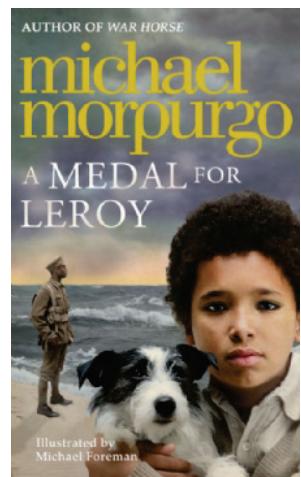
After her death, when Michael is now 13 years old, he finally gets the parcel. It contains a photo of Michael's father in his familiar RAF uniform. But concealed behind the picture lies a journal written in the early war years that brings to light astonishing family secrets.

The plot structure of the book is somewhat complex because the narrative plunges straight in. The discovery of the journal in the picture frame is a pivotal moment, the two halves of the book balanced on either hand.

The book unearths some important emotional strands, including the tensions within a wartime family triggered by sentiments about respectability, and the powerful influence in past generations of racial prejudice. The references to race conflicts serve also to remind the reader of other forms of prejudice and to point to the elements of racial prejudice still surviving in contemporary societies.

The characters are memorable, particularly those of Michael, Martha and Jasper the dog. Foreman's monochrome illustrations bring to life the period extremely effectively. Admirers of Morpurgo's opus will not be disappointed by this latest addition.

**Rebecca R. Butler**



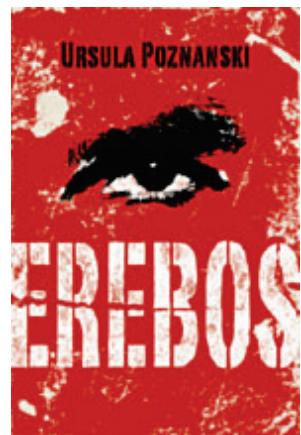
### *Erebos*

Ursula Poznanski, trans. Judith Pattinson, London: Allen & Unwin, pb. 978 1 742379531, £6.99, 2012, 432pp.

One day everyone at Nick's school starts acting strangely. They've been passing round mysterious disks which they refuse to talk about – and suddenly Nick's best friend Colin isn't talking to him any more. He's not even turning up to basketball practice. Enlisting his friends and classmates, including the beautiful, clever and elusive Emily, Nick decides to investigate. This will take him into the world of Erebos, a computer game so realistic it seems to talk directly to you, to look you in the eyes – and to give you deadly instructions.

Ursula Poznanski's novel for 13+ is a tightly structured, fast-paced thriller which grippingly portrays the experience of playing computer games, while at the same time asking how far we are responsible for our actions if we are being manipulated by someone else.

Although the translation from the original German can sometimes feel a little clunky, particularly with the setting of the action in London, the pages turn rapidly as we follow Nick's journey into Erebos, and his attempt to win Emily's heart. The scenes set within the world of the game itself are particularly striking, bringing both the world of the game and the feel of playing it to vivid life.



In the ‘real’ world, the atmosphere of increasing fear, oppression and paranoia is compelling, but, much like Nick, the reader may end up wishing he/she was back in Erebos. Nevertheless, this is a fast-paced, fun and clever read that will appeal especially to teenage gamers and to those around them who want to understand the thrill of battling all night so that your character can finally make it to the next level.

**Tom Mansfield**

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## REPORTS

### Patrick Hardy Lecture 2012

Penguin, 80 The Strand, London. 25 September 2012.

The many people who attended this annual and popular occasion were well rewarded by a sparkling lecture by Marion Lloyd (whose great-great-grandfather was Charles Dickens!). Her witty account of her own career certainly fascinated the many members of the Children's Book Circle who are in publishing (as well as those who are not!). She spoke of her 'accidental career' in publishing: the only time she had to apply for a job was for an initial humble position with Collins on leaving school. Subsequently she has worked for several major firms, culminating in having her own list at Scholastic. Authors she has worked with include Eva Ibbotson (of whom she spoke with great affection), Judy Blume, Sharon Creech, Celia Rees, Elizabeth Laird and Philip Pullman. Her title, 'Throwing off the Invisibility Cloak: Secrets from an Editor's Life in Children's Books', related to the work of editors like herself behind the scenes. She provided a good deal of insight into the influence that an editor can have, sometimes to the extent of a very extensive reshaping of a manuscript into the polished novel that readers finally encounter.

[Pat Pinsent]

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### School Library Association Celebration Day 2012

Dexter House, Tower Hill, London. 1 October 2012.

This was the occasion for the presentation of two of the annual awards given by the association for School Librarian of the Year and for Library Design. As ever, there were impressive presentations from the shortlisted librarians and schools – three of each, presented alternately. While at times a little confusing, the interspersing of two sets of material made apparent how vital to the success of a school library are the people involved with it, whether as designers who are able to have an eye for how to inspire the pupils or as librarians. While the latter are obviously pivotal, everyone who is working in the newly refurbished Cheltenham College library, the newly created library at Front Lawn Junior School, Havant, or the rebranded 'The Hub' at the Duston School, Northampton, the eventual winner, finds the experience both stimulating and supportive.

The three shortlisted librarians were Rosalind Buckland from Lancaster, Gill Trueman from near Bath and the winner Adam Lancaster from Welwyn. As ever, the accounts of their work in encouraging and supporting pupils' reading were impressive, though, as the winner emphasised, their success is dependent on everyone in the school being committed to the importance of school libraries.

An inspiring occasion, reminding the audience of how much difference a dedicated librarian and an imaginatively designed library can make to the learning of young people!

[Pat Pinsent]

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### The Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation 2013

The 2013 shortlist for the Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation was announced on 23 October at a reception organised by the Society of Authors and the English Speaking Union ESU at the English Speaking Union offices at Dartmouth House, Mayfair, London. In the elegant reception room, with carved wooden panelling and a beautiful sculpted white ceiling, a full audience participated in the proceedings.

The panel of speakers was chaired by Wendy Cooling and consisted of: Barry Cunningham of Chicken House Publishing; Anthea Bell, the renowned translator of adult and children's books; and Daniel Hahn, adult and children's book translator, who is known for the colourful children's picture book *Happiness is a Watermelon on the Head*.

The panel described how they became involved in the field, a mixture of chance, interest, linguistic talent and unexpected opportunity. There was a lively discussion between them on the role of the translator and the sensitive nature of this collaborative relationship. We learned also that there can be pitfalls if the author considers their knowledge of the English language to be equal to that of the translator, and one member of the panel described how he had managed not to be credited with the final published version. There was acknowledgement from the outset that translation represents a very small percentage of publications, about 3%. Barry Cunningham has had some success with German publishing and is hoping to extend Chicken House's range with works from The Netherlands and Belgium; this initiative has developed through arranging competitions for writers and illustrators in order to attract untapped talent. Members of the audience joined in with plenty of searching questions before Wendy Cooling announced the shortlist of five books with a presentation of each. This year five different languages in translation are represented, with an age range encompassing early readers to adolescents, and varying in subject matter from contemporary to classic. The books were on display in the adjoining salon, another elegant room full of light, where tea and delicious cakes were served.

See page 49 for the Marsh Award criteria, the shortlist and the forthcoming award ceremony details.

[Judith Philo]

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## AWARDS AND COMPETITIONS

### Roald Dahl Funny Prizes 2011

See *IBBYLink* 32 for the shortlists in each category.

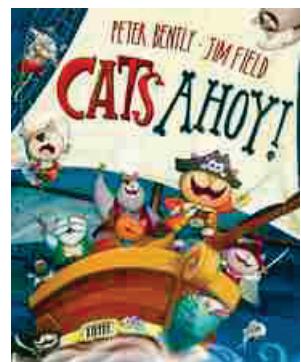
The winner of each category received £2,500 at an awards ceremony at the Unicorn Theatre, London on 8 November 2011.

The judging panel consisted of author and Twitter queen Grace Dent; author, chair of the judges and founder of the awards, Michael Rosen; Horrid Henry series illustrator and author duo Tony Ross and Francesca Simon; and *Yes Man* author and journalist Danny Wallace.

#### The Funniest Book for Children Aged Six and Under

*Cats Ahoy!* by Peter Bently, illus. Jim Field (Macmillan Children's Books)

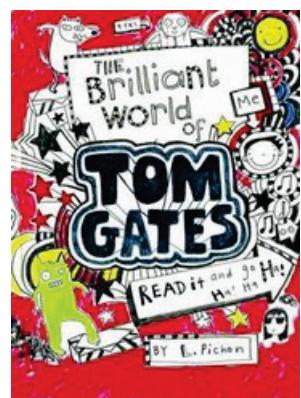
A rhyming picture book about pirate cats. When Alfonso the cat hears there's a boat coming into harbour carrying its largest ever catch, he hatches a plan. It's brave! It's bold! And it involves a ghost pirate ship, some rather gullible fishermen and cats, lots of cats. The book has an infectious rhyming text and laugh-out-loud illustrations.



#### The Funniest Book for Children Aged Seven to Fourteen

*The Brilliant World of Tom Gates* by Liz Pichon, illus. Liz Pichon (Scholastic)

This is the first in a series of books about Tom, an expert doodler and master of excuses. Tom means to do his homework but is easily distracted, mostly by thinking up ways to annoy his sister Delia, get tickets to 'the best band in the whole world' Dude3 and to attract the attention of the class clever-clogs and Tom's love interest Amy Porter.



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### Roald Dahl Funny Prizes 2012

The shortlists were announced on 20 September 2012 – the eve of Roald Dahl Day. This is the fifth year of the awards. See *IBBYLink* 32 for the aims of the awards. The awards were founded by Michael Rosen as part of his work as Children's Laureate 2007–2009 and are run by Booktrust.

The judging panel consisted of the chair of the panel and founder of the awards, Michael Rosen; TV presenter Mel Giedroyc; journalist and author Lucy Mangan; Liz Pichon, winner of the 2011 prize for 7–14 years; and Ed Vere, author of a new Roald Dahl biography – *Fantastic Mr Dahl*.

#### The Funniest Book for Children Aged Six and Under

*The Baby that Roared* by Simon Puttock, illus. Nadia Shireen (Nosy Crow)

*My Big Shouting Day* by Rebecca Patterson (Random House Children's Books, Jonathan Cape)

*Oh No, George!* by Chris Haughton (Walker Books)

*The Pirates Next Door* by Jonny Duddle (Templar)

*Stuck* by Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins Children's Books)

*The Worst Princess* by Anna Kemp, illus. Sara Ogilvie (Simon & Schuster)

#### The Funniest Book for Children Aged Seven to Fourteen

*Chitty Chitty Bang Bang Flies Again* by Frank Cottrell Boyce, illus. Joe Berger (Macmillan Children's Books)

*Dark Lord: Teenage Years* by Jamie Thomson, illus. Freya Hartas (Hachette Children's Books, Orchard Books)

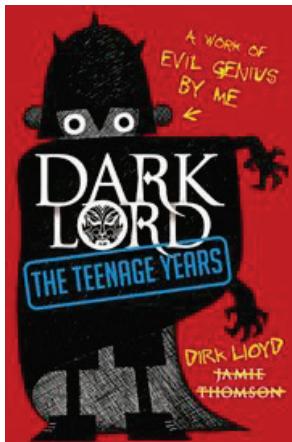
*The Dragonsitter* by Josh Lacey, illus. Gary Parsons (Andersen Press)

*Gangsta Granny* by David Walliams, illus. Tony Ross (HarperCollins Children's Books)

*Goblins* by Philip Reeve, illus. David Semple (Marion Lloyd Books)

*Socks Are not Enough* by Mark Lowery (Scholastic Children's Books)

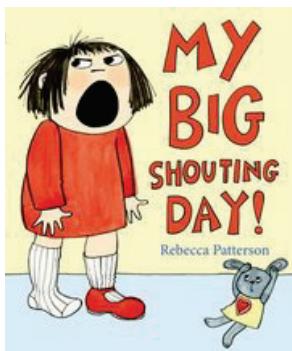
The winner of each category received £2,500 at an awards ceremony at the Unicorn Theatre, London on 6 November 2012.



The **winner of the 6-and-under category** is *Dark Lord: Teenage Years* by Jamie Thomson, illus. Freya Hartas.

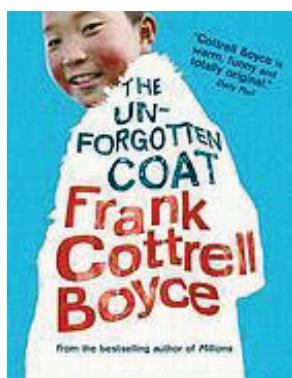
The Dark Lord falls to earth, crash landing in a suburban car park in the body of a teenage boy, spitting out poisonous mucus. His lieutenant, Dread Gargon, has disappeared, along with his powers of Domination and Destruction. Social services can't locate his home, the Iron Tower of Despair, so 'Dirk' is placed with a foster family and forced to go to school. Desperate to return home, he tries to open a Portal between earth and the Darklands, but accidentally sets fire to the cricket pavilion. And then the White Beast from Dirk's nightmares appears in the flesh. The story is funny-clever as well as funny-silly.

This book is the first of a new series by Thomson and the first book for illustration undergraduate Freya Hartas.



The **winner of the 7-to-14 category** is *My Big Shouting Day*, written and illustrated by Rebecca Patterson.

When Bella wakes up, her little brother Bob is licking her jewellery. This puts her in a bad mood so she shouts and complains all day. She doesn't like her breakfast or her shoes. Her biscuit breaks and she doesn't want to play nicely with Sasha. Ballet is itchy, her peas are too hot and her bath is too cold. She doesn't want a story and she certainly doesn't want to go to bed! But Mum gives her a kiss and a cuddle, and reads Bella her favourite bedtime story anyway and at last Bella says 'sorry' for her big shouting day. Funny and well observed, with big bold illustrations and telling facial expressions, *My Big Shouting Day* is ideal for the lower end of this age range.



### ***The Guardian Children's Fiction Prize 2012***

See *IBBYLink* 35 for details of the prize. No shortlist was published this year. The winner was announced at a ceremony at The Guardian offices on 30 October 2012 – Frank Cottrell Boyce for *The Unforgotten Coat*, photographs by Carl Hunter and Clare Heney (Walker Books, £10), age: 9+.

The story examines the effects the immigration system has on children. It tells the story of two refugee brothers from Mongolia who are determined to fit in with their Liverpool schoolmates. But they bring so much of Mongolia to Bootle that their new friend and guide Julie is hard pressed to know truth from fantasy as she recollects a wonderful friendship that was abruptly ended when Chingis and his family were forced to return to Mongolia. Told with the humour, warmth and brilliance of detail, this magical and compelling story is enriched by stunning and atmospheric Polaroid photos. The story was based on a real incident in a school in Bootle.

The book started life as a free gift to promote the charity The Reader Organisation and the book publisher Walker Books gave away thousands of copies on buses, at ferry terminals and through schools, prisons and hospitals.

### ***Coventry Inspiration Young People's Book Awards 2013***

The shortlists for the 2013 awards were announced in July 2012 and can be downloaded from [http://clg.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/4/educational\\_services](http://clg.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/4/educational_services). The online polls were launched on 1 October 2012, the Monday of the start of Children's Book Week. Eliminations began on 20 January 2013, with two titles in each group in each week being eliminated until the winner is finally found. The winners will be announced on Wednesday 20 February 2013 to coincide with school half term. The award ceremony will be on 12 June 2013.

More information on these various stages of the voting and the announcement of the winners are at  
[http://clg.coventry.gov.uk/info/4/educational\\_services/540/news\\_events\\_and\\_opportunities](http://clg.coventry.gov.uk/info/4/educational_services/540/news_events_and_opportunities).

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### **CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals 2013**

The longlist for these medals was announced on 5 November 2012. See  
[www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/pressdesk/press.php?release=pres\\_2013\\_longlist.html](http://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/pressdesk/press.php?release=pres_2013_longlist.html).

CILIP will also be running again, for both medals, a shadowing scheme engaging thousands of children and young people in reading the books on the shortlist.

Karen Robinson is chair of the judging panel for 2013 and Youth Libraries Group chair elect.

The shortlist will be announced on 19 March 2013. The winners will be announced on 19 June 2013 at a ceremony in London.

For further information, contact Anwen Hooson at Riot Communications:  
anwen@riotcommunications.com, or Liz Hyder: liz@riotcommunications.com.

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### **UKLA Children's Book Awards 2013**

The UK Literacy Association Children's Book awards are a national award conferred by education professionals and held in high esteem by teachers, who regard the shortlists as a reliable indicator of the best books of the year for inclusion in class and school collections. It is the only national award to be judged by classroom teachers. Publishers can submit a maximum of three books per imprint for each award. These may be picture books, fiction, poetry, non-fiction or play scripts. Books (and poems in anthologies) must have been published for the first time in the UK between 1 June 2011 and 31 May 2012. Books may previously have been published in other countries and translations are eligible; reprints and new editions are not eligible.

The longlists for the 2013 awards were announced on 9 October 2012. Shortlisting and then the final judging will be carried out by teachers from schools located in the region of the next UKLA International Conference, which will be held at Liverpool Hope University, 5–7 July 2013. The title of the conference is 'Literacy Policies and Practices: Diverse Perspectives in the 21st Century'. The teachers will look for books with powerful language across the age range 3–16. The awards are divided into the categories 3–6, 7–11 and 12–16. The awards will then be presented to the winners on 5 July 2013 at a gala reception during the conference.

The longlisting panel included Marilyn Brocklehurst, Joy Court, Jaki Brien, Prue Goodwin, Daniel Hahn and Althea Samuel who faced the daunting, but enjoyable, task of reading over 300 publisher submissions to select these books for the teacher judges to consider. The longlists this year shows that the book trade continues to publish brilliant books for young readers from both well-established authors and impressive new writers. The longlist can be downloaded from

[www.ukla.org/awards/ukla\\_childrens\\_book\\_awards\\_sponsored\\_by\\_mls/ukla\\_book\\_award\\_2013\\_sponsored\\_by\\_mls/](http://www.ukla.org/awards/ukla_childrens_book_awards_sponsored_by_mls/ukla_book_award_2013_sponsored_by_mls/).

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### **Foyle Young Poets of the Year Awards 2012**

An award is an opportunity for any young poet aged 11–17 to accelerate their writing career. The award has been in operation for 15 years. This year's judges were Helen Mort (a previous winner and now a published poet) and Christopher Reid. Each year 100 winners (15 overall winners and 85 commendations) are selected. Funding is by the Foyle Foundation. Entry is free. The winners were announced on 4 October 2012, National Poetry Day, which had the theme 'stars'.

Fifteen young poets were chosen from the record 7,351 poets who entered 15,047 poems from a total of 46 countries. This year's winners (15 Top winners and 85 Commended poets) come from as far as the USA, New Zealand, Nigeria and Thailand. With such fierce global competition, to be selected by the judges as one of the top 100 is truly to shine out above the rest.

Many of the 15 winning poems take on deeply intimate narratives of bereavement and loss, but do so with a striking maturity that relates these experiences outwards rather than inwards, speaking to a more universal human experience.

Emily Burns, 17, celebrates the scope of a life in 'Minutiae':

and you, sitting in your chair,  
cradling your Lapsang,  
bones quiet as dust, you  
who were once announced by fireworks  
on the day of your birth.

Tallulah Hutson, 16, explores mortality in her poem 'The Accident' rendering her experience in a hospital all too familiar:

I remember that you cannot light seven  
candles in a hospital room.

Growing up and its attendant euphoria and anxiety is a theme which travels through many of the poems, as in 17-year-old David Carey's 'The Apple Tree':

You told me once that growing  
up was like walking up a downwards  
escalator. I think I was too young  
to understand it back then.

Or as in Sarah Fletcher's 'Brighton', which recounts a morning-after both jubilant and jumbled:

leaving bruise marks you find both  
hilarious and mystifying the morning after.

Teenage notions of beauty and celebrity are also exquisitely dismantled in 16-year-old Flora de Falbe's 'Five things about the lake':

4. When the lake picks out her foliage she does so with impeccable taste.  
Even the fallen leaves have agreed on a colour scheme.
5. The lake enjoys being looked at (though she wouldn't admit it).  
She likes that I'm writing this

Darker themes of atrophy and destruction are also explored. Youngest winner, 13-year-old Jesse Rodrigues examines the notion of the void in 'Fire Knows':

Last, but not least, fire knows how to die with a flourish  
A flame, a spark, a winking coal  
Then cold, hard, black, silence.

Whilst Abigail Setchfield's poem 'Reduced' takes on the Holocaust, and Conor McKee's 'Hemingway's Thirst' grapples with the eponymous author's suicide:

Thirty years later it was  
he who would feel the buck of the bull,  
as the shot rampaged forth  
to the last flash of the matador's cloak.

All 100 winning poets attended a prize-giving ceremony at the Royal Festival Hall, where they met the judges. The top 15 Foyle Young Poets of the Year will attend a residential writing week at the Hurst Arvon Centre in Shropshire or receive a poet visit

to their school (age dependent). Commended Winners will receive book prizes and become Youth Members of the Poetry Society.

For a list of the top 15 winners and to read their poems in full, see [www.poetrysociety.org.uk/content/competitions/fyp](http://www.poetrysociety.org.uk/content/competitions/fyp).

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### Foyle Young Poets of the Year Awards 2013

The 2013 competition will launch in the first week of March 2013. Poems can be on any theme. See [www.poetrysociety.org.uk/content/competitions/fyp](http://www.poetrysociety.org.uk/content/competitions/fyp) after the launch for details.

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### Royal Society Young People's Book Prize 2012

This book prize celebrates the best books that communicate science to young people.

The prize is open to books in which science is a substantial aspect of the book's content, narrative or theme and which are written for young people aged up to 14. Books submitted for the prize must have been first published in English in the calendar year of 2011. Publishers across the UK submit their best recent books that communicate science to young people.

The winner was announced on 15 November 2012:



*Science Experiments* by Robert Winston and Ian Graham (Dorling Kindersley).

Race rockets, create crystals and grow your own germs. Make a metal detector, brew gigantic dry-ice bubbles and grab some glow in the dark jelly! These are just some of the stimulating science experiments by Robert Winston and Ian Graham.

The shortlisting panel said 'This brilliant book contains clear instructions for loads of great experiments, from things that you can try yourself (without getting in trouble from your parents), to spectacular tricks to try with adults present.'

For all previous shortlists and winners, see <http://royalsociety.org/awards/young-people/all-shortlisted/>.

For details of the 2012 shortlisted books, see <http://royalsociety.org/awards/young-people/shortlist/>.

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### Blue Peter Awards 2013

The shortlist for this year's Blue Peter Book Award was announced on 13 January on *Blue Peter*. The judges were author and journalist Catlin Moran, children's author Cressida Cowell, librarian Jake Hope and *Blue Peter* editor Tim Levell, who chaired the panel.

#### Best Story

*The Boy who Swam with Piranhas* by David Almond, illus Oliver Jeffers (Walker Books)

*Hero on a Bicycle* by Shirley Hughes (Walker Books)

*Tom Gates: Genius Ideas (Mostly)* by Liz Pichon (Scholastic)

#### Best Book with Facts

*Horrible Science: House of Horrors* by Nick Arnold and Tony De Saulles (Scholastic)

*Walter Tull's Scrapbook* by Michaela Morgan (Frances Lincoln Children's Books)

*Fantastic Mr Dahl* by Michael Rosen, illus. Quentin Blake (Puffin Books)

The shortlisted books will now be judged by more than 200 young *Blue Peter* viewers drawn from 10 schools across the UK, who will decide the winner of the Blue Peter Book of the Year 2013 in each of the two categories.

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The winners will be announced and awarded a Blue Peter trophy on a special edition of *Blue Peter* dedicated to children's books on Thursday 7 March 2013, to coincide with World Book Day.

For further information see [www.booktrust.org.uk/prizes-and-awards/2](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/prizes-and-awards/2).

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### **Christopher Tower Poetry Prizes 2013**

The 2013 competition was launched on 9 November 2012 at The Marlborough School in Woodstock, Oxon.

The Christopher Tower Poetry Competition is the UK's most valuable prize for young poets and this year students between 16–18 are challenged to write a poem on the theme of 'The Details'.

Established in 2000, the Tower Prizes are recognised as among the most prestigious literary awards for this age group. The first prize is £3,000, with £1,000 and £500 going to the second and third prize winners. In addition to individual prizes, the students' schools and colleges also receive cash prizes.

The entries will be judged this year by poets Bernard O'Donoghue, Carrie Etter and Peter McDonald.

The competition is open to all 16–18 year-olds who are in full or part-time education. Students and schools can find out more information about the prizes and associated future events at [www.towerpoetry.org.uk/prize](http://www.towerpoetry.org.uk/prize), or email [info@towerpoetry.org.uk](mailto:info@towerpoetry.org.uk), or call 01865 286591. The progress of the competition can be followed on [www.facebook.com/pages/Tower-Poetry/101808106554586?ref=hl](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Tower-Poetry/101808106554586?ref=hl), or @TowerPoetry on [Twitter](#), or on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/christophertower1](http://www.youtube.com/christophertower1). The closing date for entries is Friday 1 March, 2013.

Tower Poetry exists to encourage and challenge everyone who reads or writes poetry. Funded by a generous bequest to Christ Church, Oxford, by the late Christopher Tower, the aims of Tower Poetry are clear: to stimulate an enjoyment and critical appreciation of poetry, particularly among young people in education, and to challenge people to write their own poetry. The project is administered by the poet and academic, Peter McDonald, the first holder of the Christopher Tower Studentship and Tutorship in Poetry in the English Language at Christ Church, Oxford. Central to the work of Tower Poetry is the belief that the encouragement of young people to write poetry can foster a creative appreciation that is essential for a mature understanding and contribution to cultural life in the future. The Christopher Tower Poetry prizes, launched in 2000, offer young people a major opportunity to write poetry. Each year, students between the ages of 16–18 years are asked to submit poems on a set theme. The competition rules can be read at [www.towerpoetry.org.uk/prize/competition-rules](http://www.towerpoetry.org.uk/prize/competition-rules).

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### **Red House Children's Book Award 2013**

The Red House Children's Book Award is the only national book award voted for entirely by children. Nominations closed on 30 June 2012 and the shortlist was announced on 29 October 2012. Children can vote for their favourite in each category to choose the winner – [www.redhousechildrensbookaward.co.uk/shortlist/index](http://www.redhousechildrensbookaward.co.uk/shortlist/index). Voting closes on 27 January 2013. The winner in each category: Books for Younger Children, Books for Younger Readers and Books for Older Readers, will be announced at a ceremony at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London, at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday 23 February 2013 as part of the Imagine Festival. Many of the shortlisted authors will be taking part and tickets went on sale in mid-December 2012.

The shortlists have been arrived at by a year of reading and reviewing by children.

#### **Younger Children**

*Can You See Sassoon?* by Sam Usher (Little Tiger Press)

*Dog Loves Drawing* by Louise Yates (Red Fox Picture Books)

*The Spooky Spooky House* by Andrew Weale, illus. Lee Wildish (Corgi)  
*Welcome to Alien School* by Caryl Hart, illus. Ed Eves (Simon & Schuster Children's Books)

#### Younger Readers

*Gangsta Granny* by David Walliams, illus. Tony Ross (HarperCollins)  
*The World of Norm: May Contain Nuts* by Jonathan Meres, illus. Donough O'Malley (Orchard Books)

*Operation Eiffel Tower* by Elen Caldecott (Bloomsbury Children's Books)

#### Older Readers

*Eight Keys* by Suzanne Lafleur (Puffin Books)  
*The Medusa Project: Hit Squad* by Sophie McKenzie (Simon & Schuster Children's Books)  
*The Power of Six* (The Lorien Legacies) by Pittacus Lore (Penguin Books)

For more information, see [www.redhousechildrensbookaward.co.uk](http://www.redhousechildrensbookaward.co.uk).

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#### Red House Children's Book Award 2014

To pick the shortlist, the Federation of Children's Book Groups (who administer the award) is asking children from around the world to nominate their favourite fiction book published this year in the UK (between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2013). Children are asked to choose a picture book, chapter book or novel that has impressed them, and to send in their nominations. They can nominate as many titles as they like. Nominations close on the 30 June 2013. The nomination form is at [www.redhousechildrensbookaward.co.uk/nominate/index](http://www.redhousechildrensbookaward.co.uk/nominate/index).

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#### School Library Association Information Book Award 2012

*Can We Save the Tiger* by Martin Jenkins, illus. Vicky White (Walker Books) swept the board at the Information Book Award, winning its section (7–12) in both the Children's Choice and the Judges' Choice as well as continuing the clean sweep as the Overall Winner in Children's and Judges' Choices.

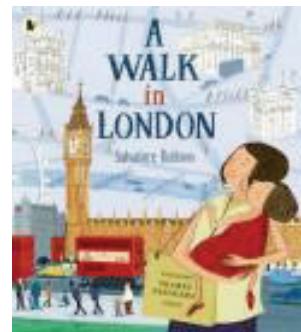
The SLA celebrated the 2012 award on Monday 22 October 2012 at the Free Word Centre, London. The award is an annual event celebrating information books, and is designed to support school libraries and to reinforce the importance of non-fiction whilst highlighting the high standard of resources available.

Between August and mid-October, schools were able to cast their vote for their favourite information book. The SLA and the sponsors were keen that schools and their students should have a say in the final decision. Each school could vote online for their favourite book in each category (Under 7s, 7–12 and 12–16) and for their overall favourite.



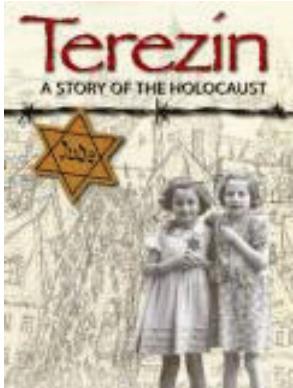
#### The winners

**Under 7s** *A Walk in London* by Salvatore Rubbino (Walker Books)  
**7–12** *Can We Save the Tiger* by Martin Jenkins, illus. Vicky White (Walker Books)  
**12–16** *Terezin – A Story of the Holocaust* by Ruth Thomson (Franklin Watts)  
**Overall Winner** *Can We Save the Tiger* by Martin Jenkins, illus. Vicky White (Walker Books)



#### Children's Choice winners

**Under 7s** *A Walk in London* by Salvatore Rubbino (Walker Books)  
**7–12** *Can We Save the Tiger* by Martin Jenkins, illus. Vicky White (Walker Books)  
**12–16** *Star: From Birth to Black Hole* by Alan Dyer (Templar)



**Overall Winner** *Can We Save the Tiger* by Martin Jenkins, illus. Vicki White (Walker Books)

**Special Award Winner** *Faces* by David Goodman and Zoe Miller (Tate Publishing)

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### iF Poems/The Times Young Poetry Competition 2012

Under-17s were invited to submit original poems for the chance to be Young Poet of the Year. Nearly a thousand poems were received and three winners, one from each age category, were announced on 12 May 2012. At the Cheltenham Literature Festival on 6 October 2012 the winners read their poems aloud, and received their prizes from James Harding, editor of *The Times*, and Carol Ann Duffy, the Poet Laureate.

Those who entered are now published poets on *The Times* website. Their poems can be read at [http://extras.thetimes.co.uk/public/young\\_poetry/](http://extras.thetimes.co.uk/public/young_poetry/). Selected audio recitals by entrants can be listened to at [www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/poetrycompetition/article3303331.ece](http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/poetrycompetition/article3303331.ece). The shortlist is at [www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/poetrycompetition/article3303140.ece](http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/poetrycompetition/article3303140.ece). Further information of the initiative are at [www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/poetrycompetition/](http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/poetrycompetition/) and [www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/poetrycompetition/article3303399.ece](http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/poetrycompetition/article3303399.ece).

### The winners

#### 0-6 category

##### **'My Little Bother' by Yetunde Lanlehin (age 6, from London)**

I have a little brother. He always bothers my Mother.  
He takes my toys  
And ruins them.  
He is more like,  
My little bother.

#### 7-12 category

##### **'A Journey' by Harris Porter (age 12, from Montrose)**

I struggled up the brae, the win' and rain soughing haird in ma face,  
Frichtened bauties skittered intae the heather as I passed.  
Twa crows were fechting ower the harigals o some pare crater,  
like weans ower a poke o' sweeties.  
But then the sun broke through the clouds,  
and the douce song o' a laverock filled me wi' gledness.

#### 13-16 category

##### **'How to Keep a Bird' by Catherine McManus (age 16, from Lancashire)**

First ensnare it with false promises,  
Lure it in with fruit and nuts,  
Treat it to obsequious titles,  
Then clip its wings tight shut.  
  
Be sure not to let it out,  
Of the cage when it sings,  
When it weeps into its feathers,  
Or acts like a mourning thing.  
  
Pretend you'll let it out in summer,  
Say you'll let it out in spring,  
Declare that it's too cold in winter,  
Warn it of Autumnal winds.  
  
Announce you'll let it out in two years,  
Or you'll let it out in three,  
Mention that it is getting old now,  
And could perish if it's free.  
  
Then wait until it's lifeless,

And the carcass has grown thin,  
Then seize safely it with gloved hands,  
And throw it in the bin.

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### Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation 2013

The Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation, awarded biennially since 1996, was founded to celebrate the best translation of a children's book from a foreign language into English and published in the UK. It aims to spotlight the high quality and diversity of translated fiction for young readers. The award is administered by the English Speaking Union on behalf of the Marsh Christian Trust.

The award seeks to address a situation in the UK in which less than 3% of work published for children and young people has been from the non-English speaking world.

#### Eligibility of books

- The translation must be first published in the UK by a British publishing company.
- The translation must be from the original work in the original language.
- Submissions will be accepted from publishers for books produced for readers from 5 to 16 years of age.
- Picture books must have a substantial proportion of text. 'Substantial' will be at the judges' discretion.

The prize of £2000 goes to the translator.

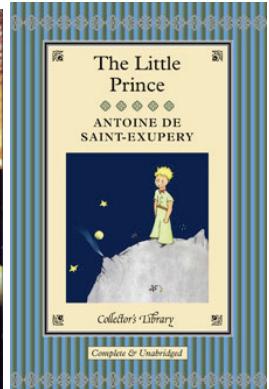
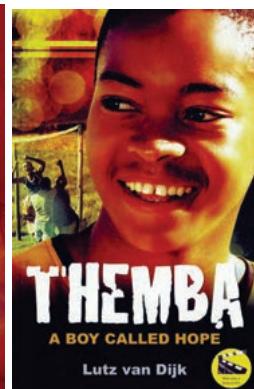
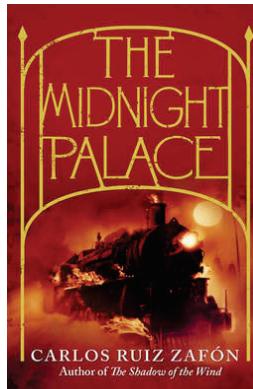
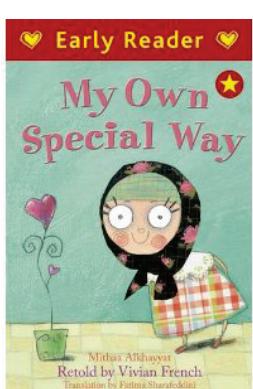
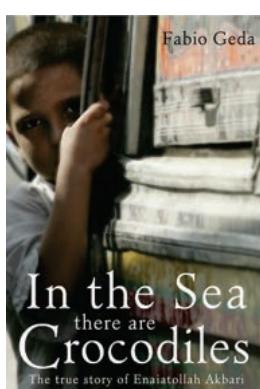
The judges' 2013 shortlist contains books translated from five different languages and includes spell-binding new work alongside a fresh take on a classic. The shortlist demonstrates the true diversity of children's translated literature, and its value for early readers as well as young adults.

The judges are Wendy Cooling OBE, Founder of Bookstart, education consultant, and author; Colin Niven OBE, Founding Headmaster of the Dulwich Colleges in Shanghai, Beijing and Suzhou, and of Sherbourne School in Qatar; Sian Williams, Founder of the Children's Bookshow; Gillian Lathey, lately Director of the National Centre for Research in Children's Literature.

The 2013 winner will be announced by the headquarters of the International English-Speaking Union, Dartmouth House, Mayfair, London, at an awards ceremony on 23 January 2013.

#### The shortlist

**Howard Curtis** for *In the Sea there are Crocodiles* by Fabio Geda, translated from Italian and published in the UK by David Fickling Books. 'A harrowing story of a young boy travelling from his home in Afghanistan to Italy, in search of safety. Based on the experiences of Enaiatollah Akbari, his story is told with a sense of humour and adventure, and with great pace and tension.' The judges say: 'A book to inspire and nourish young people.'



**Fatima Sharafeddini** for *My Own Special Way* by Mithaa Alkhayyat (retold by Vivian French), translated from Arabic and published in the UK by Orion Children's Books. 'Hamda wants to be a 'big girl' like her older sisters and wear the headscarf. A bold and simple story for early readers, about growing-up, individuality and family.' The judges say: 'A unique early reader that normalises another cultural custom.'

**Ros and Chloe Schwartz** for *The Little Prince* by Antoine de St-Exupery, translated from French and published in the UK by The Collector's Library. 'A whimsical and profound parable that enchants children and adults alike, and that warrants retelling to each new generation of readers.' The judges say: 'A classic beautifully retranslated which retains all the ineffable charm of the original.'

**Lucia Graves** for *The Midnight Palace* by Carlos Ruiz Zafón, translated from Spanish and published in the UK by Orion Children's Books. 'A fast moving tale of mystery and adventure set in 1930s Calcutta, following the story of twins separated at birth.' The judges say: 'A powerfully told story for older readers, with a strong sense of time and place.'

**Karin Chubb** for *Themba* by Lutz van Dijk, translated from German and published in the UK by Aurora Metro Books. 'A hard-hitting and emotional story of AIDS in South Africa following Themba, 'A boy called hope', and his dreams of becoming a famous footballer.' The judges say: 'A harrowing yet ultimately positive novel, which zips along and cheers the reader with its rags to riches ending and the twist in this excellently translated tale.'

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### Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation 2015

The Marsh Award is biannual, so submissions for the 2015 award will open in Spring 2014. Details will be on the English-Speaking Union's website after the launch: [www.esu.org/programmes/professional-development/awards/marsh-childrens-literature-award](http://www.esu.org/programmes/professional-development/awards/marsh-childrens-literature-award).

The translation must be first published in the UK by a British publishing company covering the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013. The shortlist will be announced in October 2014 and the prize will be awarded in January 2015.

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### NCLA 'Belonging' Poetry Competition 2012

Earlier this year under-14 and under-19 year olds from the North East were invited to enter their poems on the theme of 'belonging' for a chance to win an Amazon Kindle. At a ceremony on 1 November at the Culture Lab, Newcastle University, competition judge Matthew Sweeney awarded prizes to ten young poets from the North East. In his speech, Matthew was delighted to have read so many thoughtful and exciting entries that explored belonging from many wide-ranging perspectives. 'The poems are a celebration of the North East.'

The winners across both categories are as follows.

#### Under 14

**Winner:** Faye Sowerby for her poem 'The North East'.

**Runners-up:** Joe Foster for 'The Toon', Charlie Bradley for 'Belonging' and Toby Pearce for 'Belonging'.

#### Under 19

**Winner:** Jenny Waitt for her poem 'A Sense of Belonging'.

**Runners-up:** Adam Napier for 'Interconnectedness', Bethany Hamer for 'Belonging' and Jenny Waitt for 'Friend'.

The winners both received a Kindle, and the runners up a £50 book voucher. In addition, two iPod shuffles were awarded to two poets chosen by a panel of young adult judges.

The winners of these were Anna Wilson for her ‘Belonging’ in the under-14 category, and Jennifer Thomson for ‘Observer’ in the under 19-category.

The winning poems will be featured on the new Young Voices website.

Below are two of the poems.

**‘A Sense of Belonging’ by Jenny Waitt**

Like shoes in a shoebox, glasses in a case,  
Bread in the breadbin, all things have their place.

An egg in a nest, a fish in a pond,  
Rabbits in a burrow, there is always a bond.

The sun in the day, the moon at night,  
The seasons all changing, a beautiful sight.

A lover in your arms, a pet in your lap,  
Emotions so close, barely a gap.

A family for forgiveness, a home that is strong,  
Friends who will care, and help you along.

Belonging is a gift, shared by the world,  
We do not sense it, but around us it’s curled.

(Copyright © 2012 Jenny Waitt)

**‘The North East’ by Faye Sowerby**

Alreet ivrybody, aa’m a Geordie bairn.  
A bonny lass from Shields, hyem of that Cookson lassie.  
Reet heor in me toon yee’ll find the sands ‘n the Tyne.  
Alang biv the dunes theor’s the shows.  
Cum the autumn yee’ll see thoosan’s of joggas ‘n pretty lasses.  
Me skyul towld me ta reet aboot the North East.  
But my hyem is Sooth Shields ‘n thon’s what thos vorse is aboot.

(Copyright © 2012 Faye Sowerby)

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### **The Fantastic Book Awards 2013**

The Fantastic Book Awards (FBA) are now in their eighth year. They are organised by the Lancashire School Library Service. Its aim is to support reading for pleasure and enjoyment for children aged 9 to 11 by introducing them to recently published children’s fiction. The participating schools are organised into five groups. Each group is then given a list of six books to read, review and vote on. The title that emerges with the highest voting score in each group wins an FBA.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 all over the county read and vote on the titles throughout the autumn and spring terms. Voting takes place at the end of the spring term. Schools are encouraged to read the books in the forum of a book club, where titles are discussed and opinions shared in a relaxed setting – to foster enthusiasm for reading as a social activity.

The winning authors receive fountain pens as prizes. Every school and all participating pupils receive certificates celebrating their achievements.

See [www.storiesfromtheweb.org/fba/index.asp](http://www.storiesfromtheweb.org/fba/index.asp) for the group titles. See also [www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries/sls/fantastic.asp](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries/sls/fantastic.asp) for more information on the awards.

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## Costa Book Awards 2012

Costa has announced the shortlists for the 2012 awards. Out of the 100+ books submitted for the children's category, four have been shortlisted. The judges for the children's award were Sarah Clarke, Range Manager, Waterstones, the writer Marcus Sedgwick and the author Matt Whyman.

*Maggot Moon* by Sally Gardner (Hot Key Books)

The judges found this 'impressive, skillful and imaginative'.

*The Seeing* by Diana Hendry (The Bodley Head)

The judges say they were 'drawn in by this unsettling and gripping novel'.

*What's up with Jody Barton?* by Hayley Long (Macmillan Children's Books)

The judges describe this as 'a clever book with hidden depths'.

*A Boy and a Bear in a Boat* by Dave Shelton (David Fickling Books)

The judges say that this has 'the feel of a classic children's tale'.

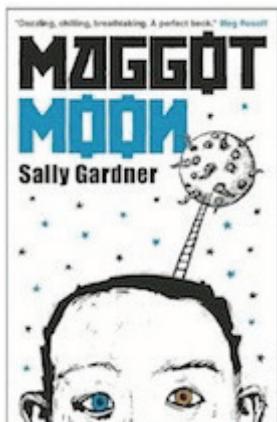
Gardner and Hendry have already won prizes: the Nestle Children's Book Award for *I, Coriander* (Gardner) and the Whitbread Award (the Costa as was) for *Harvey Angell* (Hendry). Young was shortlisted for this year's Queen of Teen Award, while *A Boy and a Bear in a Boat* is Shelton's first novel.

The winners were announced on 2 January 2013, with the overall winner of the Costa Book of the Year Award to be announced on Tuesday 29 January 2013. Only once has the overall prize gone to a children's book: Philip Pullman in 2001 for *The Amber Spyglass*.

The 2012 winner in the children's category is Sally Gardner for *Maggot Moon*. The winner receives £5000. The aim of the awards is to encourage, promote and celebrate the best in contemporary books from authors in the UK and Ireland.

The book tells an unusual teen tale of a 15-year-old dyslexic boy living in a violent, dystopian 1950s England. Hector and Standish are friends. They live together in Zone Seven where the Motherland can keep them, and others like them, under surveillance. When the friends find out something about the Motherland's plans for a moon landing, their lives take on ever more threatening levels of change. And soon Standish finds he really does have to make a stand.

The author is severely dyslexic, but was not diagnosed until she was 12, having been sent to various schools, expelled by one and branded unteachable by the others. She is now a committed spokesperson for dyslexia, seeing it as a gift, not a disability, and Maggot Moon is dedicated to all those who didn't shine at school but 'who will own tomorrow'. It is Gardner's fifth book for this age group



## Specsavers National Book Awards 2012

Known as the British Book Awards before 2011 (the 'Nibbles'), Specsavers have become the sponsors of the 2012 awards. The children's category is now co-sponsored by National Book Tokens.

The NBA 'showcases the best of British writing and publishing, whilst celebrating books with wide popular appeal, critical acclaim and commercial success'. The awards are organised and governed by Agile Marketing with developmental help from a cross-industry steering group. The event and TV programmes are managed by Cactus TV Ltd.

The shortlists are chosen by around 50 carefully selected individuals from the National Book Awards Academy, who are drawn from retailer chain buyers, independent booksellers, wholesalers and trade-press columnists. Those involved include experts with specialist knowledge of the genres covered by the categories, including children's books and audiobooks.

The winners are chosen by votes from the National Book Awards Academy. Votes at this stage are given to the whole academy of over 750 industry experts. Readers then voted for their favourite from each of the category winners to find the winner of the Specsavers National Book of the Year Award.

The shortlists were announced on 13 November 2012, recognising the most popular books of the year. The awards also acknowledge popular authors – established and new. The National Book Tokens Children's Book Award shortlist is as follows.

*The Wolf Princess* by Cathryn Constable (Chicken House)

*The Pirates Next Door* by Jonny Duddle (Templar Publishing)

*Pirates Love Underpants* by Claire Freedman and Ben Cort (Simon & Schuster)

*Itch* by Simon Mayo (Doubleday Children's Books)

*Tom Gates: Genius Ideas (Mostly)* by Liz Pichon (Scholastic Children's Books)

*Ratburger* by David Walliams (HarperCollins Children's Books)

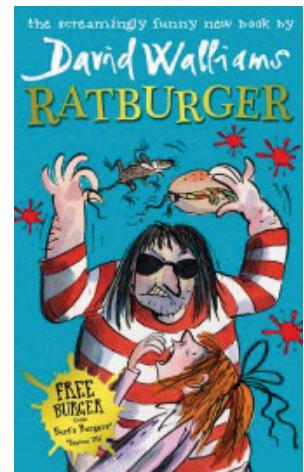
The winners were presented by TV host Lorraine Kelly at an awards ceremony at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, London, on 4 December 2012.

The winner in the children's book category was *Ratburger* by David Walliams, described by the judges as follows.

Hot on the heels of the bestselling *Gangsta Granny* comes another hilarious, action-packed and touching novel – the story of a little girl called Zoe. Things are not looking good for Zoe. Her stepmother Sheila is so lazy she gets Zoe to pick her nose for her. The school bully Tina Trotts makes her life a misery – mainly by flobbing on her head. And now the evil Burt from Burt's Burgers is after her pet rat! And guess what he wants to do with it? The clue is in the title.

The Specsavers National Book of the Year Award was announced on 18 December 2012. The winner was not the children's book category winner but a book in the fiction category that is popular with young adults – E.L. James' *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

For more information, see [www.nationalbookawards.co.uk/](http://www.nationalbookawards.co.uk/).



### Poetry by Heart Competition

Teenagers will learn by heart and recite classic poems in a new national competition to be overseen by Sir Andrew Motion. The competitors in Poetry by Heart will vie to impress judges with their skill in memorising and performing poems from an anthology provided by the Poetry Archive.

Funding of £500,000 for the scheme is being provided by the Department for Education. It will be started in schools in January 2013 to find a national champion among pupils aged 14 to 18 (Years 10–13).

The pupils will choose poems from an anthology of classic and contemporary poetry especially selected for the competition, including 'Dover Beach' by Matthew Arnold, 'Ozymandias' by Percy Bysshe Shelley and Shakespeare's clown song from *Twelfth Night*. The anthology will go live on 7 January 2013, when the website <http://poetrybyheart.org.uk/> will open. The poems have been selected by Andrew Motion and Jean Sprackland.

The competition will be organised in each school as follows. There must be at least three students competing. Ideally the competition will start with class heats and then a school final. This can be done anytime between 7 January and 28 February. In the class heats students pick any one poem from the anthology that they like. In the school final, they must recite one poem from the pre-war section of the anthology and one from the post-1914 section. The school champion and possibly the runner-up will go through to the regional heats in March with the final being held at the National Portrait Gallery, London, in mid-April. It is all free, including fares to London for the finalists and their chaperones.

All secondary schools in England will have received a mailing and those that have already expressed interest will receive a full competition pack in December 2012. For more information, contact Julie Blake: [info@poetrybyheart.org.uk](mailto:info@poetrybyheart.org.uk). The Poetry by Heart Facebook page is at <https://www.facebook.com/poetrybyheart2013?ref=ts> and for Twitter use @poetrybyheart.

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### **Read for My School: 'From Neverland to Hogwarts via Middle-Earth'**

This is a new national schools reading competition from the Pearson Foundation and Booktrust, with support from the Department for Education. There are 90 titles from which children will be encouraged to read from 21 January to 22 March 2013.

The 42 online titles donated by Pearson, Penguin and DK will be available to read for free on the Read for My School website and include Michael Rosen's recent biography of Roald Dahl, as well as titles by Eoin Colfer, Jeremy Strong and Roald Dahl.

The 48 Recommended Reads, selected from UK publishers by a panel of teachers, librarians, booksellers and children's book reviewers, include favourites from Michael Morpurgo, Shirley Hughes and J.K. Rowling, along with some lesser-known authors.

During the competition, children will also be encouraged to redeem their World Book Day tokens and read one of the four books published for the 2013 promotion that are suitable for 9 to 11 year-olds, titles by Lauren Child, Anthony Horowitz, Liz Pichon and Tony Robinson.

Aimed at children in Years 5 and 6, in its first year Read for My School is being offered free to all primary schools in England. The competitive element of the programme is designed to be fun and to motivate children of all abilities with a variety of interests to read for pleasure. It will also give children the opportunity to read their way to rewards for themselves and their schools.

The online and the Recommended Reads book lists, the competition rules and entry forms are available from [www.readformyschool.co.uk/](http://www.readformyschool.co.uk/). Schools who wish to enter pupils must register on the website. They are recommended to register before the competition opens on 21 January so that their pupils will have the full nine weeks to participate. However, registration will remain open throughout the competition.

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### **Tower Hamlets Book Award 2012**

*The Brilliant World of Tom Gates* by Liz Pichon (Scholastic) is the winner of the sixth annual award. The award, organised by Tower Hamlets School Library Service, is given for a fiction title voted the best publication by pupils in Years 5 to 8 (9 to 12 year olds). The aim is to encourage children to read, to bring them together to enable debate and discussion about books, and to encourage them to share the pleasure of reading. 160 pupils from 18 schools joined in the fun at Swanlea Secondary School in a grand finale on 30 November 2012. Over 30 schools followed the award and hundreds of votes were cast. Overall the award was a success in its aims to inspire children to read for fun and to encourage discussion about some of the best new books.

Shortlist for the 2012 award:

*A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness, illus. Jim Kay (2011, Walker Books)

*The Brilliant World of Tom Gates* by Liz Pichon, illus. Liz Pinchon (2011, Scholastic)

*The Island of Thieves* by Josh Lacey (2011, Andersen Press)

*Monacello: The Little Monk* by Geraldine McCaughrean, illus. Jana Diemberger (2011, Phoenix Yard Books)

*Too Small to Fail* by Morris Gleitzman (2011, Puffin Books)

*Brave New Girl* by Catherine Johnson (2011, Frances Lincoln Children's Books)

*Eight Keys* by Suzanne LaFleur (2011, Puffin Books)

*The Search for WondLa* by Tony DiTerlizzi, illus. Tony diTerlizzi (2010, Simon & Schuster)

For further information, email [jacob.turner@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:jacob.turner@towerhamlets.gov.uk).

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### **Eleanor Farjeon Award 2012**

Penguin Books, The Strand, London. 15 November 2012.

Illustrator Quentin Blake has won the 2012 Eleanor Farjeon Award, which is administered by the Children's Book Circle and given for distinguished service to children's books. Emma Chichester Clark, a former student of Quentin Blake, received the award on Blake's behalf. Also shortlisted for the award were the Discover Children's Story Centre in Stratford, London E1, writer and journalist Nicolette Jones, author Michael Morpurgo and Tales on Moon Lane bookshop in London SE24.

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## **CONFERENCES, EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS**

### **Daydreams and Diaries, the Story of Jacqueline Wilson**

Hove Museum and Art Gallery, Brighton. 24 November 2012 – 30 April 2013.

This is a chance to find out about Dame Jacqueline, in the first ever exhibition (now touring from Seven Stories) dedicated to the bestselling author. The exhibition guides you through a journey of her favourite stories, characters, daydreams and working process. It shows how her favourite characters began, including Tracy Beaker, Hetty Feather and the Illustrated Mum, from ideas to text and working with illustrator Nick Sharratt to bring her stories to life. Visitors can also follow Dame Jacqueline on her creative journey during the making of *Sapphire Battersea*, the sequel to *Hetty Feather*, released in September 2011. The exhibition is supported by Random House Children's Books.

See [www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/Museums/brightonmuseum/Pages/home.aspx](http://www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/Museums/brightonmuseum/Pages/home.aspx) or [www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/WhatsOn/Documents/RPM%20What%27s%20OnSep%20Dec%202012-FINAL.pdf](http://www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/WhatsOn/Documents/RPM%20What%27s%20OnSep%20Dec%202012-FINAL.pdf).

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### **A Squash and a Squeeze: Sharing Stories with Julia Donaldson**

Seven Stories, Newcastle Upon Tyne. 17 March 2012 – 13 February 2013.

This exhibition brings Julia Donaldson's captivating stories to life. It shows how she wrote modern classics such as *The Gruffalo*, *Princess Mirror-Belle*, *The Troll* and *The Highway Rat* and explores original artwork by her many illustrators – most famously Axel Scheffler. Visitors can follow her journey from song writer for children's television to current children's laureate. Children and their families can share stories and explore sensory environments based on Donaldson's books. They can also enjoy following in Toddle Waddle's footsteps, climbing into the cave with the Cave Baby and meeting the Gruffalo. Other activities include a sing-along to Donaldson's songs on Julia's Jukebox and performing a play on the Seven Stories stage. The exhibition is supported by Scholastic, Macmillan Children's Books and Alison Green Books.

For more information see [www.sevenstories.org.uk/whats-on/a-squash-and-a-squeeze-sharing-stories-with-julia-donaldson-e49331](http://www.sevenstories.org.uk/whats-on/a-squash-and-a-squeeze-sharing-stories-with-julia-donaldson-e49331).

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### **A Viking's Guide to Deadly Dragons with Cressida Cowell**

Seven Stories, Newcastle Upon Tyne. 7 October 2012 for approx. one year.

The new exhibition developed by Seven Stories and Cressida Cowell will include Cowell's original drawings, manuscripts and working processes from her How to Train your Dragon series, which have also been made into films by DreamWorks animation. The exhibition will take visitors to a time and place when dragons lived among us and we could speak to them in Dragonese. Visitors will be guided through a Viking village by Gobber the Belch, discover where going to school meant, learning how to be a Viking pirate and what it means to be a hero. They will also be able to discover the Wild Dragon Cave, sail on a Viking long ship and share Viking stories in the Great Hall. The subject matter of this exhibition is aimed to encourage and engage reluctant readers with humour, interactive play and learning.

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### **Enid Blyton Exhibition**

Seven Stories, Newcastle Upon Tyne. Spring 2013.

This major exhibition will draw on the Seven Stories collection to reveal popular and less well-known aspects of her work.

For information nearer the opening, see [www.sevenstories.org.uk](http://www.sevenstories.org.uk) or contact Amanda Beckham [amanda.beckham@sevenstories.org.uk](mailto:amanda.beckham@sevenstories.org.uk).

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### **There's Nuffin Like a Puffin!**

Lyme Park, Disley, Cheshire. 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. weekends and school holidays, 3 November 2012 – 17 February 2013.

A rare opportunity to view original illustrations and the chance to explore some of the most loved children's stories. *The Borrowers*, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and *Spot the Dog* are just some of the titles on loan for the first time from Seven Stories.

Garden and gallery admission applies. National Trust members free. For more information contact 01663 762 023.

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### **Through the Magic Mirror: The World of Anthony Browne**

Beaney Museum and Art Gallery, Canterbury. 23 November 2012 – 24 February 2013.

Step into the story books of recent children's laureate Anthony Browne, meet Dad and Willy the Chimp, enter the enchanted forest and play the Shape Game in this interactive exhibition for all ages. This is a touring exhibition from Seven Stories.

See [www.canterbury.co.uk/Beaney/](http://www.canterbury.co.uk/Beaney/).

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### **Philippa Pearce Memorial Lecture**

Homerton College, Cambridge. 5 p.m. 5 September 2013.

The 6th Philippa Pearce Memorial Lecture will be delivered by Kevin Crossley-Holland. The title of his talk will be available later.

Free 'tickets' will be available from June 2013 and a place must be booked. For more information see [www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2013](http://www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2013).

The 2012 lecture was given by Malorie Blackman and was entitled, '21st Century Storytelling: Will the Advent of New Technology Create a Paradigm Shift in the Writing and Reading of Children's Literature?' A video of the lecture will be available soon at [www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2012](http://www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2012).

To read Philip Pullman's 2011 lecture, see [www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2011](http://www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2011).

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### **The Story Museum**

Rochester House, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford.

The Story Museum exists to celebrate children's stories and to share enjoyable ways for young people to learn through stories as they grow. 'We take story performances, exhibitions, activities and ideas to schools and communities. We now have a permanent home in the heart of Oxford, UK, which we plan to open in 2015 as a magical new centre of children's literature and storytelling. In the meantime we are already holding events and exhibitions in our dilapidated and atmospheric building.'

The current work is The Thousand and One project. Michael Rosen, the curator of stories, is choosing 1001 tales for the growing collection. See details of the project and the dates of the programme to be announced shortly at [www.storymuseum.org.uk/the-story-museum/The1001](http://www.storymuseum.org.uk/the-story-museum/The1001).

### **Forthcoming events**

#### **Saturday 9 February and Saturday 9 March**

#### **Nick Cope's Songbook**

Monkeys, bears, socks and mud! Nick Cope (former Candyskins frontman) sings about everything children are really interested in. Sit back and relax, or get up and dance! 10.30-11.30 a.m.; £5 per child (adults go free).

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**Tuesday 29 January, Print your own Valentine – Session 1**  
**Tuesday 5 February, Print your own Valentine – Session 2**

Learn how to print by hand in two 2-hour sessions. Led by Dr Paul Nash, a specialist in historic printing techniques and presses at the Bodleian Library. In the first session, you will design your own special and unique Valentine's Day card. In the second session, you will create your card.

6.30–8.30 p.m.; 16+; £20 for both sessions. Booking essential.

**Saturday 23 February and Saturday 30 March, Family printing workshop**

Put your pens away and discover the art of printing by hand on our antique printing presses, taught by the Bodleian's Dr Paul Nash. You'll learn new skills, have fun, and make your own keepsake to take home! Suitable for ages 8+  
2–4 p.m.; £8 per person.

For information about the museum and to book tickets for events, see  
[www.storymuseum.org.uk/the-story-museum/The1001](http://www.storymuseum.org.uk/the-story-museum/The1001) or email Cath Nightingale:  
[cath@storymuseum.org.uk](mailto:cath@storymuseum.org.uk). See also page 64 about building developments.

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**1st IBBY Regional Conference for Asia and Oceania**

The IBBY section of Indonesia is organising the 1st IBBY Regional Conference for Asia and Oceania. The conference will be held in Bali 23–26 May 2013.

This inaugural congress will examine ideas on how to strengthen IBBY national sections in the region. It will feature the uniqueness that Asia and Oceania's regional stories can play in the children's literature market and how they can be used to educate children about respect, understanding and tolerance in the global multicultural society.

The congress is open to children's literature specialists, writers, illustrators, educators, publishers, librarians, storytellers, journalists, activists, children's book promoters and cultural enthusiasts from all over the world.

Conference accommodation is available at the Ananta Legian Hotel (4 stars) (twin shared occupant) at USD 75.00, including breakfast.

The deadline for papers and names of national sections represented has passed.

The conference website is at <http://www.inabby.com>

For more information contact Murti Bunanta [murtib@cbn.net.id](mailto:murtib@cbn.net.id).

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**Call for Papers: 'Que todos signifique todos': Inclusivity and Mexican Children's Literature**

We invite submissions for a special issue of *Bookbird* to coincide with the 34th IBBY International Congress to be held in Mexico City in 2014. We invite papers that examine texts for children from Mexico or the Latin American world as they relate to or intersect with the conference theme: 'Que todos signifique todos [May Everyone Really Mean Everyone]'.

Proposed papers of 4000 words are invited on, but not limited to, the following topics.

- Inclusivity/exclusivity
- Stereotyping
- Diversity
- Normalcy
- Participation
- Belonging
- Alternatives
- Developments and trends

- Multiculturalism
- Genre, form and themes (including, but not restricted to, fantasy, realism, young adult fiction, visual texts, poetry, controversies and taboos)

Abstracts of 250 words should be sent to both the editor and guest editor by 1 May 2013. Editor: Roxanne Harde ([rharde@ualberta.ca](mailto:rharde@ualberta.ca)); Guest Editor: Beatriz Alcubierre Moya ([balcubie@gmail.com](mailto:balcubie@gmail.com)).

The full articles will be expected by 1 September 2013. See *Bookbird*'s website at [www.ibby.org/bookbird](http://www.ibby.org/bookbird) for full submission details.

In addition, short reviews of relevant recently published children's literature (250 words) or research on children's literature (1000 words) are welcomed. Papers that are not accepted for this issue will be considered for later issues of *Bookbird*.

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### **FCBG Annual Conference 2013**

Culford School, Bury St Edmunds. 22–24 March 2013.

The Federation of Children's Book Groups annual conference, organised by one of the local children's book groups in collaboration with the National Executive, takes place every year in spring, in different locations around the country.

Talks, debates, seminars, workshops and exhibitions all feature at the conference, which is a great opportunity to hear authors and illustrators discuss their work as well as socialising with others about children's books and getting kids reading.

The conference is open to all, but members of the Federation benefit from a reduced delegate rate.

The 2013 title is 'The Power of the Page'. Guest speakers include Melvin Burgess, Angie Sage, Michelle Paver, Marcus Sedgwick, Emma Chichester Clark, Annabel Pitcher, Jonathan Meres, Conrad Mason, Rachel Ward, Alex T. Smith, Mary Hooper, Sally Nicholls, Harriet Castor and Jane Ray. Steve Barlow and Steve Skidmore will lead a literary quiz. Seminars will be given by Andrew Hammond, Adèle Geras, Malaika Rose Stanley, Liz Pichon, Elen Caldecott and Colin Mulhern.

A booking form and the provisional programme can be downloaded from [www.fcbg.org.uk/conference/](http://www.fcbg.org.uk/conference/) or contact Jane Etheridge, 123 Frederick Rd, Cheam, Sutton, SM1 2HT; [fcbgconference@gmail.com](mailto:fcbgconference@gmail.com).

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### **Call for Papers: 2013 IFLA World Conference Satellite Meeting**

This satellite meeting is for the Libraries for Children and Young Adults Section, 14–15 August 2013. The meeting will be held in Bangkok in collaboration with ThaiBBY. See <http://conference.ifla.org/ifla79/calls-for-papers/creating-the-future> for topics requested. The main conference will take place immediately afterwards in Singapore. Full details can be found at [International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions](http://international.fid.org). The deadline for submissions is the end of January 2013.

[Liz Page, IBBY International]

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## NEWS

### Children's Laureate

News of the activities and initiatives of Julia Donaldson are on the children's laureate website, [www.childrenslaureate.org.uk](http://www.childrenslaureate.org.uk).

A new website PictureBooksPlays was launched on 16 September 2012. The site is one of Donaldson's laureate projects. It is aimed at teachers and is intended to provide ideas and resources for using picture books as the basis for fun drama and performance activities in the classroom. See [www.picturebookplays.com/](http://www.picturebookplays.com/).

Donaldson has sent a plea for keeping libraries open to Maria Miller, the new Culture Secretary. The letter can be read at [www.childrenslaureate.org.uk/news-and-blog/news/71/](http://www.childrenslaureate.org.uk/news-and-blog/news/71/). Details of the dates, places and times of her Library Tour are at [www.childrenslaureate.org.uk/projects/libraries/tour-schedule](http://www.childrenslaureate.org.uk/projects/libraries/tour-schedule).

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### Young People's Laureate Wales

#### Young people from Afan Valley bring *Incarceron* to life

This October half term, a group of ten young people from Cwmafan and Pontrhydfen became singers, rappers, directors and film makers for the ground-breaking Incarceron Project – part of the Young People's Laureate project led by Literature Wales.

Swansea-based organisation LearnThruMusic worked with the group for two days to write lyrics and compose songs based on the characters, plot and themes from Young People's Laureate Catherine Fisher's novel *Incarceron* (Hodder Children's Books, 2007). The young people's creativity was astounding and resulted in raps and riffs to haunting tunes that retold the novel in their own voices. They then returned to make films for these soundtracks alongside Tom Barrance from Media Education Wales.

These films were premiered on Tuesday 20 November 2012 at a glamorous red-carpet event at Cwmafan Library, followed by a talk by Catherine Fisher on the adaptation of *Incarceron* and her new novel *Obsidian Mirror* (Hodder Children's Books, 2012). The films are available to view on Literature Wales' Young People's Laureate website (<http://youngpeopleslaureate.org/>) and YouTube channel. Photos from the project can be seen at <http://youngpeopleslaureate.org/incarceron-project-autumn-2012/>.

Since taking part in the project, the group have been inspired to read the book, and hope that their films will encourage their friends and families to develop a love of literature.

The Incarceron project was a partnership initiative between Literature Wales and Neath Port Talbot Council. To find out more about Literature Wales' work and the Young People's Laureate initiative, see [www.youngpeopleslaureate.org](http://www.youngpeopleslaureate.org). See also [www.literaturewales.org/home/](http://literaturewales.org/home/).

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### Irish Children's Laureate

The second Laureate na nÓg was announced by President Michael D. Higgins on 8 May 2012. Niamh Sharkey is a picture-book maker who has published 15 titles and has been translated into over 20 languages. She will hold the title for two years. Laureate na nÓg is an initiative of the Arts Council with the support of the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Children's Books Ireland and Poetry Ireland.

You can read about Laureate na nÓg on the dedicated website [www.childrenslaureate.ie](http://www.childrenslaureate.ie).

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### USA Children's Poet Laureate 2011–2013

Awarded by the Poetry Foundation for a two-year tenure, the children's poet laureate project aims to raise awareness that children have a natural receptivity to poetry and are its most appreciative audience, especially when poems are written specifically for them.

The current and third holder of the post is J. Patrick Lewis, appointed in June 2011. He is the author of more than 50 books of poetry for children, which find their shape in both free and formal verse, and engage a wide range of subjects.

For more information and to read some of his poems for children, see [www.jppatricklewis.com/](http://www.jppatricklewis.com/) and [www.poetryfoundation.org/](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/).

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### **Fenland Young Poet Laureate 2013**

Although the Fenland District Council no longer wishes to support the project, Atelier East with support from the Wisbech and Fenland Museum have decided to go ahead on a shoestring. The appointment will be for a year.

Elaine Ewart, the current adult Fenland Poet Laureate, has very kindly volunteered her time to run two community workshops, one at Wisbech Museum, and one at WWT Welney to give inspiration to aspiring young laureates.

Entrants for the Young Poet Laureate must be aged 10–16 and entries must be received by 5 p.m. on 1 February 2013. Aspirants should submit a poem on the theme of 'Fenland' in its widest interpretation. The poem should be no longer than 40 words and typed on a sheet of A4 paper. all entrants must live, work or study in Fenland. Entry forms are available across Fenland in libraries and museums, or by email from [info@atelier-east.co.uk](mailto:info@atelier-east.co.uk). For further information, see <http://www.atelier-east.co.uk/2012/12/fenland-poet-laureate-awards-2013-enter-the-competition/>.

Shortlisted entrants will be informed on 11 February and these entrants should then submit half a side of A4 paper giving a plan of what they would do with their year if they win. Shortlisted entrants will be asked to perform their poem at the award ceremony on 1 March at Wisbech and Fenland Museum. There will be 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes awarded and all entrants will receive a certificate of achievement.

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### **NCRCL News**

There have been significant changes to the staffing of the NCRCL this year, with Gillian Lathey stepping down as director – she is still with us though. Liz Thiel, a plenary speaker at the IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conference two years ago, has left us for work in theological pastures. Having worked with her for at least 12 years, I know that she will bring her infectious enthusiasm to whatever she encounters. On behalf of her students and colleagues I want to thank her for everything she did for the NCRCL – Liz was a dedicated, valued colleague and an inspirational lecturer. We do have a really exciting addition to our team though and I am pleased to introduce Jane Carroll, who comes to us from Trinity College Dublin. Jane has done wonderful work on landscape in children's literature, which I'm sure some of you are familiar with.

I can also announce that Melvin Burgess is to be an honorary fellow in the NCRCL and the Department of English and Creative Writing from 2013.

The NCRCL is not just made up of staff, of course, and the students working with us give momentum to many of the centre's activities. We have long wanted to reward and recognise the work of our best students, so from 2013 we will be awarding annual prizes for outstanding achievement to students on the onsite and distance learning postgraduate programmes. The prizes are named in honour of NCRCL staff Pat Pinsent and Susan Hancock, who have contributed significantly to the development and delivery of the children's literature programmes at Roehampton.

The Pinsent Prize will be awarded for outstanding work on the onsite MA in Children's Literature. The Hancock Prize will be awarded for outstanding work on the distance learning MA in Children's Literature.

[Lisa Sainsbury, Director NCRCL]

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## Royal Mail Christmas Stamps 2012

Royal Mail issued the Christmas 2012 stamps on 6 November 2012. They featured festive characters, including Santa Claus, Decoration Deer, Robin, Penguin and Snowman – all designed by Axel Scheffler, known for his Gruffalo illustrations for Julia Donaldson's books.



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## Federation of Children's Book Groups

The FCBG has redesigned its website: [www.fcbg.org.uk/](http://www.fcbg.org.uk/). From the main page, details of the 2013 annual conference are available. The Federation organises the annual non-fiction day, held on the first Thursday in each November with events throughout the country – see <http://nnfd.org/>.

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## Seven Stories, Newcastle Upon Tyne

Seven Stories has been given approval by Arts Council England to be formally recognised as Seven Stories – National Centre for Children's Books.

The status has been given as part of Arts Council England's museum accreditation scheme in recognition of the national significance of Seven Stories' work to protect and celebrate children's literature. Through its national status, Seven Stories intends to work hard to meet the expectations and responsibilities that its new status brings, playing a leading role in saving, celebrating and sharing the nation's rich literary heritage for children. It does not bring new funding, so support from friends is important. Seven Stories is a registered charity.

The Seven Stories' collection holds original material of modern and contemporary children's literature from the 1930s to the present day. The focus of the collection is not just the finished book but the whole process that goes into the making of a children's book – from first drafts to dummy books, illustrations and related correspondence. The collection contains the work of more than 100 authors and illustrators, including Philip Pullman, David Almond, Judith Kerr and Enid Blyton and around 30,000 books. (A full list can be found at [www.sevenstories.org.uk/collection/authors-and-illustrators](http://www.sevenstories.org.uk/collection/authors-and-illustrators)). The collection is accessible not only to researchers but to young people and their families through the exhibitions and learning programmes. Once the exhibitions have been on show at Seven Stories they then tour nationally to venues across the UK.

See [www.sevenstories.org.uk/](http://www.sevenstories.org.uk/) for further information.

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## **Outside In World**

September 2012

Outside In World has launched new online material for a range of different audiences.

With the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and in liaison with partners such as the British Centre for Literary Translation, Outside In World has identified key needs concerning the development, promotion and enjoyment of books from around the world and is responding to them in the form of dedicated website zones. The website will feature an Education Zone for teachers and librarians, a Young People's Zone, a Parents Zone, and a Book Professionals Zone for publishers and translators.

Valuable new resources will aim to support the development of more books in translation. For example, UK publishers will be able to find ideas for books from all over the world that might be considered for translation, based on ideas from international experts. A translation grant finder will help interested parties to find sources of financial support for translation projects, searching by country. A frequently asked questions resource will provide advice on many aspects of translation and on the role of literary translators.

The materials will include book lists on themes including art, poetry and history, as well as games, puzzles and activities on international artists, different themes and well-loved characters such as Babar and Pinocchio.

The Young People's Zone will aim to engage children in discussing books through a safe (moderated) noticeboard and allow them to help Outside In World interview book writers and illustrators. Also new for autumn 2012 is an online gallery of children's book illustration. This fun resource aims to bring books from around the world to life for children (and adults), allowing visitors to browse the corridors of a virtual art gallery.

A step-by-step guide for publishers funded by the Unwin Charitable Foundation will be launched at the end of the year. This will provide practical guidance on all aspects of translating a book, e.g. ways of identifying titles to translate, where to find translators, where to find funding and the grants available, arranging marketing and PR, and tips on working with translators. The guide will also provide anecdotal material from publishers, both the success stories and the pitfalls. This will be made available as a downloadable guide. Some of the zones represent work in progress. On-going consultation and round-table events with publishers, organisations and other potential partners are continuing to help shape the content. See [www.outsideinworld.org.uk/index.asp#](http://www.outsideinworld.org.uk/index.asp#) and select 'Zones' for the current state of the project. See also the 'IBBY news' section, page 66, for a letter to IBBYnational sections requesting suggestions for the project.

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## **National Poetry Centre at CLPE**

In February 2013, the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education will launch the new National Poetry Centre for Primary Schools. CLPE has a history of engagement with poetry teaching and learning and an extensive collection of poetry books.

The poetry centre will offer a Poetryline website with films of poets, including Roger McGough, John Agard and Jackie Kay, reading and talking about their poetry; downloadable poems by poets and children; animated poems and book lists; and teaching resources. The website will be at [www.clpe.co.uk/poetry/poetry-line](http://www.clpe.co.uk/poetry/poetry-line). Courses and projects will include poetry projects with Michael Rosen, Shakespeare poetry and drama days, and conferences on poetry. A poetry library with a selection of the best new poetry books for children, a historical collection of significant poetry anthologies and single-poet collections will be set up. Publications for teachers and anthologies by children are already available at <http://shop.clpe.co.uk/department/poetry/> and will be added to. For more information: [info@clpe.co.uk](mailto:info@clpe.co.uk); [www.clpe.co.uk](http://www.clpe.co.uk); 020 7401 3382/3; CLPE, Webber St, London, SE1 8QW.

[Ann Lazim]

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## **Story Museum**

Plans to create a ‘cathedral of stories’ in Oxford have been given approval by the city’s planning committee. The committee was unanimous in passing the scheme to transform the Story Museum’s city-centre site in Pembroke Street, following a recommendation for approval by Oxford City Council officers.

The Story Museum’s ambitious plans for the 20,000 sq. ft. site cover the refurbishment, repair and upgrade of three existing buildings and courtyard; alterations to the Pembroke Street elevation; new lift towers and walkways; and a rooftop walkway.

With £3.5 million already raised – including an anonymous donation of £2.2 million – the Story Museum needs to secure a further £8 million to see all its plans realised and is now busy working on a development programme to raise the rest of the money. Nearly 15,000 adults and young people have visited so far and been intrigued by the place and its potential for stirring the imagination.

Since May, the Story Museum has been running a development programme supported by the National Lottery through Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, WREN and others. Three major exhibitions, storytelling, talks, tours and workshops have brought visitors of all ages into the dilapidated building and the team is planning more events for 2013. The museum is also the coordinator of the city’s popular Alice’s Day, and its educational programme has championed storytelling in schools since 2005.

For more information contact Cath Nightingale, [cath@storymuseum.org.uk](mailto:cath@storymuseum.org.uk). For forthcoming events and further information see [www.storymuseum.org.uk](http://www.storymuseum.org.uk).

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## **National Libraries Day 2013**

9 February 2013. Throughout the UK.

The Saturday is the culmination of a week’s worth of celebrations in schools, colleges, universities, workplaces and public libraries. In 2012 over 400 events took place in libraries across the country, including author visits, live-music performances, book clubs, family-history days, stand-up comedy and behind-the-scenes tours. Read more at [www.cilip.org.uk/news-media/Pages/news121116.aspx](http://www.cilip.org.uk/news-media/Pages/news121116.aspx).

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## **Booktrust**

Suggestions for book gifts, stated to be aimed at Christmas giving but relevant all the year round, are listed for teens and young adults at [www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/teenagers/booklists/192/?dm\\_i=72R,150OZ,7CQUSW,3NUDD,1](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/teenagers/booklists/192/?dm_i=72R,150OZ,7CQUSW,3NUDD,1).

There is a dedicated page for children with suggested books, quizzes, ideas and activities at [www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/children/](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/children/).

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## **Bookgifting Programmes**

The government has announced that Booktrust will continue to receive a grant for its bookgifting programmes for babies, toddlers and children. As well as the universal Bookstart scheme, ministers have asked the charity to develop and deliver a new programme that will target the most disadvantaged two year olds. Booktrust will receive £6 million in 2013–2014 and a further £6 million in 2014–2015 to provide these bookgifting programmes. Its Bookstart programme is now in its twentieth year. Since 1992 it has delivered over 40 million free books to more than eight million children.

The new bookgifting programme, funded by the Department for Education, will include a book gift for two year olds taking up their free early education places.

For more information, see [www.booktrust.org.uk/news-blogs-and-press/news/171/](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/news-blogs-and-press/news/171/).

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## IBBY NEWS

### IBBY Section Newsletters

The latest newsletters uploaded to [www.ibby.org/index.php?id=932](http://www.ibby.org/index.php?id=932) and <http://www.ibby.org/index.php?id=1266>:

[Asian Regional Newsletter July 2012](#)

[IBBY Ireland, December 2012](#)

[IBBY New Zealand, November 2012](#)

[IBBY Italy, November 2012](#)

[IBBY France, November 2012](#)

[IBBY Australia, November 2012](#)

[IBBY Brazil, September 2012](#)

[IBBY Ireland, September 2012](#)

[IBBY Australia, August 2012](#)

[IBBY Bolivia, July 2012](#) (in Spanish)

[IBBY Italy, July 2012](#) (in Italian)

[IBBY Canada, June 2012](#) (in English and French)

[IBBY France, May 2012](#) (in French)

[IBBY Australia, May 2012](#)

[IBBY Ireland, May 2012](#)

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### Hans Christian Andersen Awards

To celebrate the Hans Christian Andersen Awards, IBBY, with support from the Frankfurt Book Fair, organised a panel discussion featuring the awards. The participants were Junko Yokota a former HCA juror, Wally de Doncker immediate past vice president of IBBY, David Almond winner of the 2010 HCA for writing, Roger Mello two-time finalist for the illustrator award, and Miriam Gabriela Möllers, an expert on children's and youth literature who acted as moderator.

The hour-long discussion took place on Friday morning, 12 October 2012 in Hall 3.0 as part of the *Forum für Kinder- und Jugendmedien* programme. Thanks to an arrangement with *Pioneerfilm* from Ludwigshafen, Germany, we are able to invite you to view a shortened version of the discussion at <http://youtu.be/gG6jfgDgIEc>. The clip can also be viewed on the IBBY website at [www.ibby.org/index.php?id=273](http://www.ibby.org/index.php?id=273).

We should like to thank Birgit Fricke from the Frankfurt Book Fair for supporting this panel discussion and IBBY Germany for their long-time support of IBBY representation at the fair. And, most of all, we thank Nami Island Inc. for sponsoring the Hans Christian Andersen Awards.

[Liz Page, IBBY International]

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### Shahaneem Hanoum 1949–2012

Shahaneem Hanoum President of IBBY Malaysia passed away on 24 September 2012 after a long battle with cancer. Shahaneem was born in 1949, and has been involved in IBBY since MBBY was reformed and readmitted to IBBY in 2001. For many years she was the director of Selangor Public Library Corporation in Shah Alam. In recognition of her contributions and achievements to children's literature and reading promotion activities, as well as for her work in libraries and women's associations, she was awarded various honorary titles from His Royal Highness, including DSSA in 1998,

which carries the title Datin Paduka. She was elected to the IBBY Executive Committee at the General Assembly in Cape Town in 2004 and served as an EC member until 2006. During her time on the EC, Shahaneem participated in meetings and served on various committees.

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## Outside In

Ed Zaghini of Outside In has sent the following request to all IBBY sections (except IBBY UK) requesting suggestions for the Outside In World website (see page 63).

### Ed Zaghini's message

Outside In is a UK-based organisation that promotes children's literature in translation. So far we have featured more than 850 on our website ([www.outsideinworld.org.uk](http://www.outsideinworld.org.uk)) from different parts of the world.

We would like publishers in the UK to be aware of the wide range of books for children from other parts of the world. We are aware that some countries are particularly underrepresented and some of their greatest books have not yet been translated into English.

We are creating a 'Book Professionals Zone' on our website for publishers and translators. The idea is that we want to showcase good books from around the world that have not been translated into English.

We want to get recommendations of books that your IBBY section believes should be translated into English. A maximum of three titles can be recommended and they can be picture books, fiction or poetry for children. Whether it is a classic, bestseller, award-winner or even a debut book, we are interested in all your recommendations.

From each of the recommended titles we would need the following information:

- Title
- Author and or illustrator
- Date of publication
- Country of publication
- Publisher
- Original language in which the book was written
- Synopsis (no more than 350 words or alternatively the publisher's blurb), in English
- Book cover: an image of the cover by attachment.
- A couple of lines about the person and/or organisation that has recommended the book and a link to a website (if there is one) or an email address so that publishers in the UK can find more about other books, writers, etc.

I should be grateful if you could send your recommendation/s to me by email:  
[eoscarz@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:eoscarz@yahoo.co.uk).

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## Outstanding Books for Disabled Young People

From the suggestions sent by IBBY UK to the IBBY Documentation Centre of Books for Disabled Young People in Oslo, Norway, three books have been chosen to be included in the 2013 catalogue.

Three copies of each book have been sent to the centre: two for the identical travelling exhibits and the third copy for the centre.

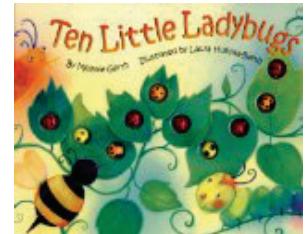
The catalogue is compiled every two years from nominations received from national sections. These are all fiction books.

The book to be included in the catalogue from IBBY UK's suggestions are:

[Category 2, Picture books]

Melanie Gerth, illus. Laura Huliska-Beith (2008) *Ten Little Ladybugs*. Gullane: Gullane Children's Books.

'In *Ten Little Ladybugs*, one by one, ten tactile bugs disappear. Where did they all go? Young ones will love finding this out as they feel their way through the sturdy, colourful pages of this innovative book. The cute creatures provide a hands-on learning experience, and the rhyming text reinforces the counting concept.'



Mary Hoffman, illus. Ros Asquith (2010) *The Great Big Book of Families*. London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books.



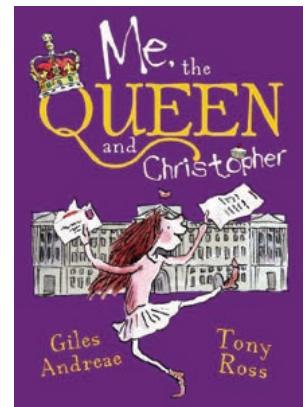
'What is a family? Once, it was said to be a father, mother, boy, girl, cat and dog living in a house with a garden. But as times have changed, families have changed too, and now there are almost as many kinds of family as colours of the rainbow – from a mum and dad or single parent to two mums or two dads, from a mixed-race family to children with different mums and dads, from families with a disabled member to those with a mum or dad in prison. Mary Hoffman takes a look through children's eyes at the wide varieties of family life.'

[Category 3, Picture books and novels that portray persons with special needs]

Giles Andreae, illus. Tony Ross (2012) *Me, the Queen and Christopher*. London: Orchard Books.

'What happens when a seven-year-old girl gets an invitation to have tea at Buckingham Palace with the Queen? Nothing ordinary, if the girl is Freya. We learn that the Queen likes to boogie, eats beans on toast (with the inevitable result), but is also compassionate and understanding. Told with warmth and humour, but with an added poignancy when the Queen meets Christopher, Freya's brother, who is in his wheelchair.'

To find out more about the collection, see [www.ibby.org/index.php?id=271](http://www.ibby.org/index.php?id=271). The catalogues for 2011 and earlier can be downloaded from [www.literature.at/collection.alo?objid=14771&from=1&to=50&orderby=title&sortorder=d](http://www.literature.at/collection.alo?objid=14771&from=1&to=50&orderby=title&sortorder=d)



The 20th Annual IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conference will take place at Roehampton University, London, on Saturday 9 November 2013. The title will be announced soon.

The next issue of *IBBYLink* is *IBBYLink 37*, Summer 2013 (copydate 30 April 2013) and will be on the topic of Ireland's literature for children. The editor is looking for a wide range of items on this topic.

Articles on other subjects, reviews, reports, information about conferences and similar items are also welcomed. Contributions to Ferelith Hordon: [fhordon@aol.com](mailto:fhordon@aol.com).

#### **Titles for Review**

Publishers and others with books to be reviewed in *IBBYLink* should send them to Sue Mansfield at 37 Gartmoor Gardens, London SW19 6NX; [mansfield37@btinternet.com](mailto:mansfield37@btinternet.com).

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Editor: Ferelith Hordon

Associate editor: Jennifer Harding

Reviews editor: Sue Mansfield

To sponsor a future issue of *IBBYLink*, contact Ferelith Hordon, [fhordon@aol.com](mailto:fhordon@aol.com).  
8 Terrapin Court, Terrapin Road, London SW17 8QW.

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