



# JPCE's Reading Newsletter

## Spring Term 2022



### Author Spotlight: Jasbinder Bilan

### Bracknell Library Opening Hours



**Jasbinder** is the Costa Award winning author of *Asha* and *the Spirit Bird* and *Tamarind* and *the Star of Ishta* and *Aarti* and *the Blue Gods*. In her writing she loves creating magical worlds inspired by her love of nature and wild places.

She was born on a farm close to the foothills of the Himalaya and now lives in a wooded valley close to Bath with her husband, two teenage boys and dog Enzo.

#### AARTI AND THE BLUE GODS

**Aarti has lived on the island with Aunt for as long as she can remember.**

Like the weather, Aunt rules her world with rare warmth. Aarti's only comforts are a book of Indian myths full of blue gods, a fox's friendship, and a toy rabbit she finds in a locked room. Then, she learns Aunt has been feeding her lies. Fate intervenes when a half-drowned boy washes up on the beach. With his help, Aarti hopes to remember who she really is ... and perhaps find a way home.

**A mesmerising third novel from Costa-winning and Waterstones- shortlisted Jasbinder Bilan, who is fast establishing herself as one of the most exciting writers of middle-grade fiction.**

#### **EXTRACT**

If Aarti could fly, she wouldn't hang around here, she'd spread her wings and keep going until she landed somewhere else. Somewhere she felt she belonged and where she could find someone who loved her. She

Monday - 9:30am to 5pm  
Tuesday - 9:30am to 7pm  
Wednesday - closed  
Thursday - 9:30am to 7pm  
Friday - 9:30am to 7pm  
Saturday - 9:30am to 4pm  
Sunday – closed

#### Address:

The Avenue  
Bracknell  
RG12 1BH  
United Kingdom

### Meme corner

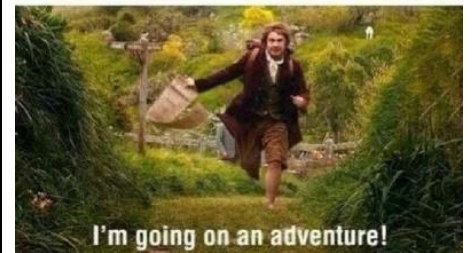


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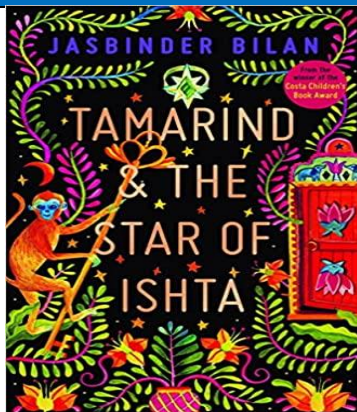


huffed cold breath on her numb fingers to warm them and watched the ladybirds as they gathered at the corners of the window. 'Aaaarti!' Aunt's voice tinkled up the stairs. 'It's nearly supper time – come down!' Aarti scooped the red-and-black speckled ladybirds into her little tin, inched the mildewed window open a fraction and tipped the insects out into the deep winter evening. The ladybirds flipped open their tiny wings and whizzed away. But Aarti knew that it didn't make any difference. However many times she did this, they always flew right back in.

**How I act when I get a new book:**



## Books by the same author:



### Tamarind & The Star of Ishita

Tamarind never knew her Indian mum, who died soon after she was born. So when she arrives at her ancestral home, a huge mansion in the Himalayas surrounded by luxuriant gardens, she's full of questions for her extended family.

But instead of answers, she finds an ominous silence – and a trickle of intriguing clues: an abandoned hut, a friendly monkey, a glowing star ring, and a strange girl in the garden who calls herself Ishita.



### Asha & The Spirit Bird

Asha lives in the foothills of the Himalayas. Money is tight and she misses her papa who works in the city. When he suddenly stops sending his wages, a ruthless moneylender ransacks their home and her mother talks of leaving. From her den in the mango tree, Asha makes a pact with her best friend, Jeevan, to find her father and make things right. But the journey is dangerous: they must cross the world's highest mountains and face hunger, tiredness – even snow leopards.

And yet, Asha has the unshakeable sense that the spirit bird of her

## Found a great book? Padlet it!

If you've read a great book, make sure you visit your year group Padlet site and leave a book review- we are always on the hunt for new books for our library!

Year 6: <https://padlet.com/amerrills/jpyear6reviews>

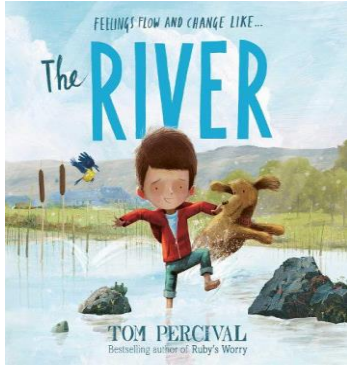
Year 5: <https://padlet.com/amerrills/jpyear5reviews>

Year 4: <https://padlet.com/amerrills/jpyear4reviews>

**The password for every site is: JP2020**



## What's new: EYFS and KS1 Fiction



### **The River** **Tom Percival**

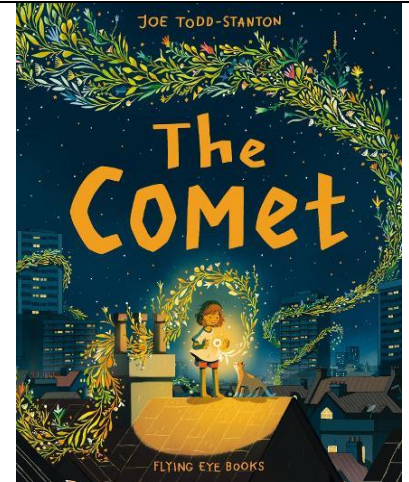
A thought-provoking book to help children understand the idea of ever-changing emotions.

Rowan loves the river; it's just like he is. On some days, it's quiet and calm, on others it's light and playful, and then there are the days when it roars along, wild and angry. But when Rowan goes through a particularly difficult winter, the river freezes - just like Rowan. Can Rowan find a way to release his frozen feelings, and allow the river to flow freely once more?

### **The Comet** **Joe Todd-Stanton**

When Nyla has to leave her home in the countryside to start life again in the city, all she can think about is everything she misses from before. So when a comet comes crashing through the city streets and starts to glow and grow, Nyla can't resist a chance to head somewhere that feels closer to what she had before. But what starts as an escape could be just the thing to make her finally feel at home.

This story explores how this can affect a child's sense of belonging, but also how it can open them up to new and wonderful experiences.



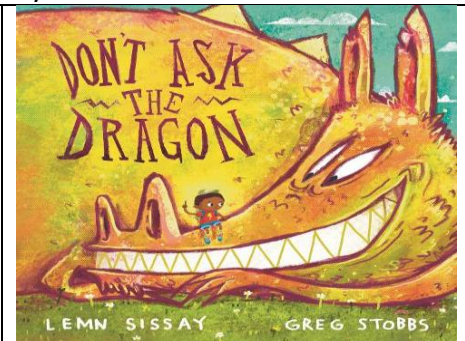
### **The Duck Who Didn't Like Water** **Steve Small**

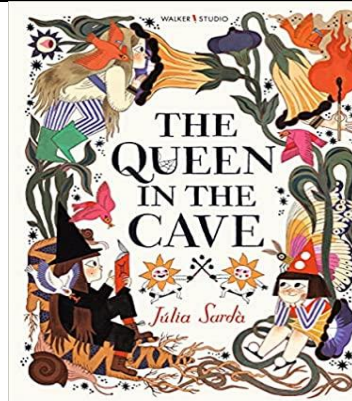
A wise, funny fable about how we don't need to like the same things to find our perfect pal.

Duck is not like other ducks. Duck doesn't like water and is perfectly fine alone, thank you very much. But then, one dark and stormy night, an outgoing, water-loving, and very lost Frog turns up at Duck's door. Can this odd couple find Frog's home? And will they find friendship along the way?

### **Don't Ask the Dragon** **Lemn Sissay**

This is the story of a little boy called Alem who goes on an adventure. It's his birthday, but who knows where he can go to celebrate it? Maybe the bear, the fox, the treefrog or the bulldog know? But don't ask the dragon... or he will EAT you!





## The Queen in the Cave

Júlia Sardà

One night, Franca has a dream about a marvellous queen. And now she feels intrigued... Eager to know more about this mystical figure, Franca shares her dream with her two younger sisters. Together, they set out on an enchanting adventure to discover the kingdom of the queen in the cave.

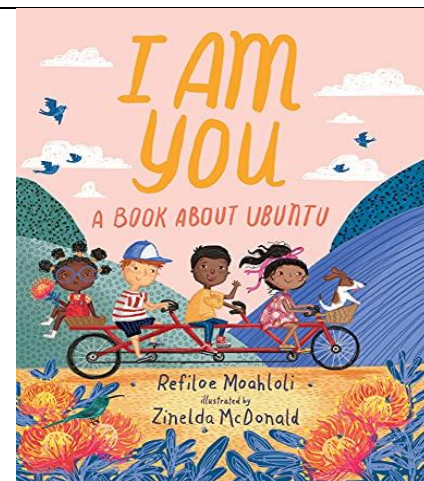
This is a riveting and atmospheric picture book that will surprise and enthrall young readers and dreamers.

## I Am You: A Book about Ubuntu

Refiloe Moahloli

We may be different, but our hearts beat the same.

In southern Africa, there is a belief called ubuntu—the idea that we are all connected. No matter where we're from or who we are, a person is a person through their connections to other people. With simple, lyrical text and charming artwork, this lively picture book first published in South Africa is the perfect introduction to the concept of ubuntu for young kids. A celebration of friendship and kindness, the book shows children the many ways that we are all one.



## What's new: KS2 Fiction



## Greta and the Ghost Hunters

Sam Copeland

Greta Woebegone did not believe in ghosts until the day she was knocked over by a car and almost died. Then everything changed...

Now Greta can not only see the spirits that haunt her ancestral home, but she can also talk to them too - from her grumpy Grandpa Woebegone and Percy the poo-pushing plague victim to the sinister spook in the cellar.

Can Greta help the ghosts avoid being exorcised (a fate worse than undeath)? Can the ghosts help Greta stop her beloved Grandma being put in a home? And can they all help each other overcome the pain in their past that's holding them back from the future?

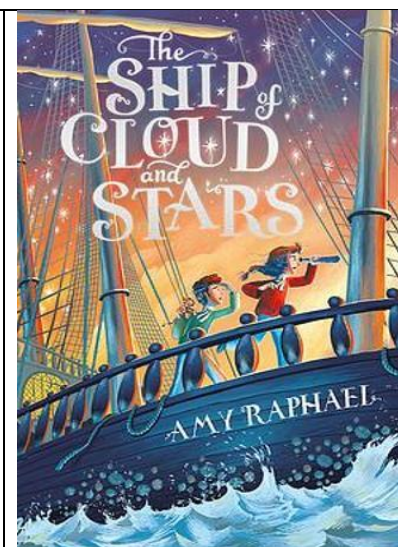
## The Ship of Cloud and Stars

Amy Raphael

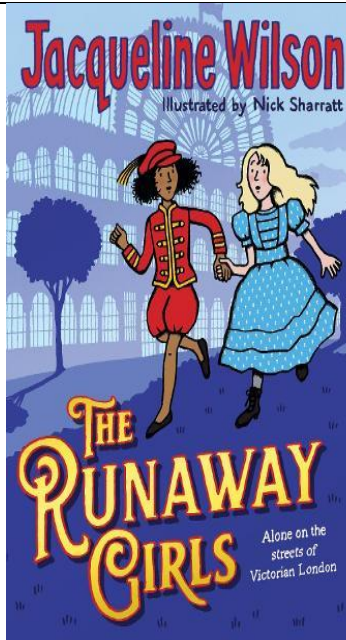
Nico Cloud desperately wants to be an explorer, but her parents think adventures aren't for girls. Fate intervenes when Nico chases a kitten on board a ship... and then the ship sails out to sea!

Nico is an accidental stowaway. Lucky for her, the ship belongs to a famous scientist who is on a quest for new discoveries. But clouds are brewing overhead and cunning pirates are determined to wreck the crew's mission. Can Nico steer the ship to victory and prove her parents wrong?

An epic adventure story about the power of science and legends.







## **The Runaway Girls** **Jacqueline Wilson**

Lucy Locket lives with her father, the New Mother and the New Baby. They sent away her beloved Nurse and replaced her with a horrid governess. Lucy desperately wants someone to be kind to her, and to have some fun - there's very little of that in her house.

Kitty Fisher is a street performer who earns tin for her supper by tumbling. She has always lived on the street and on her wits, with only the kind Gaffer to help her. But now Gaffer is gone, and Kitty is all alone.

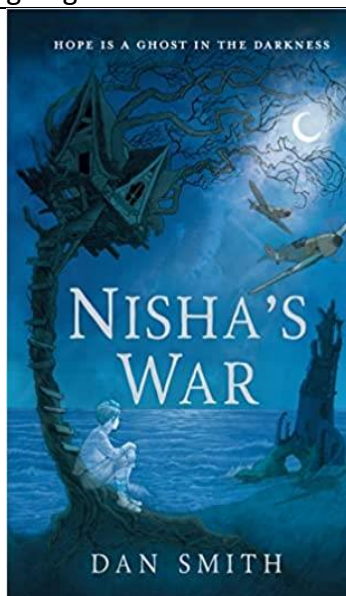
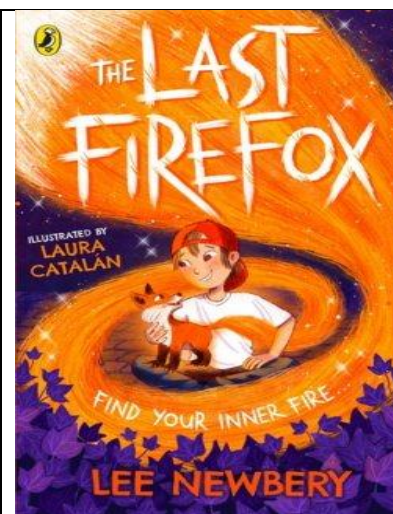
When Lucy runs away from home, Kitty shows Lucy how to survive - where to find the best picnic leftovers in the park, and which trees makes the best beds. Lucy learns quickly and shows Kitty her own skills - befriending families to get free meals and singing beautiful melodies for the crowds.

## **The Last Firefox** **Lee Newbery**

A heart-warming story about family, friendship and finding your inner fire.

Between bullies at school and changes at home, Charlie Challinor finds life a bit scary. And when he's made guardian of a furry fox cub called Cadno, things get a whole lot scarier...Because Cadno isn't just any fox: he's a firefox - the only one of his kind - and a sinister hunter from another world is on his trail.

Swept up into an unexpected adventure to protect his flammable friend, Charlie's going to need to find the bravery he never thought he had, if he's going to save the last firefox...



## **Nisha's War** **Dan Smith**

Malaya, 1942. Nisha's home is destroyed by war and she and her mother, Amma, flee to her father's ancestral house in England, perched on a cliff top on the cold Northern coast.

When Amma falls gravely ill, Nisha is left to face her formidable grandmother alone. Grandmother's rules are countless, and her Anglo-Indian granddaughter is even forbidden from climbing the old weeping tree.

But when a ghost child beckons Nisha to sit under its boughs, and promises her Amma's life in return for three truths, its pull proves irresistible ...

Readers 9+

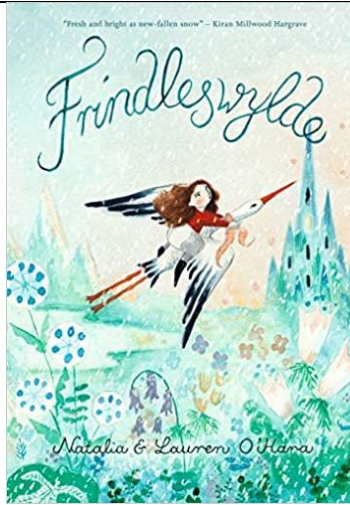
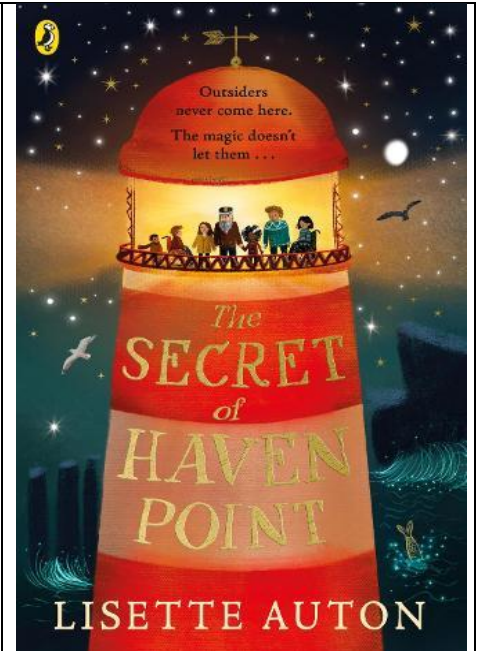
## The Secret of Haven Point

**Lisette Auton**

Washed up as a baby beside a remote lighthouse and raised by a mermaid, Alpha Lux was the first foundling at Haven Point. Now, the lighthouse is a ramshackle home for those who need somewhere to belong. Looting from passing ships to make a living, they call themselves the Wrecklings, and for the children of Haven Point life is spent adventuring on the wild shore (and getting into trouble with the grown-ups).

But when Alpha spots a strange light up on the headland, she realizes that her beloved family are in danger of being discovered by Outsiders.

With their home under threat, the Wrecklings must decide what kind of future they want... and what they're willing to do to get it.



## Frindleswyld

**Natalia & Lauren O'Hara**

Cora lives happily with her granny in the woods in a house where a lamp always burns in a window, providing a light for Granny to find her way home when she goes out. Yet, when the ice spirit Frindleswyld snuffs out the light, Cora has little choice but to follow him into the wintry woodlands and try to defeat him by completing three impossible tasks. However, even though she completes the tasks, Cora is still enchanted by Frindleswyld and joins him in his kingdom of ice where there are no feelings. Can Cora's heart be melted, or is it too late for her?

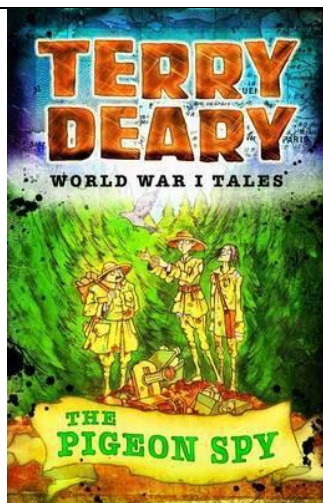
Early KS2 readers for Upper KS1.

## Non-Fiction finds:

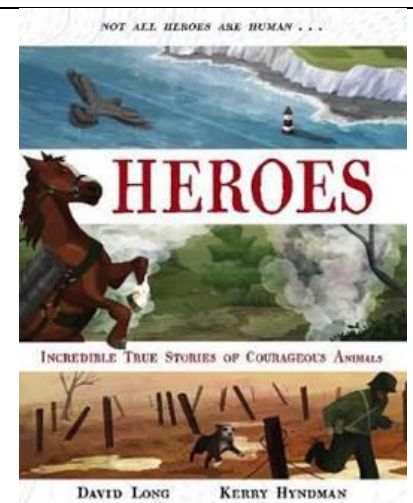
A theme of celebrating animals and all that they have given humankind, including their courage, sacrifice, achievements, and wonders!



**Dogs in Space**  
Vix Southgate

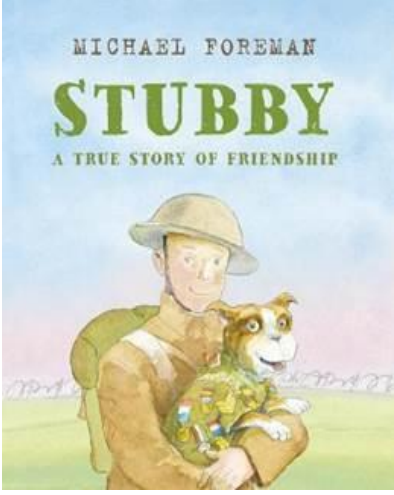


**The Pigeon Spy**  
Terry Deary



**Heroes**  
David Long & Kerry Hyndman



		
<p><b>Tales of Amazing Animal Heroes</b> Mike Unwin</p>	<p><b>Stubby: A True Story of Friendship</b> Michael Foreman</p>	<p><b>Fearless Felines: 30 True Tales of Courageous Cats</b> Kimberlie Hamilton</p>

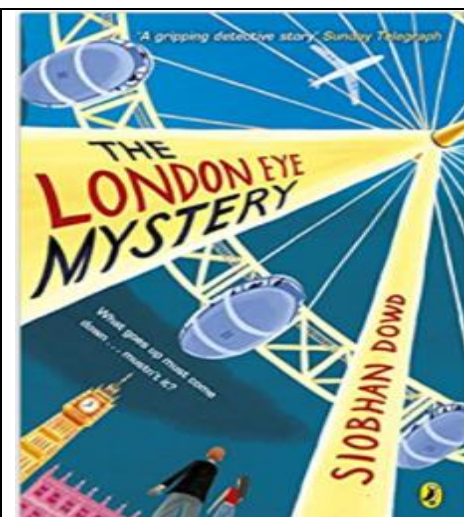
## Have you tried...?

### Mr Page recommends: The London Eye Mystery

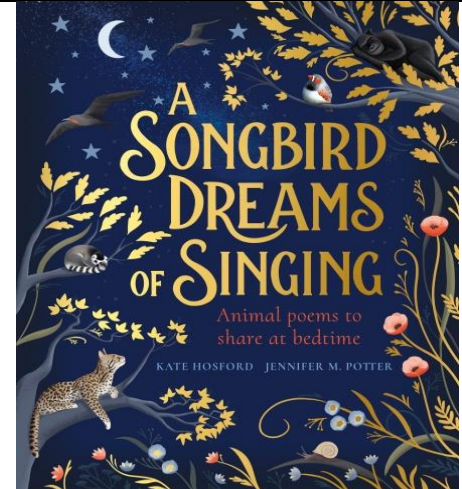
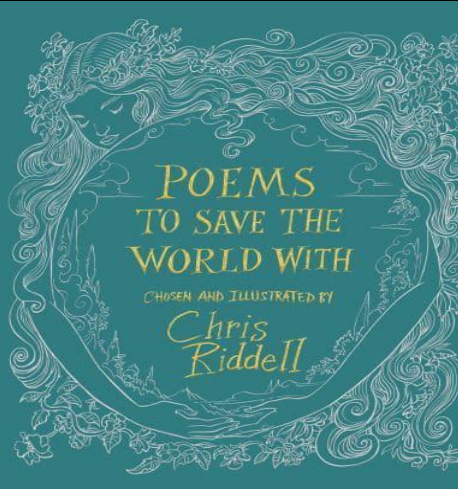
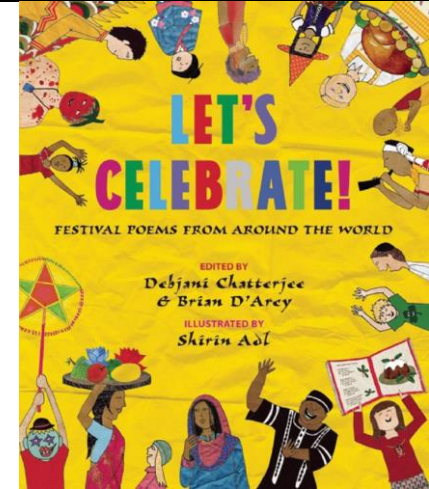
I really enjoy mystery and detective stories. I think it probably stems from my mathematical thinking and enjoyment of solving puzzles.

This book is jam-packed full of twists and turns. Written in the words of Ted, who lives with his parents and elder sister Kat in London, it describes the mysterious disappearance of his cousin Salim from a capsule on the London Eye and how he and Kat try to find him.

If you like this, you'll also enjoy the Agatha Oddly series (recommend to me by Mrs Venediktou) and I am currently enjoying the Adventures on trains series - The Highland Falcon by M.G.Leonard.



## Poetry: Why not try reading...

		
<p><b>A Songbird Dreams of Singing</b> Kate Hosford &amp; Jennifer M. Potter</p>	<p><b>Poems to Save the World With</b> Chris Riddell</p>	<p><b>Let's Celebrate!</b> Debjani Chatterjee and Brian D'Arcy</p>

# Important Dates, Events & Competitions for Literacy

## January

29th Jan - 5th February	<b>National Storytelling Week</b>	<p>Stories belong to everyone ... what's your story?</p> <p>What will you be telling and where will you be telling it?</p> <p>Last year during National Storytelling Week had almost 19000 visits to their website. There are resource packs aimed at KS1, 2 and 3 and chockablock with inspiration for story-centred activities to get those young minds whizzing.</p> <p>The resource packs for schools are now available at <a href="https://www.sfs.org.uk/national-storytelling-week">https://www.sfs.org.uk/national-storytelling-week</a></p>
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## February

3 <sup>rd</sup> February	<b>Harry Potter Book Night</b>	<p>MAGICAL JOURNEYS is the theme for the eighth annual Harry Potter Book Night and we couldn't be more excited!</p> <p>In 2022 we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone and the theme reflects the magical journey that the Harry Potter books have taken so many millions of people on since the first book published on the 26th June 1997. Witches, wizards and Muggles from all around the world are invited to take a magical journey of their own, through enchanting games, magical crafts and bewitching activities.</p> <p><a href="https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/discover/harry-potter/harry-potter-book-night-2022/">https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/discover/harry-potter/harry-potter-book-night-2022/</a></p>
9 – 20 Feb	<b>Imagine Children's Festival</b>	<p>Imagine Children's Festival turns 20 in 2022 but has no intention of growing up any time soon! We've got over 160 events jam-packed into 12 days and over 50% of the festival is completely free.</p> <p>You can find the very best children's theatre, comedy, music, literature, dance and, most importantly, full-on fun for children and their grown-ups this February half-term.</p> <p>Imagine Children's Festival is all about unlocking creativity, celebrating the individuality of every child and bringing families together.</p> <p><a href="https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/festivals-series/imagine-childrens-festival">https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/festivals-series/imagine-childrens-festival</a></p>
14 <sup>th</sup> February	<b>International Book Giving Day</b>	<p>Book fairy?</p> <p>Book ninja?</p> <p>Call it what you will, but, stealthily leaving books out in the wild for little people to find, is hands down one of our favourite ways of gifting books!</p> <p><a href="https://bookgivingday.com/about/">https://bookgivingday.com/about/</a></p>
28 <sup>th</sup> February deadline	<b>The Read Foundation's writing competition</b>	<p>READ Foundation would like to invite you, our young students to let your reflections and experiences inspire you in writing a short story, poem, play or a magazine/newspaper article about friendships. Get creative and express yourself!</p> <p>Shortlisted pieces will be published to our audience here in the UK and showcased in our READ schools abroad so that students sponsored by our incredible donors can also be inspired by your work! First prize in each category will win <b>£100 gift vouchers</b>, second prize will win <b>£50 vouchers</b> and third prize will win <b>£20 vouchers</b>.</p>
28 <sup>th</sup> February deadline	<b>Charity: Coram Voice</b>	<p>This years theme was selected by care experienced children and young people through online votes and was chosen to be –'This is Me'.</p> <p>If you are a child or young person in or leaving care aged 25 or under, we would love to hear from you We want to read your writing on 'This is me', you can interpret however you want and we welcome you to be as creative as you like! Your entries can be up to (but no more than) 500 words long and can be a story, poem, rap, article</p>



		or anything else that fits the theme. <a href="https://coramvoice.org.uk/get-involved/voices-writing-competition/voices-2021-the-national-writing-competition-for-children-in-and-leaving-care/">https://coramvoice.org.uk/get-involved/voices-writing-competition/voices-2021-the-national-writing-competition-for-children-in-and-leaving-care/</a>
28 <sup>th</sup> February deadline	<b>The Elmbridge Literary Competition</b>	The disappearance of Agatha Christie, the Mona Lisa's smile, Banksy; These are some of the most famous, sometimes infamous, enigmas in history. Whether it's the Mary Celeste's missing crew, the Famous Five exploring a treasure island or the nasty thing lurking in Cold Comfort Farm's woodshed, mysteries have always fascinated us. For the 2022 Elmbridge Literary Competition, The R C Sherriff Trust and Elmbridge Borough Council are looking for short stories and poems that unravel riddles, disentangle conundrums and resolve enigmas. It is open to all ages. <a href="https://www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk/elmbridge-literary-competition">https://www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk/elmbridge-literary-competition</a>

## March

March 3rd	<b>World Book Day</b>	World Book Day changes lives through a love of books and shared reading. Our mission is to promote reading for pleasure, offering every child and young person the opportunity to have a book of their own. Reading for pleasure is the single biggest indicator of a child's future success – more than their family circumstances, their parents' educational background or their income. Designated by UNESCO as a worldwide celebration of books and reading, World Book Day is marked in over 100 countries around the globe. <a href="https://www.worldbookday.com/">https://www.worldbookday.com/</a>
21 <sup>st</sup> March	<b>World Poetry Day</b>	World Poetry Day is celebrated on 21 March, and was declared by UNESCO in 1999. Its purpose is to promote the reading, writing, publishing and teaching of poetry throughout the world. <a href="http://www.un.org/en/events/poetryday/">http://www.un.org/en/events/poetryday/</a>
21-27 March	<b>Shakespeare Week</b>	Shakespeare Week is a national annual celebration giving primary school aged children opportunities for enriching and enjoyable early experiences of Shakespeare. It is one of the pathways to Shakespeare provided by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust for people of all ages and stages of interest. <a href="https://www.shakespeareweek.org.uk/">https://www.shakespeareweek.org.uk/</a>
March 25-April 3	<b>Oxford Literary Festival</b>	The Oxford Literary Festival is a world-class literary event that brings together leading authors and public figures in a magnificent setting in the central university area of Oxford each year. <a href="https://oxfordliteraryfestival.org/">https://oxfordliteraryfestival.org/</a>

## April

1st April deadline	<b>Chiltern Bookshops</b>	This year's theme is 'CELEBRATION' and we have not one but three fantastic authors who'll be judging your entries! You are planning a birthday party for your favourite book character. You can invite three people to the party. Who would you invite and why? What games and activities would you plan for the party? You can write about this in any way you like. For example, you could write a story about your preparations for the party, or what happened at the party itself. You could write a poem or create an invitation. The choice is yours! <a href="https://chilternbookshops.co.uk/schools-2/childrens-creative-writing-comp-2022/">https://chilternbookshops.co.uk/schools-2/childrens-creative-writing-comp-2022/</a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> April	<b>International Children's Book Day</b>	International Children's Book Day is a yearly event sponsored by the International Board on Books for Young People, an international non-profit organization. Founded in 1967, the day is observed on or around Hans Christian Andersen's birthday, April 2. <a href="https://www.ibby.org/%20index.php?id=269">https://www.ibby.org/%20index.php?id=269</a>
22 <sup>nd</sup> April	<b>Wilbur and Niso Smith Foundation, The Author of Tomorrow</b>	The Author of Tomorrow is designed to find the adventure writers of the future. Part of the Wilbur Smith Adventure Writing Prize, it is an annual competition open to young people across the world who have completed a short piece of adventure writing in English. The Author of Tomorrow will open for submissions 21st February - 22nd April 2022. <a href="https://www.wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org/awards/author-of-tomorrow-2019">https://www.wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org/awards/author-of-tomorrow-2019</a>
23 <sup>rd</sup> April	<b>World Book Night</b>	World Book Night is a national celebration of reading and books that takes place on 23 April every year. Events up and down the country run by individuals and organisations celebrate the difference that reading makes to people's lives, and everyone from publishers to librarians, and local businesses to the public can get involved. <a href="https://worldbooknight.org">https://worldbooknight.org</a>
23 <sup>rd</sup> April	<b>Shakespeare Day</b>	Many fans and enthusiasts across the world celebrate Shakespeare Day on April 23 every year to honour the birth of Shakespeare. <a href="https://www.shakespeare.org.uk">https://www.shakespeare.org.uk</a>

